

February 2024 | Draft Environmental Impact Report

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY 2045 GENERAL PLAN AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN DRAFT EIR

Prepared for:

Contra Costa County

Department of Conservation and Development
30 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

Prepared by:

PlaceWorks

Contact: Mark Teague, AICP
2040 Bancroft Way, Suite 400
Berkeley, CA 94704
info@placeworks.com
www.placeworks.com

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1-1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCEDURES.....	1-1
1.3 PROJECT LOCATION	1-4
1.4 PROJECT SUMMARY	1-4
1.5 SUMMARY OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES.....	1-5
1.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY.....	1-6
1.7 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION.....	1-6
2. INTRODUCTION.....	2-1
2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT	2-1
2.2 NOTICE OF PREPARATION.....	2-2
2.3 SCOPE OF THIS EIR.....	2-4
2.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE.....	2-5
2.5 FINAL EIR CERTIFICATION.....	2-6
2.6 MITIGATION MONITORING	2-6
3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	3-1
3.1 OVERVIEW	3-1
3.2 LOCATION AND SETTING	3-2
3.3 EIR STUDY AREA.....	3-5
3.4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS.....	3-5
3.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	3-9
3.6 PROJECT COMPONENTS.....	3-10
3.7 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTIONS.....	3-23
3.8 EVALUATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN AND ITS HORIZON-YEAR PROJECTION.....	3-29
3.9 INTENDED USE OF THE EIR AND PROPOSED PROJECT.....	3-30
3.10 REFERENCES	3-31
4. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING	4-1
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	4-1
4.2 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING.....	4-1
4.3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING	4-5
4.4 ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS.....	4-14
4.5 REFERENCES	4-17
5. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS	5-1
5.1 AESTHETICS.....	5.1-1
5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES.....	5.2-1
5.3 AIR QUALITY.....	5.3-1
5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	5.4-1
5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES	5.5-1
5.6 ENERGY	5.6-1
5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS.....	5.7-1
5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	5.8-1
5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	5.9-1
5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY	5.10-1
5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING.....	5.11-1
5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES.....	5.12-1

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
5.13 NOISE.....	5.13-1
5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING.....	5.14-1
5.15 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION.....	5.15-1
5.16 TRANSPORTATION.....	5.16-1
5.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.....	5.17-1
5.18 WILDFIRE.....	5.18-1
6. UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS, IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES, AND GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS	6-1
6.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE AND ADVERSE IMPACTS	6-2
6.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES	6-4
6.3 GROWTH INDUCEMENT	6-5
7. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT	7-1
7.1 INTRODUCTION.....	7-1
7.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED DURING THE SCOPING/PROJECT PLANNING PROCESS.....	7-5
7.3 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS	7-7
7.4 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE	7-21
8. ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED AND QUALIFICATIONS OF PREPARERS	8-1
APPENDICES	
Appendix 2-1: NOP and NOP Comments	
Appendix 5.3-1: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data	
Appendix 5.4-1: Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report	
Appendix 5.4-2: California Department of Fish and Wildlife: RareFind Report, Contra Costa County	
Appendix 5.5-1: Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report	
Appendix 5.5-2: Tribal Correspondence	
Appendix 5.8-1: Climate Action Plan	
Appendix 5.13-1: Noise Appendix	
Appendix 5.16-1: Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis Methodology and Results for the Contra Costa County General Plan Update Memorandum	

Table of Contents

Figure		Page
Figure 3-1	Regional Location.....	3-3
Figure 3-2	EIR Study Area Boundaries.....	3-7
Figure 3-3	Proposed General Plan Land Use Map.....	3-13
Figure 3-4	Existing and Proposed Road Network.....	3-19
Figure 5.1-1	Scenic Resources.....	5.1-5
Figure 5.1-2	Rural and Agricultural Areas.....	5.1-9
Figure 5.2-1	Prime Productive Agricultural Soils.....	5.2-7
Figure 5.2-2	Farmland Classifications within Contra Costa County.....	5.2-8
Figure 5.2-3	Active Williamson Act Contracts within Contra Costa County.....	5.2-9
Figure 5.2-4	Potential Farmland Conversions.....	5.2-17
Figure 5.3-1	Overburdened and Impacted Communities and Community Emitters.....	5.3-21
Figure 5.3-2	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Pollution Burden Percentile.....	5.3-25
Figure 5.3-3	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Asthma Percentile.....	5.3-26
Figure 5.3-4	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Diesel Particulate Matter Percentile.....	5.3-27
Figure 5.3-5	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – PM _{2.5} Percentile.....	5.3-28
Figure 5.4-1	Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County and Selected Locations of Protected Wildlife and Plant Species Areas.....	5.4-9
Figure 5.7-1	Regional Fault Map.....	5.7-7
Figure 5.7-2	Liquefaction Hazard Zones.....	5.7-11
Figure 5.7-3	Landslide Hazards.....	5.7-12
Figure 5.9-1	Active Hazardous Material Sites.....	5.9-21
Figure 5.9-2	Goods Movement Facilities.....	5.9-22
Figure 5.9-3	Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Safety Zones.....	5.9-25
Figure 5.9-4	Evacuation Routes.....	5.9-26
Figure 5.9-5	Single-Access Road Residential Parcels.....	5.9-27
Figure 5.10-1	Watersheds of Contra Costa County.....	5.10-15
Figure 5.10-2	Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County.....	5.10-23
Figure 5.10-3	FEMA 100-Year and 500-Year Flood Zones.....	5.10-29
Figure 5.10-4	Levees of Contra Costa County.....	5.10-30
Figure 5.10-5	Sea Level Rise 2050.....	5.10-31
Figure 5.10-6	Sea Level Rise 2100.....	5.10-32
Figure 5.10-7	Sea Level Rise 2050 with Bayshore/Delta Extreme Tide Flooding.....	5.10-33
Figure 5.10-8	Sea Level Rise 2100 with Bayshore/Delta Extreme Tide Flooding.....	5.10-34
Figure 5.10-9	Dam Inundation Zones.....	5.10-37
Figure 5.10-10	Tsunami Inundation Zones.....	5.10-38
Figure 5.11-1	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.....	5.11-3
Figure 5.12-1	County-Designated Mineral Resource Areas.....	5.12-3
Figure 5.12-2	Mineral Resource Zones and Resource Sectors.....	5.12-4
Figure 5.12-3	Operating Mines in the Unincorporated County.....	5.12-5
Figure 5.12-4	Oil and Gas Resources.....	5.12-9
Figure 5.13-1	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Index Map).....	5.13-11
Figure 5.13-2	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 1 of 5).....	5.13-12
Figure 5.13-3	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 2 of 5).....	5.13-13
Figure 5.13-4	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 3 of 5).....	5.13-14
Figure 5.13-5	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 4 of 5).....	5.13-15
Figure 5.13-6	Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 5 of 5).....	5.13-16
Figure 5.13-7	Buchanan Field Airport Noise Contours.....	5.13-21
Figure 5.13-8	Byron Airport Noise Contours.....	5.13-23
Figure 5.15-1	Fire Protection District Boundaries in Contra Costa County.....	5.15-5
Figure 5.15-2	Contra Costa County Recreation Lands.....	5.15-31
Figure 5.15-3	County Trails Network.....	5.15-37
Figure 5.16-1	Priority Development Areas and Transit Priority Areas.....	5.16-5

Table of Contents

Figure		Page
Figure 5.16-2	Routes of Regional Significance.....	5.16-9
Figure 5.16-3	Existing and Planned Bicycle Network	5.16-21
Figure 5.16-4	Pedestrian Priority Areas	5.16-22
Figure 5.16-5a	VMT Map 2020 Baseline.....	5.16-43
Figure 5.16-5b	VMT Map 2045 Cumulative Plus Project	5.16-44
Figure 5.17-1	Wastewater Service Districts.....	5.17-5
Figure 5.17-2	Water Service Districts.....	5.17-23
Figure 5.17-3	Regional Drainage Infrastructure.....	5.17-43
Figure 5.17-4	Waste Collection Service Areas	5.17-55
Figure 5.17-5	Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Facilities	5.17-56
Figure 5.18-1	Fire Hazard Severity Zones.....	5.18-13
Figure 5.18-2	Wildland-Urban Interface Areas	5.18-14
Figure 5.18-3	Historic Wildfire Perimeters	5.18-15

Table of Contents

Table	Page
Table 1-1	Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation 1-7
Table 2-1	NOP Comment Letters and Scoping Meeting Summary 2-2
Table 3-1	Acreages of Land Use Designations 3-12
Table 3-2	2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projections 3-25
Table 3-3	Approved and Pending Development 3-26
Table 5.2-1	FMMP Land Use in EIR Study Area 5.2-6
Table 5.2-2	Forest Land Acreage in Contra Costa County 5.2-11
Table 5.2-3	Nonagricultural General Plan Designations that Intersect with Important Farmland 5.2-19
Table 5.3-1	Criteria Air Pollutant Health Effects Summary 5.3-2
Table 5.3-2	CARB Recommendations for Siting New Sensitive Land Uses 5.3-6
Table 5.3-3	Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Air Pollutants 5.3-7
Table 5.3-4	Attainment Status of Criteria Air Pollutants in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin 5.3-18
Table 5.3-5	Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary 5.3-19
Table 5.3-6	Contra Costa County Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory 5.3-24
Table 5.3-7	BAAQMD Regional (Mass Emissions) Criteria Air Pollutant Significance Thresholds 5.3-30
Table 5.3-8	Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan 5.3-47
Table 5.3-9	Comparison of the Change in Population and VMT in Contra Costa County 5.3-51
Table 5.3-10	Scenario 1. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to Existing Conditions 5.3-59
Table 5.3-11	Scenario 2. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to the Future No Project Conditions 5.3-60
Table 5.4-1	Inventory of Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County 5.4-6
Table 5.4-2	Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County 5.4-11
Table 5.4-3	Special-Status and Covered Wildlife Species in Contra Costa County 5.4-15
Table 5.6-1	Estimated Existing Electricity and Natural Gas Demand 5.6-15
Table 5.6-2	Estimated Existing Propane Demand 5.6-15
Table 5.6-3	Existing Transportation-Related Annual Fuel Usage 5.6-16
Table 5.6-4	Year 2045 Forecast Electricity Consumption 5.6-26
Table 5.6-5	Year 2045 Forecast Natural Gas and Propane Consumption 5.6-27
Table 5.6-6	Operation-Related Annual Fuel Usage: Net Change from Existing 5.6-28
Table 5.8-1	GHG Emissions and Their Relative Global Warming Potential Compared to CO2 5.8-2
Table 5.8-2	Summary of GHG Emissions Risks to California 5.8-5
Table 5.8-3	Priority Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Plans 5.8-8
Table 5.8-4	Unincorporated Contra Costa County 2005 and Existing GHG Emissions Inventory 5.8-18
Table 5.8-5	Existing GHG Emission Factors 5.8-30
Table 5.8-6	Contra Costa County GHG Emissions Business-as-Usual Forecast 5.8-31
Table 5.8-7	Proposed CAP Local GHG Reduction Strategies 5.8-33
Table 5.8-8	Contra Costa County 2045 GHG Emissions Reduction Target Analysis with the Proposed CAP 5.8-33
Table 5.9-1	Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area 5.9-16
Table 5.10-1	Beneficial Uses for Surface Waters in Contra Costa County 5.10-19
Table 5.10-2	Impaired Water Bodies in Contra Costa County 5.10-21
Table 5.10-3	Existing and Potential Beneficial Uses in Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County 5.10-25
Table 5.13-1	Typical Noise Levels 5.13-4
Table 5.13-2	Human Reaction to Typical Vibration Levels 5.13-5
Table 5.13-3	Allowable Exterior Noise Levels for Events 5.13-8
Table 5.13-4	Building Architectural Damage Limits 5.13-9
Table 5.13-5	Long-Term Noise Measurement Summary 5.13-17
Table 5.13-6	Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary 5.13-17
Table 5.13-7	Existing Railroad Noise Levels 5.13-25
Table 5.13-8	Allowable Exterior Noise Levels 5.13-27
Table 5.13-9	Reference Construction Equipment Noise Levels 5.13-31

Table of Contents

Table		Page
Table 5.13-10	Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways	5.13-34
Table 5.13-11	Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances.....	5.13-44
Table 5.13-12	Future Railroad Noise Levels	5.13-51
Table 5.13-13	Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment	5.13-53
Table 5.14-1	Contra Costa County Population Growth	5.14-4
Table 5.14-2	Housing Unit Growth in the EIR Study Area.....	5.14-5
Table 5.14-3	2023-2031 Regional Housing Needs Allocation	5.14-5
Table 5.14-4	EIR Study Area Employment Growth (5-Year Increment)	5.14-6
Table 5.14-5	Industry by Occupation in the EIR Study Area (2010 and 2020).....	5.14-6
Table 5.14-6	Summary of the EIR Study Area's Projected Growth (5-Year Increments).....	5.14-7
Table 5.15-1	Response Times and ISO Ratings (2014) for Fire Districts in Contra Costa County	5.15-4
Table 5.15-2	Overview of Mutual Aid Agreements.....	5.15-7
Table 5.15-3	Contra Costa County School Enrollment 2013-2023.....	5.15-20
Table 5.15-4	Contra Costa School Districts Characteristics.....	5.15-21
Table 5.15-5	Student Generation Factors for Contra Costa County School Districts	5.15-22
Table 5.15-6	Contra Costa County Parks and Recreation Services Summary	5.15-35
Table 5.16-1	Summary of VMT Results	5.16-41
Table 5.17-1	Summary of Wastewater Collection Providers.....	5.17-8
Table 5.17-2	Wastewater Treatment Facilities within Contra Costa County.....	5.17-9
Table 5.17-3	Wastewater Demand Increase: Proposed General Plan	5.17-13
Table 5.17-4	Water Providers Serving Contra Costa County.....	5.17-25
Table 5.17-5	Net Increase in Water Demand with Proposed General Plan.....	5.17-34
Table 5.17-6	Active Solid Waste Facilities in Contra Costa County	5.17-57
Table 5.17-7	Keller Canyon Landfill.....	5.17-58
Table 5.17-8	Increase in Solid Waste Generation Rates.....	5.17-63
Table 5.18-1	Historic Wildfire Perimeters in Contra Costa County 2010-2021	5.18-17
Table 5.18-2	Record of Fire Affecting Contra Costa County.....	5.18-17
Table 7-1	No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis	7-8
Table 7-2	Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project	7-13
Table 7-3	Increased Density Near TPAs Environmental Analysis.....	7-13
Table 7-4	No Urban Development in High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project.....	7-16
Table 7-5	No Urban Development in FHSZs Environmental Analysis	7-16
Table 7-6	Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project.....	7-19
Table 7-7	Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Environmental Analysis	7-19
Table 7-8	Comparison of Project Alternatives to the Proposed Project	7-22
Table 7-9	Comparison of Alternatives to Project Objectives.....	7-23

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAQS	ambient air quality standards
AB	Assembly Bill
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ACM	asbestos-containing materials
ADT	average daily traffic
amsl	above mean sea level
AQMP	air quality management plan
AST	aboveground storage tank
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BART	Bay Area Rapid Transit
BAU	business as usual
bgs	below ground surface
BMP	best management practices
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAFE	corporate average fuel economy
CalARP	California Accidental Release Prevention Program
CalEMA	California Emergency Management Agency
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
Cal/OSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCCFPD	Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
CCCOS	Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CCWD	Contra Costa Water District

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CDE	California Department of Education
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CGS	California Geologic Survey
CMP	congestion management program
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CO	carbon monoxide
CO _{2e}	carbon dioxide equivalent
Corps	US Army Corps of Engineers
CSO	combined sewer overflows
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EBMUD	East Bay Municipal Utility District
EBRPD	East Bay Regional Park District
ECCFPD	East Contra Costa Fire Protection District
EIR	environmental impact report
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	global warming potential
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual

Abbreviations and Acronyms

HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HQTA	high quality transit area
HVAC	heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
L _{dn}	day-night noise level
L _{eq}	equivalent continuous noise level
LBP	lead-based paint
LCFS	low-carbon fuel standard
LOS	level of service
LST	localized significance thresholds
M _w	moment magnitude
MCL	maximum contaminant level
MEP	maximum extent practicable
mgd	million gallons per day
MMT	million metric tons
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MT	metric ton
MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
MWD	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
O ₃	ozone
OES	California Office of Emergency Services
PDA	Priority Development Area
PM	particulate matter
PM _{2.5}	fine particulate matter
POTW	publicly owned treatment works
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	recognized environmental condition

Abbreviations and Acronyms

RMP	risk management plan
RMS	root mean square
ROG	reactive organic gas
RPS	renewable portfolio standard
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SFBAAB	San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin
SIP	state implementation plan
SLM	sound level meter
SoCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SO _x	sulfur oxides
SQMP	stormwater quality management plan
SRA	source receptor area [or state responsibility area]
SUSMP	standard urban stormwater mitigation plan
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	toxic air contaminants
TNM	transportation noise model
TPA	Transit Priority Area
tpd	tons per day
TRI	toxic release inventory
TTCP	traditional tribal cultural places
ULL	Urban Limit Line
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
UST	underground storage tank
UWMP	urban water management plan
V/C	volume-to-capacity ratio

Abbreviations and Acronyms

VdB	velocity decibels
VHFHSZ	very high fire hazard severity zone
VMТ	vehicle miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compound
WQMP	water quality management plan
WSA	water supply assessment

Abbreviations and Acronyms

This page intentionally left blank.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addresses the environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan and Climate Action Plan (CAP) (proposed project). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that local government agencies consider the environmental impacts before acting on projects over which they have discretionary approval authority. An EIR analyzes potential environmental impacts in order to inform the public and support informed decisions by local and State governmental agency decision makers.

This Draft EIR has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of CEQA, the State's CEQA Guidelines, and Contra Costa County's CEQA Guidelines. Contra Costa County, as the lead agency, has reviewed and revised all submitted drafts, technical studies, and reports as necessary to reflect its own independent judgment, including reliance on County technical personnel from other departments and review of all technical subconsultant reports.

Data for this Draft EIR derive from discussions with affected agencies; analysis of adopted plans and policies; review of available studies, reports, data, and similar literature; and specialized environmental assessments (e.g., aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, and utilities and service systems).

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCEDURES

This Draft EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA to assess the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project, as well as anticipated future discretionary actions and approvals. CEQA establishes six main objectives for an EIR:

1. Disclose to decision-makers and the public the significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
2. Identify ways to avoid or reduce environmental damage.
3. Prevent environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures.
4. Disclose to the public reasons for agency approval of projects with significant environmental effects.
5. Foster interagency coordination in the review of projects.
6. Enhance public participation in the planning process.

1. Executive Summary

An EIR is the most comprehensive form of environmental documentation prepared pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines; it is intended to provide an objective, factually supported analysis and full disclosure of the environmental impacts of a proposed project with the potential to result in significant, adverse environmental impacts.

An EIR is one of various decision-making tools used by a lead agency to consider the merits and disadvantages of a project that is subject to its discretionary authority. Before approving a proposed project, the lead agency must consider the information in the EIR, determine whether the EIR was prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, determine that it reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency, adopt findings concerning the project's significant environmental impacts and alternatives, and adopt a statement of overriding considerations if significant impacts cannot be avoided.

1.2.1 EIR Format

Chapter 1. Executive Summary: Summarizes the background and description of the proposed project, the format of this EIR, project alternatives, any critical issues remaining to be resolved, and the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures identified for the project.

Chapter 2. Introduction: Describes the purpose of this EIR, background on the project, the Notice of Preparation (NOP), the use of incorporation by reference, and Final EIR certification.

Chapter 3. Project Description: A detailed description of the project, including its objectives, its area and location, approvals anticipated to be required as part of the project, necessary environmental clearances, and the intended uses of this EIR.

Chapter 4. Environmental Setting: A description of the physical environmental and regulatory conditions in the vicinity of the project as they existed at the time the NOP was published, from local and regional perspectives. These provide the baseline physical and regulatory conditions from which the lead agency determines the significance of the project's environmental impacts.

Chapter 5. Environmental Analysis: Each environmental topic is analyzed in a separate section that discusses: the thresholds used to determine if a significant impact would occur; the methodology to identify and evaluate the potential impacts of the project; the existing environmental setting; the potential adverse and beneficial effects of the project; the level of impact significance before mitigation; the mitigation measures for the proposed project; the level of significance after mitigation is incorporated; and the potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project combined with other existing, approved, and proposed development in the area.

Chapter 6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts: Describes the significant unavoidable adverse impacts of the proposed project, irreversible environmental changes associated with the project, and ways in which the proposed project would cause increases in population that could result in new physical or environmental impacts.

1. Executive Summary

Chapter 7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project: Describes alternatives and compares their impacts to the impacts of the proposed project. Alternatives include the No Project/Existing Plans Alternative, Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) Alternative, No Urban Development within High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Alternative, and Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative.

Chapter 8. Organizations and Persons Consulted and Qualifications of Persons Preparing EIR: Lists the people and organizations that were contacted during preparation of this EIR and the people who prepared this EIR.

Appendices: The appendices for this document comprise these supporting documents:

- Appendix 2-1: NOP and NOP Comments
- Appendix 5.3-1: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data
- Appendix 5.4-1: Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report
- Appendix 5.4-2: California Department of Fish and Wildlife: RareFind Report, Contra Costa County
- Appendix 5.5-1: Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report
- Appendix 5.5-2: Tribal Correspondence
- Appendix 5.8-1: Climate Action Plan
- Appendix 5.13-1: Noise Appendix
- Appendix 5.16-1: Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis Methodology and Results for the Contra Costa County General Plan Update Memorandum

1.2.2 Type and Purpose of This Draft EIR

This Draft EIR fulfills the requirements for a Program EIR. Although the legally required contents of a Program EIR are the same as for a Project EIR, Program EIRs are typically more conceptual than Project EIRs, with a more general discussion of impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures. According to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Program EIR may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. Use of a Program EIR gives the lead agency an opportunity to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures, as well as greater flexibility to address project-specific and cumulative environmental impacts on a comprehensive scale.

Agencies prepare Program EIRs for programs or a series of related actions that are linked geographically; logical parts of a chain of contemplated events, rules, regulations, or plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program; or individual activities carried out under the same authority and having generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways.

Once a Program EIR has been prepared, subsequent activities within the program must be evaluated to determine whether an additional CEQA document is necessary. However, if the Program EIR addresses the program's effects as specifically and comprehensively as possible, many subsequent activities may be within the

1. Executive Summary

Program EIR's scope, and additional environmental documents may not be required (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[c]). When a lead agency relies on a Program EIR for a subsequent activity, it must incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives from the Program EIR into the subsequent activities (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[c][3]). If a subsequent activity would have effects outside the scope of the Program EIR, the lead agency must prepare a new Initial Study leading to a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or EIR. Even in this case, the Program EIR still serves a valuable purpose as the first-tier environmental analysis. The CEQA Guidelines encourage the use of Program EIRs, citing five advantages:

- Provide a more exhaustive consideration of impacts and alternatives than would be practical in an individual EIR;
- Focus on cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis;
- Avoid continual reconsideration of recurring policy issues;
- Consider broad policy alternatives and programmatic mitigation measures at an early stage when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with them;
- Reduce paperwork by encouraging the reuse of data (through tiering). (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[h])

1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

Contra Costa County is on the northeastern side of the San Francisco Bay; adjacent to Alameda County to the south, San Joaquin County to the east, Solano and Sacramento Counties to the north across San Pablo Bay and Suisun Bay, and San Francisco County to the west. North to south regional access is provided by Interstate (I-) 80, I-680, and State Route (SR-) 242; east to west regional access is provided through I-580, SR-4, and SR-24. Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*, shows Contra Costa County's regional location.

The proposed project defines the project area as unincorporated Contra Costa County. This EIR focuses on the analysis of potential impacts on lands only in unincorporated Contra Costa County, including land in and outside the Urban Limit Line (ULL) and in each municipality's sphere of influence (SOI), but not inside municipality limits. This area is referred to as the "EIR Study Area" in this document and is shown in Figure 3-2, *EIR Study Area Boundaries*.

1.4 PROJECT SUMMARY

Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan

The project is an update of Contra Costa County's General Plan. The General Plan is a State-required legal document that provides guidance to decision-makers regarding allocation of resources and determining the future physical form and character of development within the unincorporated county. The proposed General Plan will serve as the County's primary land use regulatory tool and basis for all planning-related decisions made by County staff, the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors. The proposed General Plan includes the Stronger Communities; Land Use; Transportation; Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands; Public Facilities and Services; Health and Safety; and Growth Management Elements. The Contra Costa County Housing Element was updated separately from the rest of the General

1. Executive Summary

Plan. The Housing Element was adopted on December 12, 2023, and certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development on January 22, 2024.

Climate Action Plan

The Contra Costa County CAP is a comprehensive plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through a series of actions and strategies that would be undertaken by the County. The CAP identifies strategies and measures to meet the State's GHG reductions targets. The CAP also includes an adaptation plan that recommends actions to reduce the community's vulnerability to the anticipated impacts of climate change. The proposed CAP does not include any development proposals and would not directly result in physical environmental effects related to construction or operation of facilities.

1.5 SUMMARY OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6[a]) state that an EIR must address "a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives." The alternatives in this Draft EIR were based, in part, on their potential ability to reduce or eliminate the impacts determined to be significant and unavoidable for implementation of the proposed project. Project alternatives are assessed in further detail in Chapter 7, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*.

1.5.1 No-Project/Existing Plans Alternative

The No Project/Existing Plans Alternative is required to discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published and evaluate what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project is not approved (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6[e]). Pursuant to CEQA, this Alternative is based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. Therefore, the No Project/Existing Plans Alternative assumes that the proposed General Plan and CAP would not be adopted, the development intensity assumed in the existing General Plan would be followed, and existing General Plan and CAP goals, policies, strategies, implementation programs, and actions would remain unchanged.

1.5.2 Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas

The EIR Study Area includes two TPAs, as defined by California Public Resource Code, Section 21099, along a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line. This includes one in Contra Costa Centre and one in Bay Point/Pittsburg. This Alternative proposes a policy to increase the minimum density of all new development and redevelopment within these two TPAs, which include all potential development sites within a half-mile of the BART stations in Contra Costa Centre and Bay Point. Under this Alternative, all projects within these boundaries would be required to develop at 90 percent or more of their site's maximum allowed density.

1. Executive Summary

1.5.3 No Urban Development within a High or Very High FHSZ Alternative

This Alternative prohibits urban development within High or Very High FHSZs, as designated by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The EIR Study Area contains 163,524 acres of land within CAL FIRE's High or Very High FHSZs, with 18,677 acres within the County's Urban Limit Line. Urban development under the proposed General Plan would occur in High and Very High FHSZs, posing significant and unavoidable wildfire hazards risks. This Alternative ensures no urban development occurs within these hazard areas.

1.5.4 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative

This Alternative would combine the two proposed actions in the “Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas” and “No Urban Development within a High or Very High FHSZ” Alternatives. As such, this Alternative would involve requiring residential development projects within the county's two TPAs to achieve at least 90 percent of their sites' maximum allowed density in addition to prohibiting future urban development within the High or Very High FHSZs. This Alternative would have the benefit of increasing density near transit, thereby potentially reducing VMT and related impacts, in addition to reducing the wildfire hazard risk for new development.

1.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

In accordance with Section 15123(b)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR summary must identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public. The County has no knowledge of expressed opposition to the project as a whole. However, some members of the public have expressed opposition to proposed residential density increases in certain unincorporated communities while others have indicated that additional density increases, particularly in existing low-density areas, are warranted. Members of the public have also expressed opposition to proposed policy guidance related to oil and natural gas extraction.

1.7 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Table 1-1, *Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Levels of Significance After Mitigation*, summarizes the conclusions of the environmental analysis contained in this EIR. Impacts are identified as significant or less than significant, and mitigation measures are identified for all significant impacts. The level of significance after imposition of the mitigation measures is also presented.

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.1 AESTHETICS			
Impact 5.1-1: Development in accordance with the proposed project would not substantially alter or damage scenic vistas or substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.1-2: Development under the proposed project would alter visual appearance in the county but would not substantially degrade its existing visual character or quality.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.1-3: The proposed project would not generate substantial light and glare.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES			
Impact 5.2-1: The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact 5.2-2: The proposed project would not conflict with Williamson Act contracts.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
Impact 5.2-3: The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g)).	No Impact	No mitigation measures are required	No Impact
Impact 5.2-4: The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact 5.2-5: The proposed project could potentially result in other agricultural impacts not related to the above, such as diminishing available water quality and supply for agricultural uses	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
5.3 AIR QUALITY			
Impact 5.3-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the BAAQMD Clean Air Plan.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.3-2: Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards.	Potentially Significant	<p>AQ-1 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project construction-related air quality impacts to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology for assessing air quality impacts identified in their CEQA Air Quality Guidelines. If construction-related criteria air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the BAAQMD-adopted construction screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality emissions. Potential measures may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require implementation of the BAAQMD Best Management Practices for fugitive dust control, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, grading areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day. ○ All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered. ○ All visible mud or dirt trackout onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited. ○ All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour (mph). ○ All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. Building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used. 	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All excavation, grading, and/or demolition activities shall be suspended when average wind speeds exceed 20 mph. ○ All trucks and equipment, including their tires, shall be washed off prior to leaving the site. ○ Unpaved roads providing access to sites located 100 feet or further from a paved road shall be treated with a 6- to 12-inch layer of compacted layer of wood chips, mulch, or gravel. ○ Publicly visible signs shall be posted with the telephone number and name of the person to contact at the lead agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. BAAQMD's General Air Pollution Complaints number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations. <p>Measures shall be incorporated into appropriate construction documents (e.g., construction management plans) submitted to the County and shall be verified by the Department of Conservation and Development.</p>	
Impact 5.3-3: Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS.	Potentially Significant	<p>AQ-2</p> <p>Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future project applicants shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project operation-phase-related air quality impacts to the Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology in assessing air quality impacts identified in their CEQA Air Quality Guidelines. If operation-related air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the BAAQMD-adopted operational screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require that applicants for new development projects incorporate mitigation measures to reduce air pollutant</p>	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>emissions during operational activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the conditions of approval. Possible mitigation measures to reduce long-term emissions could include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementing commute trip reduction programs. ▪ Unbundling residential parking costs from property costs. ▪ Expanding bikeway networks. ▪ Expanding transit network coverage or hours. ▪ Using cleaner-fueled vehicles. ▪ Exceeding the current Title 24 Building Envelope Energy Efficiency Standards. ▪ Establishing on-site renewable energy generation systems. ▪ Requiring all-electric buildings. ▪ Replacing gas-powered landscaping equipment with zero-emission alternatives. ▪ Expanding urban tree planting 	
Impact 5.3-4: Construction activities associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	<p>AQ-3 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more within 1,000 feet of residential and other sensitive land uses (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and day care centers) in the unincorporated county, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds the respective threshold established by the BAAQMD—project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000</p>	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>feet of a BAAQMD Overburdened Community; ten in a million in all other areas; PM_{2.5} emissions that exceed 0.3 µg/m³; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0—the applicant will be required to identify and demonstrate that mitigation measures are capable of reducing potential cancer and non-cancer risks below the respective threshold, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. Measures to reduce risk may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of construction equipment rated as US EPA Tier 4 Interim or higher for equipment of 50 horsepower or more. ▪ Use of construction equipment fitted with Level 3 Diesel Particulate Filters for all equipment of 50 horsepower or more. <p>Measures identified in the HRA shall be included in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site development plan as a component of the proposed project. Prior to issuance of any construction permit, the construction contractor shall ensure that all construction plans submitted to the Department of Conservation and Development clearly show incorporation of all applicable mitigation measures.</p>	
Impact 5.3-5: Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	<p>AQ-4 Prior to discretionary approval by the County, project applicants for new industrial or warehousing development projects that 1) have the potential to generate 100 or more diesel truck trips per day or have 40 or more trucks with operating diesel-powered transport refrigeration units, and 2) are within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use (e.g., residential, schools, hospitals, nursing homes) or Impacted Community, as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the nearest sensitive use, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age</p>	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the cumulative and project-level incremental cancer risk, noncancer hazard index, and/or PM_{2.5} exceeds the respective threshold, as established by BAAQMD (all areas of the unincorporated county) and project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000 feet of a BAAQMD Overburdened Community; ten in a million in all other areas; PM_{2.5} emissions that exceed 0.3 µg/m³; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the project applicant will be required to identify best available control technologies (T BACTs) and appropriate enforcement mechanisms, and demonstrate that they are capable of reducing potential cancer, noncancer risks, and PM_{2.5} to an acceptable level. T-BACTs may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restricting idling on-site beyond Air Toxic Control Measures idling restrictions ▪ Electrifying warehousing docks ▪ Requiring use of newer equipment ▪ Requiring near-zero or zero-emission trucks for a portion of the vehicle fleet based on opening year ▪ Truck Electric Vehicle (EV) Capable trailer spaces ▪ Restricting off-site truck travel through the creation of truck routes <p>T-BACTs identified in the HRA shall be identified as mitigation measures in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site plan.</p>	
Impact 5.3-6: The proposed project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact 5.4-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plan, policies, or regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
Impact 5.4-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.4-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.4-4: Implementation of the proposed project could interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.	Potentially Significant	BIO-1 Prior to the issuance of a building permit for projects not exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, the County shall require a habitat connectivity/wildlife corridor evaluation for future development that may impact existing connectivity areas and wildlife linkages. The evaluation shall identify project design features that would reduce potential impacts and maintain habitat and wildlife movement. To this end, the County shall incorporate the following measures, to the extent practicable, for projects impacting wildlife movement corridors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage clustering of development • Avoid known sensitive biological resources • Provide shielded lighting adjacent to sensitive habitat areas • Encourage development plans that maximize wildlife movement • Provide buffers between development and wetland/riparian areas 	Less than significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect wetland/riparian areas through regulatory agency permitting process Encourage wildlife-passable fence designs (e.g., three-strand barbless wire fence) on property boundaries. Encourage preservation of native habitat on developed parcels Minimize road/roadway development to help prevent loss of habitat due to roadkill and habitat loss Use native, drought-resistant plant species in landscape design Encourage participation in local/regional recreational trail design efforts 	
Impact 5.4-5: The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact 5.5-1: Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact 5.5-2: Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.	Potentially Significant	<p>CUL-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant may be required to enter into a cultural resources treatment agreement with the culturally affiliated tribe. If required, the agreement would address the treatment and disposition of cultural resources and human remains that may be impacted as a result of the development as well as provisions for tribal monitors. If an agreement is required, the applicant must provide a copy of the cultural resources treatment agreement to the County prior to issuance of a grading or building</p>	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		permit. If an agreement is not required, then documentation of the appropriate disposition of the cultural resource(s) will be required prior to construction activities. If cultural resources are discovered during project construction, all work in the area shall cease and a qualified archaeologist and representatives of the culturally affiliated tribe shall be retained by the project sponsor to investigate the find and make recommendations as to treatment and mitigation.	
Impact 5.5-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.5-4: Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or determined to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c).	Potentially significant	<p>Implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1</p> <p>TCR-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant may be required to enter into a cultural resources treatment agreement with the culturally affiliated tribe. If required, the agreement would address the treatment and disposition of cultural resources and human remains that may be impacted as a result of the development as well as provisions for tribal monitors. If an agreement is required, the applicant must provide a copy of the cultural resources treatment agreement to the County prior to issuance of a grading or building permit. Regardless of whether an agreement is required, if cultural resources are discovered during project construction, all work in the area shall cease and a qualified archaeologist and representatives of the culturally affiliated tribe shall be retained by the project sponsor to investigate the find and make recommendations as to treatment and mitigation.</p> <p>TCR-2 Tribal monitors from the culturally affiliated tribe shall be allowed to monitor all grading, excavation, and ground-breaking activities, including archaeological surveys, testing, and studies for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and that would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County.</p>	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.6 ENERGY			
Impact 5.6-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.6-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.6-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded energy facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
Impact 5.7-1: The proposed project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault; ii) Strong seismic ground shaking; iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or iv) Landslides, mudslides, or other similar hazards. [Threshold G-1i, G-1ii, G-1iii and G-1iv)].	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.7-2: Development under the proposed project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.7-3: Development under the proposed project would not subject people or structures to hazards from unstable soil or expansive soil conditions.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.7-4: Development under the proposed project would connect to existing sewer lines or comply with State and local regulations for on-site septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.7-5: Development under the proposed project could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature.	Potentially Significant	GEO-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant shall be required to retain a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to determine the project's potential to significantly impact paleontological resources according to Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. If necessary, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall recommend mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.	Less than Significant
5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS			
Impact 5.8-1: Implementation of the proposed project is not projected to result in emissions that would exceed the unincorporated county's GHG reduction target established under SB 32 and progress toward the State's carbon neutrality goal.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.8-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Impact 5.9-1: Implementation of the proposed project, including construction and operation activities, could involve the transport, use, and/or disposal of hazardous materials; however, compliance with existing local, State, and federal regulations would ensure impacts are minimized.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.9-2: Implementation of the proposed project could facilitate development of a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 but would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.9-3: Development under the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working within two miles of an airport.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
Impact 5.9-4: Development under the proposed project would not affect the implementation of an emergency responder or evacuation plan.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required	Less than Significant
5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Impact 5.10-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.10-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.10-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or iv) impede or redirect flood flows.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.10-4: Implementation of the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation if in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.10-5: The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING			
Impact 5.11-1: Project implementation would not divide an established community.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
Impact 5.11-2: Project implementation would not conflict with applicable plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES			
Impact 5.12-1: Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
5.13 NOISE			
Impact 5.13-1: Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project.	Potentially Significant	<p>N-1 Require construction contractors to implement the following measures for construction activities. Demolition, grading, and construction plans submitted to the County shall identify these measures and the County Department of Conservation and Development shall verify that the submitted plans include these notations prior to issuance of demolition, grading, and/or construction permits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the entire active construction period, equipment and trucks used for project construction shall use the best-available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, equipment re-design, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures, and acoustically attenuating shields or shrouds) available. Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers and breakers) shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible. Where the use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air 	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		<p>exhaust shall be used along with external noise jackets on the tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary equipment, such as generators and air compressors, shall be as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive uses. • Stockpiling shall be as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive receptors. • Construction traffic shall be limited, to the extent feasible, to approved haul routes approved by the County Conservation and Development and Public Works Departments. • At least 10 days prior to the start of construction activities, a sign shall be posted at the entrance(s) to the job site, clearly visible to the public, that includes permitted construction days and hours, as well as the telephone numbers of the County's and contractor's authorized representatives that are assigned to respond in the event of a noise or vibration complaint. If the authorized contractor's representative receives a complaint, they shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action to the County. • Signs shall be posted at the job site entrance(s), within the on-site construction zones, and along queueing lanes (if any) to reinforce the prohibition of unnecessary engine idling. All other equipment shall be turned off if not in use for more than 5 minutes. • During the entire active construction period and to the extent feasible, the use of noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, shall be for safety warning purposes only. The construction manager shall use smart back-up alarms, which automatically adjust the alarm level based on the background noise level or switch off back-up alarms and replace with human spotters in compliance with all safety requirements and laws. • Erect temporary noise barriers (at least as high as the exhaust of equipment and breaking line-of-sight between noise sources and sensitive receptors), as 	

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		necessary and feasible, to maintain construction noise levels at or below the performance standard of 80 dBA Leq. Barriers shall be constructed with a solid material that has a density of at least 4 pounds per square foot with no gaps from the ground to the top of the barrier.	
Impact 5.13-2: Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact 5.13-3: Individual construction developments for future projects may expose sensitive uses to excessive levels of groundborne vibration	Potentially Significant	N-2 Prior to issuance of a building permit for a project requiring pile driving during construction within 135 feet of fragile structures, such as historical resources, 100 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (e.g., most residential buildings), or within 75 feet of engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster); or a vibratory roller within 25 feet of any structure, the project applicant shall prepare a noise and vibration analysis to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to these activities. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer. The vibration levels shall not exceed FTA architectural damage thresholds (i.e., 0.12 inches per second [in/sec] peak particle velocity [PPV] for fragile or historical resources, 0.2 in/sec PPV for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry). If vibration levels would exceed this threshold, alternative uses such as drilling piles as opposed to pile driving and static rollers as opposed to vibratory rollers shall be used. If necessary, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to ensure vibration thresholds are not exceeded.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		N-3 During the project-level CEQA process for industrial development projects or other projects that could generate substantial vibration levels near sensitive uses, such as residential uses, a noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to the operations of that individual development. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer and shall follow the latest CEQA guidelines, practices, and precedents.	
Impact 5.13-4: Implementation of the proposed project would not expose future residents to excessive levels of airport-related noise	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING			
Impact 5.14-1: The proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the EIR Study Area.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
Impact 5.14-2: The proposed project would not result in the displacement of people and/or housing.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
5.15 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION			
FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Impact 5.15-1: The proposed project could introduce new structures and residents into the CCCFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD, KFPD, and CCFPD's service boundaries, thereby increasing the requirement for fire protection facilities and personnel.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
POLICE PROTECTION			
Impact 5.15-2: The proposed project could introduce new structures and residents into the CCCOS service boundaries, thereby potentially increasing the requirement for police protection facilities and personnel.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
SCHOOL SERVICES			
Impact 5.15-3: Development under the proposed project could generate new students who would impact the school enrollment capacities of area schools and result in the need for new and/or expanded school facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
LIBRARY SERVICES			
Impact 5.15-4: Development under the proposed project could generate new residents in the county and result in the need for new and/or expanded library facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
PARKS			
Impact 5.15-5: The proposed project could generate additional residents that would increase the use of existing park and recreational facilities but would not require the immediate provision of new and/or expanded recreational facilities.	Less Than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant
5.16 TRANSPORTATION			
Impact 5.16-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.16-2: Implementation of the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact 5.16-3: Implementation of the proposed would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.16-4: Development associated with the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
5.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS			
Impact 5.17-1: Sewer and wastewater treatment systems are adequate to meet project requirements.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-2: Water supply and delivery systems are adequate to meet project requirements.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-3: The proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-4: Existing and/or proposed storm drainage systems are adequate to serve the drainage requirements of the proposed project.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-5: Existing and/or proposed facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated solid waste.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-6: The proposed project would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.17-7: Existing telecommunication facilities are adequate to meet project requirements.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
5.18 WILDFIRE			
Impact 5.18-1: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs and a single access roadway or in an Evacuation-Constrained Area could substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.18-2: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

Table 1-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures and Levels of Significance After Mitigation

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact 5.18-3: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities), but it would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.18-4: The project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are required.	Less than Significant
Impact 5.18-5: Development in designated High or Very FHSZs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger.	Potentially Significant	No feasible mitigation measures.	Significant and Unavoidable

1. Executive Summary

This page intentionally left blank.

2. Introduction

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all State and local governmental agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before acting on those projects. This draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to satisfy CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The EIR is a public document designed to provide decision makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid environmental damage, and to identify alternatives to the project. The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth-inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The lead agency means “the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment” (CEQA Section 21067). Contra Costa County has the principal responsibility for approval of the proposed project. For this reason, Contra Costa County is the CEQA lead agency for this project.

The Draft EIR intends to provide sufficient information on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to allow Contra Costa County to make an informed decision regarding the approval of the project. Specific discretionary actions to be reviewed by the County are described in Section 3.9, *Intended Uses of the EIR and Proposed Project*.

This Draft EIR has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.)
- State Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA of 1970 (CEQA Guidelines), as amended (California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 et seq.)
- Contra Costa County Guidelines for Administering the California Environmental Quality Act

The overall purpose of this Draft EIR is to inform the lead agency, responsible agencies, decision makers, and the general public about the environmental effects of the development and operation of the proposed project. This Draft EIR addresses effects that may be significant and adverse, evaluates alternatives to the project, and identifies mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse effects.

2. Introduction

2.2 NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Contra Costa County determined that an EIR would be required for this project and issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (see Appendix 2-1 to this Draft EIR). The NOP process helps determine the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR. Comments were received during the first NOP public review period from Wednesday, September 20, 2023, through Friday, October 20, 2023. All comments received during the public review period are included in Appendix 2-1 and summarized in Table 2-1, *NOP Comment Letters and Scoping Meeting Summary*.

A total of six agencies and interested parties responded to the NOP and made comments at the scoping meeting. CEQA does not require a formal response to these comments.

Table 2-1 NOP Comment Letters and Scoping Meeting Summary

Agency/Organization/Individual	Date	Summary of Comments	Section of EIR Comment is Addressed
Native American Heritage Commission	09/25/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic region of the proposed project. Outlines steps to comply with laws Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18. Recommends various actions for cultural resource assessments, including the preparation of an archaeological inventory survey and provides resources to assist the process. 	Section 5.5, <i>Cultural and Tribal Resources</i>
California Geological Survey (CGS)	09/28/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends that the CGS zones of required investigation for liquefaction, land sliding, surface fault rupture, and ground shaking be shown and discussed in the Draft EIR and supporting documents as they relate to planned development. Recommends that the Draft EIR discuss that some areas may be within a Tsunami Design Zone and that the California Building Code requires certain design standards for essential/critical or larger structures. 	Section 5.7, <i>Geology and Soils</i> Section 5.10, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i>
Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)	10/16/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends that the County review BART's Transit-Oriented (TOD) Guidelines. Encourages staff to ensure that updates align with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Transit-Oriented Communities Policy. 	Section 5.16, <i>Transportation</i>
East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD)	10/16/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists policies and regulations that future projects will be subject to regarding water service and Mokelumne aqueducts. Requests coordination with the County and developers to explore options to promote use of recycled water in the General Plan. Requests that the County include in its conditions of approval a requirement that the project sponsor comply with Assembly Bill 325, "Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance." Provides the agency's applicant pipeline design criteria. Lists the authorized uses of pipeline rights-of-way, including the procedures and criteria for review and authorization of overhead, surface, and subsurface use of 	Section 5.10, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i>

2. Introduction

Table 2-1 NOP Comment Letters and Scoping Meeting Summary

Agency/Organization/Individual	Date	Summary of Comments	Section of EIR Comment is Addressed
		<p>District-owned and easement-established property containing raw and distribution water aqueducts and pipelines for purposes other than installation, maintenance, and operation of District pipelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lists the requirements for entry or use of pipeline right-of-way. 	
Delta Stewardship Council	10/20/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ States that the proposed project may meet the definition of a covered project under Water Code Section 85057.5(a), which includes projects that would occur within the boundaries of the Delta or Suisun Marsh; that are carried out, approved, or funded by a State or a local public agency; covered by one of the provisions of the Delta Plan; and would have a significant impact on the achievement of the goals of the Delta Plan or the implementation of government-sponsored flood-control programs to reduce risks to people, property, and State interests in the Delta. ▪ States that the State or local agency approving, funding, or carrying out the proposed project must determine if that project is a covered action and, if so, file a certification of consistency with the Council before initiating project implementation. ▪ Invites the County to continue to engage Council staff in early consultation to discuss project features and mitigation measures that would promote consistency with the Delta Plan. 	<p>Section 5.10, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i> Section 5.11, <i>Land Use and Planning</i></p>
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	10/20/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ States that projects that do not screen from vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis should perform an analysis that includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Projects that result in automobile VMT being above the threshold of significance, should incorporate mitigation measures that support the use of transit or active transportation modes. ○ A schematic illustration of walking, biking, and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential traffic safety issues to the State Transportation Network may be assessed by Caltrans via the Interim Safety Guidance. ○ The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities, and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycles, and transit facilities must be maintained. ▪ Recommends including references to the Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan (2021) and the Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan (2018) in the Draft EIR. 	Section 5.16, <i>Transportation</i>

2. Introduction

2.3 SCOPE OF THIS EIR

The County determined the scope for this EIR based on the review of the proposed project, agency consultation, the NOP, and comments in response to the NOP. According to Sections 15126.2 and 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR should identify any potentially significant adverse impacts to the environment and incorporate mitigation that would reduce or eliminate these impacts to levels of insignificance.

This EIR evaluates potential impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project. The information in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, establishes the basis for analyzing future project-related environmental impacts in this EIR. The General Plan Update policies and mitigation measures have been identified that either eliminate or reduce potentially significant impacts.

2.3.1 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts

The County determined that nine environmental factors have potentially significant impacts if the proposed project is implemented.

- Agriculture and Forestry Services
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Transportation
- Wildfire

2.3.2 Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

This Draft EIR identifies 12 significant and unavoidable adverse impacts, as defined by CEQA, that would result from implementation of the proposed project. The County must prepare a “statement of overriding considerations” before it can approve the project, attesting that the decision-making body has balanced the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable significant environmental effects and has determined that the benefits outweigh the adverse effects, and therefore the adverse effects are considered acceptable. The impacts that were found in the Draft EIR to be significant and unavoidable are:

- **Impact 5.2-1:** The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use.
- **Impact 5.2-4:** The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- **Impact 5.3-2:** Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards.

2. Introduction

- **Impact 5.3-3:** Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS.
- **Impact 5.3-5:** Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- **Impact 5.5-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.
- **Impact 5.12-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.
- **Impact 5.13-1:** Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project.
- **Impact 5.13-2:** Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards.
- **Impact 5.16-2:** Implementation of the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).
- **Impact 5.18-2:** Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.
- **Impact 5.18-5:** Development in designated High or Very FHSZs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger.

2.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Some documents are incorporated by reference into this Draft EIR, consistent with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, and are available for review at the County.

- Contra Costa County 2005-2020 General Plan and EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 1988071904)
- Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

2. Introduction

2.5 FINAL EIR CERTIFICATION

This Draft EIR is being circulated for public review for 60 days from February 9, 2024, through April 8, 2024. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to provide written comments on the Draft EIR to the address of the County Department of Conservation and Development:

Department of Conservation and Development
Attn: Will Nelson
30 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

After the 60-day review period, the County will consider all written comments received and prepare written responses for each. A Final EIR will incorporate the received comments, responses to the comments, and any changes to the Draft EIR that result from comments. The Final EIR will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors for potential certification as the environmental document for the project. All persons who comment on the Draft EIR and provide adequate contact information will be notified of the availability of the Final EIR and the date of the public hearing before the County.

The Draft EIR is available to the public for review at the following locations:

- Online: <https://envisioncontracosta2040.org/documents>
- In-Person: Department of Conservation and Development – 30 Muir Road, Martinez, CA 94553

2.6 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires that agencies adopt a monitoring or reporting program for any project for which it has made findings pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081 or adopted a Negative Declaration pursuant to Public Resources Code 21080(c). Such a program is intended to ensure implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR or Negative Declaration.

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the proposed project will be completed as part of the Final EIR, prior to consideration of the project by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

3. Project Description

This chapter of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the proposed Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan (proposed General Plan Update) and the Climate Action Plan (CAP), hereinafter referred to as the “proposed project,” pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).¹ The proposed project would replace the County’s existing General Plan, which was adopted in 1991 and reconsolidated twice (once for 1990-2005 and again for 2005-2020), and the 2015 CAP. A public review draft of each project component was published on October 17, 2023.

This chapter provides a detailed description of the proposed project, including the location, setting, and characteristics of the study area, as well as the project objectives, the principal project features, and required permits and approvals. A more detailed description of the environmental setting is provided in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*, and additional descriptions of the environmental setting as they relate to each of the environmental issues analyzed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Assessment*, of this Draft EIR, are included in the environmental setting discussions contained in Sections 5.1 through 5.18.

3.1 OVERVIEW

Every city and county in California is required to have an adopted comprehensive long-range general plan for the physical development of the county or city and, in some cases, land outside the city or county boundaries.² It is the community’s overarching policy document that defines a vision for future change and sets the “ground rules” for locating and designing new projects, expanding the local economy, conserving resources, improving public services and safety, and fostering community health. The proposed General Plan functions as the County’s primary land use regulatory tool. It will be used as the basis for all planning-related decisions made by County staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors.

Per State law, the General Plan must address eight mandated topics: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, environmental justice, and safety. Typically, General Plans cover a timeframe or forecast of 15 to 20 years. However, State law also requires that Housing Elements be updated every eight years, so the Contra Costa County Housing Element was updated before the rest of the General Plan and evaluated by a separate EIR.³

In addition to the eight topics required by State Law, the proposed General Plan addresses two optional topics: growth management and public facilities and services.

¹ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.

² California Government Code Section 65300.

³ SCH # 2022070481.

3. Project Description

The proposed General Plan encompasses the required and optional topics in the following chapters:

- Stronger Communities Element
- Land Use Element
- Transportation Element
- Housing Element (prepared as part of a separate project)
- Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element
- Public Facilities and Services Element
- Health and Safety Element
- Growth Management Element

All specific plans and zoning in the county must be consistent with the General Plan. Similarly, all land use development approvals and environmental decisions made by the County must be consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan itself, however, does not approve or entitle any development project. Property owners have control over when they wish to propose a project, and final development approval decisions are made on a project-by-project basis by County staff, the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, and/or the Board of Supervisors.

The proposed CAP is a separate document that provides strategic implementation programs to show how the County will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in support of the State's adopted GHG reduction targets. The CAP implements the General Plan and its general policies and actions supporting the reduction of GHG emissions. As an implementing document, the CAP provides more specific direction to the County than the General Plan, and the CAP will be monitored and updated more often than the General Plan.

In compliance with CEQA, this EIR describes the potential environmental impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the proposed project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 establishes that the physical environmental conditions at the time of the issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) constitute the baseline conditions by which it is determined whether an impact is significant. The NOP for this EIR was published on September 20, 2023 (State Clearinghouse No. 2023090467). The Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development is the Lead Agency for the environmental review of the proposed project.

3.2 LOCATION AND SETTING

Contra Costa County is on the northeastern side of the San Francisco Bay; adjacent to Alameda County to the south, San Joaquin County to the east, Solano and Sacramento Counties to the north across San Pablo Bay and Suisun Bay, and San Francisco County to the west. North to south regional access is provided by Interstate 80, Interstate 680, and State Route 242; east to west regional access is provided by Interstate 580, State Route 4, and State Route 24. Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*, shows Contra Costa County's regional location.

3. Project Description

Contra Costa County, which is Spanish for “opposite coast,” is across the San Francisco Bay from San Francisco and is bordered by San Francisco Bay to the west and San Pablo Bay and Suisun Bay to the north. Two major transcontinental railroads (Burlington Northern Santa Fe, or BNSF, and Union Pacific Railroad, or UPRR) follow the county’s northern shoreline, also serving ports and major rail facilities in Oakland and Richmond. The Buchanan Field Airport, in unincorporated Concord, and Byron Airport, located south of Byron in eastern Contra Costa County, provide domestic aviation services, along with air cargo service and other operations.

There is a long history of people living in what is now Contra Costa County and using the land for a variety of purposes. Members of the Bay Miwok, Northern Valley Yokuts, and Ohlone Tribes were the first inhabitants. Spanish colonization of what is now California began in 1769. Spain controlled the area until Mexico won its independence in 1821. Under Mexican rule, much of the county was divided amongst 15 land grants, or ranchos. Acalanes, Pacheco, El Sobrante, and many other locations in the county derive their names from the ranchos or their owners. The county, along with the rest of California, was ceded to the United States in 1848 following the Mexican-American War. Contra Costa County was established in 1850 as one of California’s original 27 counties, with Martinez as the county seat. Fewer than 5,000 people lived in the county at the time.

The current physical form and character of the county has largely been defined by the pattern of urban development sparked by rapid industrialization during World War II and the economic expansion and diversification that followed:

- West County was the first area to develop with urban and industrial uses. Several cities and unincorporated communities existed in the area before World War II, but they were relatively small (Richmond, by far the largest city in the county at the time, had a population of 23,093 in the 1940 Census). However, West County became a hub of industrial activity during the war (Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond produced nearly 750 ships, more than any other shipyard complex in the country), leading to fast and extensive urbanization. By 1950, Richmond’s population approached 100,000.
- Central County experienced a wave of suburbanization during the prosperous post-World War II economy of the 1950s and 1960s. Rural agricultural communities were transformed into cities as middle- and upper-class residents, most of whom were White, were provided the opportunity to live in newly constructed housing tracts and commute via the expanding freeway network. Construction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system in the 1960s and 1970s enhanced the area’s desirability and facilitated additional development.
- The suburban development pattern began extending into the agricultural landscape of East County in the 1980s. Small cities such as Brentwood grew rapidly, and a new city, Oakley, was incorporated in 1999. Residents were attracted to East County by lower housing costs and scenic open spaces, as well as the extension of BART to the Pittsburg/Bay Point Station in 1996.

As of 2020, the population of unincorporated Contra Costa County was approximately 174,000 people; there were about 60,300 homes, and the average household size was 2.83 people per household (DOF 2020). Over the next 20 years, Contra Costa County is likely to see continued growth, including residential and employment expansion.

3. Project Description

3.3 EIR STUDY AREA

The proposed General Plan defines the project area as unincorporated Contra Costa County. Land inside the city or town limits of incorporated municipalities is not under Contra Costa County's jurisdiction. Contra Costa County is home to 19 incorporated municipalities ranging from the City of Concord, which is 30.5 square miles, to the City of Clayton, which is 3.8 square miles.

In 1990, voters adopted Measure C-1990, which created the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and Urban Limit Line (ULL). Together these play a major role in shaping land use and community character across the county. The 65/35 Standard limits the amount of land that can be designated for urban development, while the ULL limits the areas where such development can occur.

The 65/35 Standard limits urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land area of the county. The remaining 65 percent must be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses. Institutional/public uses such as schools, transit facilities, fire and police stations, water and wastewater treatment plants, correctional facilities, and airports are also categorized as non-urban.

The ULL's function is to protect the majority of the county from urban development. The urbanized areas of the county, including incorporated cities and unincorporated communities, are contained within the ULL. Urban and non-urban uses are allowed inside the ULL while only non-urban uses are allowed outside. Any expansion of the ULL that exceeds 30 acres is subject to a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors and requires countywide voter approval.

This EIR focuses on the analysis of potential impacts on lands only in unincorporated Contra Costa County, including land in and outside the ULL and inside each municipality's sphere of influence (SOI), but not inside municipality limits. This area is referred to as the "EIR Study Area" in this document and is shown in Figure 3-2, *EIR Study Area Boundaries*.

3.4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The process to update the existing General Plan began in December 2017 when the Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) to oversee updates to the General Plan and Zoning Code. The Board of Supervisors subsequently directed DCD to concurrently update the County's 2015 Climate Action Plan. Substantive work on the project began in September 2018 and public outreach kicked off in February 2019. Over the next four years, the County held or participated in over 130 public and community-organized meetings with residents, community advocates, stakeholders, and public officials, including:

- Meetings of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Sustainability Commission, Library Commission, Hazardous Materials Commission, Arts and Culture Commission, Sustainability Committee, Historic Landmarks Advisory Committee, Aviation Advisory Committee, and all 13 Municipal Advisory Councils.
- Almost 50 community meetings, workshops, and open houses held across the county.

3. Project Description

- Stakeholder meetings on environmental justice, community health, sustainability, and economic development.
- Native American tribal consultations.
- Over 20 meetings with various community-based organizations representing a wide range of interests in the county.

In addition, throughout the process the Envision Contra Costa website provided information about upcoming meetings, access to draft documents, and online tools that community members used to share their thoughts. The online tools were especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they allowed community members to remain engaged and even attend meetings virtually. Input and direction from the public and County officials were incorporated into each component of the General Plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

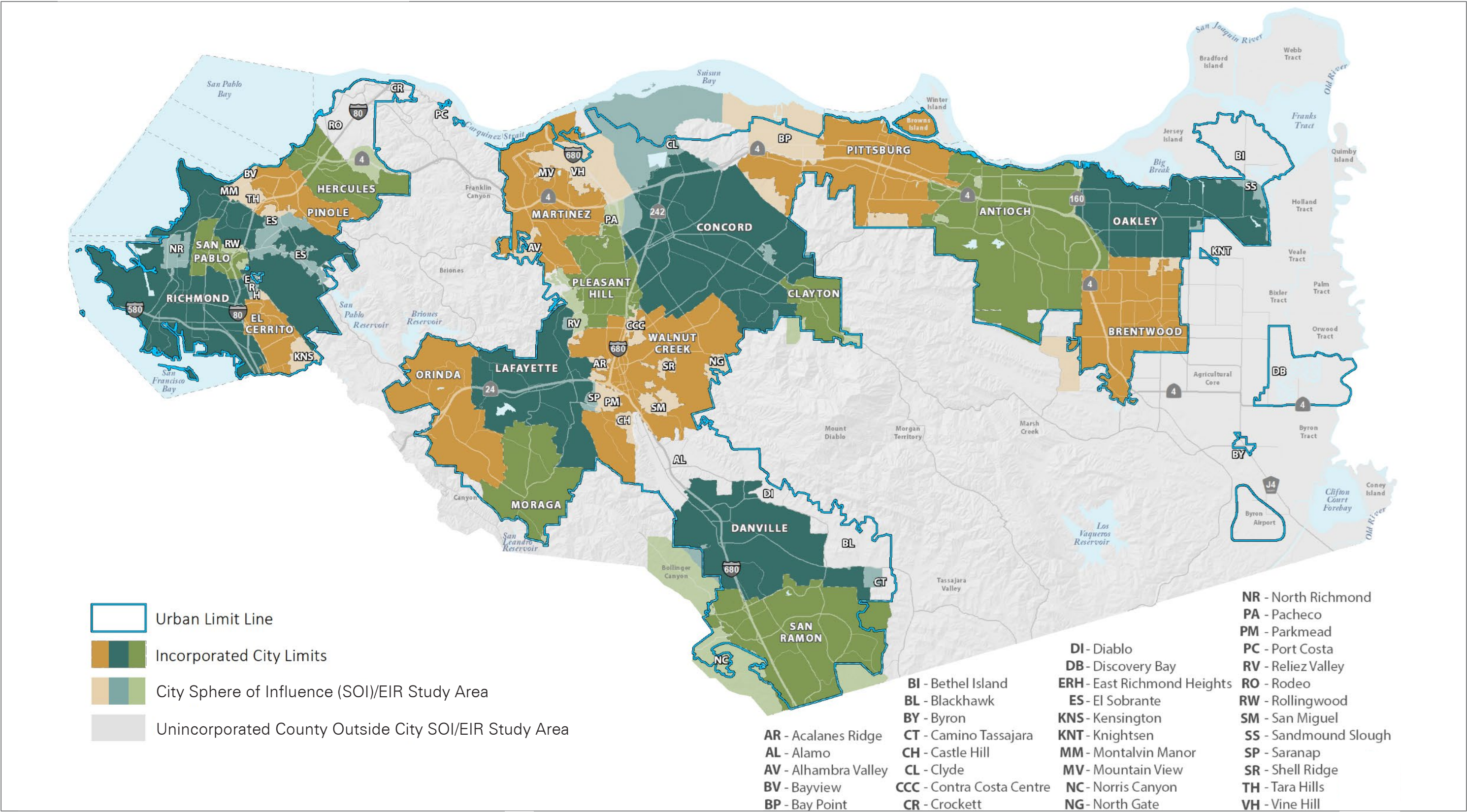


Figure 3-2
EIR Study Boundaries

3. Project Description

This page intentionally left blank.

3. Project Description

3.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The primary purposes of the proposed project are to extend the General Plan planning horizon to year 2045 and establish a legally adequate General Plan and CAP that meet State requirements through a community-based planning process.

Through the updates to the land use map, the General Plan also aims to align the map with land uses that already exist on the ground today, while also focusing more mixed-use development and higher density housing within community cores, where infrastructure and services are available.

The policy objectives of the proposed General Plan are enumerated in Chapter 1 of the General Plan. It was conceived as a modern, visionary, and nimble policy document intended to address the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. In addition, because the county spans a wide geography with diverse communities that have different visions, goals, and opportunities for growth, another important objective was to plan at a community scale, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all policy approach throughout the county. Finally, as part of its decision to update the General Plan, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff to incorporate four themes: environmental justice, community health, economic development, and sustainability. These themes are described herein:

- **Environmental Justice.** Environmental justice policies and actions intend to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in communities that experience the highest levels of pollution and negative health outcomes, such as asthma and low birth weight babies, and the greatest social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty and housing instability. The General Plan refers to these areas as “Impacted Communities” and focuses on improving environmental justice for the people living there by promoting meaningful community engagement and prioritizing improvements that address their needs. Environmental justice is a new topic that was not discussed in the prior General Plan. State law now requires that general plans address environmental justice and it is a matter of great concern to many county residents. While this topic is addressed throughout the General Plan, the Stronger Communities Element provides detailed information about Impacted Communities and environmental justice.
- **Community Health.** The physical and mental health of community members is inextricably linked to where and how communities are developed. Therefore, the community health policies and actions guide planning and development decisions to provide opportunities for community members to live healthy lifestyles, including by improving peoples’ ability to walk or bike between destinations, providing multi-modal transportation connections, creating opportunities for social interaction, and promoting access to outdoor recreation, healthy food, and medical facilities. The community health policy guidance additionally aims to reduce exposure of all community members to pollutants that can adversely affect their health.
- **Economic Development.** The economic development policies and actions aim to develop the county’s workforce and attract and support sustainable businesses and industries that provide living-wage jobs, invest in hiring from the local workforce, and engage with communities. Investment in diversified industries, as supported in the economic development policy guidance, promotes innovation, builds the tax base, and allows residents to work in the county where they live.

3. Project Description

- **Sustainability.** Sustainability means meeting the needs of today's population while leaving viable resources to meet the needs of future generations. One important part of a sustainable future is resiliency, which is the ability to withstand, recover, and learn from a disruptive experience, such as a wildfire, flood, or pandemic. The sustainability policies and actions aim to conserve resources, improve resiliency (especially to the impacts of climate change), protect the environment, reduce pollution, and enhance overall quality of life.

In addition to the proposed General Plan objectives, the proposed CAP sets targets to reduce the county's GHG emissions consistent with State targets. It is an objective of the proposed project to meet the GHG reduction targets established by the proposed CAP.

3.6 PROJECT COMPONENTS

This section provides a summary of the major components of the proposed project.

3.6.1 Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan

The following provides a summary of the major components of the proposed General Plan.

3.6.1.1 CONTENTS AND ORGANIZATION

The proposed General Plan includes an introductory chapter, a chapter describing the planning context, and seven separate elements that establish goals, policies, and actions for each given set of topics. The elements cover all topics required by California State Government Code Section 65302 as well as topics of particular interest to Contra Costa County. The proposed General Plan also includes a glossary and list of abbreviations, as well as two appendices that compile the policies and actions that relate to each of the four themes described in Section 3.5, *Project Objectives* and provide additional technical detail on health and safety topics.

A brief explanation of each proposed General Plan element is provided below.

- **Stronger Communities Element.** This element aims for all community members to feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods; have access to healthy food, the outdoors, living wage jobs, and healthcare; have opportunities for self-expression through art and cultural celebration; benefit from business innovation and investment; and strengthen bonds with other community members. The focus of this element is on promoting equity and community resiliency, fostering a spirit of collaboration, and creating opportunities for positive collective impact. This element presents policy guidance that applies to unincorporated communities throughout the county, followed by Community Profiles that address issues unique to each community.
- **Land Use Element.** This element meets the requirements of the State-required Land Use Element. It designates all lands within the unincorporated county for uses such as housing, commerce, industry, parks, or agriculture, and establishes regulations and standards for development in each land use designation. It also provides policy guidance to support orderly, well-planned growth by balancing development and conservation, as well as policy guidance tailored to specific land uses.

3. Project Description

- **Transportation Element.** This element sets forth goals and policies describing the overall mobility program for the county and identifies the general location of existing and proposed major transportation routes, terminals, and facilities, as required by the Government Code. The Transportation Element provides policy guidance that addresses safe and sustainable transportation, coordinated planning, a multimodal roadway network, active transportation, goods movement, and air mobility.
- **Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element.** This element promotes conservation and preservation of open spaces, working lands, and other natural and cultural resources. It provides policy guidance that addresses an open space framework, agricultural resources and working lands, ecological resources and natural systems, water resources, historic and cultural resources, scenic resources, mineral resources, and energy resources.
- **Public Facilities and Services Element.** This element aims to ensure that public services, infrastructure, and facilities are accessible to and benefit all county residents. It provides policy guidance that addresses general public facilities and services; water and wastewater; drainage and flood risk; sheriff, fire, and emergency medical services; solid waste management; parks and recreation; schools; and libraries.
- **Health and Safety Element.** The focus of this element is on improving public health and safety and reducing the risk of hazards. It is organized around 10 key topics: air quality; GHGs; climate change, resilience, and adaptation; flood hazards and sea-level rise; wildfire hazards; extreme heat; management of hazardous materials and hazardous waste; seismic and geologic hazards; emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation routes; and noise and vibration.
- **Growth Management Element.** The purpose of this element is to establish the goals, policies, and actions intended to manage and mitigate the impacts of future growth and development in the unincorporated county. This element complies with the requirements of the Measure J-2004 Growth Management Program.

3.6.1.2 GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Each element of the proposed General Plan contains background information and goals, policies, and actions that must be implemented to achieve the community's vision for the future. The goal, policy, and action terms are further defined as follows:

- **Goal:** An end statement describing the general result sought by the community. Each goal has associated policies and most also have associated actions.
- **Policy:** A specific statement that guides decision-making as the County works to achieve a goal. Policies represent statements of County regulation and establish the standards used when considering proposed development and other decisions. A policy is ongoing and requires no corresponding action.
- **Action:** A measure, procedure, or activity that helps the County achieve a specific goal. An action is something concrete that can and will be completed.

3. Project Description

3.6.1.3 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND MAP

The proposed General Plan land use map is shown in Figure 3-3, *Proposed General Plan Land Use Map*. The land use designations and the standards for the allowed density or intensity of each use are listed below. The acreage of unincorporated county area designated for each land use type is provided in Table 3-1. Residential densities are expressed in terms of dwelling units per net acre, which is the area remaining after land is dedicated for rights-of-way, easements, and other public or common uses. As a rule of thumb, the County assumes net acreage to be 75 percent of the gross for single-family residential projects and 80 percent of the gross for multiple-family residential and mixed-use projects. A project's actual density is calculated during the development review process and must usually fall within the density range for the applicable land use designation. Development intensities for nonresidential uses are expressed in terms of floor area ratio (FAR), which is the ratio of gross building floor square footage to gross land area, expressed as a decimal number. When a building's square footage is equal to the area of the parcel it occupies, the FAR is 1.0. FARs are lower in suburban areas, where buildings are shorter and often surrounded with parking and landscaping, than in urban areas, where buildings are taller and occupy more of their respective parcels. Nonresidential development cannot exceed the FAR for the applicable land use designation.

Table 3-1 Acreages of Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Acreage
Residential Very Low Density	2,518
Residential Low Density	6,302
Residential Low-Medium Density	5,810
Residential Medium Density	3,504
Residential Medium-High Density	771
Residential High Density	125
Residential Very High Density	55
Commercial and Office	269
Light Industry	1,285
Heavy Industry	3,408
Mixed-Use Low Density	233
Mixed-Use Medium Density	69
Mixed-Use High Density	108
Mixed-Use Community-Specific Density	363
Public and Semi-Public	16,884
Agricultural Core	11,902
Agricultural Lands	95,852
Parks and Recreation	72,796
Commercial Recreation	1,838
Resource Conservation	59,900
Water	26,564
Total	310,554

Note: Acreages are rounded to the nearest ten.
Source: Contra Costa County 2023

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

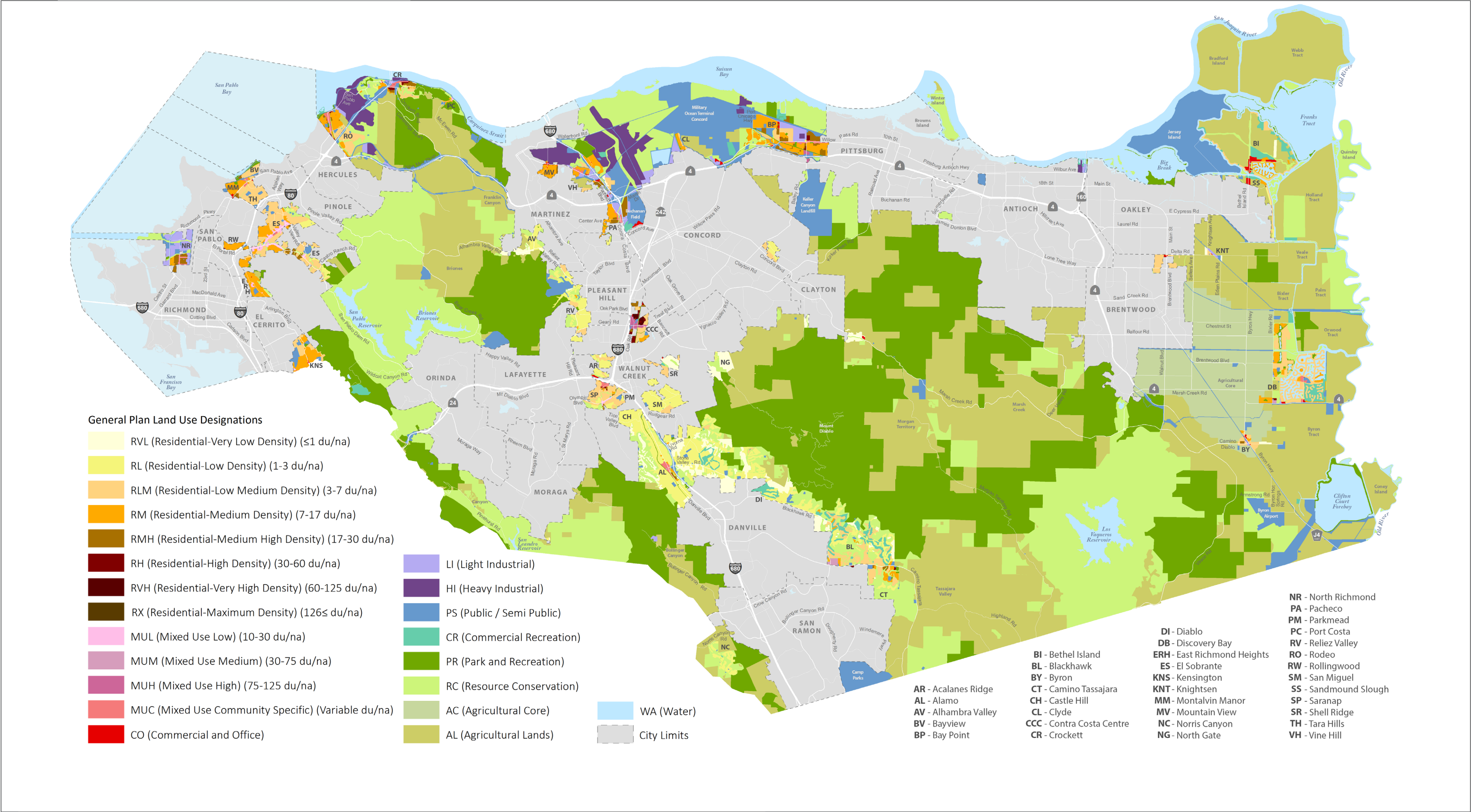


Figure 3-3
Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

3. Project Description

This page intentionally left blank.

3. Project Description

The proposed General Plan land use designations and associated standards are as follows:

- **Residential Very Low Density (RVL).** This designation provides a transition between urban development and agricultural/rural areas. It is also applied to constrained sites where reduced densities are justified. Typical uses would include detached single-family units on lots 1 acre or larger and small-scale agricultural activities. The maximum density is 1 unit per acre.
- **Residential Low Density (RL).** This designation allows for low-density, predominantly single-family residential development. Typical uses include detached single-family units on lots approximately 15,000 square feet to 1 acre in size and limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. Small-scale agricultural activities may be compatible on larger lots. This designation allows densities ranging from 1 to 3 units per acre.
- **Residential Low-Medium Density (RLM).** This designation allows for moderate-density, predominantly single-family residential development. Typical uses include detached single-family units on lots of approximately 6,000 to 15,000 square feet and limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. Duplexes and triplexes may also be compatible. This designation allows densities ranging from 3 to 7 units per acre.
- **Residential Medium Density (RM).** This designation allows for higher-density single-family and low-density multifamily residential development. Typical uses include single-family units on lots approximately 2,500 to 6,000 square feet, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and mobile home parks. It also includes limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. This designation allows densities ranging from 7 to 17 units per acre.
- **Residential Medium-High Density (RMH).** This designation allows for the highest-density single-family and medium-density multifamily residential development. Typical uses include single-family units on lots smaller than 2,500 square feet, tiny homes, fourplexes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and assisted living facilities. It also includes limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. This designation allows densities ranging from 17 to 30 units per acre.
- **Residential High Density (RH).** This designation allows for higher-density, multifamily development. Typical uses include condominiums, apartments, and assisted living facilities. It also includes limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. This designation allows densities ranging from 30 to 60 units per acre.
- **Residential Very High Density (RVH).** This designation is applied near transit stations, employment centers, and other locations where providing exceptionally high density is a priority. Typical uses include condominiums, apartments, and micro-units. It also includes limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. This designation allows densities ranging from 60 to 125 units per acre.
- **Residential Maximum Density (RX).** This designation is reserved for unique projects providing the highest densities in the unincorporated county. Typical uses include condominiums, apartments, and micro-units. Density would be determined on a project-by-project basis. It also includes limited nonresidential uses that serve and support nearby homes. This designation allows a minimum density of 126 units per acre.
- **Commercial and Office (CO).** This designation allows for a full range of commercial and office uses. Typical uses include retail (neighborhood, community, and regional scale), personal and business services, lodging and hospitality services, entertainment venues, event spaces, shared co-workspaces, commercial

3. Project Description

kitchens, workforce training centers, and all kinds of medical, business, and professional offices. The maximum FAR is 1.0 for commercial uses and 2.5 for office uses.

- **Light Industry (LI).** This designation allows for a range of low- to moderate-intensity industrial uses that when properly designed and operated may be established in proximity to residences and other sensitive receptors without sacrificing human health and safety or resulting in significant environmental impacts. Typical uses include light manufacturing, fabrication/assembly, processing, machinery repair, warehousing and storage, distribution, research and development, laboratories, incubators, workforce training centers, and ancillary or supportive retail and office uses. The maximum FAR is 1.5.
- **Heavy Industry (HI).** This designation allows for the most intense industrial land uses. Heavy industrial uses typically require significant acreage and direct access to deep water channels, rail lines, or freeways. Operations are often characterized by transport, storage, and use of large quantities of hazardous or noxious materials; significant emissions of pollutants, odors, noise, vibration, and light; and inherent risks to human health and safety and the environment. Typical uses include heavy manufacturing and processing (e.g., petroleum refining, chemical manufacturing, steel production), tank farms, marine terminals, rail yards, and fossil fuel-fired power plants. Light-industrial uses are also allowed in this designation. The maximum FAR is 0.67 for heavy industrial uses and 1.5 for light industrial uses.
- **Mixed-Use Low Density (MUL).** This designation allows for various housing types, including tiny homes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, studios, live-work units, and micro-units, along with a wide range of neighborhood-serving retail, personal service, office, entertainment, and public uses. This designation is applied where a modest level of mixed-use development is appropriate, such as pedestrian-scale corridors, neighborhood nodes, and individual or small groups of parcels generally encompassing less than 1 acre. This designation allows densities ranging from 10 to 30 units per acre. The maximum FAR is 1.0.
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density (MUM).** This designation allows for various housing types, including townhouses, condominiums, apartments, studios, live-work units, and micro-units, along with a wide range of retail, personal service, office, hospitality, entertainment, and public uses sized to serve nearby neighborhoods or the surrounding community. This designation is applied where moderate- to large-scale mixed-use development is appropriate, such as existing commercial or mixed-use cores of established communities, transitioning commercial areas (e.g., obsolete shopping centers), and individual or groups of parcels encompassing several acres. This designation allows densities ranging from 30 to 75 units per acre. The maximum FAR is 2.0.
- **Mixed-Use High Density (MUH).** This designation allows for high-density residential complexes of all types, office towers, large hotels, convention spaces, and accompanying retail, personal service, entertainment, and public uses. This designation is applied where intense, urban-scale mixed-use development is appropriate, such as transit villages and employment centers. This designation allows densities ranging from 75 to 125 units per acre. The maximum FAR is 4.0.
- **Mixed-Use Community-Specific Density (MUC).** This designation allows for various housing types, including tiny homes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, studios, live-work units, and micro-units, along with a wide range of neighborhood- and community-serving retail, personal service, office, hospitality, entertainment, and public uses. Densities and FARs are specific to the community where this designation is applied.

3. Project Description

- **Public and Semi-Public (PS).** This designation allows for uses and facilities owned or operated by public entities or private entities serving the public. These include law enforcement and fire stations, schools, libraries, hospitals, water and sewage treatment plants, landfills, cemeteries, airports, and military installations. Also included are high-volume public and private transportation corridors (e.g., freeways, BART, railroads) and utility corridors.
- **Agricultural Core (AC).** This designation is applied to approximately 11,900 acres between Brentwood, Discovery Bay, and Byron composed primarily of soils rated Class I or II per the National Resources Conservation System (NRCS) Land Capability Classifications. Much of the area under this designation is prime agricultural land that is actively farmed with intensive row crops, orchards, and vineyards. Agricultural production is the primary use in areas with this designation and takes precedent over other uses. Limited agricultural tourism activities that support the agricultural economy are consistent with this designation. “Ranchette” or estate-style residential development, and any other use that interferes with agricultural activities, is inconsistent with this designation. The maximum density is 0.025 units per acre.
- **Agricultural Lands (AL).** This designation is applied to agricultural areas composed primarily of soils rated Class III or lower per the NRCS Land Capability Classifications. Most areas under this designation are non-irrigated, rural lands that may support grazing and dryland farming, though it also includes non-prime, productive agricultural lands. Other types of agricultural, open space, and non-urban uses are consistent with this designation when conducted in accordance with the County’s policies pertaining to agricultural areas. This includes limited opportunities for recreation, lodging (farm stays, bed and breakfasts, etc.), food services (farm-to-table dining, farm stands, etc.), special events, and similar activities that support the county’s agricultural economy. Some land with this designation is in the Delta Primary Zone (DPZ) and may be used for recreation and other nonagricultural activities that are consistent with the Delta Protection Commission’s *Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Delta* and the Delta Stewardship Council’s *Delta Plan*. The maximum density is 0.1 units per acre; in the DPZ, the maximum density is 0.05 units per acre.
- **Parks and Recreation (PR).** This designation applies to publicly and privately owned parks and similar outdoor spaces. It includes neighborhood and community parks as well as federal, State, and regional parks and historic sites that are managed primarily for conservation purposes and provide passive recreational activities. Ancillary amenities such as visitor centers, event spaces, amusements/rides, and eateries that support or enhance the primary recreational use are consistent with this designation.
- **Commercial Recreation (CR).** This designation allows for privately owned recreational uses where the primary activity is conducted outdoors, such as golf courses, recreational vehicle campgrounds, hunting clubs, and marinas. Ancillary commercial and service uses, as well as an on-site residential unit for a caretaker, harbor master, etc., are consistent with this designation.
- **Resource Conservation (RC).** This designation is applied to the watersheds of reservoirs owned by public utilities, mitigation banks, ecologically significant or environmentally sensitive areas that are not in publicly owned parkland, and hazardous or otherwise constrained areas that are unsuitable for development. Resource management, low-intensity agriculture, low-intensity recreation, and similar activities are consistent with this designation when conducted in a way that is not damaging to the resources being protected. Construction of one single-family residence on an existing legal lot under private ownership is consistent with this designation. All types of urban development and subdivisions that increase density are prohibited.

3. Project Description

- **Water (WA).** This designation is applied to approximately 41.5 square miles of water including portions of San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, and the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta that are in the county, large inland reservoirs, and other water bodies large enough to warrant designation. Typical uses include ferry terminals, shipping facilities associated with adjacent industry (marine terminals, wharves, etc.), docks, water-oriented recreation uses, and aquaculture.

3.6.1.4 ROAD NETWORK

The proposed General Plan identifies the existing and proposed road network, as depicted in Figure 3-4, *Existing and Proposed Road Network*. The proposed General Plan defines the County's roadway network based on traditional categories recognized by regional, State, and federal transportation agencies, as described herein:

- **Freeways** are high-speed facilities that move inter-city or regional traffic. Freeways that provide regional access to, from, and in Contra Costa County include Interstate (I-) 80, I-680, I-580, State Route (SR) 4, SR 24, SR 242, and SR 160.
- **Arterials** are relatively high-volume facilities that connect the regional roadway network to the local roadway network. Limited access is provided to abutting parcels in many cases. Arterial streets generally serve between 10,000 and 40,000 vehicles per day; some minor arterials serve fewer than 10,000 vehicles per day. Most intersections along arterials are signalized, often with a coordinated and interconnected signal system. Some of the primary arterials in Contra Costa County include Richmond Parkway, San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo Dam Road, Kirker Pass Road, Danville Boulevard/San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Camino Tassajara, Vasco Road, and Byron Highway.
- **Collectors** connect residential and local-serving commercial areas with the arterial system. Collector streets serve as principal traffic arteries in residential and commercial areas. These streets typically carry up to 10,000 vehicles per day, although some collectors may carry more vehicle traffic for short segments as they convey traffic between arterial streets and local residential streets. Collectors are often important segments of bikeway networks.
- **Local roads** provide circulation in neighborhoods and between adjacent land uses. They are typically low-speed, low-volume streets with design features that discourage through traffic to be more compatible with residential needs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

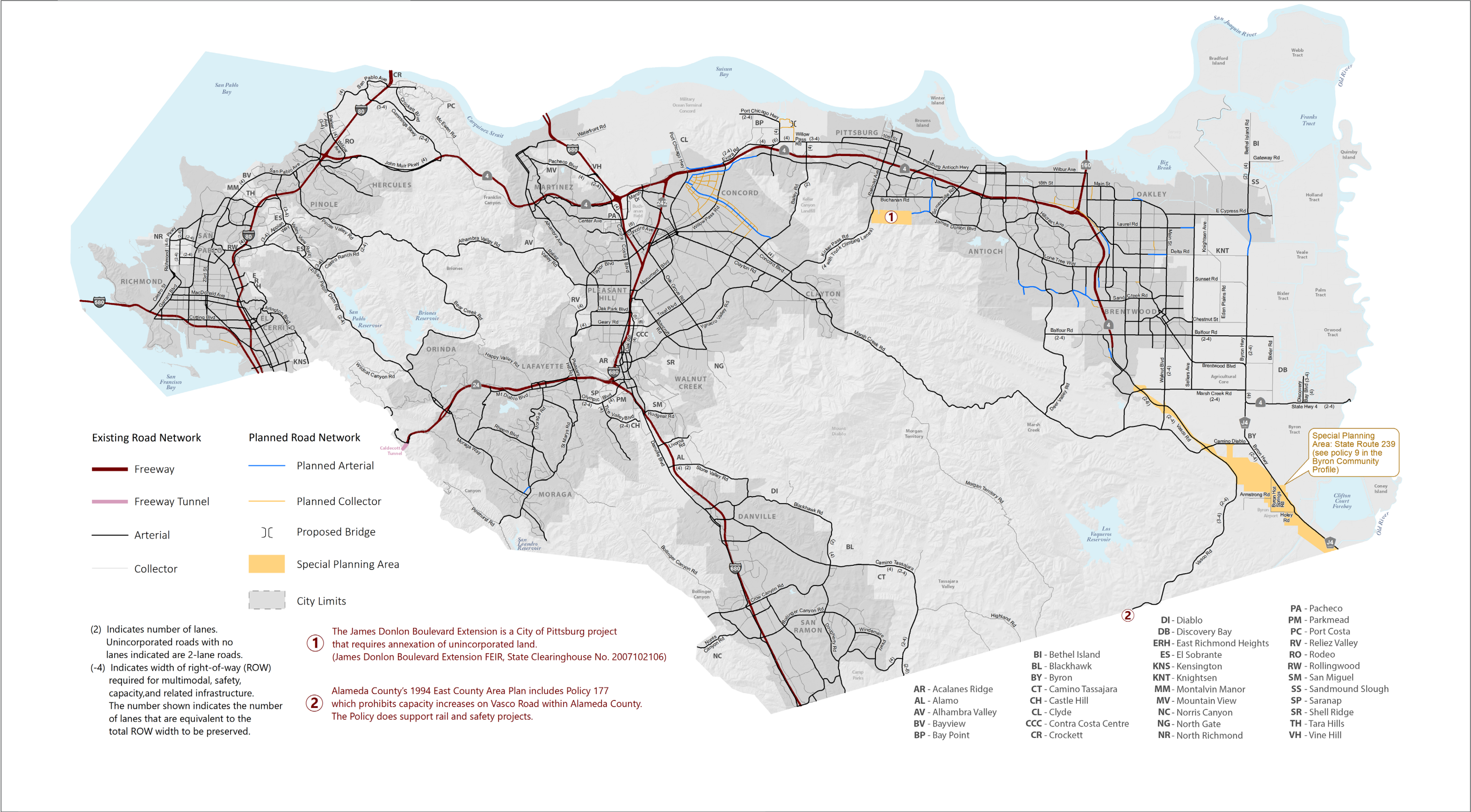


Figure 3-4
Existing and Proposed Road Network

3. Project Description

This page intentionally left blank.

3. Project Description

3.6.1.5 MAJOR CHANGES FROM THE EXISTING GENERAL PLAN

The proposed General Plan represents a change in the policy framework for future development in Contra Costa County compared to the existing General Plan. The proposed General Plan substantially reduces the volume of the previous General Plan by eliminating redundant and conflicting goals, policies, and actions, instead focusing on the concepts and policy direction that reflect the voice of the many Contra Costa County community members that participated in the General Plan Update process, such as promoting access for all unincorporated communities to healthy food, affordable housing, public transit, clean energy, living wage jobs, and quality medical care. Meanwhile, the proposed General Plan introduces new and expanded policies and actions that are needed to fill gaps found in the existing policy framework and identified by the public through outreach. New policy direction reflects updates in State law, such as the requirement to address environmental justice and new and expanded requirements related to safety and climate change adaptation. By focusing on a compact set of goals, policies, and actions, the proposed General Plan is intended to be more user-friendly to decision-makers, County staff, and the public.

The land use designations in the proposed General Plan also represent a change from the existing General Plan:

Residential Designations. The existing General Plan includes 12 residential designations that are divided into single-family and multifamily categories. Five single-family residential designations allow densities ranging up to 7.2 units per acre; this category also includes the Off-Island Bonus Area designation, which is applied to the off-island portion of the Bethel Island planning area and allows a base density of 1 unit per 5 acres, with provisions for increased density when certain criteria are met. The existing General Plan includes seven multifamily residential designations that allow densities between 7.3 and 99.9 units per acre, as well as designations specific to congregate care facilities (i.e., senior housing with some shared facilities) and mobile homes. As described in Section 3.6.1.3, *Land Use Designations and Map*, the proposed General Plan includes eight residential designations with allowed densities ranging up to 125 units per acre, with provisions to allow for even higher densities to be determined on a project-by-project basis through the Residential Maximum Density designation. The designations do not specify whether development must be single-family or multifamily, instead describing typical uses anticipated based on the allowed density.

Commercial and Industrial Designations. The existing General Plan includes 10 commercial and industrial designations. These include three categories of commercial uses, two categories of office uses, and two categories of industrial uses, all of which are differentiated based on the scale and/or intensity of the use. The remaining three designations are specific to privately operated recreational uses, marina and shoreline-oriented retail uses in the Bethel Island area, and airport-supporting commercial uses. As described in Section 3.6.1.3, the proposed General Plan replaces those 10 designations with one commercial and office designation that covers the full range of commercial and office uses and two industrial designations for light and heavy industrial uses.

Mixed Use Designations. The existing General Plan includes 15 Mixed Use designations that are each specific to a community or project, with community- or project-specific development standards. As described in Section 3.6.1.3, the proposed General Plan includes three Mixed Use designations that allow a range of development density and intensity up to a maximum of 125 units per acre and 4.0 FAR. The proposed General Plan also includes a community-specific Mixed Use designation that refines the allowed density and intensity of development for specific communities.

3. Project Description

Other Designations. The existing General Plan includes nine other designations: Public and Semi-Public, Landfill, Parks and Recreation, Open Space, Agricultural Lands, Agricultural Core, Delta Recreation and Resources, Water, and Watershed. As described in Section 3.6.1.3, the proposed General Plan folds landfill uses into the Public and Semi-Public designation, folds the Delta-focused uses into the Agricultural Lands designation, and combines the Open Space and Watershed designations into one Resource Conservation designation. The Parks and Recreation, Agricultural Core, and Water designations are essentially unchanged.

Beyond the updates to the land use designations, the main types of land use map changes proposed in the General Plan include:

- **Updates to Reflect Existing Uses.** Many of the land use map changes fall into this category, in which the proposed General Plan land use map applies a designation to a parcel based on the type or intensity of land use that exists on the parcel today.
- **Increased Density and Intensity in Community Cores.** Many community members supported the concept of allowing more mixed-use development and higher density housing in their community cores. Based on that input, the Mixed Use and higher density residential designations were applied to many core areas in unincorporated communities. This change also supports the County in meeting its Regional Housing Need Allocation under a separate process to prepare the Housing Element.

This section is provided for informational purposes only. This EIR does not evaluate the changes in the proposed General Plan relative to the existing General Plan, but rather evaluates the impacts of the proposed General Plan relative to existing conditions, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2. This EIR does not assume that any previously approved projects that are not yet constructed will be “re-opened” for substantial changes in buildout expectations.

3.6.1.6 REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL PLAN POST PUBLIC DRAFT REVIEW

In response to the analysis provided in this Draft EIR, the following revisions will be made to proposed General Plan Policies HS-P7.3 and LU-P4.3 that were published in the public draft review version on October 17, 2023:

- **Policy HS-P7.3:** Require new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA (as shown on Figure HS-10) or in the WUI (as shown on Figure HS-11), ~~or~~ and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints (as shown on Figure HS-21), to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and approve the traffic control plan prior to issuance of building permits.
- **Policy LU-P4.3:** Encourage smooth transitions between new and existing or planned development.

These revisions will be incorporated into the final General Plan.

3. Project Description

3.6.2 Climate Action Plan

The proposed CAP is the County’s strategic plan to reduce GHG emissions and to adapt to changing climate conditions in the unincorporated county. It demonstrates the County’s leadership and commitment to reduce GHG emissions and enhance community resiliency to long-term changes associated with climate-related hazards such as heat, flooding, droughts, and wildfires.

The proposed CAP is an update of the 2015 CAP. It provides updated information, an expanded set of GHG reduction strategies, climate adaptation strategies, and a planning horizon out to 2045. It also establishes an implementation program and a framework to monitor, track, and report progress over time.

The proposed CAP builds on several earlier sustainability and energy efficiency efforts and local accomplishments and the concurrent update of the General Plan. This approach supports a holistic view of climate action planning and sustainability: that is, it works to reduce Contra Costa County’s contribution to climate change while simultaneously preparing for climate-related changes that cannot be avoided.

The proposed CAP allows decision-makers, residents, businesses, and community stakeholders to understand the sources and magnitude of local emissions from the energy, solid waste, water, and transportation sectors of the unincorporated county; establish goals to reduce emissions; and prioritize steps to achieve reduction targets. The proposed CAP includes goals, strategies, and actions that the County and community can take to achieve significant GHG emission reductions in the unincorporated county and ensure that the County is on track toward the State’s goal to achieve statewide net carbon neutrality by 2045.

In addition to GHG mitigation, the proposed CAP includes information about how climate change may affect natural hazards and identifies the populations, infrastructure, services, facilities, and resources in the unincorporated county that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The proposed CAP has a suite of strategies to help improve community resilience to these hazards.

3.7 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTIONS

This EIR evaluates the projected development that could occur under the proposed General Plan through its horizon year of 2045, consistent with CEQA requirements that an EIR evaluate the “reasonably foreseeable” direct and indirect impacts of a proposed project.

The “full buildout” of the proposed General Plan is also presented in Section 3.7.3, *Full Buildout Methodology*, for information disclosure purposes, as well as to explain the methodology for identifying the projected 2045 development that is evaluated in this EIR. The full buildout presented in that section would be the development of every parcel with the maximum amount of development that could occur under the General Plan. The full buildout projection is based on the allowable density or intensity of development and does not account for other policy guidance that may affect whether and how development could occur. Future projects are subject to County review and approval.

3. Project Description

This EIR assumes that the full buildout of residential uses would occur by 2045 based on a conservative estimate of the residential demand by 2045, so it evaluates the full residential buildout. However, the full buildout of non-residential uses under the proposed General Plan far exceeds the anticipated demand for that type of development. Combined with approved and pending development in Contra Costa County, the full non-residential buildout of the proposed General Plan would result in over 17 times more new commercial and office development and over 4 times more new industrial development in Contra Costa County in 2045 than expected based on land use demand projections. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that the full non-residential buildout would occur by the year 2045.

This full non-residential buildout of the General Plan could not be achieved for a variety of reasons. Namely, proposed General Plan Policy LU-P1.1 caps the amount of development that could occur to the 2045 projections evaluated in this EIR, and, for development that would exceed that cap, requires additional environmental review that addresses growth impacts that would occur due to development exceeding the General Plan EIR's projections. In addition, proposed General Plan Action LU-A1.1 establishes a monitoring program to track the rate of growth and ensure that it does not exceed the amounts analyzed in this EIR without requiring further environmental review.

Moreover, by or before 2045, it is probable that Contra Costa County will have adopted another update to the General Plan, in keeping with past decisions in the California courts, which dictate that local jurisdictions should update General Plans regularly.⁴ Therefore, development after 2045 is expected to take place under a revised General Plan, rather than under the proposed General Plan. Consistent with CEQA statutes, this Draft EIR considers the “reasonably foreseeable” effects of adopting the proposed General Plan, which would result from development allowed between the adoption of the document and its horizon year of 2045. For the purposes of this EIR, this is termed the “horizon-year projection.” The horizon-year projection is based on an estimate of the amount of development that would occur by 2045.

Based on the methodology described in this section and as shown in Table 3-2, *2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projections*, the horizon-year development projection for the proposed General Plan, including approved and pending development projects, includes the following:

- 23,200 new housing units
- 65,600 new residents
- 1.2 million square feet of new commercial and office space
- 5.0 million square feet of new industrial space

⁴ *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 572, 276 Cal.Rptr. 410, 801 P.2d 1161.

3. Project Description

Table 3-2 2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projections

	Existing (2020)	Growth in 2045 from Proposed General Plan	Growth from Approved and Pending Projects	Total 2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projection ³
Housing Units	60,300 ¹	17,200	6,000	23,200
Residents	174,100 ¹	48,800 ²	16,800 ²	65,600 ²
Commercial Space (square feet)	Not available	870,000	370,000	1.2 million
Industrial Space (square feet)	Not available	2 million	3 million	5 million

1. State of California, Department of Finance, 2019. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State.

2. Based on an assumption of 2.83 persons per household, as reported in: State of California, Department of Finance, 2020. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State.

3. Existing plus growth does not add up due to rounding.

Source: PlaceWorks, 2021.

3.7.1 Key Points About Development Projections

This section provides a detailed explanation of the process used to estimate the horizon-year projection. By way of introduction, it is important to understand several overall points about the estimation process and its meaning:

- As described in Section 3.7.6.2, *Distribute Planning Period Development*, the horizon-year projection assumes that certain areas with development potential are likely to develop by 2045, while others are not. The distribution of this horizon-year development is based in part on General Plan policies that encourage growth in communities where residents support investment and redevelopment to foster economic activity and accessibility, meaning a higher percentage of the non-residential development potential is assumed to occur in those communities than in communities without that policy guidance and community support.
- As described below, the horizon-year projection was estimated based on the best available information. Since this projection covers a relatively long timeframe of more than 20 years, it is likely that there will be deviations from the development projections. However, deviations from the horizon-year projection are not in themselves a basis for finding inadequacy of the proposed General Plan or this EIR, since these projections represent Contra Costa County's best estimate of "reasonably foreseeable" development under the General Plan.
- The horizon-year projection is used as a basis for the environmental assessment, but it does not restrict or specify the actual physical location of future development that will be permitted under the proposed General Plan. Even if an area is not identified as having quantifiable new development by 2045 in this EIR, it can still accommodate new development in keeping with the General Plan's policies and land use designations. Conversely, geographic areas or potential development projects for which development is assumed in this EIR are not in any way "pre-cleared" for development or privileged for special consideration by County staff or the Board of Supervisors; development in those areas still requires normal review under CEQA and under regular County policies that are spelled out in the proposed General Plan, the Contra Costa County Zoning Code, and other County regulations.

3. Project Description

3.7.2 Existing Development Potential

There is a significant amount of vacant land in Contra Costa County that could be developed under the existing General Plan. Some of these vacant areas have been approved for development, but the projects have not yet been constructed. Others have pending development applications that are currently under review. These approved and pending projects provide a significant amount of development potential, and they are included in the 2045 development projection that is evaluated in this EIR. The approved and pending development that was considered in this EIR is shown in Table 3-3, *Approved and Pending Development*.

Table 3-3 Approved and Pending Development

	Single-Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Commercial Square Feet	Industrial Square Feet
Pantages	280			
Del Hombre ³		280		
Palmer School Site		130		
Bay View	140			
Orbisonia Heights ^a		330		
Avalon Block C ³		200		
Saranap Village		260		
Spieker Senior Housing	50	300		
Willow View Apartments		190		
Tassajara Parks ²	130			
St. Anne Village ¹		180		
Discovery Bay Apartments ¹		170		
Delta Coves	500	70		
Alves Lane		100		
Cecchini ¹	1,890	330		533,000
Pacheco Apartments ¹		300		
Bay Point Apartments ¹		120		
Byron Airport				441,000
PH/CC Centre BART Block D ¹			290,000	
Willow Pass Business Park			80,000	171,000
Panatonni (N. Richmond)				500,000
CenterPoint Warehouse				556,000
Scannell Warehouse				327,000
Warehouse (Buchanan Field) ¹				310,000
Panatonni 2 (N. Richmond) ¹				120,000

¹ Pending; not approved.

² This project was approved by the County, but a court decision in June 2023 rescinded portions of the County's approval.

³ These projects have been constructed.

Notes: Units are rounded to the nearest 10; square footages are rounded to the nearest 1,000. This list only includes projects over 100 units or 100,000 square feet.
Source: Contra Costa County and PlaceWorks, 2022.

3. Project Description

Other vacant or underutilized areas in the county have no pending or approved development applications, but are designated for residential, commercial, or industrial use, so there is still the potential for future development. These vacant and underutilized areas could be developed even if the proposed General Plan is not adopted.

3.7.3 Full Buildout Methodology

Determining the full buildout is the first step towards projecting horizon-year development. This section describes the methods used to calculate the full buildout potential of the proposed General Plan. As noted above, full buildout is the development of every parcel with the maximum amount of development allowed under the General Plan.

The full buildout was estimated based on the three-step process described below, including:

1. Identify vacant and underutilized parcels where new development could occur.
2. Estimate buildout of the vacant and underutilized parcels.
3. Assume no change on parcels that are fully developed.

The results of the full buildout analysis are as follows:

- 23,200 new housing units
- 65,600 new residents
- 20.7 million square feet of new commercial and office space
- 20.3 million square feet of new industrial space

3.7.4 Identify Vacant and Underutilized Parcels

While many of the parcels in Contra Costa County have existing development that is not likely to change, others are either vacant or underutilized. These vacant and underutilized parcels are the only locations where buildout is considered to be potentially different from existing conditions.

Data from the Contra Costa County Assessor's Office was used to identify vacant and underutilized parcels within the unincorporated county. The County Assessor data identifies vacant land using a specific "use code." To identify underutilized properties, the improvement-to-land (I/L) ratio for each parcel was calculated based on County Assessor data. The I/L ratio is the relationship of a property's improvement value to its land value. For example, a lot worth \$100,000 that is improved with a building worth \$40,000 would have an I/L ratio of 0.4. In this analysis, properties with an I/L ratio equal to or less than 0.5 were considered underutilized. There are other infill development opportunities on parcels that are considered underutilized because they haven't been developed to their full potential under current zoning, such as locations where only a portion of a parcel is developed.

Following the preliminary identification of vacant and underutilized parcels that was based on County Assessor data, County staff used its local knowledge and additional site analysis to refine the data and identify the existing development on underutilized parcels.

3. Project Description

3.7.5 Estimate Buildout

For each vacant and underutilized parcel, the residential buildout was estimated by multiplying the parcel acreage by the allowed density (see Section 3.6.1.3). The buildout factors in an assumption about the actual density at which development is likely to occur, since developers often build a variety of product types, some of which could be at a lower density than the maximum allowed. This EIR assumes that 75 percent of the maximum allowed density will be built in the Residential Very Low, Low, and Low-Medium Density designations. In the remaining residential designations, this EIR assumes that 80 percent of the maximum allowed density will be built.

The non-residential buildout was also estimated for vacant and underutilized parcels by first multiplying the parcel acreage by 43,560 (i.e., the number of square feet in each acre), and then multiplying the result by the maximum FAR allowed by the designation (see Section 3.6.1.3).

Buildout projections for approved and pending projects are based on the approved or proposed project information.

3.7.5.1 ASSUME NO CHANGE ON FULLY DEVELOPED PARCELS

For parcels that were not identified as vacant or underutilized, it was assumed that there would be no additional development and the buildout would therefore be the same as existing development.

3.7.6 Horizon-Year Projections Methodology

This section describes the methods used to calculate the 2045 horizon-year development projection.

3.7.6.1 DETERMINE PROBABLE PLANNING PERIOD DEVELOPMENT

Multiple sources were consulted to determine the probable amount of development in the planning period, including a market study⁵ conducted at the outset of the General Plan Update which considers housing, population, and job growth forecasts from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for 2023-2031, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) growth projections, the Contra Costa County permit database, and projects in the County's development pipeline. The probable planning period development assumed in this EIR for each land use type is provided below:

- **Residential:** Over 20,000 new housing units by 2045, based primarily on the 2023-2031 RHNA. Given that the RHNA-based estimate is similar to the full buildout potential of 23,200 units, this EIR assumes that full buildout is the probable planning period development and assesses impacts that could result from full residential buildout.
- **Commercial:** 1.2 million square feet of new commercial and office development by 2045, based primarily on regional growth projections and County permit history data.

⁵ Contra Costa County, 2018. *Existing Conditions Technical Report: Market Overview*, pages 61 to 65.

3. Project Description

- **Industrial:** 5 million square feet of new industrial development by 2045, based primarily on County permit history data and projects in the development pipeline.

3.7.6.2 DISTRIBUTE PLANNING PERIOD DEVELOPMENT

Once the amount of non-residential development for the planning period was estimated, this amount was then distributed throughout the EIR Study Area. For residential development, this step was not needed since the EIR assumes that full residential buildout will occur by 2045.

The non-residential planning period development was primarily distributed in two types of locations:

- **Vacant and underutilized parcels within unincorporated communities:** During public outreach for the proposed project, participants from some unincorporated communities voiced interest in redevelopment or support for more intense uses to foster economic activity and accessibility. The resulting General Plan 2045 policies and the revised General Plan land use designations encourage growth in those communities. To distribute the non-residential planning period development, this EIR assumes that a percentage of the full non-residential buildout potential in each community will happen by 2045, considering the policy guidance from the proposed General Plan combined with development constraints, transportation access, and market demand.
- **Approved and pending development projects.** As noted in Section 3.7.2, *Existing Development Potential*, there is significant development potential available in approved development projects that have not yet been constructed. Such projects can continue to be developed regardless of whether the County adopts the proposed General Plan. The development allowed in those approved projects, as well as development proposed in pending development projects, is included in the horizon-year projection, and was considered as part of the process to distribute the planning period development. The approved and pending development that was considered in this EIR is shown in Table 3-3.

3.8 EVALUATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN AND ITS HORIZON-YEAR PROJECTION

The analyses in this EIR are based on a consistent interpretation of the proposed General Plan land use map and policies, and the type and amount of growth that the General Plan would allow. The various analyses in this EIR require two different types of data inputs: some analyses require spatial inputs only and some require both quantitative and spatial inputs. In each case, the required analysis is determined by the standard of significance used for the impact discussion.

- Analyses that require a quantitative estimate of growth include vehicle miles traveled (VMT), air pollution emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, noise generation, population growth, and impacts on public services and utilities and recreation. Impacts in these areas are generated by an increase in the number of people living and working in Contra Costa County, which generates consequent increases in VMT, noise, emissions, and use of services. Therefore, a reliable analysis depends on a reasonable, quantitative estimate of new population and employment. For these analyses, the horizon-year projection (i.e., the projected amount of development that could occur under the proposed General Plan through its horizon year of 2045) was considered “reasonably foreseeable” and was used in the analysis.

3. Project Description

- Analyses that are based on spatial location only include aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, exposure to localized air pollution and noise, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, hazards and safety, hydrology and water quality, and land use. These analyses must consider whether the proposed General Plan would allow *any* development in a geographic area, such as a fire hazard severity zone or an area with prime agricultural soils, which could trigger potential impacts. For these analyses, the question is not *how much* development the General Plan would allow, but *where* that development could potentially be located. Therefore, all potential development allowed by the land use map of the proposed General Plan (i.e., full buildout of the proposed General Plan) was evaluated to assess impacts related to these topics.

3.9 INTENDED USE OF THE EIR AND PROPOSED PROJECT

This EIR is a program-level EIR intended to review potential environmental impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the proposed General Plan and CAP, and determine corresponding mitigation measures, as necessary. This EIR does not identify or evaluate the impacts of specific, individual developments that may be allowed under the proposed General Plan. Each specific future project will require separate project-level environmental review, as required by CEQA, to secure the necessary discretionary development permits. Subsequent environmental review may be tiered off this EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines⁶ Section 15162. Subsequent projects will be reviewed by the County for consistency with the General Plan, CAP, and this EIR. Projects successive to this EIR include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approval and funding of major public projects and capital improvements.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the proposed General Plan and CAP.
- Future specific plan and planned unit development approvals.
- Property rezoning consistent with the proposed General Plan.
- Development plan approvals, such as tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land use permits.
- Permit issuances and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects.
- Development agreement processes and approvals.

Concurrent with the process to prepare the proposed General Plan and CAP, the County also initiated a comprehensive update to the County's Zoning Code. The Zoning Code Update will provide consistency with the updated General Plan and meet modern standards. It will implement the General Plan policies and land use map, providing more specificity for land use rules and regulations to guide development. It is anticipated that CEQA review of the future Zoning Code Update will tier from this EIR.

⁶ The CEQA Guidelines are at Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations.

3. Project Description

3.10 REFERENCES

Department of Finance (DOF). 2020a. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State — January 1, 2011-2020.

3. Project Description

This page intentionally left blank.

4. Environmental Setting

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a “description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published.... Pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, the environmental setting provides the baseline physical conditions from which the lead agency will determine the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project. from both a local and a regional perspective” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a]).

For many of the environmental impacts analyzed in this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the scale at which impacts are evaluated is the boundary of the county, exclusive of its incorporated cities but including unincorporated communities and other unincorporated areas. However, for some environmental topical sections—air quality, biological resources, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and transportation—the setting is the regional context or larger area. Section 4.2, *Regional Environmental Setting*, expands on the regional environmental context, which plays a role in determining potential cumulative impacts throughout the Draft EIR. Section 4.4, *Assumptions Regarding Cumulative Environmental Impacts*, describes the methods used to analyze cumulative impacts, as well as the cumulative setting for each topical area.

4.2 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.2.1 Regional Location

Contra Costa County is on the northeastern side of the San Francisco Bay; adjacent counties include Alameda County to the south, San Joaquin County to the east, Solano and Sacramento Counties to the north across San Pablo Bay and Suisun Bay, and San Francisco County to the west. North to south regional access is provided via Interstate (I-) 80, I-680, and State Route (SR-) 242; east to west regional access is provided by I-580, SR-4, and SR-24. Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*, shows Contra Costa County’s regional location.

As of 2020, about 1 million residents live in the 19 incorporated cities and approximately 174,000 residents live in the unincorporated portions of the county (DOF 2020). Additionally, almost 564,000 people work in the county, with over 186,000 jobs in the unincorporated areas of the county (EDD 2022). Contra Costa County can be divided into three subregions separated by major topographic features—West County, encompassing the urbanized shoreline of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, includes five cities and the unincorporated communities of Kensington, El Sobrante, Rodeo, Crockett, and Port Costa; Central County, encompassing the area between the Berkeley Hills and Diablo Range, includes 10 cities and the unincorporated communities of Alamo, Alhambra Valley, Blackhawk, Canyon, Clyde, Diablo, Pacheco, and Saranap and includes over half the population; and East County, encompassing the Diablo Range and lands to the east, includes four cities and the unincorporated communities of Bay Point, Bethel Island, Knightsen, Byron, and Discovery Bay.

4. Environmental Setting

4.2.2 Regional Planning Considerations

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. It is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and State law. In this role, ABAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. ABAG and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) are jointly responsible for regional planning of the 9-county, 101-city, San Francisco Bay Area. These agencies are responsible for developing the long-range regional transportation plan, known as the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). ABAG/MTC adopted its RTP/SCS, titled *Plan Bay Area 2050: A Vision for the Future*, in October 2021.

Plan Bay Area 2050 integrates the components of the RTP/SCS and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation into a single document. The plan connects the elements of housing, the economy, transportation, and the environment through 35 strategies that will make the Bay Area more equitable for all residents and more resilient in the face of unexpected challenges. In the short term, the plan's Implementation Plan identifies more than 80 specific actions for MTC, ABAG, and partner organizations to take over the next five years. Plan Bay Area 2050 focuses on five major principles to drive the overarching planning process, including affordability, connectivity, diversity, health, and vibrancy. Using these principles, this plan developed three sets of future conditions by which to analyze the success of its strategies. These scenarios vary in terms of economic vibrancy, population growth rates, severity of natural hazards, and adoption rates for telecommuting, among other forces. The plan also emphasizes the role of advancing equity through investment in residents of systemically underserved communities in the region.

Plan Bay Area 2050 does not require that local general plans, specific plans, or zoning be consistent with its policies; instead, it provides incentives to governments and developers to promote consistency. The consistency of the proposed General Plan and Climate Action Plan (CAP) (i.e., the proposed project) with the applicable Plan Bay Area 2050 policies is analyzed in detail in Section 5.11, *Land Use and Planning*.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District Clean Air Plan

The *2017 Clean Air Plan: Spare the Air, Cool the Climate* was adopted on April 19, 2017, by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), in cooperation with MTC, ABAG, and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission to provide a regional strategy to improve air quality within the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB) and meet public health goals. The control strategy described in the 2017 Clean Air Plan includes a wide range of control measures designed to reduce emissions and lower ambient concentrations of harmful pollutants, safeguard public health by reducing exposure to air pollutants that pose the greatest health risk, and reduce GHGs to protect the climate.

The 2017 Clean Air Plan addresses four categories of pollutants: ground-level ozone and its key precursors, reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x); particulate matter (PM), primarily fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and precursors to secondary PM_{2.5}; air toxics; and GHG emissions. The control

4. Environmental Setting

measures are categorized based on the economic sector framework, including stationary sources, transportation, energy, buildings, agriculture, natural and working lands, waste management, and water measures.

BAAQMD is the regional agency with jurisdiction over the nine-county region in the SFBAAB. ABAG, MTC, County transportation agencies, Cities and Counties, and various nongovernmental organizations also participate in the efforts to improve air quality through a variety of programs. These programs include the adoption of regulations and policies, as well as implementation of extensive education and public outreach programs. BAAQMD is responsible for attaining and maintaining air quality in the region within federal and State air quality standards. Specifically, BAAQMD has the responsibility to monitor ambient air pollutant levels throughout the region and develop and implement strategies to attain the applicable federal and State standards. BAAQMD has permit authority over most types of stationary emission sources and can require stationary sources to obtain permits, impose emission limits, set fuel or material specifications, or establish operational limits to reduce air emissions. BAAQMD also regulates new or expanding stationary sources of toxic air contaminants (TACs) and requires air toxic control measures for many sources emitting TACs. The proposed project's consistency with the applicable policies is discussed in Section 5.3, *Air Quality*.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Legislation

Current State guidance and goals for reductions in GHG emissions are embodied in several State regulations. Executive Order S-03-05, signed June 1, 2005, set the following GHG reduction goals for California:

- 2000 levels by year 2010
- 1990 levels by year 2020
- 80 percent below year 1990 levels by year 2050

Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act (2006), was passed by the State legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its contribution of GHG emissions. AB 32 established a legislative target for the year 2020 goal outlined in Executive Order S-03-05. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) prepared its first Scoping Plan in 2008 that outlined the State's plan for achieving the 2020 targets of AB 32.

In 2008, Senate Bill (SB) 375 was adopted to connect passenger-vehicle GHG emissions-reduction targets for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicle trips.

In September 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 32, making the Executive Order B-15-30 goal for year 2030 of a 40 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2030 into a statewide-mandated legislative target. CARB issued an update to its Scoping Plan in 2017, with programs for meeting the SB 32 reduction target.

Executive Order B-55-18 sets a goal for the state to achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2045 and to achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. SB 100 would help the state reach the goal set by Executive Order B-55-18 by requiring that the state's electricity suppliers have a source mix that consists of at least 60 percent renewable/zero-carbon sources in 2030 and 100 renewable/zero-carbon sources in 2045.

4. Environmental Setting

Senate Bill 743

On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into law and started a process that has fundamentally changed transportation impact analysis for CEQA compliance. With the adoption of SB 375, the State signaled its commitment to encourage land use and transportation planning decisions and investments that reduce VMT and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions, as required by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32).

SB 743 generally eliminates auto delay, level of service, and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts under CEQA. Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, the new criteria “shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses” (Public Resources Code Section 21099[b][1]).

Pursuant to SB 743, the Natural Resources Agency adopted revisions to the CEQA Guidelines to implement SB 743 on December 28, 2018. Under the new guidelines, VMT-related metric(s) that evaluate the significance of transportation-related impacts under CEQA for development projects, land use plans, and transportation infrastructure projects, were required beginning July 1, 2020. The legislation does not preclude the application of local general plan policies, zoning codes, conditions of approval, or any other planning requirements for evaluation of level of service, but these metrics can no longer be the basis for determining transportation impacts under CEQA.

Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans)

The county is in the water quality control jurisdiction of Region 2, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and Region 5, the Central Valley RWQCB. Each regional board in the state is required to adopt a water quality control plan, or basin plan, that recognizes and reflects the regional differences in existing water quality, the beneficial uses of the region’s ground and surface water, and local water quality conditions and problems. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB prepared the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin and the Central Valley RWQCB prepared the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins. Both regions are tasked with implementing the adopted Basin Plan through planning, permitting, and enforcement of established water quality objectives. In accordance with State Policy for Water Quality Control, both regions employ a range of beneficial use designations for surface waters (including creeks, streams, lakes and reservoirs), groundwaters, marshes, and mudflats that serve as the basis for establishing water quality objectives, discharge conditions, and prohibitions. The Basin Plans identify existing and potential beneficial uses supported by the key surface water drainages throughout their respective jurisdictional planning areas.

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan

The primary goal of the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) is to “provide an effective framework to protect natural resources in eastern Contra Costa County, while improving and streamlining the environmental permitting process for impacts on endangered species.” The HCP/NCCP provides comprehensive species, wetlands, and ecosystem conservation and contributes to the recovery of endangered species in northern California. The HCP/NCCP avoids project-

4. Environmental Setting

by-project permitting that is generally costly and time consuming for applicants and often results in uncoordinated and biologically ineffective mitigation.

The HCP/NCCP obtains authorization for take of covered species under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and California Endangered Species Act (CESA) for the reasonable expansion of urban development and specific rural infrastructure projects outside these urban boundaries that will support urban growth. The HCP/NCCP inventory area is in the eastern portion of Contra Costa County and is identified as the area in which impacts are evaluated and conservation will occur.

Covered species are those species fully addressed in the HCP/NCCP and are included in the FESA and NCCP incidental take permits by evaluating and complying with avoidance and minimization requirements at a regional scale. In addition, the HCP/NCCP includes “no-take” species, which are species for which take is not authorized under the Natural Community Conservation Plan Act. To comply with the terms of the HCP/NCCP, the applicant must avoid all direct and indirect impacts on no-take species.

4.3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.3.1 Natural Setting

The county is a unique area where the greater San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta (Delta), and Central Valley meet. Elevations range from at or below sea level (e.g., in the marshes and islands of the Delta) to 3,849 feet at the peak of Mount Diablo, the highest point in the county. The physiography of the county is dominated by Mount Diablo and its surrounding slopes and valleys, which generally trend northwest to southeast, as well as lower valleys and plains that transition to the San Francisco Bay/Delta zones (ICF 2019).

Urban development is dense in the western and northern portions of the county, especially adjacent to San Francisco Bay, while the eastern and southern portions of the county include more unincorporated rural developments. Many unincorporated areas of the county are made up of rural agricultural and public lands and used for grazing, open space, and watershed protection (ICF 2019).

The county contains over 145,000 acres of protected land (28 percent of the county), comprising land protected in fee title only (136,000 acres), through conservation easement only (8,000 acres), or both (1,000 acres). Protected areas are defined as open space reserves that are managed primarily for their ecological functions and values. Lands within the county that fit this definition are owned by the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy, California Department of Parks and Recreation, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), and Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) among other agencies (ICF 2019).

4.3.1.1 GEOLOGY

Contra Costa County is in the Coast Ranges geomorphic province of California. The Coast Ranges have experienced a complex geological history characterized by Late Tertiary folding and faulting that has resulted in a series of northwest-trending mountain ranges and intervening valleys. Bedrock in the Coast Ranges consists of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks that range in age from Jurassic to Pleistocene. The present physiography and geology of the Coast Ranges are the result of deformation and deposition along the tectonic

4. Environmental Setting

boundary between the North American plate and the Pacific plate. Plate boundary fault movements are largely concentrated along the well-known fault zones, which include the San Andreas Fault, Hayward Fault, and Calaveras Fault, as well as other lesser-order faults (Contra Costa 2018).

The geology of Contra Costa County is dominated by several northwest-trending fault systems that divide the county into large blocks of rock. For example, the Briones Hills are bounded by the Hayward Fault on the west and elements of the Franklin-Calaveras fault system on the east. Within a particular block, the rock sequence consists of a basement complex of broken and jumbled pre-tertiary sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks; a section of younger Tertiary sedimentary rocks and some volcanic rocks (flows and tuffs) that locally inter-tongue with and overlie the sedimentary section; and surficial deposits, including stream alluvium, colluvium (slopewash deposits at the foot of steeper slopes), slides, alluvial fans, and Bay Plain deposits (Contra Costa 2018).

Alluvium; terrace deposits; and bay mud, primarily composed of sand, silt, clay and gravel, are prevalent in the lowlands. The intermountain valleys and foothills contain alluvial soils and terrace deposits. In the east, north, and northwest parts of the county, the soils generally consist of bay muds (Contra Costa 2018).

4.3.1.2 ECOREGIONS

Ecoregions are areas of general similarity in ecosystems, based on major terrain features, such as a desert, plateau, valley, mountain range, or a combination thereof. Three ecoregions overlap the county: the California Coastal Chaparral Forest and Shrub Province, California Coastal Range Open Woodland-Shrub-Coniferous Forest-Meadow Province, and California Dry Steppe Province (ICF 2019).

There are almost 294,000 acres of the California Coastal Chaparral Forest and Shrub Province in the county, covering the western and central portions. The primary distinguishing characteristic of this ecoregion is its Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and cool, moist winters. The associated vegetative cover comprises primarily chaparral and woodlands (ICF 2019).

The California Coastal Range Open Woodland-Shrub-Coniferous Forest-Meadow Province overlaps the southeastern portion of the county. There are almost 68,000 acres of California Coastal Range Open Woodland-Shrub-Coniferous Forest-Meadow Province in the county, covering the southern portion. The ecoregion also has a Mediterranean climate. Most of the precipitation is rain. The associated vegetative cover comprises evergreen shrubland, with lesser areas of woodland, consisting of broadleaf species, some of which are drought-deciduous (ICF 2019).

The California Dry Steppe Province overlaps the northeastern corner of the county. There are almost 105,000 acres of California Dry Steppe Province in the county, covering the eastern portion. The ecoregion also has a Mediterranean climate, and most of the precipitation is rain, which falls during the winter. The landscape, with its low hills, is typical of an alluvial plain. The associated vegetative cover was historically herbaceous but is now largely irrigated to support agricultural crops (ICF 2019).

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.1.3 WATERSHEDS

There are 15 major watersheds that cover approximately 464,700 acres and overlap or occur completely within the county. The largest watershed in the county is the Walnut Creek-Frontal Suisun Bay Estuaries. This watershed contains nine cities: Orinda, Moraga, Danville, San Ramon, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and a portion of Martinez. Other sizeable watersheds in the county include the Kellogg Creek-Big Break, San Pablo Creek-Frontal Estuaries, Mount Diablo Creek-Frontal Suisun Bay Estuaries, and Marsh Creek. These watersheds catch precipitation and runoff from storm drains, then carry the water to the San Francisco Bay/Delta system. Water from the urbanized western portion of the county drains directly to San Francisco Bay or San Pablo Bay, while the northern and eastern portions of the county drain into Suisun Bay and the Delta river channels, eventually flowing into San Francisco Bay or San Pablo Bay. The south-central portion of the county is within the Alameda Creek drainage basin; this area's water drains south to Alameda Creek, then west to San Francisco Bay (Contra Costa 2005).

Because of the Mediterranean climate and its characteristic lack of rainfall during the summer months, ephemeral and intermittent streams are the dominant hydrologic features in the county watersheds. The range of precipitation reflects variations in elevation and proximity to the coast. Surface flow in ephemeral streams is generally supplied by rainfall; these streams flow only during and immediately following rain events. Surface flow in intermittent or seasonal streams is supplied by a combination of rainfall runoff and groundwater; accordingly, these streams generally flow throughout the rainy season and into the late spring or early summer. Perennial streams in the county are also supported by rainfall runoff and groundwater, but unlike seasonal streams, they run year-round, with major dry-season inputs from both natural and artificial sources (e.g., upwelling springs and surface or subsurface flows from local irrigation, respectively).

The natural hydrology of many of the major creeks and streams in the urban areas has been altered to control flooding or convey irrigation water. Channels were made wider and deeper and lined with concrete or riprap. Creeks and streams were relocated and realigned to accommodate increased flows, then placed in conduits and culverts (Contra Costa 2005). Most creeks and streams have been disconnected from their historic floodplains by levees and channelization. Many of these streams are maintained as flood-control channels, which support little or no riparian vegetation. Outside the urbanized areas, most drainages remain relatively natural and occupy at least a portion of their historic floodplains. Most of these features are ephemeral or intermittent and generally support narrow floodplains with limited riparian habitat (ICF 2019).

4.3.1.4 LAND COVER TYPES

The county contains a diverse range of flora, from montane plant communities on Mount Diablo to the saline plant communities of the San Francisco Bay estuaries. Natural communities are the assemblage of species that co-occur in the same habitat or area and interact through trophic and spatial relationships. Natural communities are defined by the land cover types, which are typically characterized by one or more dominant species. A total of 9 natural communities and 41 land cover types are found in the county. Excluding urban development, the predominant land cover type in the county is California annual grassland, which is abundant in the unincorporated portions of the eastern county. Shrubland, woodland, conifer forests, riparian woodland, wetland and pond, baylands, and cultivated agriculture land cover types also exist in the county (ICF 2019).

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.1.5 SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

The county contains 72 special-status plant species (ICF 2019). These species are found across the diverse and, in some cases, specialized habitats in the county. Special-status plants are more abundant in the eastern portions of the county, which retains a rural landscape that is compatible with the habitat needs of many of the special-status plant species.

The county has a rich landscape that is home to a number of rare wildlife and fish species, including an endemic butterfly, the Lange's metalmark butterfly (*Apodemia mormo langei*), found only at the Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge. A total of 84 special-status wildlife species are known to occur in the county, including the San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotus mutica*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugea*), and vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Brachinecta lynchi*) (CDFW 2018a). Often, these special-status wildlife species occur in protected areas, such as Mount Diablo State Park or Los Vaqueros Reservoir, or in various East Bay Regional Parks.

Similar to its benefits for special-status plant species, the rural grassland of the eastern portion of the county provides some of the best remaining undeveloped habitat for special-status wildlife species. For example, vernal pools, which provide essential habitat for special-status wildlife species such as California tiger salamander and fairy shrimp, are restricted to the Livermore Vernal Pool Region, which overlaps the eastern portion of the county. The Livermore Vernal Pool Region contains the Altamont Hills Core Area, with specific sites that are necessary for recovering endangered or threatened species or conserving species of concern. The Altamont Hills Core Area contains five distinct core areas near the Contra Costa County-Alameda County boundary (two in Alameda County and three in Contra Costa County), with the largest core area in the Bryon Hills/Vasco Caves region of Contra Costa County (ICF 2019).

4.3.1.6 SENSITIVE HABITAT

The existing General Plan identifies 41 unique biotic resource areas that have biological and wildlife importance (see Figure 8-1 in Chapter 8, *Conservation Element*, of the existing General Plan). The existing General Plan also identifies these areas as significant ecological resource areas, most of which contain aquatic habitat, such as freshwater marsh, seasonal and perennial wetlands, alkali mud flats, coastal salt marsh, and riparian vegetation. Examples of significant ecological resource areas with aquatic habitat include the Marsh Creek Riparian Corridor, Big Break, Alkali Meadows and Northern Claypan Vernal Pools, Bay Point Salt Marsh, mouth of the Contra Costa Canal, and Brooks Islands. Other locations include a mix of aquatic and upland habitat or are entirely within upland areas. Significant ecological resource areas in upland habitat typically contain unique soil types (e.g., San Pablo Ridge, Shell Ridge, Antioch Sand Dunes, and Blackhawk Ranch Fossil Locality), high-quality native habitats, and often special-status species (e.g., Mount Diablo, Las Trampas and Rocky Ridges, Redwood Regional Park, and Los Vaqueros Watershed). The habitat constituents within each significant ecological resource area are described in detail in the existing General Plan (Contra Costa 2005).

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.1.7 SCENIC RESOURCES

The county features one scenic route that has been designated by the State Scenic Highway System. SR-24 travels east to west from the City of Walnut Creek towards the City of Berkeley. This route travels for approximately nine miles in the county (Caltrans 2018). Portions of SR-4 are also eligible for State designation.

While there are many localized scenic features in the county, two of the most notable are its abundance of scenic ridges, hillsides, and rock outcroppings and the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system. Throughout much of Contra Costa County, there are significant topographic variations in the landscape. The largest and most prominent of these hills, including Mount Diablo, form the backdrop for much of the developed portions of the area. Views of these major ridgelines help to reinforce the rural feeling of the county's rapidly growing communities (Contra Costa 2005). The most notable scenic ridges in the county are shown in Figure 9-1 in the Open Space Element of the existing General Plan. The other major scenic resource of Contra Costa County is the extensive water system of the Delta and San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun Bays. The bays and Delta extend along the entire western and northern perimeter of the county. This waterway system provides a pleasant contrast to the landforms of the area. Where the water reaches the shoreline, a mix of land uses occur: salt marshes, railroad tracks, industrial activities, housing, and parkland. All add to the diversity and interest of the shoreline (Contra Costa 2005).

4.3.2 Land Use and Housing

4.3.2.1 EXISTING USES

The majority of unincorporated land is protected for open space, recreation, and watershed purposes. Other dominant land uses include rural and agricultural uses, as well as institutional and public uses, most of which are on government-owned land, like schools, hospitals, and churches. Residential, commercial, and industrial uses make up a small portion of the unincorporated county (Contra Costa 2019).

4.3.2.2 PLANNED USES

The County is in the process of updating its General Plan and Zoning Code (see Chapter 3, *Project Description* for more information). The County's adopted (existing) General Plan land use map includes over 40 separate designations that fall under nine larger categories. Currently, 6 percent of land is designated for single-family residential uses; less than 1 percent for multiple-family residential; less than 1 percent for commercial uses; less than 1 percent for mixed uses; 2 percent for industrial uses; 5 percent for public/semi-public uses; 39 percent for parks, watersheds, and open space uses; 38 percent for agricultural uses; and 8 percent for water-related uses (Contra Costa 2019).

4.3.2.3 PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The County has identified Priority Development Areas (PDAs) for focused development efforts. PDAs are areas that are designated for infill development opportunities because they are easily accessible to transit, jobs, shopping, and services. There are five designated PDAs within unincorporated Contra Costa County, including San Pablo Avenue Corridor, North Richmond, Downtown El Sobrante, Contra Costa Centre, and Pittsburg/Bay Point Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station (Contra Costa 2019).

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.2.4 TRANSIT PRIORITY AREAS

Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) are defined in State law as areas within a half mile of an existing or planned major transit stop, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon of a transportation improvement program or applicable RTP. Major planning stops include rail or bus rapid transit stations, ferry terminals that are served by bus or rail transit, and intersections of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods. There are two TPAs in the unincorporated county along the Antioch-San Francisco International Airport BART line.

4.3.2.5 URBAN LIMIT LINE

In an effort to manage and guide growth in Contra Costa County, in 1990 voters adopted Measure C-1990, which created the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and Urban Limit Line (ULL). Together, these play a major role in shaping land use and community character across the county. The 65/35 Standard limits the amount of land that can be devoted to urban development, while the ULL limits the areas where such development can occur (Contra Costa 2019).

The 65/35 Standard limits urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land area of the county. The remaining 65 percent must be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses. Institutional/public uses, such as schools, transit facilities, fire and police stations, water and wastewater treatment plants, correctional facilities, and airports are also counted as non-urban. It is important to note that the 65/35 Standard addresses the amount of land devoted to development, not the intensity of development. Thus, one acre of single-family homes and one acre of high-rise apartments count equally against the 35-percent limit (Contra Costa 2019).

The ULL's function is to protect most areas of the county from urban development. The urbanized areas of the county, including incorporated cities and unincorporated communities, are within the ULL. Urban and non-urban uses are allowed inside the ULL while only non-urban uses are allowed outside. There is a misconception that the ULL is aligned directly with the 65/35 Standard, and thus contains 35 percent of the land area in the county. The ULL actually contains about 45 percent because non-urban uses, such as schools, fire stations, and neighborhood parks, necessarily exist within it. There must also be flexibility within the ULL to accommodate anticipated growth (Contra Costa 2019).

Changes to the ULL are rare. Any expansion of 30 acres or fewer must be approved by the County Board of Supervisors after making at least one of seven rigorous findings. Any change to the ULL that exceeds 30 acres is subject to a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors and requires countywide voter approval. The County has adjusted the ULL on a handful of occasions, for example, to make it coterminous with city boundaries or exclude land unsuitable for development. Since its creation in 1990, the ULL has been moved only once to accommodate a specific development proposal.

4.3.2.6 HOUSING STOCK

Housing in the county primarily consists of single-family homes. In the unincorporated county, single-family dwellings comprise 79.7 percent of the housing stock. Multiple-family units account for 15.9 percent, while the remaining 4.4 percent are mobile homes (Contra Costa 2023). The areas in and around the cities of Richmond,

4. Environmental Setting

Martinez, Concord, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, Antioch, and Pittsburg have the greatest supply of multifamily units. Multiple-family development has been the fastest-growing type of new housing construction in the unincorporated county since 2010, with an 8-percent increase in buildings containing five or more units, compared to only 2-percent increases in single-family attached and detached housing (Contra Costa 2019).

4.3.3 Cultural and Tribal Resources

Contra Costa County is in an area where traditional territories of three Native American groups – the Bay Miwok, Northern Valley Yokuts, and Ohlone – converged.

- The Bay Miwok inhabited the inner Coast Range, with territory stretching through eastern Contra Costa County, from Mount Diablo into the Sacramento River Delta. The Bay Miwok were politically organized by tribelet, which consisted of one or more villages and camps within a defined territory.
- The Northern Valley Yokuts are the historical occupants of the central and northern San Joaquin Valley, and their territory extended into eastern Contra Costa County. Their main settlements were built on low mounds on or near the banks of large watercourses for protection against flooding.
- The territory of the Ohlone people extended along the coast from the Golden Gate in the north to just below Carmel to the south, as well as along several inland valleys that led from the coastline. The Ohlone were also politically organized by tribelet, with each having a designated territory.

All of these groups were primarily hunter-gatherers. They hunted animals like mule deer, tule elk, pronged antelope, mountain lions, whales, and waterfowl. Groups would travel seasonally into the foothills or plains to gather specific plant resources, such as acorns, buckeye nuts, hazelnuts, and pine nuts, as well as seeds, roots, and berries. These and other resources likely supported hundreds of individual villages throughout what is now Contra Costa County. Today, there are several Ohlone nations in Contra Costa, Alameda, Solano, Napa, and San Joaquin Counties, each with its own culture and language, including the Lisjan (Ohlone), Karkin (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok, Delta Yokut, and Napian (Patwin).

Over 400 historic sites, buildings, and other structures have been identified and mapped in the county. They include historic buildings that were part of the early industrialization of the western county, like the C&H Sugar Factory, historic ranches and homes, like the home of John Muir, which is part of the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, in addition to natural and cultural preserves like Vasco Caves Regional Preserve at the eastern slope of Mount Diablo and sites associated with historic mining uses like Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve (see Appendix 5.5-1 for a full list of historic resources in the county). Historical and cultural resources in the county are discussed in further detail in Section 5.5, *Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources*, of this Draft EIR (Contra Costa 2019).

4. Environmental Setting

4.3.4 Public Services and Utilities

4.3.4.1 FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCYPD) provides fire protection and emergency medical response services for approximately 628,200 people within Contra Costa County. The East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCYPD) previously covered approximately 249 square miles and served approximately 128,000 residents with three fire stations staffed by three firefighters each (ECCYPD 2022). However, in March 2022, the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission unanimously approved the annexation of ECCYPD to the CCCYPD and the dissolution of ECCYPD (Contra Costa LAFCO 2022). The Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD) provides fire suppression and emergency services to Kensington, with one operating station. The KFPD also receives aid from the El Cerrito Fire Department (KFPD 2019). The Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District provides services to the Cities of Moraga and Orinda with five stations operating in the district. The Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District services approximately 32 square miles and 34,000 residents in the City of Hercules and the Town of Rodeo (RHFPD 2022). The San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District services the Cities of San Ramon and Danville and the unincorporated communities of Tassajara, Blackhawk, and Alamo with 10 fire stations. The Crockett-Carquinez Fire Protection District is a volunteer fire department that serves the communities of Crockett, Valona, Port Costa, and Tormey.

4.3.4.2 POLICE SERVICES

The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff (CCCOS) is the largest law enforcement agency in the county with 720 sworn officers and over 1,000 total personnel providing a full range of services to over 1 million residents in the 716-square mile county. The Sheriff's Office provides uniformed law enforcement services for unincorporated areas of the county, with the exception of the community of Kensington, which provides its own patrol services through the Kensington Community Services District. CCCOS also provides services to contract cities (Danville, Lafayette, and Orinda) and special districts (CCCOS 2022a).

The Emergency Services Division is a branch of the Sheriff's Office that provides disaster planning services, coordinates disaster outreach for public agencies and contract cities in the county, and helps County departments with emergency preparedness, disaster mitigation, and recovery. It also serves as a liaison with the State Office of Emergency Services for all County agencies. In addition to providing preparedness training, this Division oversees and has responsibility for County staff working in the Emergency Operations Center (CCCOS 2022b).

4.3.4.3 SCHOOL SERVICES

Contra Costa County has the ninth-largest public school population in the state, containing 18 school districts and 285 schools. These school districts include Acalanes Union High, Antioch Unified, Brentwood Union Elementary, Byron Union Elementary, Canyon Elementary, John Swett Unified, Knightsen Elementary, Lafayette Elementary, Liberty Union High, Martinez Unified, Moraga Elementary, Mt. Diablo Unified, Oakley Union Elementary, Orinda Union Elementary, Pittsburg Unified, San Ramon Valley Unified, Walnut Creek Elementary, and West Contra Costa Unified.

4. Environmental Setting

According to the California Department of Education's Overcrowded School Program, 20 schools in Contra Costa County are considered critically overcrowded. These include 16 in West Contra Costa Unified, two in Antioch Unified, and two in San Ramon Valley Unified (DOE 2022). In addition, according to each district's school enrollment and school capacity data, Brentwood Union Elementary School District, Liberty Union High School District, Pittsburg Unified School District, and West Contra Costa Unified School District had enrollment levels in the 2021 to 2022 school year that exceed their estimated capacities (see Chapter 5.15, *Public Services and Recreation*).

4.3.4.4 PARKS AND RECREATION

The county contains thousands of acres of parks and recreational areas that are owned and operated by various entities. These include the U.S. National Park Service, California State Parks Department, California Department of Water Resources, EBRPD, EBMUD, CCWD, independent Parks and Recreation Service Districts, County Service Districts, Contra Costa County Public Works Department, and incorporated cities and towns.

EBRPD is currently the largest parks provider in the county, with nearly 125,000 acres across 73 parks in both Contra Costa County and Alameda County. EBRPD maintains 30 parks in the county and manages hundreds of additional acres of land in its land bank, which the district holds until the property is made suitable for public access. Other notable parks and recreation facilities include Frank Tract State Recreation Area near Bethel Island in the Delta at 3,523 acres, the Marsh Creek State Historic Park south of Brentwood at 3,673 acres, and the Mount Diablo State Park at 20,124 acres, which are all State parks managed by the State Parks Department (CSP 2022). In addition, EBMUD and CCWD operate several reservoirs, such as San Pablo, Lafayette, and Los Vaqueros, which provide water-based recreational and hiking opportunities.

4.3.4.5 WASTEWATER TREATMENT

As discussed in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, there are many wastewater treatment and collection services throughout the county. Wastewater services are provided through 20 agencies: 7 cities and 13 sanitary districts. Of these, 11 provide wastewater service to unincorporated areas, including Byron Sanitary District, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, Crockett Community Services District, Delta Diablo, EBMUD, Ironhouse Sanitary District, Mountain View Sanitary District, Rodeo Sanitary District, Stege Sanitary District, Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District, and West County Wastewater District.

4.3.4.6 WATER SUPPLY

There are two major water providers in the county: EBMUD and CCWD. EBMUD delivers water directly to its customers after it is treated. CCWD provides treated water services to several cities and unincorporated communities in the Central County area and several city and other water agencies buy "raw," untreated water from CCWD, treat it, and then sell it to their own local customers. CCWD is not limited to providing domestic urban water supplies. Other services include wholesale treated water, reclaimed water, industrial, agricultural, and landscaping irrigation water supplies.

4. Environmental Setting

EBMUD provides treated water to all of western Contra Costa County, the Lamorinda area, portions of Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill, and all of the San Ramon Valley. EBMUD's Urban Water Management Plan 2020 reported that the district served a population of 473,000 in 2020. CCWD supplies treated water to all urbanized areas in Central Contra Costa County that are not serviced by EBMUD: the northern and eastern portion of Walnut Creek, most of Pleasant Hill, all of Concord and Clayton, the Hidden Lakes area of Martinez, and the unincorporated areas of Vine Hill, Pacheco, Clyde, Port Chicago, and along Marsh Creek Road to Morgan Territory.

Additional water districts serve small portions of the eastern county, including the Byron Bethany Irrigation District and East Contra Costa Irrigation District, which primarily provide agricultural irrigation water to customers within the county. Bay Point is served by Golden State Water Company and Discovery Bay is served by the Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District. The full list of water providers in the county is shown in Table 5.17-4, *Water Providers Serving Contra Costa County*, in Section 5.17.

4.3.4.7 SOLID WASTE

In Contra Costa County, the private sector has traditionally been responsible for solid waste collection and disposal. The role of government in solid waste management is one of planning, administration, and facility approval. Fourteen of the 19 cities, four special districts, and the County franchise solid waste collection. Cities, districts, and the County enter into franchise agreements with private collectors to provide collection services. Cities and counties also have land use approval over solid waste facilities in their jurisdiction. It is noted that all the disposal facilities, as well as the collection services, are privately owned. As a result, the range of actions, including new facility construction and landfill expansions, requires private sector-initiated applications or agreements as well as government policy direction and approvals. There are two landfills in Contra Costa County: Keller Canyon Landfill and ACME Landfill, both in the north-central part of the county.

4.4 ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines states that cumulative impacts shall be discussed when a project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. It further states that this discussion shall reflect the level and severity of the impact and the likelihood of occurrence, but not in as great of detail as that necessary for the proposed project alone. Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines defines cumulative impacts to be "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of the proposed project when added to effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects in the vicinity.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1) states that the information used in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources, either:

- 1) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or
- 2) A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

4. Environmental Setting

The cumulative impacts analyzed in this Draft EIR use method No. 2. The proposed project consists of the Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan and CAP. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(B), this Draft EIR analyzes the environmental impacts of development in accordance with horizon-year development projections of the land use plan for the proposed General Plan. As a result, this Draft EIR addresses the cumulative impacts of the projected horizon-year development under the proposed General Plan within the county and region, as appropriate. In most cases, the potential for cumulative impacts is contiguous with the county boundary, inclusive of incorporated cities.

The cumulative discussions in Sections 5.1 through 5.18 of this Draft EIR explain the geographic scope of the area affected by each cumulative effect (e.g., immediate project vicinity, county, watershed, or air basin). The geographic area considered for each cumulative impact depends on the impact that is being analyzed. For example, in assessing macro-scale air quality impacts, all development within the air basin contributes to regional emissions of criteria pollutants, and basin-wide projections of emissions are the best tool for determining the cumulative impact.

Regional growth impacts related to traffic, air quality, and noise have been accounted for through use of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Countywide Travel Demand Model, which is a model that uses regional growth projections to calculate future VMT. The growth projections in the Travel Demand Model are used for the cumulative impact analyses of this Draft EIR. Please refer to Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR for a discussion of the cumulative impacts associated with development and growth in the county and region with regard to each resource topic.

As noted previously, the geographic scope of the cumulative analysis is most often countywide (i.e., including all unincorporated and incorporated areas within the county), although some topics use a different scale of analysis. The parameters for assessing cumulative impacts are:

- **Aesthetics:** The cumulative setting for visual impacts includes countywide growth.
- **Agricultural and Forestry Resources:** The geographic scope of the cumulative analysis for agricultural and forestry resources is countywide, including lands classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance, as well as forestland natural community types.
- **Air Quality:** Air quality impacts are analyzed on both a regional and localized level. For cumulative impacts, the analysis is based on the regional boundaries of the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin.
- **Biological Resources:** Cumulative impacts consider potential impacts to sensitive habitat, protected species, and jurisdictional resources on a countywide scale.
- **Cultural Resources:** Cumulative impacts consider the potential for the proposed project to result in impacts on cultural resources countywide.
- **Energy:** The geographic scope of the cumulative analysis for energy resources is the service area for the two energy providers, MCE and Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
- **Geology and Soils:** Geology and soils impacts are site-specific and generally do not combine to result in cumulative impacts.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** GHG emissions impacts are inherently cumulative. Therefore, the analysis in Section 5.8 is the proposed project's cumulative contribution to GHG emissions impacts.

4. Environmental Setting

- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The cumulative analysis for hazardous materials impacts is countywide. Cumulative impacts related to airports consider cumulative development within the airport influence areas of each airport.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Cumulative water quality impacts are based on the boundaries of the San Francisco RWQCB (Region 2) and Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5).
- **Land Use and Planning:** Cumulative impacts are based on applicable jurisdictional boundaries and related plans, including the general plans of incorporated cities within the county and regional land use plans (e.g., the RTP/SCS).
- **Mineral Resources:** The geographic scope of cumulative impacts to mineral resources is all regionally significant mineral resource areas and recovery sites countywide.
- **Noise:** Cumulative construction impacts are considered in the context of countywide development that could result in construction noise levels higher than those of development under the proposed project alone at some receptor locations. Long-term stationary noise sources associated with the development and activities under the proposed project, combined with other cumulative projects, make up cumulative stationary impacts. Cumulative operational noise impacts consider whether future countywide development would significantly affect the roadway noise and, if so, whether the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact would be considerable.
- **Population and Housing:** Cumulative impacts are based on regional demographic patterns identified in regional plans (e.g., the RTP/SCS).
- **Public Services:** Cumulative impacts are based on cumulative development within each service provider's boundaries.
- **Recreation:** Cumulative impacts are assessed relative to potential park and open space demand countywide.
- **Transportation:** The VMT analysis considers the projected development under the proposed project to determine its cumulative contribution to VMT in the region. The analysis is based on the Contra Costa Transportation Authority's Countywide Travel Demand Model and regional growth projections identified by ABAG.
- **Tribal Cultural Resources:** Cumulative impacts related to tribal cultural resources are based on the local Native American tribes' culturally significant areas, which include, but are not limited to, cultural landscapes and regions to specific heritage sites and other tribal cultural places.
- **Utilities and Service Systems:** Cumulative impacts related to utilities and service systems are based on cumulative development within each service provider's boundaries.
- **Wildfire:** Cumulative impacts related to wildfire are based on the potential development in and near fire hazard severity zones.

4. Environmental Setting

4.5 REFERENCES

- California Department of Education (DOE). 2003, April 22 (last reviewed February 7, 2022). Critically Overcrowded School Program. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/co/>
- _____. 2022, February 7. Critically Overcrowded School Program. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/co/>
- California Department of Finance (DOF). 2020. E-TE1 City and County Test Estimates of Population and Housing, March 31, 2020, and Census 2010. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2018a. Natural Communities. State of California. Available: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities#sensitive%20natural%20communities>. Accessed: June 8, 2022.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2018. California State Scenic Highway System Map. <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>
- California Employment Development Department (EDD). 2022. Labor Force and Unemployment Rate for Cities and Census Designated Places (Contra Costa). <https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/labor-force-and-unemployment-for-cities-and-census-areas.html>
- California State Parks (CSP). 2022, June 6 (Provided). Statistical Report 2018/19 Fiscal Year.
- Contra Costa, County of (Contra Costa). 2003, November. Contra Costa County Watershed Atlas. <https://www.cccleanwater.org/userfiles/kcfinder/files/Watershed%20Atlas.pdf>
- _____. 2005. *2005-2020 General Plan Conservation Element*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30918/Ch8-Conservation-Element?bidId=>
- _____. 2016. *Landscape Standards- Design Guidelines*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/43770/DESIGN-2016-PDF?bidId=>
- _____. 2019. *Envision Contra Costa 2040: Contra Costa County Briefing Book*. <https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=fc2415bbdacb409baf0f19fe802a81f3>
- _____. 2018, January. *Contra Costa Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*. http://64.166.146.245/docs/2018/CCCFPD/20180612_1115/33997_Attachment%20-%20Contra%20Costa%20County%20Draft%20LHMP%20Final_Vol1.pdf
- _____. 2023, November. *2023-2031 Housing Element*. https://envisioncontracosta2040.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Contra-Costa-County-Housing-Element_BOS-Draft_Nov-2023_Clean.pdf

4. Environmental Setting

Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff (CCCOS). 2022a, May 26 (Accessed). Office of the Sheriff Overview. <https://www.cocosherriff.org/about-us/office-of-the-sheriff-overview>

_____. 2022b, May 26 (Accessed). Emergency Services Division. <https://www.cocosherriff.org/disaster-preparedness/emergency-services-division>

Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). 2022, February 9. Executive Officer's Report LAFCO 21-11 February 9, 2022 (Agenda). <https://www.contracostalafco.org/agenda/2022/020922/11%20-%20LAFCO%2021-11%20Annexation%20of%20East%20Contra%20Costa%20Fire%20Protection%20District%20to%20Contra%20Costa%20County%20Fire%20Protection%20District%20and%20Dissolution.pdf>

Department of Water Resources. 2004. California's Groundwater Bulletin 118. Santa Clara Valley Groundwater Basin, East Bay Plain Subbasin. https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118/Files/2003-Basin-Descriptions/2_009_04_East-BayPlainSubbasin.pdf

East Bay Municipal Utility District. 2021. East Bay Plain Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan. <https://eastbayplainsdms.com/>

East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD). 2022, May 25 (Accessed). About The District. <https://eccfpd.specialdistrict.org/about-the-district>

ICF. 2019, January. Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report. Appendix 5.4-1 to this Draft EIR.

Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD). 2019, July. Third Amendment to Agreement for Services By and Between the Kensington Fire Protection District and the City of El Cerrito. <https://www.kensingtonfire.org/files/edcac13b0/kfpd-el+cerrito+contract+and+amendments-10292019093325.pdf>

Richmond, City of. 2011, February. General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report. <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/59005/General-Plan-Draft-EIR>

Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District (RHFPD). 2022, May 25 (Accessed). History. <https://www.rhfd.org/about/history/>

5. Environmental Analysis

Chapter 5 examines the environmental setting of the proposed project, analyzes its effects and the significance of its impacts, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or avoid impacts. This chapter has a separate section for each environmental topic that was determined to need further study in the environmental impact report (EIR). This scope was determined in the Notice of Preparation (NOP), which was published on September 20, 2023 (see Appendix 2-1), and through public and agency comments received during the NOP comment period from September 20, 2023, to October 20, 2023 (see Appendix 2-1). Environmental issues and their corresponding EIR sections are:

- Section 5.1 Aesthetics
- Section 5.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Section 5.3 Air Quality
- Section 5.4 Biological Resources
- Section 5.5 Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Section 5.6 Energy
- Section 5.7 Geology and Soils
- Section 5.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Section 5.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Section 5.10 Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 5.11 Land Use and Planning
- Section 5.12 Mineral Resources
- Section 5.13 Noise
- Section 5.14 Population and Housing
- Section 5.15 Public Services and Recreation
- Section 5.16 Transportation
- Section 5.17 Utilities and Service Systems
- Section 5.18 Wildfire

EIR Sections 5.1 through 5.18 provide a detailed discussion of the environmental setting, impacts associated with the proposed project, and mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts where required and when feasible. The residual impacts following the implementation of any mitigation measure are also discussed.

Organization of Environmental Analysis

To assist the reader with comparing information between environmental issues, each section is organized under nine major headings:

5. Environmental Analysis

- Environmental Setting
- Thresholds of Significance
- Programs, Plans, and Policies
- Environmental Impacts
- Cumulative Impacts
- Level of Significance Before Mitigation
- Mitigation Measures
- Level of Significance After Mitigation
- References

In addition, Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, includes a table summarizing all impacts by environmental issue.

Terminology Used in This Draft EIR

The level of significance is identified for each impact in this Draft EIR. Although the criteria for determining significance are different for each topic area, the environmental analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on definitions consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines:

- **No impact.** The project would not impact the environment.
- **Less than significant.** The project would not cause any substantial, adverse impact on the environment.
- **Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.** The EIR includes mitigation measures that avoid substantial adverse impacts on the environment.
- **Significant and unavoidable.** The project would cause a substantial adverse impact on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

5. Environmental Analysis AESTHETICS

5.1 AESTHETICS

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing aesthetic character of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential impacts on visual resources from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.1.1 Environmental Setting

5.1.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

Caltrans Scenic Highway Program

In 1963, California's Scenic Highway Program was created to preserve and protect the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The State laws governing this program are in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 to 263, and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) oversees the program. Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on three criteria described in Caltrans' *Guidelines for Official Designation of Scenic Highways* (2008) (Caltrans 2022):

- **Vividness.** The extent to which the landscape is memorable. This is associated with the distinctiveness, diversity, and contrast of visual elements.
- **Intactness.** The integrity of visual order and the extent to which the natural landscape is free from visual intrusions (e.g., buildings, structures, equipment, grading).
- **Unity.** The extent to which development is sensitive to and visually harmonious with the natural landscape.

California Building Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design through Title 24, Part 2, of the California Code of Regulations, commonly referred to as the California Building Code (CBC). The CBC is updated every three years. It is generally adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local conditions. Contra Costa County regularly adopts each new CBC update under the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code Division 74, *Building Code*. The CBC includes standards for outdoor lighting that are intended to reduce light pollution and glare by regulating light power and brightness, shielding, and sensor controls.

California Building Code: CALGreen

The California Building Standards Commission adopted the California Green Building Standards Code, also known as CALGreen. As part of the CBC, CALGreen is in Part 11 of Title 24. CALGreen establishes building standards aimed at enhancing the design and construction of buildings using building concepts that reduce negative impacts and increase positive environmental impacts by encouraging sustainable construction

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

practices. Specifically, Section 5.106.8, *Light Pollution Reduction*, establishes backlight, uplight, and glare ratings to minimize the effects of light pollution for nonresidential development. The local building permit process enforces the mandatory provisions of CALGreen. The County regularly adopts each new CALGreen update under Chapter 74-2, *Adoption*, of Division 74 of the County Ordinance Code.

Senate Bill 743

As described in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR, Senate Bill (SB) 743, which became effective on January 1, 2014, amended the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by adding California Public Resources Code Section 21099 regarding analysis of aesthetics impacts for urban infill projects, among other provisions. CEQA Section 21099(d)(1), states, “Aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site located within a transit priority area (TPA) shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment.”

Accordingly, these topics are no longer to be considered in determining significant environmental effects for projects that meet all three of the following criteria:

- Is located on an infill site which is defined as “a lot located within an urban area that has been previously developed or on a vacant site where at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the site adjoins or is separated only by an improved public right-of-way from, parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses.”
- Is a residential, mixed-use residential, or an employment-center project.
- Is in a TPA, which is defined as “an area within one-half mile of a major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in a Transportation Improvement Program adopted pursuant to Section 450.216 or Section 450.322 of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations.”

The EIR Study Area includes two TPAs along the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line (MTC 2021). Accordingly, in compliance with SB 743, no significant aesthetic impact findings can be made in this environmental analysis for potential future development in the TPAs surrounding the BART rail line. Aesthetic impacts are not discussed further in this EIR with respect to potential future development in these designated TPAs. As appropriate, aesthetic impacts are only considered for potential future development outside of these areas.

Regional

San Francisco Bay Plan

In 1969, the McAteer-Petris Act designated the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) as the agency responsible for the protection of the San Francisco Bay and its natural resources. BCDC fulfills this mission through the implementation of the *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan), an enforceable plan that guides the future protection and use of San Francisco Bay and its shoreline (BCDC 2020). The Bay Plan includes a range of policies on public access, water quality, project design, and dredging and fill. The Bay Plan also designates shoreline areas that should be reserved for water-related sports, industry, and public recreation; airports; and wildlife areas. BCDC’s jurisdiction includes San Pablo Bay, Carquinez Strait, Central Bay North, and Suisun Bay and Marsh; portions of the shorelines of these bays are within the EIR Study Area. Impacts

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

related to biological resources, water quality, land use and planning, and recreation are discussed in Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, Section 5.11, *Land Use and Planning*, and Section 5.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, of this Draft EIR, respectively.

BCDC has jurisdiction within 100 feet of the San Francisco Bay's shoreline, and proposed development in its jurisdiction is subject to BCDC *Public Access Design Guidelines*, which are intended to ensure that maximum feasible public access is provided (BCDC 2005). BCDC defines "public access" to include physical public access to and along the shoreline of the San Francisco Bay and visual public access to the San Francisco Bay from other public spaces. Physical improvements, as defined by BCDC, may include waterfront promenades, trails, plazas, play areas, overlooks, parking spaces, landscaping, site furnishings, and connections from public streets to the water's edge.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 76-4 – Modifications

Section 76-4.612, *Public Nuisance Lighting*, requires that lighting fixtures be installed, controlled, or directed so that the light will not glare or be blinding to pedestrians or vehicular traffic or on adjoining property.

Chapter 82-1 – 65/35 Land Preservation Plan

Chapter 82-1, *65/35 Land Preservation Plan*, limits potential urban development in the county to 35 percent of the land in the county, preserving the remaining 65 percent for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other nonurban uses. Section 82-1.010 describes the Urban Limit Line (ULL), which prohibits that County from designating any land located outside the ULL for an urban land use.

Chapter 814-2 – SD-1 Slope Density and Hillside Development Combining District

Chapter 814-2, *SD-1 Slope Density and Hillside Development Combining District*, provides objectives for the regulation of residential slope density and hillsides, which includes requiring the retention of trees and other vegetation that stabilize steep hillsides, retaining moisture, minimizing erosion, enhancing the natural scenic beauty, and, where necessary, requiring additional landscaping to enhance the scenic and safety qualities of the hillsides.

Chapter 816-6 – Tree Protection and Preservation

Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, provides for the preservation of certain protected trees in the unincorporated county. In addition, this Chapter provides for the protections of trees on private property by controlling tree removal while allowing for reasonable enjoyment of private property rights and property development for the following reasons:

1. The County finds it necessary to preserve trees on private property in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare and to preserve scenic beauty.
2. Trees provide soil stability, improve drainage conditions, provide habitat for wildlife, and provide aesthetic beauty and screening for privacy.

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

3. Trees are a vital part of a visually pleasing, healthy environment for the unincorporated area of the county.

6th Cycle Housing Element

The following policies are from the 6th cycle Housing Element and pertain to aesthetics:

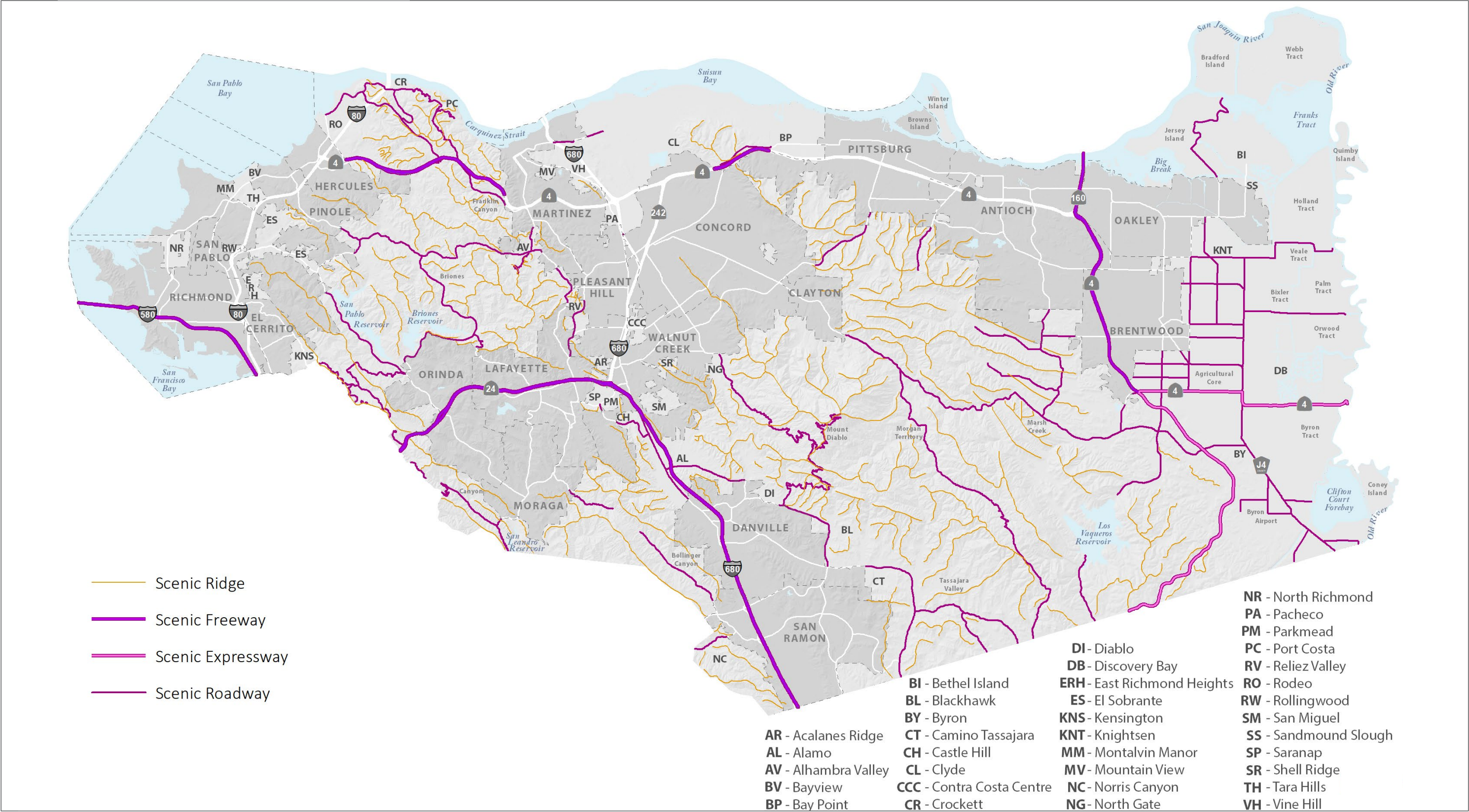
- **Policy HE-P1.2:** To the extent practicable, focus rehabilitation expenditures and code enforcement efforts in communities with a high concentration of older and/or substandard residential structures for continued reinvestment in established neighborhoods. The goal of the code enforcement effort is to improve quality of life in these neighborhoods.
- **Policy HE-P1.1:** Assist low-income homeowners in maintaining and improving residential properties through housing rehabilitation and energy-efficiency assistance programs. Promote increased awareness among property owners and residents of the importance of property maintenance to neighborhood quality.
- **Policy HE-P2.5:** Encourage innovative housing design and building types to lower housing costs and provide high quality options for affordable housing.
- **Policy HE-P2.6:** Plan for a variety of housing types in the county. Encourage innovative, nontraditional designs and layouts in response to evolving housing needs. Provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community while ensuring compatibility with surrounding uses.

5.1.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Land uses in the county include both urban and rural areas with open spaces between developed areas. In the West and Central County, primary uses in suburban cities and towns are residential, commercial, and industrial. In the East County, land is still primarily used for agriculture and general open space. Over the years, development pressure has steadily moved eastward from the flat Baylands, to the valleys near Mount Diablo, and now to the communities of East County. The elongated corridors of cities and towns are connected by a network of major transportation routes linking the county directly to employment centers in San Francisco and Alameda Counties.

State Route (SR) 24 from the Alameda County line to the Interstate (I-) 680 interchange, and I-680 south of that interchange to the Alameda County line are State-designated scenic routes by Caltrans (Contra Costa County 2005). SR 4 is eligible for a scenic highway designation. Figure 5.1-1, *Scenic Resources*, shows the County-designated scenic routes and scenic ridges from the proposed General Plan. Scenic freeways, expressways, and roadways shown in the figure include public roadways that pass through picturesque natural landscapes. These roads tend to offer sweeping views of particularly beautiful areas or prominent features, such as valleys and mountain ranges. They also include the State-designated scenic route and eligible scenic highway described previously. Scenic ridges shown in the figure include ridges that contribute to the scenic quality and character of a community or locale. In many areas, visually prominent ridges offer a striking and welcome contrast to the urban environment.

AESTHETICS



5. Environmental Analysis
AESTHETICS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis AESTHETICS

5.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- AE-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- AE-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway.
- AE-3 In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). In urbanized areas, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
- AE-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

5.1.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.1.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to aesthetic resources. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
- **Policy LU-P2.3:** Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P4.3:** Encourage smooth transitions between new and existing or planned development.
- **Policy LU-P4.4:** Require site and building reconfigurations, setback increases, landscaping enhancements, screening, or other design solutions wherever necessary to minimize potential conflicts between uses.
- **Policy LU-P4.5:** *Require shadow and solar access studies for new multiple-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial projects greater than three stories in height or with obvious potential to significantly shade parks, commercial nurseries, residential yards, solar arrays, and other uses that are sensitive to loss of sunlight.*

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

- **Policy LU-P4.7:** Encourage residential and mixed-use buildings over four stories tall to incorporate setbacks or other massing changes on upper floors to create more human-scale and comfortable pedestrian environments.
- **Policy LU-P10.3:** Preserve the rural character of the following areas, which are displayed in Figure LU-5 of the General Plan (EIR Figure 5.1-2, *Rural and Agricultural Areas*):
 - a) Alhambra Valley/Briones;
 - b) Tassajara Valley;
 - c) Agricultural Core between Brentwood and Discovery Bay;
 - d) Crockett Hills between Crockett and State Route 4;
 - e) Franklin Canyon/State Route 4 corridor between Hercules and Martinez;
 - f) Bollinger Canyon Road corridor between Las Trampas Regional Wilderness and Crow Canyon Road;
 - g) Norris Canyon Road corridor between San Ramon and the Alameda County line;
 - h) Marsh Creek Road corridor between Clayton and Byron Highway;
 - i) Kirker Pass Road corridor;
 - j) Morgan Territory Road corridor;
 - k) Deer Valley Road corridor.

Pay special attention to potential aesthetic impacts in these areas and ensure such impacts are adequately mitigated.

AESTHETICS

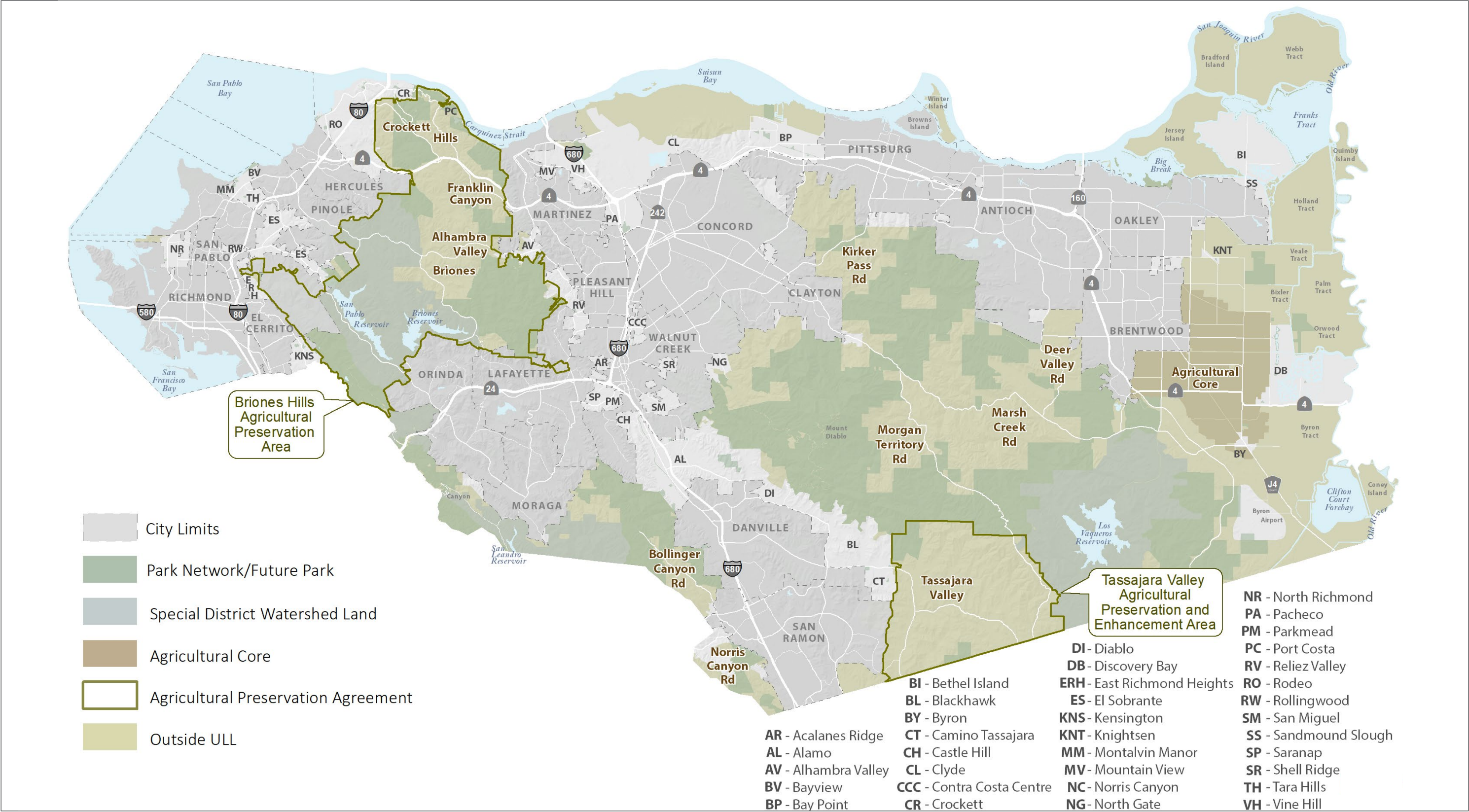


Figure 5.1-2
Rural and Agricultural Areas

5. Environmental Analysis
AESTHETICS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis AESTHETICS

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P6.1:** Preserve natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species
- **Action COS-A6.2:** Develop an Oak Woodland Conservation Program that establishes special mitigation ratios for removal of oak trees, along with specific tree replacement and planting standards to ensure long-term growth and survival. Amend the County Ordinance Code as needed to implement the program.
- **Policy COS-P9.8:** Require design excellence for new development along Bay and Delta waterways to enhance the visual quality of these areas.
- **Policy COS-P12.1:** *Deny applications for development that would destroy unique and irreplaceable natural features, such as distinctive rock formations.*
- **Policy COS-P12.2:** *Require redesign of project components that negatively impact viewsheds or the visual quality of the area.*
- **Policy COS-P12.3:** *Prohibit development within 100 vertical feet of the top of designated scenic ridges and within 50 vertical feet of other visually prominent ridgelines. Exceptions may be considered on existing legal lots where no other feasible building sites exist, and for infrastructure that requires high-elevation siting, such as wind turbines, communications towers, and water tanks. When siting buildings or infrastructure on or near ridges is unavoidable, require appropriate measures, such as screening, undergrounding, or camouflaging to mitigate visual impacts.*
- **Policy COS-P12.4:** Preserve the scenic qualities of hillsides by encouraging designs that are sensitive to a site's topography and prohibiting unnecessary grading and vegetation removal.
- **Policy COS-P12.5:** Require restoration of natural contours and vegetation after grading and other land disturbances.
- **Policy COS-P12.6:** Prohibit extreme topographic modification, such as filling in canyons or removing prominent hilltops. Exemptions may be considered for landfills, mining operations, and public or semi-public projects that necessitate such modifications.
- **Policy COS-P12.7:** Support preservation and enhancement of natural and human-made features that contribute to the scenic quality of the landscape and viewshed along designated scenic routes, and discourage projects that interfere with public views of those features.
- **Policy COS-P12.8:** *Require a visual impact analysis for projects with potential to significantly impact public views along designated scenic routes.*
- **Policy COS-P12.9:** Enable flexibility in the design of projects in scenic corridors and support innovative solutions to protect views and visual quality.
- **Action COS-A12.1:** Amend County Ordinance Code Division 814 – Slope and Hillside Development to convert the requirements from being a combining district to design and development standards related to building envelopes, building massing, colors, materials, grading, draining, and erosion control.
- **Action COS-A12.2:** Adopt design guidelines to preserve views, vistas, and defining natural features along designated scenic routes.

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

5.1.3.2 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) that are applicable to aesthetic resources.

5.1.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.1-1: Development in accordance with the proposed project would not substantially alter or damage scenic vistas or substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway. [Thresholds AE-1 and AE-2]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Figure 5.1-1, scenic resources are identified throughout the county, including the State-designated scenic route SR-24 and eligible scenic route SR-4. The county has vast open spaces, estuary systems, rolling hills that encompass an outstanding variety of scenic natural vistas, water resources, and landscapes. Therefore, future development under the proposed General Plan could impact scenic resources.

As identified in Section 5.1.3.1, the proposed General Plan includes policies aimed at reducing impacts to identified scenic resources from future development, including:

- **Policy LU-P4.3:** Encourage smooth transitions between new and existing or planned development.
- **Policy LU-P4.4:** Require site and building reconfigurations, setback increases, landscaping enhancements, screening, or other design solutions wherever necessary to minimize potential conflicts between uses.
- **Policy LU-P10.3:** Preserve the rural character of the following areas, which are displayed in Figure LU-5 [of the General Plan] (EIR Figure 5.1-2):
 - a) Alhambra Valley/Briones;
 - b) Tassajara Valley;
 - c) Agricultural Core between Brentwood and Discovery Bay;
 - d) Crockett Hills between Crockett and State Route 4;
 - e) Franklin Canyon/State Route 4 corridor between Hercules and Martinez;
 - f) Bollinger Canyon Road corridor between Las Trampas Regional Wilderness and Crow Canyon Road;
 - g) Norris Canyon Road corridor between San Ramon and the Alameda County line;
 - h) Marsh Creek Road corridor between Clayton and Byron Highway;
 - i) Kirker Pass Road corridor;
 - j) Morgan Territory Road corridor;
 - k) Deer Valley Road corridor.

Pay special attention to potential aesthetic impacts in these areas and ensure such impacts are adequately mitigated.

5. Environmental Analysis AESTHETICS

- **Policy COS-P12.2:** Require redesign of project components that negatively impact viewsheds or the visual quality of the area.
- **Policy COS-P12.3:** Prohibit development within 100 vertical feet of the top of designated scenic ridges and within 50 vertical feet of other visually prominent ridgelines. Exceptions may be considered on existing legal lots where no other feasible building sites exist, and for infrastructure that requires high-elevation siting, such as wind turbines, communications towers, and water tanks. When siting buildings or infrastructure on or near ridges is unavoidable, require appropriate measures, such as screening, undergrounding, or camouflaging to mitigate visual impacts.
- **Policy COS-P12.4:** Preserve the scenic qualities of hillsides by encouraging designs that are sensitive to a site's topography and prohibiting unnecessary grading and vegetation removal.
- **Policy COS-P12.5:** Require restoration of natural contours and vegetation after grading and other land disturbances.
- **Policy COS-P12.6:** Prohibit extreme topographic modification, such as filling in canyons or removing prominent hilltops. Exemptions may be considered for landfills, mining operations, and public or semi-public projects that necessitate such modifications.
- **Policy COS-P12.7:** Support preservation and enhancement of natural and human-made features that contribute to the scenic quality of the landscape and viewshed along designated scenic routes, and discourage projects that interfere with public views of those features.
- **Policy COS-P12.8:** Require a visual impact analysis for projects with potential to significantly impact public views along designated scenic routes.

In addition, all development in the county must comply with building and design standards that would ensure new development complements existing development. Development allowed by the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with development standards in the County Ordinance Code, such as Chapter 814-2, which governs hillside development. Additionally, the ULL would limit the extent of urban development, preserving agricultural and open space areas from urbanization, while the 65/35 Standard would ensure that urban development is limited to no more than 35 percent of the county's land area, preserving the remaining 65 percent for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses. The proposed project would continue to support these standards through Policy LU-P2.1, which directs the County to continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard in order to preserve agricultural land, rangeland, natural habitats, watersheds, and open space, while focusing development in urban and suburban communities, and Policy LU-P2.3, which directs the County to limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses.

Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) defines "forest land" as land that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. As noted in Section 5.2, *Agriculture and Forestry Resources*, there are a total of approximately 63,806 acres of forested area in the county. Although development allowed by the proposed General Plan would consist mainly of infill and redevelopment, future development could create aesthetic impacts through the conversion of forest to non-forest lands. However, Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, of the County Ordinance Code requires that a property owner obtain a tree permit from the County before trenching, grading, or filling within the dripline of any protected tree or before cutting down, destroying,

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

trimming by topping, or removal of any protected tree. In addition, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element includes policies aimed at preserving and protecting trees from future development. Specifically, Policy COS-P6.1 directs the County to preserve natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species, and Action COS-A6.2 directs the County to establish an Oak Woodland Conservation Program with mitigation ratios and tree replacement and planting standards.

The proposed project would not substantially alter scenic resources, and the urban nature of the development would be similar to existing conditions. Therefore, public vistas and scenic resources from publicly accessible locations in the county would not be adversely impacted. All General Plan policies, ordinances, and development standards would apply to future development, and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects that would have a direct, adverse effect on scenic resources. However, the proposed CAP includes actions that could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP. Where located in developed areas, these projects are not expected to significantly affect views from scenic vistas or viewsheds because they would be more likely to blend in with surrounding development and would not be likely to create changes to visual quality that would be visible from a scenic vista or that would significantly interrupt views available from scenic vistas. In addition, future projects facilitated by the CAP would need to comply with the applicable design standards, ordinances, and proposed General Plan policies discussed previously, which would mitigate potential aesthetic impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.1-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.1-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.1-2: Development under the proposed project would alter visual appearance in the county but would not substantially degrade its existing visual character or quality. [Threshold AE-3]

Proposed General Plan

Although new developments could alter the visual appearance of the county, much of the area inside the ULL is already developed with urban and suburban uses. Future urban growth allowed by the proposed General Plan would be inside the ULL and would be anticipated to develop over time. As discussed in Impact 5.1-2, the proposed project would support the ULL and 65/35 Standard (i.e., through Policy LU-P2.1 and Policy LU-P2.4), which preserve agricultural land, rangeland, natural habitats, watersheds, and open space, while focusing development in urban and suburban communities.

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

Adherence to County ordinances regarding development, lighting, and landscaping is required of all development. Compliance with development regulations is verified prior to issuance of a building permit and is therefore not reliant on future CEQA action. Because future urban development would be inside the ULL and all projects must comply with design regulations of the County, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the county, and impacts are less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP does not include specific projects that could directly result in new or expanded development that could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the area due to their height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features; however, projects facilitated by proposed CAP strategies and actions could do so. All projects facilitated by the proposed CAP strategies and actions must be consistent with the General Plan and comply with applicable provisions of the County Ordinance Code, including its regulation of height limits, setbacks, bulk, and other development standards appropriate to each zone. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.1-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.1-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.1-3: The proposed project would not generate substantial light and glare. [Threshold AE-4]

Proposed General Plan

The two major causes of light pollution are glare and spill light. Spill light is caused by misdirected light that illuminates outside the intended area. Glare is light that shines directly or is reflected from a surface into a viewer's eyes. Spill light and glare impacts are effects of a project's exterior lighting on adjoining uses and areas.

Sources of light in the county include building lighting (interior and exterior), security lighting, sign illumination, sports fields lighting, and parking area lighting. These sources of light and glare are mostly associated with residential, commercial, and industrial uses, as well as larger community parks. Other sources of nighttime light and glare include streetlights, vehicular traffic along surrounding roadways, and ambient lighting from surrounding communities.

Future development allowed by the proposed General Plan could increase nighttime light and glare, including in areas that are currently undeveloped. However, all new development is required to comply with the lighting standards of the County Ordinance Code in Chapter 76-4, *Modifications*, which requires that lighting fixtures be installed, controlled, or directed so that the light will not glare or be blinding to pedestrians or vehicular traffic or on adjoining property. Additionally, landscaping, walls, and fences that would be constructed as part of future projects would further reduce light and glare spillover. Furthermore, future development must comply with the most recent CALGreen standards, including 5.106.8, *Light Pollution Reduction*, which establishes

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

backlight, uplight, and glare ratings to minimize light pollution for nonresidential development. The local building permit process enforces the provisions of CALGreen. Through compliance with the County Ordinance Code and site-planning/design standards pertaining to light and glare, any potential spillover would be minimized, and the impact is considered less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP could result in the introduction of lighting to the environment as a result of the development of projects called for in proposed CAP actions, such as mixed-use or infill development, building retrofits, or solar energy generation facilities. Depending on the location and design of these projects, they have the potential to create shade, shadows, daytime or nighttime glare, or nighttime lighting of buildings or other structures. However, through compliance with the County Ordinance Code and site-planning/design standards pertaining to light and glare, any potential spillover would be minimized, and the impact is considered less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.1-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.1-3 would be less than significant.

5.1.5 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative aesthetic impacts are based on potential changes to the visual quality in the county as development occurs consistent with the proposed project. While most development is focused within the ULL, there will be some development that is outside the ULL and still consistent with the proposed General Plan. Future development will alter the visual quality of the landscape through the introduction of structures on undeveloped parcels. Large-scale development will be discretionary and subject to design review by the Conservation and Development Department. Smaller-scale projects may be permitted uses and might not be subject to the design review process. However, all development must adhere to the General Plan policies, County Ordinance Code, and development standards that would ensure the aesthetics of new development is consistent with the General Plan. Therefore, the cumulative impacts of development consistent with the proposed General Plan are considered less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

5.1.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AESTHETICS

5.1.9 References

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2022. Scenic Highways: California State Scenic Highway. Accessed May 24, 2022. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>.
- Contra Costa, County of. 2005, January 18. Transportation and Circulation Element. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30915/Ch5-Transportation-and-Circulation-Element?bidId=https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/?view=county&criteria=7>
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). 2021. “Transit Priority Areas (2021)” (Webmap). https://opendata.mtc.ca.gov/datasets/370de9dc4d65402d992a769bf6ac8ef5_1/explore?location=37.832047%2C-122.143055%2C10.44
- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). 2005. Public Access Design Guidelines for the San Francisco Bay. https://bcdc.ca.gov/planning/reports/ShorelineSpacesPublicAccessDesignGuidelinesForSFBay_Apr2005.pdf
- _____. 2020. San Francisco Bay Plan. <https://www.bcdc.ca.gov/pdf/bayplan/bayplan.pdf#page=115>

5. Environmental Analysis

5.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section describes the potential impacts to agricultural and forestry resources associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions, identifies criteria used to determine impact significance, provides an analysis of the potential impacts to agricultural and forestry resources, and identifies proposed General Plan policies and actions that could minimize any potentially significant impacts.

Information regarding forested areas in this section is based in part on the *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report*, or “Existing Conditions Report,” which is included in the Technical Appendices to this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as Appendix 5.4-1. The Existing Conditions Report encompasses the entire county for the existing biological resources conditions. This is a conservative approach as the county is treated as a continuous natural habitat that is not bound by artificial boundaries such as city limits.

5.2.1 Environmental Setting

5.2.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

California General Plan Law

The California Government Code (Section 65302[d]) requires general plans to include an open space and conservation element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources—including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The conservation element must consider the effect of development on natural resources that are on public lands. The element must also cover:

- The reclamation of land and waters.
- Prevention and control of the pollution of streams and other waters.
- Regulation of the use of land for the accomplishment of the conservation plan.
- Prevention, control, and correction of the erosion of soils, beaches, and shores.
- Protection of watersheds.
- Location, quantity, and quality of the rock, sand, and gravel resources.
- Waterways, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for groundwater recharge and stormwater management.

In October 2017, the State legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 732, which authorizes a county or city to develop an agricultural land component of the open space element or a separate agricultural element in its general plan. For local governments that choose this option, the bill authorizes the California Department of Conservation (DOC) to award grants, bond proceeds, and other assistance provided the element meets certain requirements.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Natural Resources Agency is charged with restoring, protecting, and maintaining the state's natural, cultural, and historical resources. Within it, the DOC provides technical services and information to promote informed land use decisions and sound management of the state's natural resources. DOC manages the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), which supports agriculture throughout California by developing maps and statistical data for analyzing land use impacts to farmland. FMMP publishes a field report for each county in the state; the most recent field report for Contra Costa County was published in 2018. The field report categorizes land by agricultural production potential, according to the following classifications:

- **Prime Farmland** has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. Prime Farmland has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agriculture production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance** is like Prime Farmland, but with minor shortcomings, such as steeper slopes or less ability to store moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland** consists of lesser quality soils used to produce the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include no irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been farmed at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance** consists of dryland grains and irrigated pastures not meeting the definitions of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. In Contra Costa County, this includes lands within the Tassajara area, extending eastward to the county boundary and bordered on the north by the Black Hills; the Deer, Lone Tree, and Briones Valleys; the Antioch area; and the Delta. These lands are typically used for livestock grazing. They are capable of producing dryland grain on a two-year summer fallow or longer rotation with volunteer hay and pasture. The farmlands in this category are included in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Land Capability Classes I, II, III, and IV, and lack some irrigation water (DOC 2018a).
- **Grazing Land** is the land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.
- **Confined Animal Agriculture** lands include poultry facilities, feedlots, dairy facilities, and fish farms. In some counties, confined animal agriculture is a component of the farmland of local importance category.
- **Nonagricultural and Natural Vegetation** includes heavily wooded, rocky, or barren areas; riparian and wetland areas; grassland areas that do not qualify for grazing land due to their size or land management restrictions; small water bodies; and recreational water ski lakes. Constructed wetlands are also included in this category.
- **Semi-agricultural and Rural Commercial Land** includes farmstead, agricultural storage and packing sheds, unpaved parking areas, composting facilities, equine facilities, firewood lots, and campgrounds.
- **Vacant or Disturbed Land** includes open field areas that do not qualify for an agricultural category, mineral and oil extraction areas, off-road vehicle areas, electrical substations, channelized canals, and rural freeway interchanges.
- **Rural Residential Land** includes residential areas of one to five structures per 10 acres.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- **Urban and Built-Up Land** is occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit per 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. Common examples include residential structures, industrial structures, commercial structures, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment structures, and water control structures.
- **Water** is used to describe perennial water bodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, better known as the Williamson Act, conserves agricultural and open space lands through property tax incentives and voluntary restrictive land use contracts administered by local governments under State regulations. Private landowners voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open space uses under minimum 10-year rolling term contracts, with counties and cities also acting voluntarily. In return, restricted parcels are assessed for property tax purposes at a rate consistent with their actual use, rather than potential market value.

Nonrenewal status is applied to Williamson Act contracts that are within the nine-year termination process, during which the annual tax assessment for the property gradually increases.

Forestland and Timberland Protection

State regulations such as the Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976 and the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 (California Forest Practice Act) provide for the preservation of forest lands from encroachment by other, incompatible land uses and for oversight of the management of forest practices and forest resources.

Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) defines “forest land” for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water-quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

The California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982, like the Land Conservation Act, was passed to encourage the production of timber resources. Government Code Section 51104(g) defines Timber, Timberland, and Timberland Production Zone for the purposes of CEQA and Timberland Preserve Zone, which may be used in city and county general plans.

- **Timber** means trees of any species maintained for eventual harvest for forest production purposes, whether planted or of natural growth, standing or down, on privately or publicly owned land, including Christmas trees, but does not mean nursery stock.
- **Timberland** means privately owned land, or land acquired for State Forest purposes, which is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses, and which is capable of growing an average annual volume of wood fiber of at least 15 cubic feet per acre.
- **Timberland Production Zone** or **TPZ** means an area that has been zoned pursuant to Section 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses, as defined in subdivision (h). With respect to the general plans of cities and counties, Timberland Preserve Zone means Timberland Production Zone.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

County boards of supervisors may designate areas of timberland preserve, referred to as Timberland Production Zones, which restrict the land's use to the production of timber for an initial 10-year term in return for lower property taxes.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Title 8 – Zoning

The Zoning Code has six agricultural zones: General Agricultural District (A-2), Heavy Agricultural District (A-3), Agricultural Preserve District (A-4), and three Exclusive Agricultural Districts (A-20, A-40, and A-80). Uses allowed in the General Agricultural and Heavy Agricultural Districts include all types of agriculture, including general farming, wholesale horticulture and floriculture, wholesale nurseries and greenhouses, dairying, livestock production, poultry raising, animal breeding, forestry, and similar agricultural uses. Additionally, they allow other agricultural uses, including the erection and maintenance of buildings for the storage of agricultural products and equipment; sheds; warehouses; granaries; dehydration plants; hullers; fruit and vegetable packing plants; and agricultural cold storage plants on parcels at least 10 acres in size. The Agricultural Preserve District is intended to provide areas for the commercial production of food and other compatible uses consistent with the intent and purpose of the Williamson Act. The three Exclusive Agricultural Districts are intended to provide and protect areas for agricultural uses by preventing the development of urban and other uses that are incompatible with agriculture.

Chapter 84-32 of the Zoning Code includes the Forestry Recreation District (F-R). This District allows uses permitted in single-family residential districts and agricultural districts. Forestry is also listed as a permitted use under the A-2 and A-3 districts. The County intends to delete the F-R District from the Zoning Code.

Chapter 82-1 – 65/35 Land Preservation Plan

This chapter states that urban development in the county shall be limited to no more than 35 percent of the land in the county. At least 65 percent of all land in the county shall be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other nonurban use. The County's Urban Limit Line (ULL) was established in 1990 and is integral to enforcing the 65/35 Standard.

Chapter 810-2 – Agricultural Preserves

The Board of Supervisors designates areas of the county as agricultural preserves, pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act (Government Code Section 51200[ff], as amended), to be devoted to agricultural and compatible uses. This chapter establishes uniform standards, minimum acreage and parcel sizes, land use restrictions, and regulations regarding agricultural preserves.

Chapter 810-4 – Land Conservation Contracts

Land conservation contracts are contracts with the owners of land located within agricultural preserves, pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act. Contracts shall be for a term of ten years renewable annually in the manner provided in Government Code Section 51244. This chapter establishes uniform standards, land use restrictions, and regulations regarding land conservation contracts.

5. Environmental Analysis AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Chapter 816-6 – Tree Protection and Preservation

Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, provides for the preservation of certain protected trees in the unincorporated county. This chapter provides for the protection of trees on private property by controlling tree removal while allowing for reasonable enjoyment of private property rights and property development. The County Ordinance Code defines protected trees based on tree size, species, location, and other characteristics, as specified in Section 816-6.6004, *Protected Trees*.

Division 820 – Right to Farm

The Right to Farm Ordinance serves as a notification to owners, purchasers, residents, and users of property adjacent to agricultural operations of potential issues at the agriculture-urban interface. The Right to Farm Ordinance is intended to prevent the loss to the county of its agricultural resources by clarifying the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be considered a nuisance. It is also intended to promote a good-neighbor policy by requiring notification of purchasers and users of property adjacent to or near agricultural operations of the inherent potential problems associated with such purchase or residential use.

5.2.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section describes agricultural land with respect to its physical conditions and the unique geography and environmental factors that contribute to high agricultural productivity in Contra Costa County.

Agricultural Uses

Contra Costa County is in the East Bay subregion of the San Francisco Bay Area. The farming environment in Contra Costa County is rich with high-quality soils. The USDA NRCS maps prime productive agricultural soils, which are classified as Class I and II soils and considered the very best soils for farming. As shown in Figure 5.2-1, *Prime Productive Agricultural Soils*, these soils are primarily in East County.

The State authority on farmland classification is the FMMP, as described in Section 5.2.1.1. The FMMP rates the quality of agricultural land according to soil ratings and land use. Figure 5.2-2, *Farmland Classifications within Contra Costa County*, shows the FMMP's farmland classifications in Contra Costa County. According to the most recently available data from the FMMP, approximately 82,647 acres of land in the EIR Study Area are classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance (DOC 2018b). Of these 82,647 acres, approximately 6,557 acres are within the County's ULL.

Agricultural Classifications and Williamson Act Contracts

Table 5.2-1, *FMMP Land Use in EIR Study Area*, compiles the 2020 FMMP inventory documenting land uses in the unincorporated county. As shown in Table 5.2-1, the unincorporated county contains 23,613 acres of Prime Farmland, 6,722 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, 2,767 acres of Unique Farmland, and 59,442 acres of Farmland of Local Importance. In total, the EIR Study Area is made up of approximately 16.7 percent Important Farmland. With the addition of Grazing Land, unincorporated Contra Costa County is 69 percent agricultural land. The majority of farmland in the county is outside of the County's ULL, as shown in Table 5.2-1. Agricultural land is primarily in the eastern portion of the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Table 5.2-1 FMMP Land Use in EIR Study Area

Land Use Category	EIR Study Area ¹	Inside ULL
Prime Farmland	23,613	591
Farmland of Statewide Importance	6,722	826
Unique Farmland	2,767	124
Farmland of Local Importance	59,442	5,002
Important Farmland Subtotal	92,544	6,543
Grazing Land	158,273	9,986
Agricultural Land Subtotal	250,817	16,529
Urban and Built-Up Land	147,124	27,804
Other Land	47,743	4,135
Water Area	108,255	1,075
Total Area Inventoried	553,939	49,453

Source: DOC 2020

¹ EIR Study Area includes all land in the unincorporated county; see Chapter 3, *Project Description*, for more details.

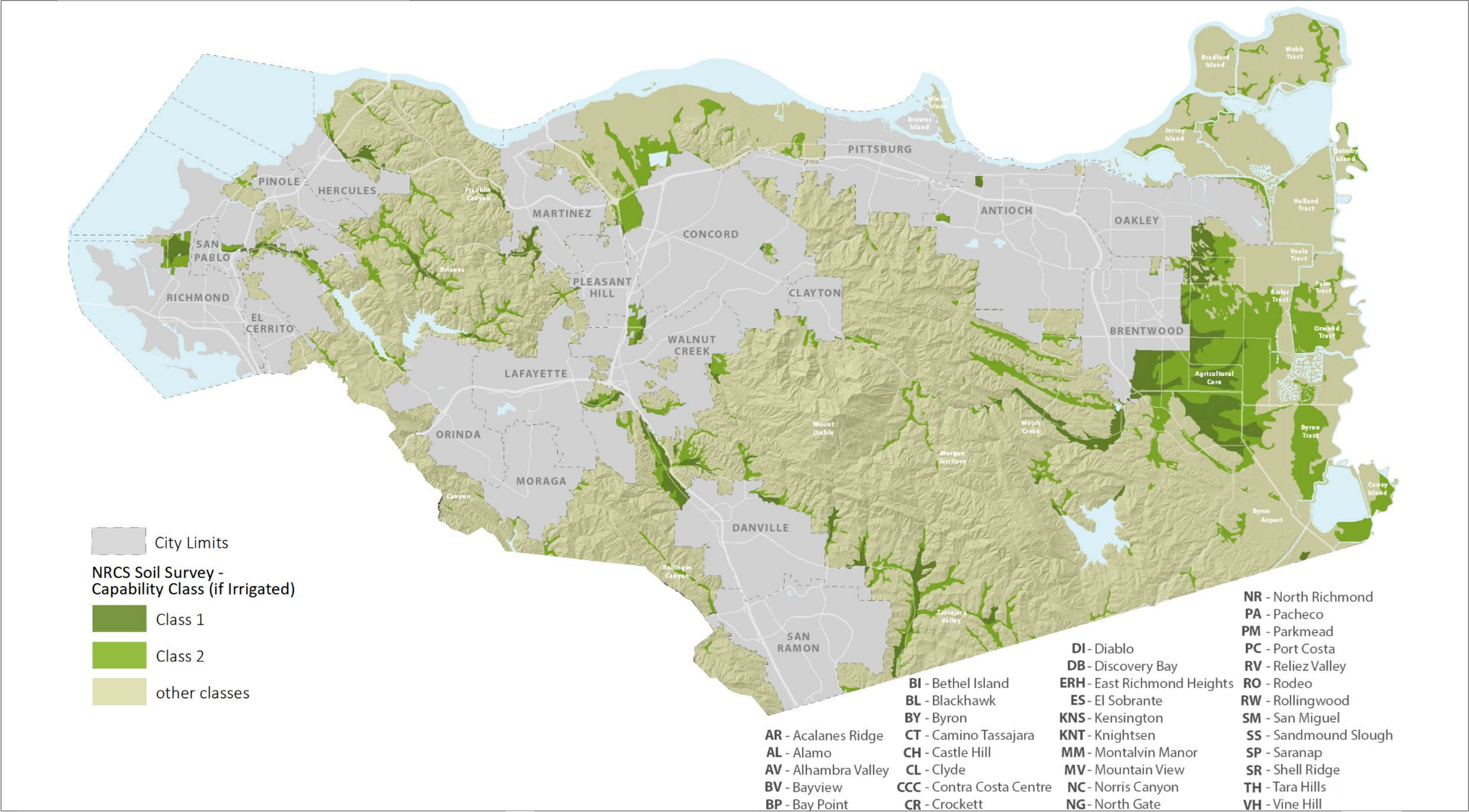
Contra Costa County has been implementing the Williamson Act since 1968 when the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 68-53, which authorized the creation of Agricultural Preserves and the execution of Land Conservation Contracts pursuant to State law. Figure 5.2-3, *Active Williamson Act Contracts within Contra Costa County*, depicts active contracts, most of which are outside the ULL (DCD 2017).

Forest Land and Timberland

Contra Costa County does not designate any land within the EIR Study Area as Timber, Timberland, or Timberland Production Zone, according to Government Code Section 51104(g).

The upland areas of the county support grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests. These natural communities are important because they provide carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, forage and homes for wildlife, erosion control, and recreation, while also supporting agriculture and other working lands. Oak trees are an iconic part of the landscape in the county and throughout the state, recognized by State law with special protections for oak woodlands. Table 5.2-2, *Forest Land Acreage in Contra Costa County*, shows the averages of these forest land cover types.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

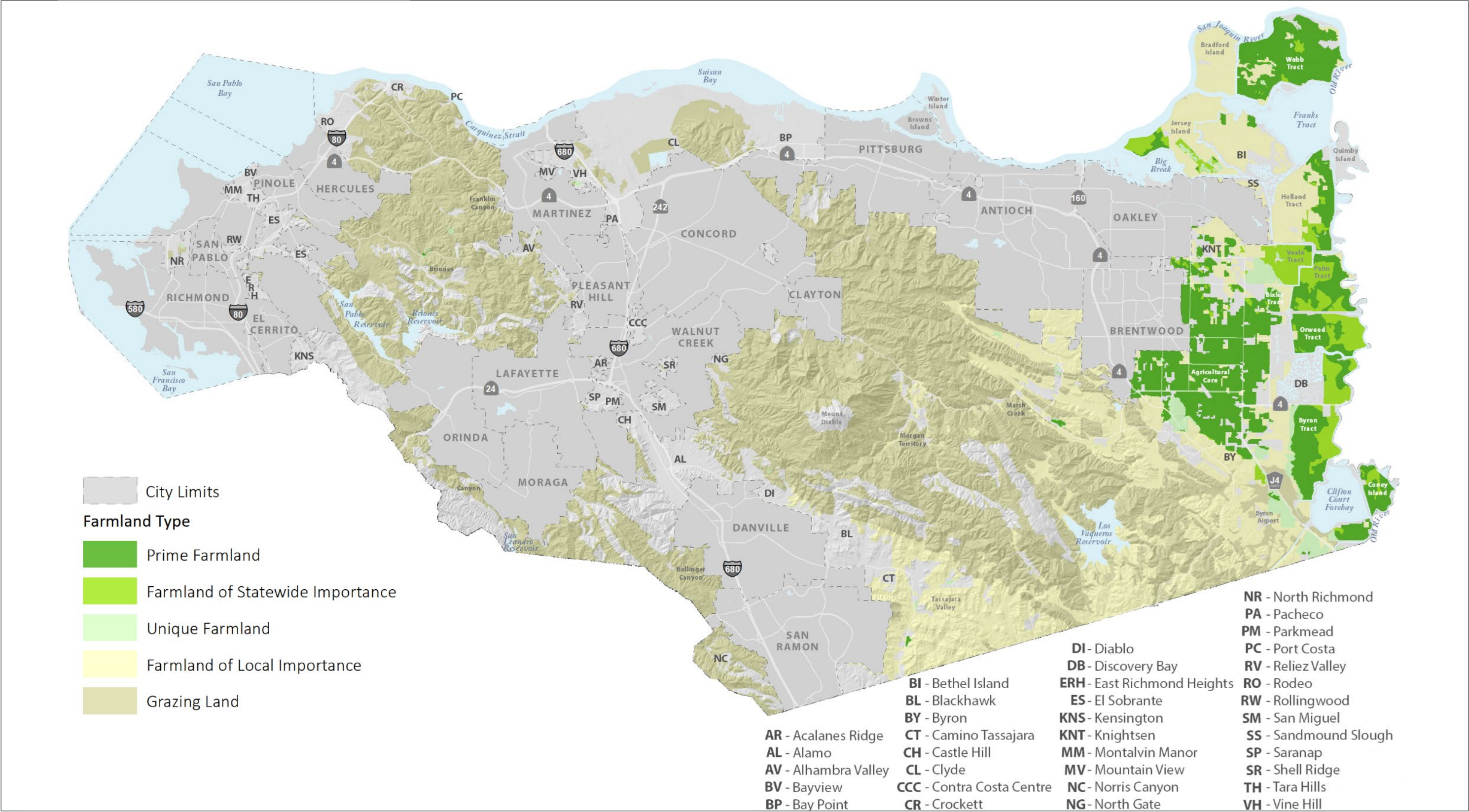


Source: US Department of Agriculture (USDA); Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey.



Figure 5.2-1
Prime Productive Agricultural Soils

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

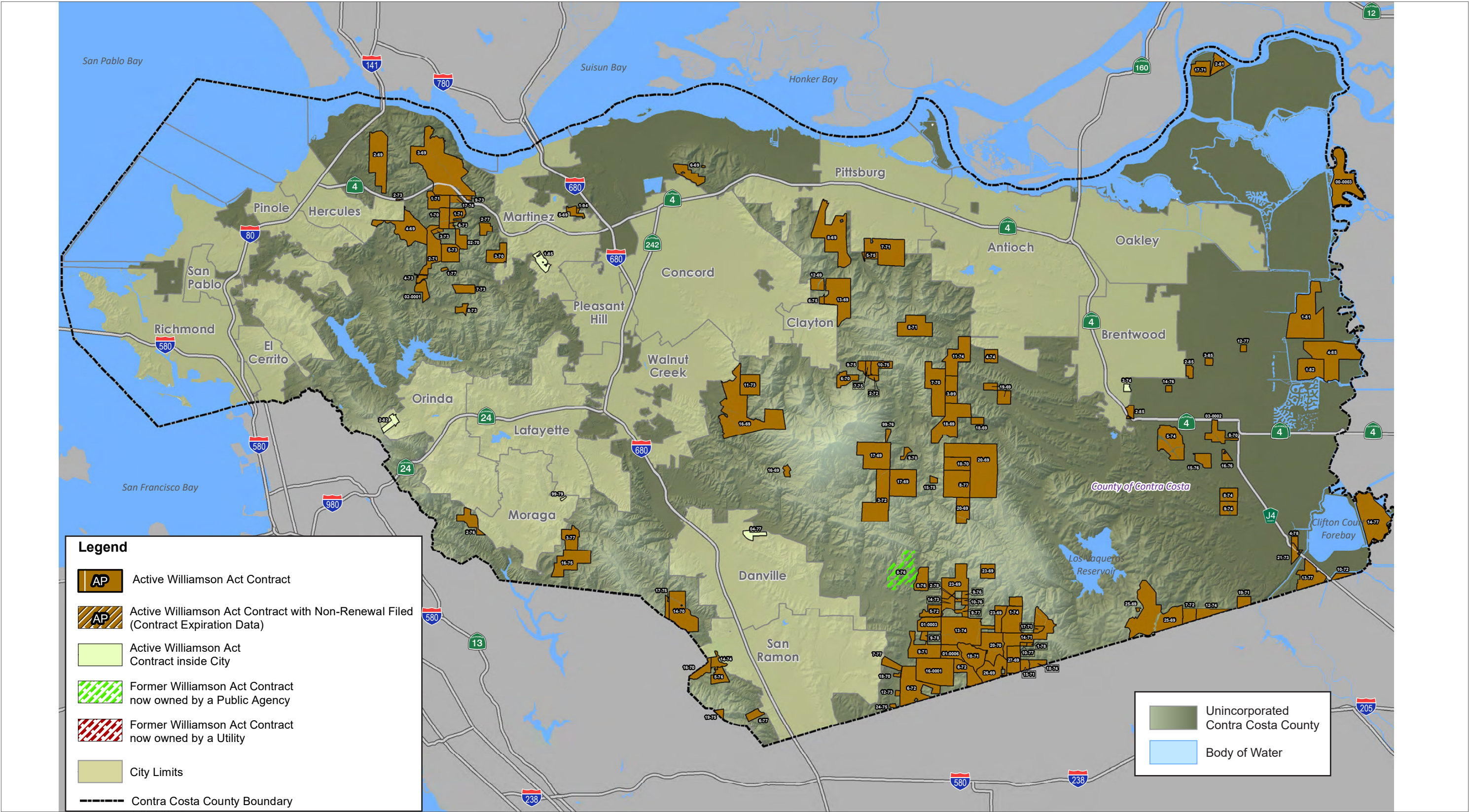


Source: California Department of Conservation - Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program (FMMP) Important Farmland Map.



Figure 5.2-2
Farmland Classifications within Contra Costa County

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES



Source: Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development, January 30th, 2024



Figure 5.2-3
Active Williamson Act Contracts within Contra Costa County

5. Environmental Analysis
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Table 5.2-2 Forest Land Acreage in Contra Costa County

Land Cover Type	Acres
Woodland	
Blue oak woodland	9,520
Cismontane juniper woodland*	67
Coast live oak forest and woodland	25,167
Mixed-oak woodland and forest	24,781
Montane hardwood*	1,595
Serpentine hardwood*	78
Valley oak woodland*	256
Conifer Forest	
Coulter pine forest*	68
Knobcone pine forest*	80
Ponderosa pine woodland*	544
Redwood forest*	818
Serpentine conifer*	21
Riparian Woodland	
Mixed riparian forest and scrub	811
Total	63,806

*Identified as a rare land cover type.

Source: ICF (Appendix 5.4-1)

5.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The County has determined that a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- AG-1 Convert Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance (Important Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP, to nonagricultural use.
- AG-2 Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
- AG-3 Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g)).
- AG-4 Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- AG-5 Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

5.2.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.2.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to agricultural and forestry resources. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
- ***Policy LU-P2.3:*** *Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.*
- **Action LU-A2.1:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to require the following prior to approval of a tentative map for subdivision in areas designated Agricultural Lands or Agricultural Core:
 - a) Evidence of adequate groundwater supply to support intended uses, considering the cumulative, long-term demand.
 - b) Demonstration that each parcel is suitable for an on-site wastewater treatment system.
 - c) Satisfactory road and street access, particularly for emergency vehicles.
 - d) Adequate regional drainage capacity, including downstream natural watercourses.
 - e) Detailed site plans for each lot indicating building locations, driveways, well and leach field locations, energy-efficient and conserving features, location of hazards such as landslides and floodplains, necessary flood and stormwater management improvements, and fencing.
 - f) Other information that may be required to confirm the safe use of each lot for its intended purpose.
- ***Policy LU-P10.4:*** *Maintain agricultural preserves in the Briones Hills and Tassajara Valley areas through agreements with adjacent cities to retain these areas for agricultural, open space, and other non-urban uses.*
- **Action LU-A10.1:** Amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning related to development of homes and associated buildings and structures on agricultural properties to require clustering of such improvements to protect agricultural vitality and sustainability.
- **Action LU-A10.2:** Continue working with agricultural stakeholders to minimize the complexity, time, and expense of County permitting requirements for agricultural properties and maximize focus on meeting the objectives of the regulations.

5. Environmental Analysis AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Goal COS-2:** A thriving and resilient agricultural sector based on resource conservation and sustainability practices.
 - **Policy COS-P2.1:** *Preserve large, contiguous areas of the county for agricultural production. Prohibit projects that would lead to fragmentation of agricultural areas.*
 - **Policy COS-P2.2:** *Preserve and protect productive agricultural land from conversion to urban uses, especially land designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland on the Important Farmland Map prepared by the California Department of Conservation; land containing Class 1 or Class 2 soils; and land designated Agricultural Core.*
 - **Policy COS-P2.3:** Require a 40-acre-minimum parcel size for subdivisions of prime productive agricultural land (i.e., Class 1 and Class 2 soils).
 - **Policy COS-P2.4:** *Require new projects adjacent to agriculture to establish buffers on their properties as necessary to minimize conflicts and protect agriculture.*
 - **Policy COS-P2.5:** When resolving conflicts between agricultural uses and urban uses, prioritize maintaining the viability of the agricultural uses.
 - **Policy COS-P2.6:** *Require deed disclosures for new residential development in or adjacent to areas designated or zoned for agricultural use. The disclosures must explain the potential disturbances associated with agricultural operations (e.g., dust, noise, odors, and use of pesticides) and reference the Right-to-Farm Ordinance, which protects agricultural operations from nuisance complaints and unreasonable restrictions.*
 - **Policy COS-P2.7:** Encourage owners of qualifying agricultural land to participate in the Williamson Act (Agricultural Preserve) Program.
 - **Policy COS-P2.8:** Support public infrastructure projects and programs that will increase, enhance, and protect agricultural land and its production capabilities.
 - **Policy COS-P2.9:** Coordinate with Byron-Bethany Irrigation District and East Contra Costa Irrigation District to facilitate water conservation, efficient use of agricultural irrigation water, and implementation of emerging water reuse technologies and practices.
 - **Policy COS-P2.10:** Support soil conservation and restoration programs. Encourage agricultural landowners to work with agencies such as the USDA's NRCS and Contra Costa RCD to reduce erosion and soil loss.
 - **Action COS-A2.1:** Review each update of the California Department of Conservation FMMP data and report to the Board of Supervisors on the quantity of land in the county converted to and from agricultural use.
 - **Action COS-A2.2:** Work with the agricultural community, Contra Costa LAFCO, and cities to establish programs and mechanisms to protect agricultural resources, such as preservation agreements, conservation easements, agricultural soils trust fund, and agricultural mitigation fees.
 - **Action COS-A2.3:** Conduct a study of potential Transfer or Purchase of Development Rights (TDR/PDR) programs to address development pressures and preserve agricultural land. The study should determine:

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- a) Overall feasibility and usefulness toward implementing the County's agricultural preservation goals.
- b) Specific mechanisms that could be used.
- c) Geographic areas where these mechanisms could be used.
- d) Organizational and administrative requirements.
- e) Cost to the County and potential revenue sources.
- **Action COS-A2.4:** Amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include development standards, and possibly adopt accompanying design guidelines, for urban land uses that interface with agricultural uses, addressing, at minimum:
 - a) Setbacks on urban properties to provide a buffer for agricultural uses.
 - b) Location and arrangement of buildings, structures, and uses on urban properties.
 - c) Lighting, fencing, screening, and appropriate landscaping/vegetation.
- **Action COS-A2.5:** Review the Williamson Act Program to identify potential areas for improvement, such as:
 - a) Expanding the range of allowable uses to include wildlife habitat areas.
 - b) Increasing enforcement of non-compliant properties.
 - c) Ensuring agricultural conservation commitments are adequate to justify inclusion in the Program.
 - d) Creating a mechanism to ensure rezoning of properties no longer under a Williamson Act contract.
- **Action COS-A3.1:** *Establish a mitigation program to offset conversion of working lands (irrigated and intensively cultivated agricultural lands and rangeland) to nonagricultural uses. The program will define the types of land conversions requiring mitigation, mitigation ratios, acceptable mitigation locations, allowable conservation instruments, and use of in-lieu fees.*
- **Goal COS-6:** Preserved and enhanced native upland habitat, including woodlands, grasslands, and rangelands.
 - **Policy COS-P6.1:** *Preserve natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species.*
 - **Policy COS-P6.2:** Encourage planting and propagation of native trees throughout the county to enhance the natural landscape, provide shade, sustain wildlife, absorb stormwater, and sequester carbon.
 - **Policy COS-P6.3:** Support protection of native trees, especially oaks, in foothill woodlands and agricultural areas by encouraging voluntary installation of fencing around individuals or clusters of trees to prevent grazing and promoting replanting of native species.
 - **Policy COS-P6.5:** Encourage revegetation of native species in areas that were previously converted for agriculture but are no longer in production.
 - **Action COS-A6.1:** *Update County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6, Tree Protection and Preservation, to enhance protections and strengthen mitigation requirements/restitution for tree removal.*
 - **Action COS-A6.2:** *Develop an Oak Woodland Conservation Program that establishes special mitigation ratios for removal of oak trees, along with specific tree replacement and planting standards to ensure long-term growth and survival. Amend the County Ordinance Code as needed to implement the program.*

5. Environmental Analysis AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

5.2.3.2 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to agricultural and forestry resources:

Strategy NI-4: Sequester carbon on natural and working lands in Contra Costa County.

Strategy NI-4 Actions:

- Establish a mechanism to support expanded tree planting and maintenance activities, particularly in areas with few trees.
- Continue to support and work with key partners to maintain and establish new pilot programs for carbon sequestration on agricultural land.
- Promote restorative agricultural and landscaping techniques that incorporate cover crops, mulching, compost application, field borders, alley cropping, conservation crop rotation, prescribed grazing, and reduced tillage to promote healthy soil and soil conservation.
- Coordinate with farming groups, ranchers, the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, and the University of California Cooperative Extension to identify and promote varieties of feedstock, livestock, and crops that are resilient to rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns and that increase carbon sequestration.

5.2.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.2-1: The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use. [Threshold AG-1]

Proposed General Plan

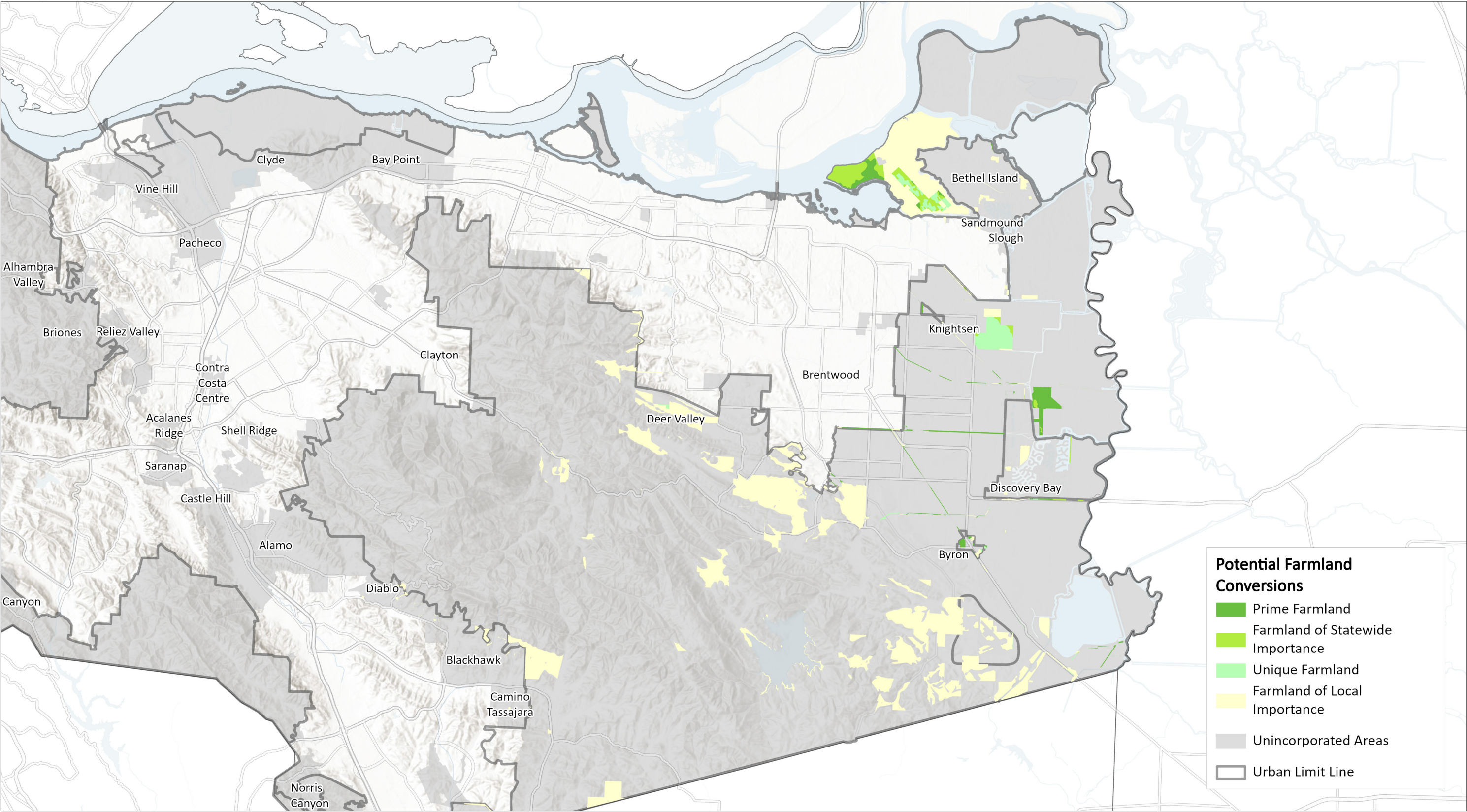
Figure 5.2-2, *Farmland Classifications within Contra Costa County*, shows that Important Farmland is primarily in the eastern portion of the county outside the ULL. Under the proposed General Plan land use map, the County would designate 11,904 acres of land as Agricultural Core (AC), 96,721 acres of land as Agricultural Lands (AL), and 59,180 acres of land as Resource Conservation (RC), as shown in Figure 3-3, *Proposed General Plan Land Use Map*, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*. These designations allow for agricultural (AC and AL) and grazing (RC) uses of these lands and place limitations on urban development. However, approximately 13,816 acres of land in the EIR Study Area that are classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance are designated for a use other than AC, AL, or RC in the proposed General Plan, as shown in Figure 5.2-4, *Potential Farmland Conversions*. Of this land, 3,447 acres are within the ULL, while the remaining 10,369 acres are outside of the ULL. The acreages of the land with nonagricultural designations that overlie Important Farmland are shown in Table 5.2-3, *Nonagricultural General Plan Designations that Intersect with Important Farmland*.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES



Source: California Department of Conservation - Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program 2020.

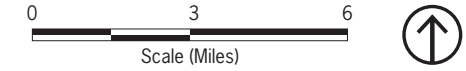


Figure 5.2-4
Potential Farmland Conversions

5. Environmental Analysis
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Table 5.2-3 Nonagricultural General Plan Designations that Intersect with Important Farmland

General Plan 2045 Land Use Designation	Acreage of Intersect with Important Farmland Inside ULL	Acreage of Intersect with Important Farmland Outside ULL	Total
Commercial Office (CO)	23.1	43.3	66.4
Commercial Recreation (CR)	98.3	38.5	136.8
Light Industry (LI)	11.88	0	11.88
Parks and Recreation	2,604.5	5,872.4	8,476.9
Public/Semi-Public	505.6	4,409.1	4,914.7
Residential- Very Low Density (RVL)	17.1	0	17.1
Residential- Low Density (RL)	30.8	0	30.8
Residential- Low Medium Density (RLM)	122.7	0	122.7
Residential- Medium Density (RM)	0.41	0	0.41
Residential- Medium High Density (RMH)	9.3	0	9.3
Residential- High Density (RH)	6.14	0	6.14
Water (WA)	16.7	5.8	22.5
TOTAL	3,446.5	10,369.1	13,815.6

Source: DOC 2020

According to this analysis, the proposed General Plan could result in the conversion of 13,816 acres to nonagricultural uses in the EIR Study Area. However, this analysis is conservative and does not consider site-specific and other factors that could affect the potential conservation of agricultural land. For example, development of land outside the ULL is restricted to non-urban uses by the County's ULL, which would help to prevent conversion of the majority (75 percent) of the total potential 13,816 acres. Additionally, the FMMP data used in this analysis may not accurately represent current conditions on the land. For example, the proposed General Plan land use designation of Water is only applied to areas that are inundated by water (based on County staff knowledge of sites and satellite imagery); therefore, the 22.5 acres of land identified as an area of potential agricultural conversion are inundated and not suitable for farmland.

The analysis may also overstate the proposed General Plan's influence on potential agricultural land conversion. Some areas identified in Table 5.2-3 are already designated for urban use, so the proposed General Plan would not change the potential for conversion from what is currently allowed. Furthermore, as shown in Table 5.2-3, 96 percent of the acreage of potential conversion identified by this analysis is designated as Parks and Recreation and Public/Semi-Public; these areas are owned by public agencies such as the Department of Water Resources, East Bay Regional Park District, the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy, and Ironhouse Sanitary District. This land will very likely be preserved for non-urban uses. Furthermore, as public agencies that are independent from the County and may be subject to limited or no County land use authority, these agencies would be required to perform their own analysis of the environmental impacts of converting this land should they decide to do so.

Moreover, the intent of the proposed General Plan is to preserve this land. For example, Policy COS-P2.2 directs the County to preserve and protect productive agricultural land from urban conversion, particularly land designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland on the Important

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Farmland Map, land with Class 1 or Class 2 soils, and land designated Agricultural Core. This policy, along with the following, would help to preserve agricultural lands from future urban development:

- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
- **Policy LU-P2.3:** Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.
- **Policy LU-P2.4:** Prohibit major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive minor subdivisions of lots outside the ULL that were created through previous subdivisions.
- **Policy LU-P2.8:** Discourage extension of water and sanitary sewer lines into areas outside the ULL, except to serve public and semi-public uses that are not growth inducing, or when such extension is necessary to address a declared public health emergency. When lines are extended outside the ULL, they should be designed to service the intended use only, and not allow for additional future service connections.

Although the proposed General Plan includes policies that would minimize the conversion of farmland, the proposed land use plan designates approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland in the EIR Study Area for nonagricultural uses. As discussed previously, the majority of this land is not intended for urban development and will likely be preserved for agricultural use, but this analysis conservatively determines that farmland could be converted as a result of the proposed General Plan, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Proposed CAP

Projects facilitated by the proposed CAP Strategy NI-4 could conserve agriculture lands or implement regenerative agricultural practices, which would result in a beneficial effect on Important Farmland. For example, actions under Strategy NI-4 include establishing pilot programs for carbon sequestration on agricultural land and promoting restorative agricultural and landscaping techniques.

On the other hand, projects facilitated by proposed CAP actions that involve ground disturbance could result in the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use. In particular, public uses such as solar and wind farms could occur in areas outside the ULL. As stated in the proposed General Plan Policy LU-P2.3, wind and solar energy production, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure would be allowed outside the ULL, and although these projects would support agricultural infrastructure and limit urban development, they could still result in farmland conversion. Therefore, the proposed CAP would result in a potentially significant farmland conversion impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.2-1 would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Mitigation Measures

The criterion for mitigation under CEQA is feasible mitigation that lessens a project's impacts. Agricultural conservation easements are a possible mitigation measure under CEQA. Programs that establish agricultural conservation easements and in-lieu fees for mitigation banking are most effective when determined concurrent with project approval. However, the effectiveness and extent to which future projects would opt-in to agricultural conservation easements as mitigation measures cannot be determined in this analysis; therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.2-1 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.2-2: The proposed project would not conflict with Williamson Act contracts. [Threshold AG-2]

Proposed General Plan

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed General Plan includes an updated land use map, which includes Agricultural Core (AC), Agricultural Lands (AL), and Resource Conservation (RC) land use designations.

The AL designation includes non-irrigated, rural lands that support grazing and dryland farming. Other types of agricultural, open space, and non-urban uses are also allowed. The maximum density under the proposed General Plan is 1 unit per 10 acres, which reduces the density allowance in areas designated AL by half compared to the existing General Plan. AC is a designation applied to 11,900 acres between Brentwood and Discovery Bay, where agricultural production is the primary use and limited tourism activities are allowed. Residential development that interferes with agricultural activities is prohibited. The maximum density is 1 unit per 40 acres. The RC designation applies to open space lands for watershed protection and other environmentally sensitive areas – activities can include low intensity agriculture.

As shown in Figure 5.2-3, the EIR Study Area contains approximately 40,545 acres of land under Williamson Act contracts, as of 2023. Under the proposed General Plan, most of this land is designated AC, AL, or RC. There are some parcels with Williamson Act contracts that are designated Water, meaning they are inundated by water, or Parks and Recreation. The areas designated Parks and Recreation are owned by East Bay Regional Park District and planned for park and open space uses. The proposed General Plan would not change the Williamson Act process that is owner-initiated through a 10-year contract annually renewed. While conversion of agricultural land is addressed in Impact 5.2-1 and found to be significant and unavoidable, the Williamson Act program is unchanged with adoption of the proposed project, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Proposed CAP

Projects facilitated by the CAP would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan; therefore, the proposed CAP would result in a less-than-significant Williamson Act contract impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.2-2 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.2-2 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.2-3: The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g)). [Threshold AG-3]

Proposed General Plan

There are no areas zoned as forest land in Contra Costa County. The Zoning Code and the existing and proposed General Plan do not designate any land for forest or timberland uses. Forest and timber lands defined by the State include both land that is used for timber harvesting and other forested land that has aesthetic, recreational, and biological amenities. The proposed General Plan would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Thus, no impact would occur.

See Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*, of this Draft EIR regarding consideration of tree aesthetics as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g).

Proposed CAP

As described above, there is no timberland in the EIR Study Area; therefore, neither the proposed CAP nor projects facilitated by the CAP strategies and actions would result in an adverse impact on timberland, so there is no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.2-2 would have no impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.2-2 would have no impact.

Impact 5.2-4: The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. [Threshold AG-4]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Table 5.2-2, there is a total of 63,806 acres of forest land within the county (see Figure 2-6 in Appendix 5.4-1). As such, the proposed General Plan could result in the conversion of forested areas and other upland habitats for future development. As discussed in Section 5.2.1.2, the Existing Conditions Report that documents this forest land cover encompasses the entire county in the interest of presenting a conservative approach that treats the county as a continuous natural habitat not bound by artificial boundaries such as city limits. As a result, this analysis presents a conservative overview of potential impacts since it includes forest

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

land outside of the EIR Study Area in addition to land that is largely intended for non-urban development such as land outside the ULL, land owned by parks and utility districts, and land that may have already been developed.

The proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element includes policies that aim to preserve forested areas:

- **Policy COS-P6.1:** Preserve natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species.
- **Policy COS-P6.2:** Encourage planting and propagation of native trees throughout the county to enhance the natural landscape, provide shade, sustain wildlife, absorb stormwater, and sequester carbon.
- **Policy COS-P6.3:** Support protection of native trees, especially oaks, in foothill woodlands and agricultural areas by encouraging voluntary installation of fencing around individuals or clusters of trees to prevent grazing and promoting replanting of native species.
- **Policy COS-P6.5:** Encourage revegetation of native species in areas that were previously converted for agriculture but are no longer in production.

In addition to these policies, Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, of the County Ordinance Code enhances protection of specified protected trees and establishes requirements for tree removal. As stated in Section 816-6.8002, *Permit Requirement*, individuals must apply for a tree permit prior to any disturbance of a protected trees. The County sets factors that must be considered for approval of a tree permit, such as if the arborist report indicates the tree is in poor health, in danger of falling, damaging existing private improvements, or determined to be a fire hazard. Therefore, although future development could result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, there are regulations in place that would consider an array of factors before the removal or alternation of these habitats.

Regardless, even applying a combination of these policies by the proposed General Plan and implementation of the tree protection provisions of the County Ordinance Code, woodland habitat will likely be impacted by future development. Therefore, impacts to forest land under the proposed General Plan would be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

Projects facilitated by the proposed CAP would not likely be proposed on forest land because the characteristics of forest land make it unsuitable for the types of projects that would be facilitated by the CAP. However, as mentioned above, a certain amount of woodland habitat will likely be impacted by future development. The resulting impacts would be potentially significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.2-4 would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Mitigation Measures

There are no feasible mitigation measures applicable to Impact 5.2-4. Although policies in the proposed General Plan would help to minimize impacts to loss of woodland and other habitat types and result in the planting of new trees, the proposed project could potentially convert forested areas to non-forested uses to accommodate future demand. Therefore, this impact is significant and unavoidable.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.2-4 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.2-5: The proposed project could potentially result in other agricultural impacts not related to the above, such as diminishing available water quality and supply for agricultural uses. [Threshold AG-5]

Proposed General Plan

Future development under the proposed General Plan would increase water demands, as further described in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, which would diminish the available water supply for agricultural uses. Such development would occur throughout the county, which spreads the impact over a large geographic area. Further, most development would require connection to municipal water provider(s). Water connections are regulated by Section 414-4.2 of the County Ordinance Code, the purpose of which is to "...provide protection of the county's groundwater sources from degradation that could result from inadequately constructed, defective, or improperly abandoned wells, to provide for regulation of small water systems in accordance with federal standards as mandated by the state, and to require submission of tentative subdivision maps and building permit applications to the health officer for him to review the availability of an approved water supply prior to recordation of final maps and issuance of building permits."

Construction activities can increase urban runoff containing nutrients, sediments, and toxic contaminants, which would pollute nearby water streams and could impact agricultural uses. In addition, future development will bring in more residents and people, which can increase urban runoff. However, existing regulations would help avoid or mitigate potential impacts to agricultural lands. For example, Chapter 74-6.012 of the County Ordinance Code states that a drainage plan for development projects is required to determine methods to reduce runoff. The drainage plan must include provisions to stop erosion of exposed soil into drainages, such as by covering stockpiles, using jute-bales and silt fencing, frequent watering, and replanting to prevent both wind and rain erosion. Through compliance with the County Ordinance Code, sediment and erosion of material would not leave project sites and would not affect available water quality or supply for agricultural uses.

In addition, the proposed General Plan also includes Policy COS-P2.4, which requires new projects adjacent to agriculture to establish buffers on their properties as necessary to minimize conflicts and protect agriculture. The General Plan also includes Action COS-A2.4, which would amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include development standards and design guidelines for urban land uses that interface with agricultural uses, addressing setbacks on urban properties. Therefore, the other agricultural impacts of the proposed General Plan would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Proposed CAP

Projects facilitated by the proposed CAP could result in a beneficial effect on farmland, while other projects could cause other changes in the environment that could result in conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use. However, compliance with the County Ordinance Code and proposed General Plan policies and actions described above would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.2-5 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.2-5 would be less than significant.

5.2.5 Cumulative Impacts

Future development under the proposed project could directly and/or indirectly impact agricultural and forestry resources. Although future development under the proposed General Plan and projects facilitated by the proposed CAP would be required to comply with existing laws and regulations protecting agricultural and forestry resources, including the ULL, the project could still result in the conversion of 13,816 acres of Important Farmland for nonagricultural uses and result in the loss of forest land. While most agricultural and forest land resources are located in the unincorporated county, there is also the potential for agricultural and forest land conversion to occur from development within incorporated areas. Despite compliance with County codes, the ULL, and the proposed General Plan policies, the proposed project would result in impacts to agriculture and forestry resources that are cumulatively significant and unavoidable.

5.2.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

With implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: Impacts 5.2-2, 5.2-3, and 5.2-5.

Without mitigation, these impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.2-1:** The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use.
- **Impact 5.2-4:** The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

5.2.7 Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures are available.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

5.2.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.2-1

Development in accordance with the proposed project has the potential to convert 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural uses. Agricultural conservation easements are a potential mitigation measure, but their effectiveness and extent are uncertain, making their impact significant and unavoidable. Therefore, Impact 5.2-1 would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

Impact 5.2-4

Development in accordance with the proposed project has the potential to convert forest lands to a non-forest use. Despite compliance with the County Ordinance Code and proposed General Plan policies, there is still a potential for forest land conversion to occur. Therefore, Impact 5.2-4 would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

5.2.9 References

- Contra Costa, County of. 2005a. *General Plan*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4732/General-Plan>.
- . 2005b. *Contra Costa General Plan Environmental Impact Report*, Appendix-D. <https://www.cocohcp.org/DocumentCenter/View/420/Appendix-D-Summary-of-Impacts-and-Recommended-Mitigation-Measures-from-City-General-Plan-EIRs-PDF>
- Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (DCD). 2017. Contra Costa 2016 Agricultural Preserves Map. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/882/Map-of-Properties-Under-Contract?bidId=>.
- California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2018a. Farmland of Local Importance. https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Documents/Farmland_of_Local_Importance_2018.pdf.
- . 2018b. 2018 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program File Geodatabase. <https://gis.conservation.ca.gov/portal/home/item.html?id=b6d923ac4bd94d62bbea1378e587b3a>
- . 2020. 2020 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program File Geodatabase.

5. Environmental Analysis

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.3 AIR QUALITY

This section describes the potential impacts to air quality due to adoption and implementation of the proposed project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions, identifies criteria used to determine impact significance, provides an analysis of the potential air quality impacts, and identifies proposed General Plan policies and feasible mitigation measures that could minimize any potentially significant impacts.

This evaluation is based on the methodology recommended by the Bay Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) for plan-level analyses. The analysis focuses on air pollution from regional emissions and localized pollutant concentrations. Criteria air pollutant emissions modeling is included in Appendix 5.3-1, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data*, of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Transportation-sector impacts are based on trip generation and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) provided by Fehr and Peers. Note that this quantitative analysis was conducted based on the horizon-year projection for the proposed General Plan, which is summarized in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR. Cumulative impacts related to air quality are based on the regional boundaries of the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB).

5.3.1 Environmental Setting

5.3.1.1 TERMINOLOGY

- **AAQS.** Ambient Air Quality Standards
- **CES.** CalEnviroScreen. CES is a mapping tool that helps identify the California communities most affected by sources of pollution and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution's effects.
- **Concentrations.** Refers to the amount of pollutant material per volumetric unit of air. Concentrations are measured in parts per million (ppm), parts per billion (ppb), or micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).
- **Criteria Air Pollutants.** Those air pollutants specifically identified for control under the Federal Clean Air Act (currently seven—carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, lead, sulfur oxides, ozone, and coarse and fine particulates).
- **DPM.** Diesel particulate matter.
- **Emissions.** Refers to the actual quantity of pollutant, measured in pounds per day or tons per year.
- **Impacted Community.** Unincorporated communities in Contra Costa County that are disproportionately burdened by pollution as defined by the County in the proposed General Plan using CES data.
- **Overburdened Community.** As defined by BAAQMD, an area in a census tract identified by CES, Version 4, having an overall CES score at or above the 70th percentile, or within 1,000 feet of any such census tract.
- **ppm.** Parts per million.
- **Sensitive receptor.** Land uses that are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. These land uses include residential, retirement facilities, hospitals, and schools.
- **TAC.** Toxic air contaminant.
- **$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.** Micrograms per cubic meter.
- **VMT.** Vehicle miles traveled.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

5.3.1.2 AIR POLLUTANTS OF CONCERN

Criteria Air Pollutants

The pollutants emitted into the ambient air by stationary and mobile sources are categorized as primary and/or secondary pollutants. Primary air pollutants are emitted directly from sources. Carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb) are primary air pollutants. Of these, CO, SO₂, NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} are “criteria air pollutants,” which means that AAQS have been established for them. VOC and NO_x are criteria pollutant precursors that form secondary criteria air pollutants through chemical and photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. Ozone (O₃) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are the principal secondary pollutants. Table 5.3-1, *Criteria Air Pollutant Health Effects Summary*, summarizes the potential health effects associated with the criteria air pollutants.

Table 5.3-1 Criteria Air Pollutant Health Effects Summary

Pollutant	Health Effects	Examples of Sources
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Chest pain in heart patients Headaches, nausea Reduced mental alertness Death at very high levels	Any source that burns fuel such as cars, trucks, construction and farming equipment, and residential heaters and stoves
Ozone (O ₃)	Cough, chest tightness Difficulty taking a deep breath Worsened asthma symptoms Lung inflammation	Atmospheric reaction of organic gases with nitrogen oxides in sunlight
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Increased response to allergens Aggravation of respiratory illness	Same as carbon monoxide sources
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5})	Hospitalizations for worsened heart diseases Emergency room visits for asthma Premature death	Cars and trucks (particularly diesels) Fireplaces and woodstoves Windblown dust from overlays, agriculture, and construction
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Aggravation of respiratory disease (e.g., asthma and emphysema) Reduced lung function	Combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels, smelting of sulfur-bearing metal ores, and industrial processes
Lead (Pb)	Behavioral and learning disabilities in children Nervous system impairment	Contaminated soil

Source: CARB 2023b; South Coast AQMD 2005.

A description of each of the primary and secondary criteria air pollutants and their known health effects is presented below.

- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** is a colorless, odorless gas produced by incomplete combustion of carbon substances, such as gasoline or diesel fuel. CO is a primary criteria air pollutant. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during winter mornings with little to no wind, when surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near traffic-congested corridors and intersections. When inhaled at high concentrations, CO combines with hemoglobin in the blood and reduces its oxygen-carrying capacity. This results in reduced oxygen reaching

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

the brain, heart, and other body tissues. This condition is especially critical for people with cardiovascular diseases, chronic lung disease, or anemia, as well as for fetuses. Even healthy people exposed to high CO concentrations can experience headaches, dizziness, fatigue, unconsciousness, and even death (BAAQMD 2017a).

- **Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)** are a by-product of fuel combustion and contribute to the formation of ground-level O₃, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. The two major forms of NO_x are nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). NO is a colorless, odorless gas formed from atmospheric nitrogen and oxygen when combustion takes place under high temperature and/or high pressure. The principal form of NO_x produced by combustion is NO, but NO reacts quickly with oxygen to form NO₂, creating the mixture of NO and NO₂ commonly called NO_x. NO₂ is an acute irritant and more injurious than NO in equal concentrations. At atmospheric concentrations, however, NO₂ is only potentially irritating. NO₂ absorbs blue light; the result is a brownish-red cast to the atmosphere and reduced visibility. NO is a colorless, odorless gas formed from atmospheric nitrogen and oxygen when combustion takes place under high temperature and/or high pressure (BAAQMD 2017a). NO₂ acts as an acute irritant and in equal concentrations is more injurious than NO. At atmospheric concentrations, however, NO₂ is only potentially irritating. There is some indication of a relationship between NO₂ and chronic pulmonary fibrosis. Some increase in bronchitis in children (2 and 3 years old) has also been observed at concentrations below 0.3 parts per million (ppm) (BAAQMD 2017a).
- **Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)** is a colorless, pungent, irritating gas formed by the combustion of sulfurous fossil fuels. It enters the atmosphere as a result of burning high-sulfur-content fuel oils and coal and chemical processes at plants and refineries. Gasoline and natural gas have very low sulfur content and do not release significant quantities of SO₂. When sulfur dioxide forms sulfates (SO₄) in the atmosphere, together these pollutants are referred to as sulfur oxides (SO_x). Thus, SO₂ is both a primary and secondary criteria air pollutant. At sufficiently high concentrations, SO₂ may irritate the upper respiratory tract. Current scientific evidence links short-term exposures to SO₂, ranging from 5 minutes to 24 hours, with an array of adverse respiratory effects, including bronchoconstriction and increased asthma symptoms. These effects are particularly adverse for asthmatics at elevated ventilation rates (e.g., while exercising or playing) at lower concentrations and when combined with particulates, SO₂ may do greater harm by injuring lung tissue. (BAAQMD 2017a).
- **Suspended Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)** consists of finely divided solids or liquids such as soot, dust, aerosols, fumes, and mists. In the SFBAAB, most particulate matter is caused by combustion, factories, construction, grading, demolition, agricultural activities, and motor vehicles. Inhalable coarse particles, or PM₁₀, include the particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns (i.e., 10 millionths of a meter or 0.0004 inch) or less.

Extended exposure to particulate matter can increase the risk of chronic respiratory disease. PM₁₀ bypasses the body's natural filtration system more easily than larger particles and can lodge deep in the lungs. These health effects include premature death in people with heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms (e.g., irritation of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing). Motor vehicles are currently responsible for about half of particulates in the SFBAAB. Wood burning in fireplaces and stoves is another large source of fine particulates (BAAQMD 2017a).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Suspended Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5})** is another form of fine particulate matter that has an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 microns or less (i.e., 2.5 millionths of a meter or 0.0001 inch). Fine particulate matter originates from a variety of sources, including fossil fuel combustion, residential wood burning and cooking, and natural sources, such as wildfires and dust. As mentioned above, extended exposure to particulate matter can cause negative effects on the respiratory system, such as triggering asthma attacks, aggravating bronchitis, and diminishing lung function. PM_{2.5} studies have also found harm to the cardiovascular system and impacts on the brain, such as reduced cognitive function.

Local jurisdictions have the option of developing community risk reduction plans (CRRPs) to cumulatively reduce community wide PM_{2.5} concentrations by following a comprehensive plan. Stationary source screening maps contain all the facilities in the Bay Area where a permit has been issued and that emit one or more TACs. These stationary source screening maps can be used as a basis for community baseline conditions and to evaluate screening-level health risk impacts using the cavity effects equation. An alternative screening methodology is to use the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) gas station screening tool to estimate cancer risk and chronic/acute hazards from gas station emissions (BAAQMD 2017a).

- **Ozone (O₃)** is a key ingredient of “smog” and is a gas that is formed when ROGs and NO_x, both by-products of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo photochemical reactions in sunlight. O₃ is a secondary criteria air pollutant. O₃ concentrations are generally highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light winds, and warm temperatures create favorable conditions for its formation. O₃ poses a health threat to those who already suffer from respiratory diseases as well as to healthy people. Breathing O₃ can trigger a variety of health problems, including chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and congestion. It can worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma; reduce lung function; and inflame the linings of the lungs. Besides causing shortness of breath, it can aggravate existing respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema. Chronic exposure to high ozone levels can permanently damage lung tissue. O₃ can also damage plants and trees and materials such as rubber and fabrics (BAAQMD 2017a).
- **Reactive Organic Gases (ROGs)/Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)** are compounds composed primarily of hydrogen and carbon atoms. Internal combustion associated with motor vehicle usage is the major source of ROGs. Other sources of ROGs include evaporative emissions from paints and solvents, the application of asphalt paving, and the use of household consumer products such as aerosols. Adverse effects on human health are not caused directly by ROGs, but rather by reactions of ROGs to form secondary pollutants such as O₃. There are no AAQS established for ROGs. However, because they contribute to the formation of O₃, the BAAQMD has established a significance threshold for this pollutant (BAAQMD 2017a).
- **Lead (Pb)** is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products. The major sources of lead emissions have historically been mobile and industrial sources. As a result of the phasing out of leaded gasoline, metal processing is currently the primary source of lead emissions. The highest levels of lead in air are generally found near lead smelters. Other stationary sources are waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. Because emissions of lead are found only in projects that are permitted by the BAAQMD, lead is not an air quality of concern for the proposed project (BAAQMD 2017a).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Toxic Air Contaminants

People exposed to TACs at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of getting cancer or experiencing other serious health effects. These health effects can include damage to the immune system as well as neurological, reproductive (e.g., reduced fertility), developmental, respiratory, and other health problems (USEPA 2020). By the last update to the TAC list in December 1999, CARB had designated 244 compounds as TACs (CARB 1999). Additionally, CARB has implemented control measures for a number of compounds that pose high risks and show potential for effective control. There are no air quality standards for TACs. Instead, TAC impacts are evaluated by calculating the health risks associated with a given exposure. The majority of the estimated health risks from TACs can be attributed to relatively few compounds, the most relevant to the proposed project being particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines.

Diesel Particulate Matter

In 1998, CARB identified DPM as a TAC. Previously, the individual chemical compounds in diesel exhaust were considered TACs. Almost all diesel exhaust particles are 10 microns or less in diameter. Because of their extremely small size, these particles can be inhaled and eventually trapped in the bronchial and alveolar regions of the lungs. Long-term (chronic) inhalation of DPM is likely a lung cancer risk. Short-term (i.e., acute) exposure can cause irritation and inflammatory symptoms and may exacerbate existing allergies and asthma symptoms (USEPA 2002).

Placement of New Sensitive Receptors

Because placement of sensitive land uses falls outside CARB's jurisdiction, CARB developed and approved the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (2005) to address the siting of sensitive land uses in the vicinity of freeways, distribution centers, rail yards, ports, refineries, chrome-plating facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline-dispensing facilities. This guidance document was developed to assess compatibility and associated health risks when placing sensitive receptors near existing pollution sources.

CARB's recommendations on the siting of new sensitive land uses identified in Table 5.3-2, *CARB Recommendations for Siting New Sensitive Land Uses*, were based on a compilation of recent studies that evaluated data on the adverse health effects from proximity to air pollution sources.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-2 CARB Recommendations for Siting New Sensitive Land Uses

Source/Category	Advisory Recommendations
Freeways and High-Traffic Roads	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles per day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles per day.
Distribution Centers	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a distribution center (that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day, more than 40 trucks with operating transport refrigeration units [TRUs] per day, or where TRU unit operations exceed 300 hours per week).
Rail Yards	Take into account the configuration of existing distribution centers and avoid locating residences and other sensitive land uses near entry and exit points.
Ports	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a major service and maintenance rail yard. Within one mile of a rail yard, consider possible siting limitations and mitigation approaches.
Refineries	Avoid siting of new sensitive land uses immediately downwind of ports in the most heavily impacted zones. Consult local air districts or CARB on the status of pending analyses of health risks.
Chrome Platers	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses immediately downwind of petroleum refineries. Consult with local air districts and other local agencies to determine an appropriate separation.
Dry Cleaners Using Perchloroethylene	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a chrome plater.
Gasoline Dispensing Facilities	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 300 feet of any dry cleaning operation. For operations with two or more machines, provide 500 feet. For operations with three or more machines, consult with the local air district. Do not site new sensitive land uses in the same building with perchloroethylene dry cleaning operations.

Source: CARB 2005.

The key observation in these studies is that proximity to air pollution sources substantially increases both exposure and the potential for adverse health effects. There are three carcinogenic TACs that constitute the majority of the known health risks from motor vehicle traffic: DPM from trucks and benzene and 1,3-butadiene from passenger vehicles.

In 2017, CARB provided a supplemental technical advisory to the handbook for near-roadway air pollution exposure, *Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High-Volume Roadways*. Strategies include practices and technologies that reduce traffic emissions, increase dispersion of traffic pollution (or the dilution of pollution in the air), or remove pollution from the air (CARB 2017).

5.3.1.3 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

AAQS have been adopted at the State and federal levels for criteria air pollutants. In addition, both the State and federal government regulate the release of TACs. Land uses in Contra Costa County are subject to the rules and regulations imposed by BAAQMD, the California AAQS adopted by CARB, and National AAQS adopted by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Federal, State, regional, and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines that are potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized in this section.

5. Environmental Analysis AIR QUALITY

Federal and State

Ambient Air Quality Standards

The Clean Air Act (CAA) was passed in 1963 by the US Congress and has been amended several times. The 1970 CAA amendments strengthened previous legislation and laid the foundation for the regulatory scheme of the 1970s and 1980s. In 1977, Congress again added several provisions, including nonattainment requirements for areas not meeting National AAQS and the Prevention of Significant Deterioration program. The 1990 amendments represent the latest in a series of federal efforts to regulate the protection of air quality in the United States. The CAA allows states to adopt more stringent standards or include other pollutants. The California CAA, signed in 1988, requires all areas of the state to achieve and maintain the California AAQS by the earliest practical date. The California AAQS tend to be more restrictive than the National AAQS.

The National and California AAQS are the levels of air quality considered to provide a margin of safety in the protection of the public health and welfare. They are designed to protect “sensitive receptors” most susceptible to further respiratory distress, such as asthmatics, the elderly, very young children, people already weakened by other disease or illness, and persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise. Healthy adults can tolerate occasional exposure to air pollutant concentrations considerably above these minimum standards before adverse effects are observed.

Both California and the federal government have established health-based AAQS for seven air pollutants, which are shown in Table 5.3-3, *Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants*. These pollutants are ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), and lead (Pb). In addition, the State has set standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility-reducing particles.

Table 5.3-3 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Air Pollutants

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard ¹	Federal Primary Standard ²	Major Pollutant Sources
Ozone (O ₃) ³	1 hour	0.09 ppm	*	Motor vehicles, paints, coatings, and solvents.
	8 hours	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 hour	20 ppm	35 ppm	Internal combustion engines, primarily gasoline-powered motor vehicles.
	8 hours	9.0 ppm	9 ppm	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm	0.053 ppm	Motor vehicles, petroleum-refining operations, industrial sources, aircraft, ships, and railroads.
	1 hour	0.18 ppm	0.100 ppm	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	*	0.030 ppm	Fuel combustion, chemical plants, sulfur recovery plants, and metal processing.
	1 hour	0.25 ppm	0.075 ppm	
	24 hours	0.04 ppm	0.14 ppm	
Respirable Coarse Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³	*	Dust and fume-producing construction, industrial, and agricultural operations, combustion, atmospheric photochemical reactions, and natural activities (e.g., wind-raised dust and ocean sprays).
	24 hours	50 µg/m ³	150 µg/m ³	

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-3 Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Air Pollutants

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard ¹	Federal Primary Standard ²	Major Pollutant Sources
Respirable Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ⁴	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	12 µg/m ³	Dust and fume-producing construction, industrial, and agricultural operations, combustion, atmospheric photochemical reactions, and natural activities (e.g., wind-raised dust and ocean sprays).
	24 hours	*	35 µg/m ³	
Lead (Pb)	30-Day Average	1.5 µg/m ³	*	Present source: lead smelters, battery manufacturing & recycling facilities. Past source: combustion of leaded gasoline.
	Calendar Quarter	*	1.5 µg/m ³	
	Rolling 3-Month Average	*	0.15 µg/m ³	
Sulfates (SO ₄) ⁵	24 hours	25 µg/m ³	No Federal Standard	Industrial processes.
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 hours	ExCo =0.23/km visibility of 10≥ miles	No Federal Standard	Visibility-reducing particles consist of suspended particulate matter, which is a complex mixture of tiny particles that consists of dry solid fragments, solid cores with liquid coatings, and small droplets of liquid. These particles vary greatly in shape, size and chemical composition, and can be made up of many different materials such as metals, soot, soil, dust, and salt.
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 hour	0.03 ppm	No Federal Standard	Hydrogen sulfide (H ₂ S) is a colorless gas with the odor of rotten eggs. It is formed during bacterial decomposition of sulfur-containing organic substances. Also, it can be present in sewer gas and some natural gas, and can be emitted as the result of geothermal energy exploitation.
Vinyl Chloride	24 hours	0.01 ppm	No Federal Standard	Vinyl chloride (chloroethene), a chlorinated hydrocarbon, is a colorless gas with a mild, sweet odor. Most vinyl chloride is used to make polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic and vinyl products. Vinyl chloride has been detected near landfills, sewage plants, and hazardous waste sites, due to microbial breakdown of chlorinated solvents.

Source: CARB 2016.

Notes: ppm: parts per million; µg/m³: micrograms per cubic meter

* Standard has not been established for this pollutant/duration by this entity.

¹ California standards for O₃, CO (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), SO₂ (1 and 24 hour), NO₂, and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and visibility reducing particles) are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California AAQS are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

² National standards (other than O₃, PM, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The O₃ standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM₁₀, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m³ is equal to or less than one. For PM_{2.5}, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard.

³ On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.

⁴ On December 14, 2012, the national annual PM_{2.5} primary standard was lowered from 15 µg/m³ to 12.0 µg/m³. The existing national 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 µg/m³, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 µg/m³. The existing 24-hour PM₁₀ standards (primary and secondary) of 150 µg/m³ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.

⁵ On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established, and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. The 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

California has also adopted a host of other regulations that reduce criteria pollutant emissions.

- **AB 1493: Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards.** Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduced emissions from new passenger vehicles (light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016. In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025.
- **Heavy-Duty (Tractor-Trailer) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Regulation.** The tractors and trailers subject to this regulation must either use US EPA SmartWay certified tractors and trailers or retrofit their existing fleet with SmartWay-verified technologies. The regulation applies primarily to owners of 53-foot or longer box-type trailers, including both dry-van and refrigerated-van trailers, and owners of the heavy-duty tractors that pull them on California highways. These owners are responsible for replacing or retrofitting their affected vehicles with compliant aerodynamic technologies and low-rolling-resistance tires. Sleeper-cab tractors model year 2011 and later must be SmartWay certified. All other tractors must use SmartWay-verified low-rolling-resistance tires. This rule has criteria air pollutant co-benefits.
- **SB 1078 and SB 107: Renewables Portfolio Standards.** A major component of California's Renewable Energy Program is the renewables portfolio standard established under Senate Bills (SB) 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). Under this standard, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent in order to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010.
- **California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20: Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards.** The 2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR secs. 1601–1608) were adopted by the California Energy Commission on October 11, 2006, and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on December 14, 2006. The regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non-federally regulated appliances. This Code reduces natural gas use from appliances.
- **24 CCR, Part 6: Building and Energy Efficiency Standards.** Energy conservation standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the California Energy Commission) in June 1977. This Code reduces natural gas use from buildings.
- **24 CCR, Part 11: Green Building Standards Code.** Establishes planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. This Code reduces natural gas use from buildings.

Tanner Air Toxics Act and Air Toxics Hot Spot Information and Assessment Act

Public exposure to TACs is a significant environmental health issue in California. In 1983, the California legislature enacted a program to identify the health effects of TACs and reduce exposure to them. The California Health and Safety Code defines a TAC as “an air pollutant which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health” (17 CCR sec. 93000). A substance that is listed as a hazardous air pollutant pursuant to Section 112(b) of the federal CAA (42 US Code sec. 7412[b]) is a TAC. Under State law, the California EPA, acting through CARB, is

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

authorized to identify a substance as a TAC if it is an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or may pose a present or potential hazard to human health.

California regulates TACs primarily through Assembly Bill (AB) 1807 (Tanner Air Toxics Act) and AB 2588 (Air Toxics “Hot Spot” Information and Assessment Act of 1987). The Tanner Air Toxics Act set up a formal procedure for CARB to designate substances as TACs. Once a TAC is identified, CARB adopts an “airborne toxics control measure” for sources that emit that TAC. If there is a safe threshold for a substance (i.e., a point below which there is no toxic effect), the control measure must reduce exposure to below that threshold. If there is no safe threshold, the measure must incorporate “toxics best available control technology” to minimize emissions. To date, CARB has established formal control measures for 11 TACs that are identified as having no safe threshold.

Under AB 2588, TAC emissions from individual facilities are quantified and prioritized by the air quality management district or air pollution control district. High-priority facilities are required to perform a health risk assessment, and if specific thresholds are exceeded, are required to communicate the results to the public through notices and public meetings.

CARB has promulgated the following specific rules to limit TAC emissions:

- **13 CCR Chapter 10 Section 2485: Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling.** Generally restricts on-road diesel-powered commercial motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of greater than 10,000 pounds from idling more than five minutes.
- **13 CCR Chapter 10 Section 2480: Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit School Bus Idling and Idling at Schools.** Generally restricts a school bus or transit bus from idling for more than five minutes when within 100 feet of a school.
- **13 CCR Section 2477 and Article 8: Airborne Toxic Control Measure for In-Use Diesel-Fueled Transport Refrigeration Units (TRU) and TRU Generator Sets and Facilities Where TRUs Operate.** Regulations established to control emissions associated with diesel-powered TRUs.

Regional

Bay Area Air Quality Management District

BAAQMD is the agency responsible for ensuring that the National and California AAQS are attained and maintained in the SFBAAB. Air quality conditions in the SFBAAB have improved significantly since the BAAQMD was created in 1955. BAAQMD prepares air quality management plans (AQMP) to attain AAQS in the SFBAAB. BAAQMD prepares ozone attainment plans for the National O₃ standard and clean air plans for the California O₃ standard. BAAQMD prepares these AQMPs in coordination with Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to ensure consistent assumptions about regional growth.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2017 Clean Air Plan

BAAQMD adopted the 2017 “Clean Air Plan: Spare the Air, Cool the Climate” (2017 Clean Air Plan) on April 19, 2017, making it the most recently adopted comprehensive plan. The 2017 Clean Air Plan incorporates significant new scientific data, primarily in the form of updated emissions inventories, ambient measurements, new meteorological episodes, and new air quality modeling tools. The 2017 Clean Air Plan serves as an update to the adopted Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan and continues to provide the framework for SFBAAB to achieve attainment of the California and National AAQS. The 2017 Clean Air Plan updates the Bay Area’s ozone plan, which is based on the “all feasible measures” approach to meet the requirements of the California CAA. It sets a goal of reducing health risk impacts to local communities by 20 percent between 2015 and 2020 and lays the groundwork for reducing GHG emissions in the Bay Area to meet the State’s 2030 GHG reduction target and 2050 GHG reduction goal. It also includes a vision for the Bay Area in a post-carbon year 2050 that encompasses the following:

- Construct buildings that are energy efficient and powered by renewable energy.
- Walk, bicycle, and use public transit for the majority of trips and use electric-powered autonomous public transit fleets.
- Incubate and produce clean energy technologies.
- Live a low-carbon lifestyle by purchasing low-carbon foods and goods in addition to recycling and putting organic waste to productive use.

A comprehensive multipollutant control strategy was developed to be implemented in the next three to five years to address public health and climate change and to set a pathway to achieve the 2050 vision. The control strategy includes 85 control measures to reduce emissions of ozone, particulate matter, TACs, and GHG from a full range of emission sources. These control measures cover the following sectors: (1) stationary (industrial) sources, (2) transportation, (3) energy, (4) agriculture, (5) natural and working lands, (6) waste management, (7) water, (8) super-GHG pollutants, and (9) buildings.

- The proposed control strategy is based on the following key priorities:
- Reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and TACs from all key sources.
- Reduce emissions of “super-GHGs” such as methane, black carbon, and fluorinated gases.
- Decrease demand for fossil fuels (gasoline, diesel, and natural gas).
 - Increase efficiency of the energy and transportation systems.
 - Reduce demand for vehicle travel, and high-carbon goods and services.
- Decarbonize the energy system.
 - Make the electricity supply carbon-free.
 - Electrify the transportation and building sectors (BAAQMD 2017c).

Community Air Risk Evaluation Program

BAAQMD’s Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program was initiated in 2004 to evaluate and reduce health risks associated with exposure to outdoor TACs in the Bay Area, primarily DPM. The last update to this program was in 2014. Based on findings of the latest report, DPM was found to account for approximately 85

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

percent of the cancer risk from airborne toxins. Carcinogenic compounds from gasoline-powered cars and light duty trucks were also identified as significant contributors: 1,3-butadiene contributed 4 percent of the cancer risk-weighted emissions, and benzene contributed 3 percent. Collectively, five compounds—DPM, 1,3-butadiene, benzene, formaldehyde, and acetaldehyde—were found to be responsible for more than 90 percent of the cancer risk attributed to emissions. All of these compounds are associated with emissions from internal combustion engines. The most important sources of cancer risk-weighted emissions were combustion-related sources of DPM, including on-road mobile sources (31 percent), construction equipment (29 percent), and ships and harbor craft (13 percent). Overall, cancer risk from TAC dropped by more than 50 percent between 2005 and 2015, when emissions inputs accounted for State diesel regulations and other reductions.

The major contributor to acute and chronic non-cancer health effects in the BAAQMD is acrolein (C_3H_4O). Major sources of acrolein are on-road mobile sources and aircraft near freeways and commercial and military airports. Currently CARB does not have certified emission factors or an analytical test method for acrolein. Since the appropriate tools needed to implement and enforce acrolein emission limits are not available, BAAQMD does not conduct health risk screening analysis for acrolein emissions.

Assembly Bill 617 Community Action Plans

AB 617 (C. Garcia, Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017) was signed into law in July 2017 to develop a new community-focused program to reduce exposure more effectively to air pollution and preserve public health in environmental justice communities. AB 617 directs CARB and all local air districts to take measures to protect communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution through monitoring and implementing air pollution control strategies.

On September 27, 2018, CARB approved BAAQMD's recommended communities for monitoring and emission reduction planning. The State approved communities for year 1 of the program as well as communities that would move forward over the next five years. Bay Area recommendations included all the CARE areas, areas with large sources of air pollution (e.g., refineries, seaports, and airports), areas identified via statewide screening tools as having pollution and/or health burden vulnerability, and areas with low life expectancy (BAAQMD 2019a).

■ Year 1 Communities:

- *West Oakland.* The West Oakland community was selected for BAAQMD's first Community Action Plan. In 2017, cancer risk from sources in West Oakland (local sources) was 204 in a million. The primary sources of air pollution in West Oakland include heavy trucks and cars, port and rail sources, large industries, and to a lesser extent other sources such as residential sources (i.e., wood burning). The majority (over 90 percent) of cancer risk is from DPM (BAAQMD 2019b).
- *Richmond.* Richmond was selected for a community monitoring plan in year 1 of the AB 617 program. In December 2023, BAAQMD released the draft Path to Clean Air Community Emissions Reduction Plan (PTCA Plan) for Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo communities. It also includes the following unincorporated areas in Contra Costa County: Bay View, East Richmond Heights, Rollingwood, Tara Hills, Montalvin Manor, North Richmond, and El Sobrante. The PTCA Plan

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

includes measures and strategies to be implemented over the next ten years by state, regional, and local agencies to reduce pollution exposure and emissions in the community (BAAQMD 2023a).

- Year 2 to 5 Communities: East Oakland/San Leandro, Eastern San Francisco, the Pittsburg-Bay Point area, San Jose, Tri-Valley, and Vallejo are slated for action in years 2 to 5 of the AB 617 program (BAAQMD 2019a).

BAAQMD Rules and Regulations

Regulation 7, Odorous Substances

Sources of objectionable odors may occur within the unincorporated county. BAAQMD's Regulation 7, Odorous Substances, places general limitations on odorous substances and specific emission limitations on certain odorous compounds. Odors are also regulated under BAAQMD Regulation 1, Rule 1-301, *Public Nuisance*, which states that "no person shall discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or the public; or which endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which causes, or has a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property." Under BAAQMD's Rule 1-301, a facility that receives three or more violation notices within a 30-day period can be declared a public nuisance.

Other BAAQMD Regulations

In addition to the plans and programs described above, BAAQMD administers a number of specific regulations on various sources of pollutant emissions that would apply to the proposed project:

- Regulation 2, Rule 2, Permits, New Source Review
- Regulation 2, Rule 5, New Source Review of Toxic Air Contaminants
- Regulation 2, Rule 6, Permits, Major Facility Review
- Regulation 6, Rule 1, General Requirements
- Regulation 6, Rule 2, Commercial Cooking Equipment
- Regulation 8, Rule 3, Architectural Coatings
- Regulation 8, Rule 4, General Solvent and Surface Coatings Operations
- Regulation 11, Rule 2, Asbestos, Demolition, Renovation and Manufacturing

Plan Bay Area 2050

MTC and ABAG adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 on October 21, 2021 (ABAG/MTC 2021). Plan Bay Area provides transportation and environmental strategies to continue to meet the regional transportation-related GHG reduction goals of SB 375, which is described further in Section 5.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, of this Draft EIR. Strategies to reduce GHG emissions include focusing housing and commercial construction in walkable, transit-accessible places; investing in transit and active transportation; and shifting the location of jobs to encourage shorter commutes. To achieve MTC's/ABAG's sustainable vision for the Bay Area, the Plan Bay Area land use concept plan for the region concentrates the majority of new population and employment growth in the region in Priority Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs are transit-oriented, infill development opportunity areas within existing communities. An overarching goal of the regional plan is to concentrate

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

development in areas where there are existing services and infrastructure rather than allocate new growth to outlying areas where substantial transportation investments would be necessary to achieve the per capita passenger vehicle, VMT, and associated GHG emissions reductions.

Local

Contra Costa Transportation Authority Congestion Management Plan

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) prepares and adopts a Congestion Management Program (CMP) for Contra Costa County every two years. The 2021 CMP is the 15th biennial update of the CMP (CCTA 2021). The CMP provides a roadmap to reduce congestion, improve mobility, and increase overall sustainability of the transportation system in the county. The 2021 update also documents changes in the use of level of service (LOS) as a finding of significant impact in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under SB 743, which is described further in Section 5.16, *Transportation*, of this Draft EIR. Consistent with State law and the MTC's Regional Transportation Plan, the CMP contains the following components: traffic LOS standards, a performance element to evaluate current and future multi-modal system performances, a seven-year capital improvement program (CIP), a program to analyze the impacts of land use decisions, and a travel demand element to promote more transportation alternatives.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

The Contra Costa County Ordinance Code includes various directives to minimize adverse impacts to air quality in Contra Costa County.

Most provisions related to air quality impacts are included in Title 7, *Building Regulations*, and Title 8, *Zoning*, as follows:

- Chapter 74-2, *Adoption*, in Title 7, *Building Regulations*, incorporates the CCR Title 24, Part 11, CALGreen.
- Chapter 84-52, *R-B Retail Business District*, in Title 8, *Zoning*, establishes that no odors created by an industrial or processing operation shall be perceptible at the property site boundaries.
- Ordinance No. 2022-02, *All-Electric Ordinance (New Construction)*, recently amended Title 7, *Building Regulations*, to require the following building types to be all-electric:
 - Residential (including single-family and multi-family buildings)
 - Detached Accessory Dwelling Units
 - Hotel
 - Office
 - Retail
- Ordinance No. 450-8, *Industrial Safety Ordinance*, expands on the California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CalARP) in the county, which addresses accidental releases of air toxins. Four facilities in the unincorporated county are currently subject to the County's Industrial Safety Ordinance (ISO): Phillips 66 Rodeo Refinery, Air Liquide-Rodeo Hydrogen Plant, PBF Energy - Martinez Refining Company (MRC) [formerly Shell Oil Martinez Refinery], and Air Products (within the MRC).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Climate Action Plan

The existing 2015 Climate Action Plan (CAP) identifies how the County will achieve the AB 32 GHG emissions reduction target of 15 percent below baseline levels by the year 2020, in addition to supporting other public health, energy efficiency, water conservation, and air quality goals identified in the County's existing General Plan and other existing policy documents.

5.3.1.4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin Conditions

California is divided geographically into air basins for the purpose of managing the air resources of the State on a regional basis. An air basin generally has similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. The State is divided into 15 air basins. Contra Costa County is in the SFBAAB. The discussion below identifies the natural factors in the Air Basin that affect air pollution. Air pollutants of concern are criteria air pollutants and TACs. Federal, State, and local air districts have adopted laws and regulations intended to control and improve air quality.

BAAQMD is the regional air quality agency for the SFBAAB, which comprises all of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties; the southern portion of Sonoma County; and the southwestern portion of Solano County. Air quality in this area is determined by such natural factors as topography, meteorology, and climate, in addition to the presence of existing air pollution sources and ambient conditions (BAAQMD 2017a).

Meteorology

The SFBAAB is characterized by complex terrain, consisting of coastal mountain ranges, inland valleys, and bays, which distort normal wind flow patterns. The Coast Range¹ splits in the Bay Area, creating a western coast gap, the Golden Gate, and an eastern coast gap, the Carquinez Strait, which allows air to flow in and out of the Bay Area and the Central Valley. The climate is dominated by the strength and location of a semi-permanent, subtropical high-pressure cell. During the summer, the Pacific high-pressure cell is centered over the northeastern Pacific Ocean, resulting in stable meteorological conditions and a steady northwesterly wind flow. Upwelling of cold ocean water from below the surface because of the northwesterly flow produces a band of cold water off the California coast. The cool and moisture-laden air approaching the coast from the Pacific Ocean is further cooled by the presence of the cold-water band, resulting in condensation and the presence of fog and stratus clouds along the Northern California coast. In the winter, the Pacific high-pressure cell weakens and shifts southward, resulting in wind flow offshore, the absence of upwelling, and the occurrence of storms. Weak inversions coupled with moderate winds result in a low air pollution potential.

¹ The Coast Range traverses California's west coast from Humboldt County to Santa Barbara County.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Wind Patterns

During the summer, winds flowing from the northwest are drawn inland through the Golden Gate and over the lower portions of the San Francisco Peninsula. Immediately south of Mount Tamalpais in Marin County, the northwesterly winds accelerate considerably and come more directly from the west as they stream through the Golden Gate. This channeling of wind through the Golden Gate produces a jet that sweeps eastward and splits off to the northwest toward Richmond and to the southwest toward San José when it meets the East Bay hills. Wind speeds may be strong locally in areas where air is channeled through a narrow opening, such as the Carquinez Strait, the Golden Gate, or the San Bruno gap.

The air flowing in from the coast to the Central Valley, called the sea breeze, begins developing at or near ground level along the coast in late morning or early afternoon and the sea breeze deepens and increases in velocity while spreading inland. Under normal atmospheric conditions, the air in the lower atmosphere is warmer than the air above it. In the winter, the SFBAAB frequently experiences stormy conditions with moderate to strong winds, as well as periods of stagnation with very light winds. Winter stagnation episodes (i.e., conditions where there is little mixing, which occurs when there is a lack of or little wind) are characterized by nighttime drainage flows in coastal valleys. Drainage is a reversal of the usual daytime air-flow patterns; air moves from the Central Valley toward the coast and back down toward the Bay from the smaller valleys within the SFBAAB.

Temperature

Summertime temperatures in the Air Basin are determined in large part by the effect of differential heating between land and water surfaces. Because land tends to heat up and cool off more quickly than water, a large-scale gradient (differential) in temperature is often created between the coast and the Central Valley, and small-scale local gradients are often produced along the shorelines of the ocean and bays. The temperature gradient near the ocean is also exaggerated, especially in summer, because of the upwelling of cold water from the ocean bottom along the coast. On summer afternoons, the temperatures at the coast can be 35 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) cooler than temperatures 15 to 20 miles inland; at night, this contrast usually decreases to less than 10°F. In the winter, the relationship of minimum and maximum temperatures is reversed. During the daytime the temperature contrast between the coast and inland areas is small, whereas at night the variation in temperature is large.

Precipitation

The Air Basin is characterized by moderately wet winters and dry summers. Winter rains (November through March) account for about 75 percent of the average annual rainfall. The amount of annual precipitation can vary greatly from one part of the Air Basin to another, even within short distances. In general, total annual rainfall can reach 40 inches in the mountains, but it is often less than 16 inches in sheltered valleys.

During rainy periods, ventilation (rapid horizontal movement of air and injection of cleaner air) and vertical mixing (an upward and downward movement of air) are usually high, and thus pollution levels tend to be low (i.e., air pollutants are dispersed more readily into the atmosphere rather than accumulate under stagnant

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

conditions). However, during the winter, frequent dry periods do occur, where mixing and ventilation are low and pollutant levels build up.

Wind Circulation

Low wind speed contributes to the buildup of air pollution because it allows more pollutants to be emitted into the air mass per unit of time. Light winds occur most frequently during periods of low sun (fall and winter, and early morning) and at night. These are also periods when air pollutant emissions from some sources are at their peak, namely, commuter traffic (early morning) and wood-burning appliances (nighttime). The problem can be compounded in valleys, when weak flows carry the pollutants up-valley during the day, and cold air drainage flows move the air mass down-valley at night. Such restricted movement of trapped air provides little opportunity for ventilation and leads to buildup of pollutants to potentially unhealthful levels.

Inversions

An inversion is a layer of warmer air over a layer of cooler air. Inversions affect air quality conditions significantly because they influence the mixing depth (i.e., the vertical depth in the atmosphere available for diluting air contaminants near the ground). There are two types of inversions that occur regularly in the SFBAAB. Elevation inversions² are more common in the summer and fall, and radiation inversions³ are more common during the winter. The highest air pollutant concentrations in the SFBAAB generally occur during inversions.

Attainment Status of the SFBAAB

The AQMP provides the framework for air quality basins to achieve attainment of the State and federal AAQS through the State Implementation Plan. Areas that meet AAQS are classified as attainment areas, and areas that do not meet these standards are classified as nonattainment areas. Severity classifications for O₃ range from marginal, moderate, and serious to severe and extreme.

- **Unclassified:** A pollutant is designated unclassified if the data are incomplete and do not support a designation of attainment or nonattainment.
- **Attainment:** A pollutant is in attainment if the AAQS for that pollutant was not violated at any site in the area during a three-year period.
- **Nonattainment:** A pollutant is in nonattainment if there was at least one violation of an AAQS for that pollutant in the area.
- **Nonattainment/Transitional:** A subcategory of the nonattainment designation. An area is designated nonattainment/transitional to signify that the area is close to attaining the AAQS for that pollutant.

² When the air blows over elevated areas, it is heated as it is compressed into the side of the hill/mountain. When that warm air comes over the top, it is warmer than the cooler air of the valley.

³ During the night, the ground cools off, radiating the heat to the sky.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

The attainment status for the SFBAAB is shown in Table 5.3-4, *Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin*. The SFBAAB is currently designated a nonattainment area for California and National O₃, California and National PM_{2.5}, and California PM₁₀ AAQS.

Table 5.3-4 Attainment Status of Criteria Air Pollutants in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin

Pollutant	State	Federal
Ozone – 1-hour	Nonattainment	Classification revoked (2005)
Ozone – 8-hour	Nonattainment (serious)	Nonattainment (marginal) ¹
PM ₁₀	Nonattainment	Unclassified/Attainment ²
PM _{2.5}	Nonattainment	Unclassified/Attainment
CO	Attainment	Attainment
NO ₂	Attainment	Unclassified
SO ₂	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfates	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
All others	Unclassified/Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment

Source: CARB 2023a.

¹ Severity classification current as of February 13, 2017.

² In December 2014, US EPA issued final area designations for the 2012 primary annual PM_{2.5} National AAQS. Areas designated “unclassifiable/attainment” must continue to take steps to prevent their air quality from deteriorating to unhealthy levels. The effective date of this standard is April 15, 2015.

Existing Ambient Air Quality

Existing levels of ambient air quality and historical trends and projections in the county are best documented by measurements taken by BAAQMD. BAAQMD has 24 permanent monitoring stations around the Bay Area. The nearest station is the Concord-2975 Treat Blvd Monitoring Station, which monitors O₃, NO₂, and PM_{2.5}. Data from this monitoring station is summarized in Table 5.3-5, *Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary*. The data show that the area regularly exceeds the State and federal one-hour, eight-hour O₃ standards and federal PM_{2.5}, and occasionally exceeds the State and federal PM₁₀ in the last five recorded years.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-5 Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary

Pollutant/Standard	Number of Days Thresholds Were Exceeded and Maximum Levels				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Ozone (O₃)					
State 1-Hour \geq 0.09 ppm (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	2	1
State & Federal 8-hour \geq 0.070 ppm (days exceed threshold)	0	0	2	3	1
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.082	0.077	0.092	0.108	0.096
Max. 8-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.070	0.061	0.074	0.083	0.077
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)					
State 1-Hour \geq 0.18 ppm (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	0	0
Federal 1-Hour \geq 0.100 ppm (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	0	0
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.0406	0.0383	0.0406	0.0339	0.0290
Coarse Particulates (PM₁₀)					
State 24-Hour $>$ 50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (days exceed threshold)	0	1	0	1	0
Federal 24-Hour $>$ 150 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (days exceed threshold)	0	0	0	1	0
Max. 24-Hour Conc. ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	41.2	99.3	34.8	165.4	25.0
Fine Particulates (PM_{2.5})					
Federal 24-Hour $>$ 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (days exceed threshold)	6	14	0	16	2
Max. 24-Hour Conc. ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	89.4	180.0	28.2	119.8	43.7

Source: CARB 2023c.

ppm = parts per million; parts per billion, $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ = micrograms per cubic meter

Data for O₃, NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} obtained from the Concord-2975 Treat Blvd Monitoring Station.

Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. Sensitive population groups include children, the elderly, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill, especially those with cardiorespiratory diseases. BAAQMD defines sensitive receptors as “Facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples include schools, hospitals and residential areas” (BAAQMD 2023b).

Residential areas are also considered sensitive receptors to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present. Other sensitive receptors include retirement facilities, hospitals, and schools. Recreational land uses are considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Although exposure periods are generally short, exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation. Industrial, commercial, retail, and office areas are considered the least sensitive to air pollution. Exposure periods are relatively short and intermittent, as the majority of the workers tend to stay indoors most of the time. In addition, the working population is generally the healthiest segment of the public.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Environmental Justice Communities

Disadvantaged communities identified by CES (i.e., environmental justice communities) may be disproportionately affected by and vulnerable to poor air quality.^{4, 5} The CES cumulative score is a cumulative measure of overall environmental justice burden based on 24 indicators, including pollution, social, and health indicators, four of which specifically relate to air quality or air pollution. Within Contra Costa County, there are the following identified sensitive community types, which are areas that are disproportionately burdened by pollution:

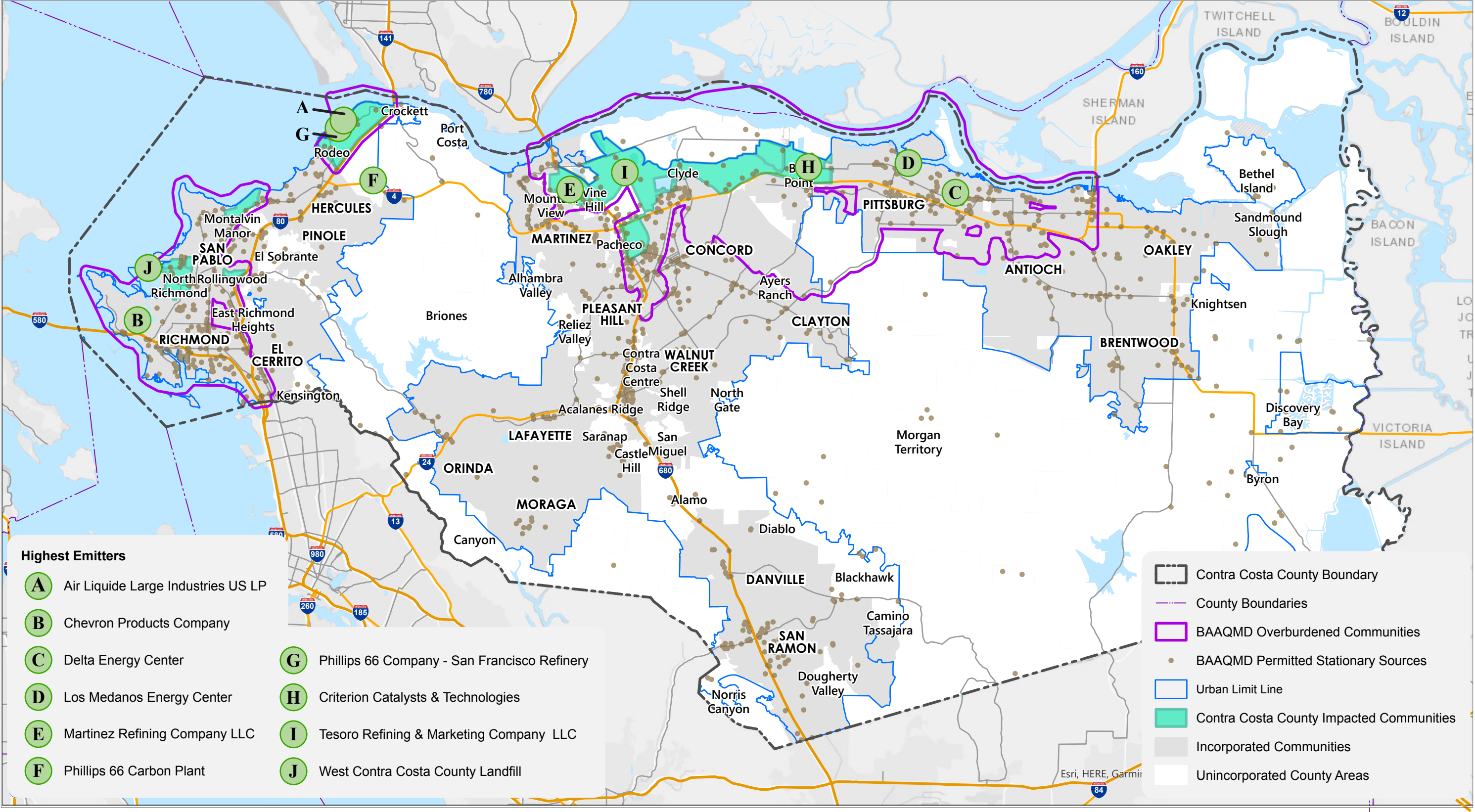
- Contra Costa County Impacted Communities
- BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities
- BAAQMD's AB 617 Community – Richmond

Figure 5.3-1, *Overburdened and Impacted Communities and Community Emitters*, shows these sensitive community types, the location of the top ten highest emitters, and BAAQMD permitted stationary sources. Both BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities and Contra Costa County's Impacted Communities were mapped using CES Version 4. CES measures pollution and population characteristics using 21 indicators, such as air quality, hazardous waste sites, asthma rates, and poverty. It applies a formula to each census tract in the state to generate a score that ranks the level of cumulative impacts in each area relative to the rest of the census tracts in the state. Contra Costa County's Impacted Communities designation is applied to unincorporated areas that score at or above the 72nd percentile, whereas BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities designation is applied to census tracts that score at or above the 70th percentile, plus areas within 1,000 feet of any such census tract. As a result, BAAQMD's Overburdened Community designation is more encompassing of sensitive populations, and is therefore used in the impact analysis.

⁴ Under SB 535, disadvantaged communities are defined as the top 25 percent scoring areas from CES along with other areas with high amounts of pollution and low populations.

⁵ CES 4.0. Indicator maps can be found at: <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

AIR QUALITY



Source: BAAQMD, 2013; OEHHA CalEnvironScreen 4.0, 2021; Contra Costa County, 2022.



Figure 5.3-1
Overburdened and Impacted Communities and Community Emitters

5. Environmental Analysis
AIR QUALITY

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

AB 617 Community – Richmond Area

Figure 5.3-1 also identifies the AB 617 community. The Richmond Area includes most of Richmond and San Pablo and adjacent communities such as North Richmond, Montalvin Manor, parts of Tara Hills, El Sobrante, and the Richmond Annex. Residents in the Richmond Area are exposed to a substantial and complex mix of air pollutants. Industrial sources of air pollution include a petroleum refinery, a chemical plant, a coal and petroleum coke terminal, organic liquid storage and distribution facilities, wastewater treatment plants, a landfill, organic waste metal facilities, and industrial and manufacturing plants of various sizes. Also, numerous smaller sources of air pollution are within residential areas, including auto body shops, paint shops, restaurants, and gas stations.

Mobile sources contribute air pollution, including DPM, to the area as well, including traffic on high volume freeways and roadways, such as Interstate (I) 80, I-580, the Richmond Parkway, and San Pablo Avenue; truck operations related to large distribution facilities; seaport operations; railways; and railyards. In total, there are more than 200 permitted emissions sources distributed throughout the Richmond Area (BAAQMD 2020). The community air monitoring program for the Richmond Area identified several areas with higher levels of different VOCs, likely due to specific nearby facilities and operations or a prevalence of combustion-related sources of VOCs like high-traffic corridors and restaurants (BAAQMD 2022).

CalEnviroScreen Air Quality Indicators

CES is a mapping tool that helps identify the California communities most affected by many sources of pollution and where people are especially vulnerable to pollution's effects. People in environmental justice areas identified by CES 4.0 may be disproportionately affected by and vulnerable to poor air quality. CES's "pollution burden" map identifies communities that are exposed to pollution from human activities, such as air pollution (ozone, PM_{2.5}, DPM), water pollution (drinking water contaminants), and hazardous materials (pesticide use, children's lead exposure, toxic releases), and traffic density. Figure 5.3-2, *CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Pollution Burden Percentile*, shows the pollution burden in the county relative to the rest of the state. In CES, the pollution burden score considers the disproportionate effect of pollution on environmental justice communities, because the score weighs socioeconomic factors (e.g., educational attainment and poverty) and sensitivity of the population (e.g., asthma rates and cardiovascular disease).

Although the causes of asthma are poorly understood, it is well established that exposure to traffic and outdoor air pollutants can trigger asthma attacks. Children, the elderly, and low-income Californians suffer disproportionately from asthma (CalEPA 2017). Figure 5.3-3, *CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Asthma Percentile*, maps the percentile of spatially modeled, age-adjusted rate of emergency department visits for asthma per 10,000 (averaged over 2015-2017) relative to the rest of the state (OEHHA 2023).

Figure 5.3-4, *CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – Diesel Particulate Matter Percentile*, and Figure 5.3-5, *CalEnviroScreen 4.0 – PM_{2.5} Percentile* provides an estimate of the percentile of DPM and PM_{2.5} in the county relative to the rest of the state. The PM_{2.5} percentile displays the annual mean concentration of PM_{2.5} (weighted average of measured monitor concentrations and satellite observations, µg/m³) over three years (2015 to 2017). DPM percentile is based on spatial distribution of gridded DPM emissions from on-road and non-road sources in 2016 (tons/year). Exposure to DPM has been shown to have numerous adverse health effects including irritation to

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

the eyes, throat, and nose; cardiovascular and pulmonary disease; and lung cancer. California regulations enacted since 1990 have led to a steady decline in diesel emissions. Particulate matter pollution, and fine particle (PM_{2.5}) pollution in particular, has been shown to cause numerous adverse health effects, including heart and lung disease (OEHHA 2021).

Other indicators identified by CES can be found in the proposed General Plan Stronger Communities Element, including:

- Figure SC-3, Cardiovascular Disease Rankings Relative to the State
- Figure SC-4, Low Birth Weight Rankings Relative to the State
- Figure SC-5, Children's Lead Risk from Housing Ranking Relative to the State
- Figure SC-6, Poverty Rankings Relative to the State
- Figure SC-7, Adults Without a High School Degree Rankings Relative to the State

Existing Emissions

Table 5.3-6, *Contra Costa County Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory*, identifies the existing criteria air pollutant emissions inventory using emission rates for year 2019 (baseline). The inventories are based on existing land uses in the county. The Year 2019 inventory represents the projected emissions currently generated by existing land uses using the baseline year 2019 emission factors for on-road vehicles and emissions from off-road construction equipment.

Table 5.3-6 Contra Costa County Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory

Sector	Existing Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (tons per year)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Transportation ¹	41	207	26	10
Energy ²	11	206	15	15
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	758	15	115	115
Off-Road Equipment ³	3	3	0	0
Consumer Products ⁴	444			
Total	1,256	431	156	140
Sector	Existing Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (lbs per day)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Transportation ¹	234	1,193	151	57
Energy ²	60	1,129	84	84
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	4,152	84	629	629
Area –Off-Road Equipment ³	17	16	1	1
Area – Consumer Products ⁴	2,432			
Total	6,895	2,422	865	771

Notes:

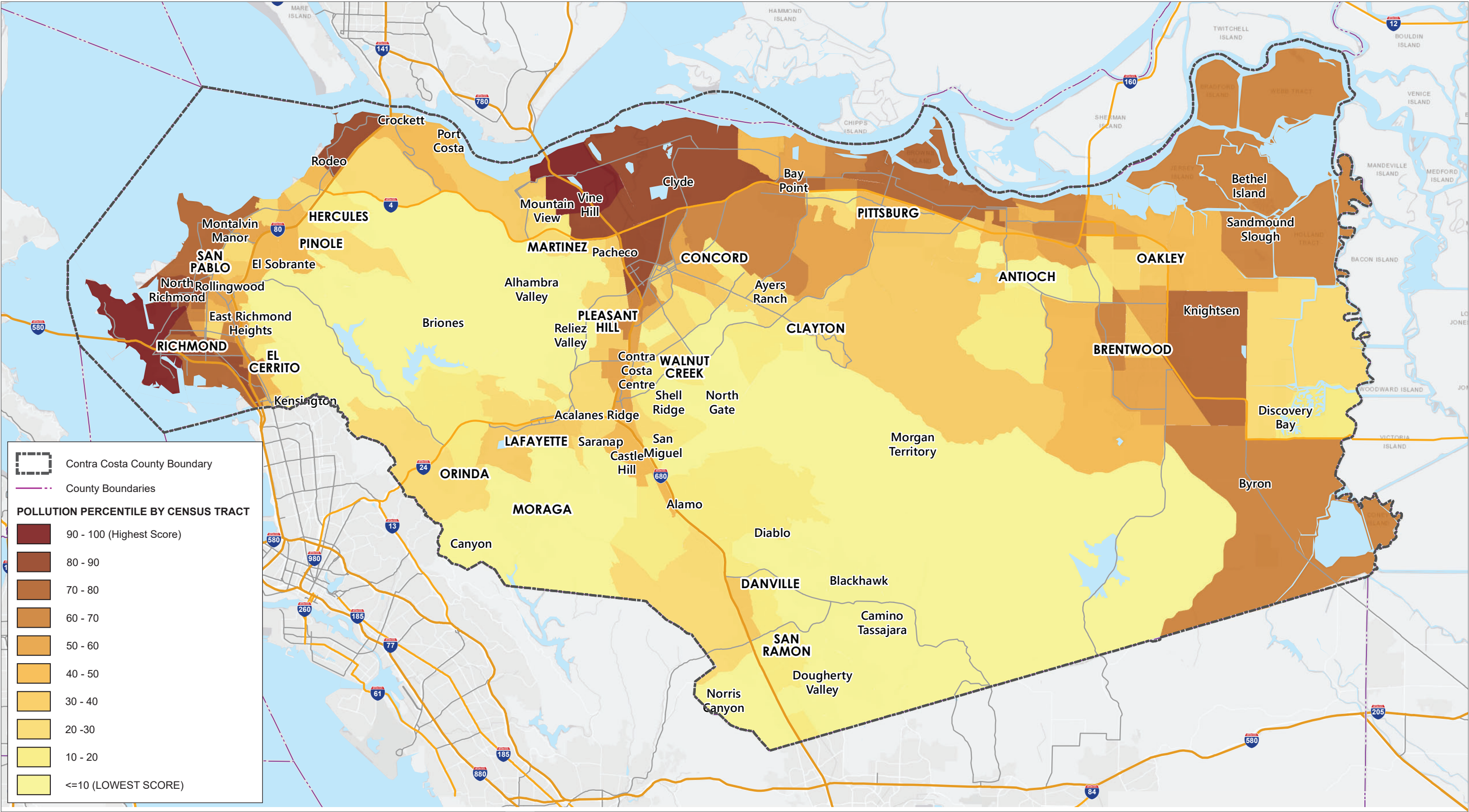
¹ EMFAC2021 V.1.0.2. Based on daily VMT provided by Fehr & Peers (see Appendix 5.3-1).

² Based on natural gas use provided by PG&E and residential fuels identified for the CAP Update.

³ OFFROAD2021 V.1.02.

⁴ Based on CalEEMod User's Guide methodology to calculate VOC emissions from use of household consumer cleaning products.

AIR QUALITY



0 3.5
Scale (Miles)



Figure 5.3-2
CalEnvironScreen 4.0 – Pollution Burden Percentile

AIR QUALITY

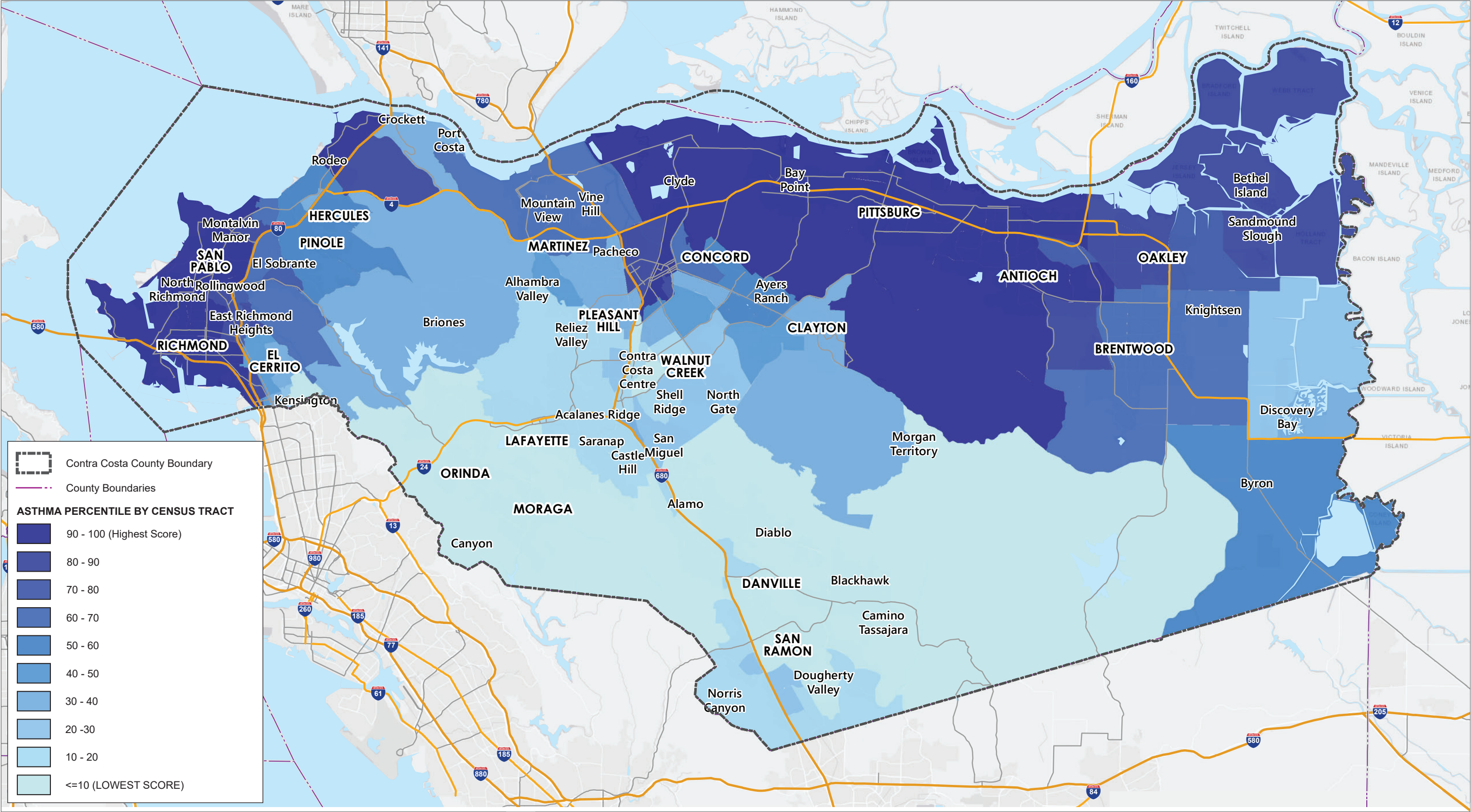
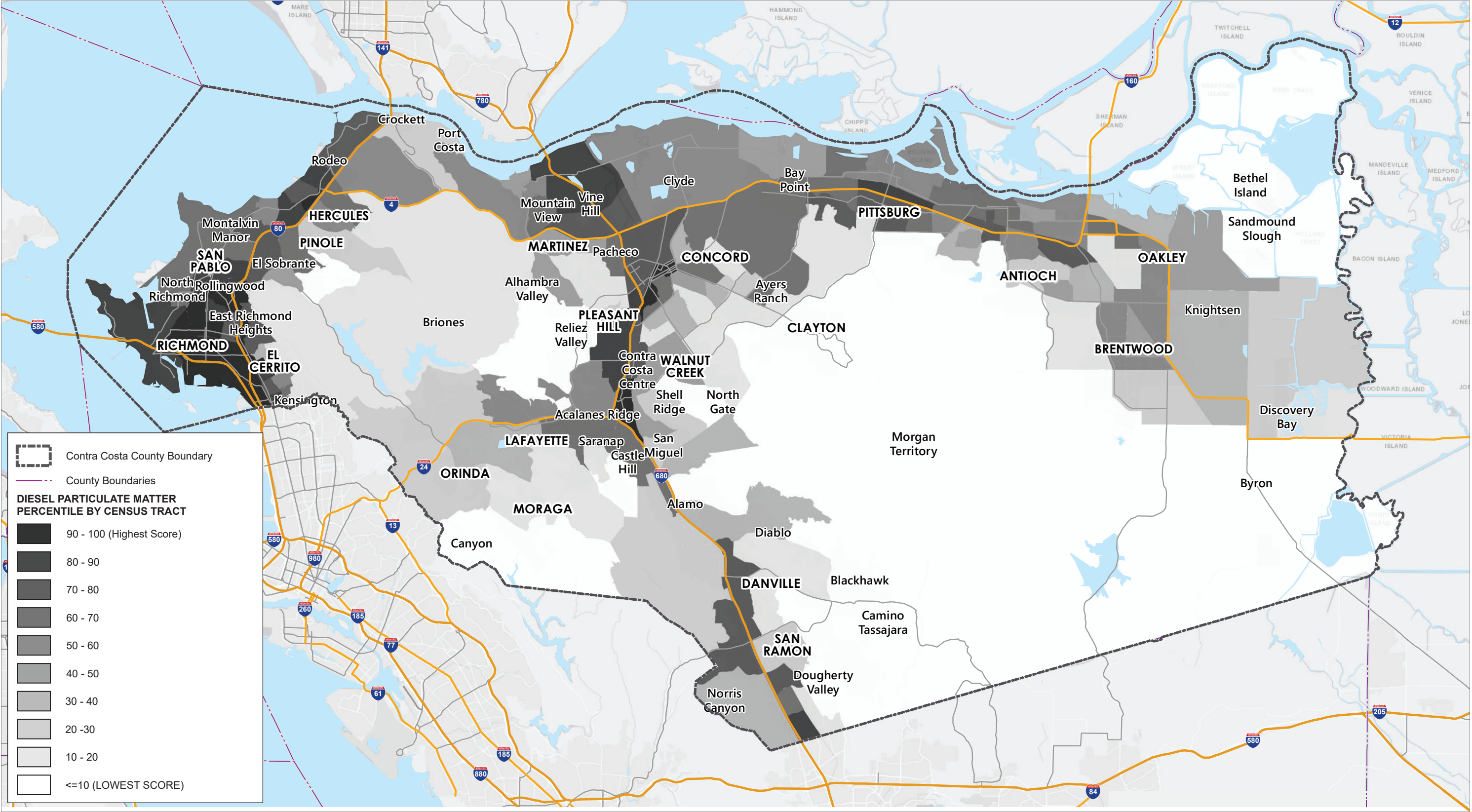


Figure 5.3-3
CalEnvironScreen 4.0 – Asthma Percentile

AIR QUALITY

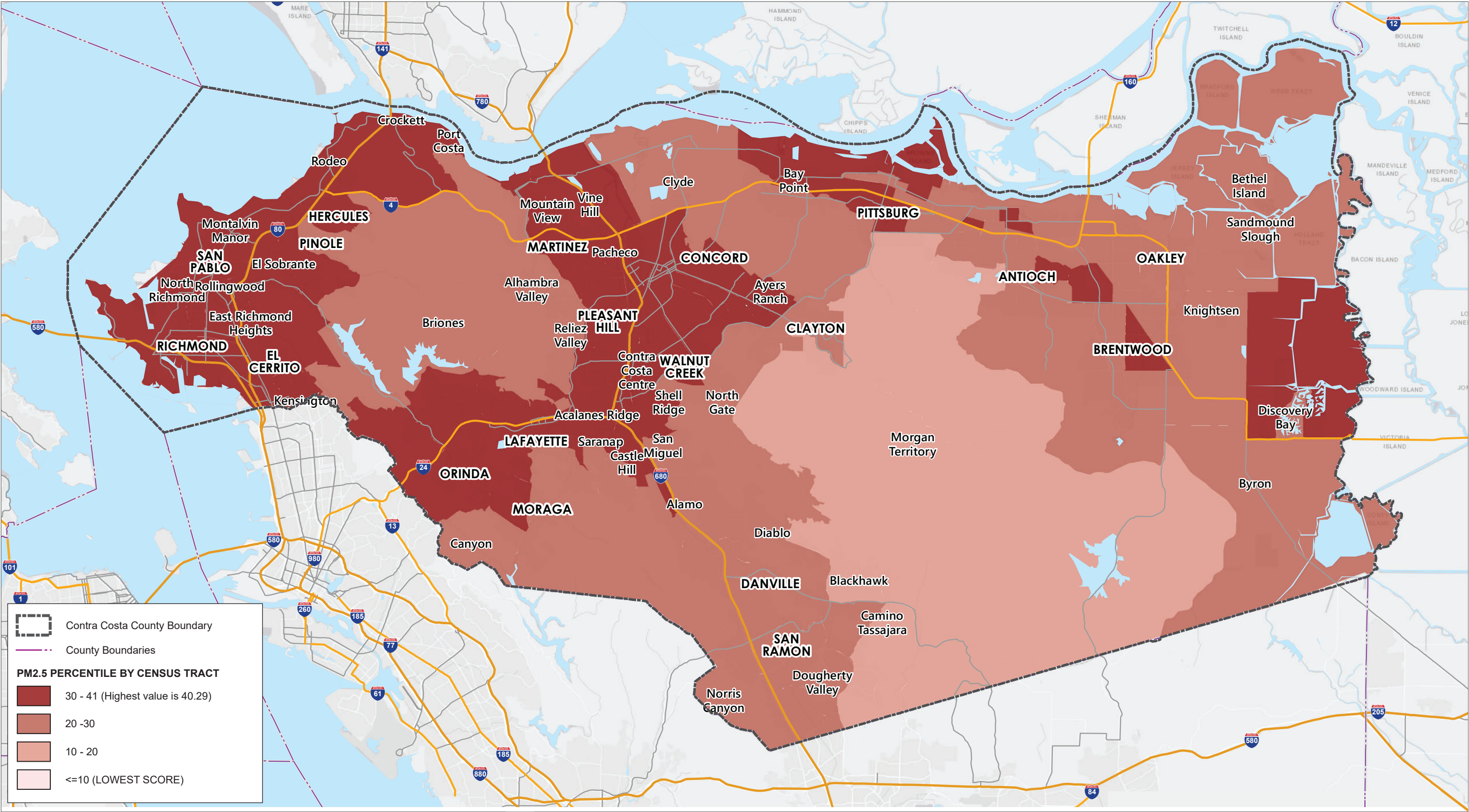


Source: OEHHA CalEnvironScreen 4.0, 2021.



Figure 5.3-4
CalEnvironScreen 4.0 – Diesel Particulate Matter Percentile

AIR QUALITY



Source: OEHHA CalEnvironScreen 4.0, 2021.



Figure 5.3-5
CalEnvironScreen 4.0 – PM2.5 Percentile

5. Environmental Analysis AIR QUALITY

5.3.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- AQ-1 Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- AQ-2 Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State AAQS.
- AQ-3 Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- AQ-4 Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

5.3.2.1 BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT THRESHOLDS

The BAAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* were prepared to assist in the evaluation of air quality impacts of projects and plans proposed within the Bay Area. The guidelines provide recommended procedures for evaluating potential air impacts during the environmental review process, consistent with CEQA requirements, and include recommended thresholds of significance, mitigation measures, and background air quality information. They also include recommended assessment methodologies for air toxins, odors, GHG emissions, and environmental justice.

In June 2010, BAAQMD's Board of Directors adopted CEQA thresholds of significance and an update of the CEQA Guidelines. These thresholds are designed to establish the level at which the BAAQMD believed air pollution emissions would cause significant environmental impacts under CEQA. BAAQMD published a new version of the Guidelines in April 2023. This latest version of the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines was used to prepare the analysis in this EIR.

Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions and Precursors

Regional Significance Criteria

BAAQMD's regional significance criteria for projects that exceed the screening thresholds are shown in Table 5.3-7, *BAAQMD Regional (Mass Emissions) Criteria Air Pollutant Significance Thresholds*. Criteria for both the construction and operational phases of the project are shown.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-7 BAAQMD Regional (Mass Emissions) Criteria Air Pollutant Significance Thresholds

Air Pollutant	Construction Phase	Operational Phase	
	Average Daily Emissions (lbs/day)	Average Daily Emissions (lbs/day)	Maximum Annual Emissions (Tons/year)
Project-Level			
ROG	54	54	10
NO _x	54	54	10
PM ₁₀	82 (Exhaust)	82	15
PM _{2.5}	54 (Exhaust)	54	10
PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5} Fugitive Dust	Best Management Practices	None	None
Plan-Level			
All Criteria Air Pollutants	No Net Increase		

Source: BAAQMD 2023b.

The proposed project is a regional plan; regional plans would have a less-than-significant impact related to air quality if they demonstrate ‘no net increase’ in criteria air pollutants and risks and hazards. To demonstrate no net increase, BAAQMD’s Guidelines require two comparative analyses for the projected future emissions:

- **Scenario 1: Project to Existing Conditions (base-to-future-year comparison).** Compare the existing (base year) emissions with projected future year emissions plus the regional plan’s emissions (base year/regional plan comparison).
- **Scenario 2: Project to Future No Project Conditions (future baseline comparison)** Compare projected future year emissions with projected future year emissions plus the regional plan’s emissions (no regional plan/regional plan comparison). This scenario isolates changes in emissions due solely to the project since both the scenarios consider emissions reductions from federal and State regulations.

If both comparative analyses demonstrate no net increase in emissions, the air quality and GHG impacts of the regional plan would be less than significant.

Health Effects of Criteria Air Pollutants

If projects exceed the emissions in Table 5.3-7, their emissions would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment status and would contribute in elevating health effects associated to these criteria air pollutants. Known health effects related to ozone include worsening of bronchitis, asthma, and emphysema and a decrease in lung function. Health effects associated with particulate matter include premature death of people with heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Reducing emissions would further contribute to reducing possible health effects related to criteria air pollutants.

However, for projects that exceed the emissions in Table 5.3-7, it is speculative to determine how exceeding the regional thresholds would affect the number of days the region is in nonattainment since mass emissions are not correlated with concentrations of emissions or how many additional individuals in the air basin would be affected by the health effects cited above. BAAQMD is the primary agency responsible for ensuring the health and welfare of sensitive individuals to elevated concentrations of air quality in the Air Basin, and at the present

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

time, it has not provided methodology to assess the specific correlation between mass emissions generated and the effect on health in order to address the issue raised in *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno (Friant Ranch, L.P.)* (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502, Case No. S21978 (Friant Ranch).

Ozone concentrations depend on a variety of complex factors, including the presence of sunlight and precursor pollutants, natural topography, nearby structures that cause building downwash, atmospheric stability, and wind patterns. Because of the complexities of predicting ground-level ozone concentrations in relation to the National and California AAQS, it is not possible to link health risks to the magnitude of emissions exceeding the significance thresholds. To achieve the health-based standards established by the EPA, the air districts prepare AQMPs that detail regional programs to attain the AAQS. However, if a project within the Plan Area exceeds the regional significance thresholds, the project could contribute to an increase in health effects in the basin until such time the attainment standards are met in the Air Basin.

CO Hotspots

Congested intersections have the potential to create elevated concentrations of CO, referred to as CO hotspots. The significance criteria for CO hotspots are based on the California AAQS for CO, which are 9.0 ppm (8-hour average) and 20.0 ppm (1-hour average). With the turnover of older vehicles, introduction of cleaner fuels, and implementation of control technology, the SFBAAB is in attainment of the California and National AAQS, and CO concentrations in the SFBAAB have steadily declined. Because CO concentrations have improved, the BAAQMD does not require a CO hotspot analysis if the following criteria are met (BAAQMD 2023b):

- The project is consistent with an applicable congestion management program established by the County Congestion Management Agency for designated roads or highways, the regional transportation plan, and local congestion management agency plans.
- The project would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour.
- The project traffic would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersection to more than 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited (e.g., tunnel, parking garage, bridge underpass, natural or urban street canyon, and below-grade roadway).

Community Risk and Hazards

BAAQMD's significance thresholds for local community risk and hazard impacts apply to both the siting of a new source and to the siting of a new receptor. Local community risk and hazard impacts are associated with TACs and PM_{2.5} because emissions of these pollutants can have significant health impacts at the local level. The proposed project would generate TACs and PM_{2.5} during construction activities that could elevate concentrations of air pollutants at the nearby sensitive receptors. The thresholds for construction-related local community risk and hazard impacts are the same as for project operations. BAAQMD has adopted screening tables for air toxics evaluation during construction (BAAQMD 2010b). Construction-related TAC and PM_{2.5} impacts should be addressed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the specific construction-related characteristics of each project and proximity to off-site and on-site receptors, as applicable (BAAQMD 2010b and BAAQMD 2017a).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Community Risk and Hazards: Project

Project-level emissions of TACs or PM_{2.5} from individual sources that exceed any of the thresholds listed below are considered a potentially significant community health risk in the absence of a qualified community risk reduction plan:

- An excess (i.e., increased) cancer risk level of more than 10 in one million⁶
- Noncancer (i.e., chronic or acute) hazard index greater than 1.0
- An incremental increase of greater than 0.3 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) annual average PM_{2.5} (BAAQMD 2023b)

Community Risk and Hazards: Cumulative

Cumulative sources represent the combined total risk values of each of the individual sources within the 1,000-foot evaluation zone. A project would have a cumulatively considerable impact if the aggregate total of all past, present, and foreseeable future sources within a 1,000-foot radius from the fence line of a source or location of a receptor, plus the contribution from the project, exceeds any of the following in the absence of a qualified community risk reduction plan:

- An excess cancer risk level of more than 100 in one million (from all sources)
- Chronic noncancer hazard index (from all local sources) greater than 10.0
- 0.8 µg/m³ annual average PM_{2.5} (from all local sources) (BAAQMD 2023b)

In February 2015, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) adopted new health risk assessment guidance that includes several efforts to be more protective of children's health. These updated procedures include the use of age sensitivity factors to account for the higher sensitivity of infants and young children to cancer causing chemicals, and age-specific breathing rate (OEHHA 2015).

Odors

BAAQMD's thresholds for odors are qualitative based on BAAQMD's Regulation 7, *Odorous Substances*. This rule places general limitations on odorous substances and specific emission limitations on certain odorous compounds. Odors are also regulated under BAAQMD Regulation 1, Rule 1-301, *Public Nuisance*, which states that no person shall discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or the public, or which endangers the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or has a natural tendency to cause, injury, or damage to business or property. Under BAAQMD's Rule 1-301. BAAQMD has established odor screening distance thresholds for land uses that have the potential to generate substantial odor complaints, including wastewater treatment plants, landfills or transfer stations, composting facilities, confined animal facilities, food manufacturing, and chemical plants (BAAQMD 2023b, Table 5-4, *Odor Screening Distances*).

⁶ The CEQA thresholds of significance do not reflect recent amendments adopted in 2021 to BAAQMD Regulation 2-5 that lower the cancer risk threshold to 6 cases in a million in overburdened communities.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

For a plan-level analysis, BAAQMD requires:

- Identification of potential existing and planned location of odors sources.
- Policies to reduce potential odor impacts in the plan area.

5.3.2.2 CONTRA COSTA COUNTY THRESHOLDS

Community Risk and Hazard

In addition to the BAAQMD thresholds identified above, the County has proposed the following policy in the General Plan that sets the incremental cancer risk threshold to 6.0 per million in Impacted Communities (compared to 10 in a million) in the unincorporated area:

- **HS-P2.1.** When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use an excess cancer risk of 6.0 per million and a non-cancer (acute and chronic) hazard index greater than 1.0 as thresholds for finding that the project could cause a cumulatively considerable contribution and a significant impact.

5.3.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.3.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to air quality. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Stronger Communities Element

- **Policy SC-P1.1:** In partnership with residents of Impacted Communities, affected workers, business/industry, environmental and environmental justice advocates, community colleges, workforce development and training entities, local government, and other involved agencies, support transition from petroleum refining and other highly polluting industries to a net-zero emission economy based on renewable and sustainable industries that provide living-wage jobs.
- **Policy SC-P1.3:** Support development of walkable districts that provide a range of neighborhood-serving retail and service uses, public amenities, and related infrastructure (such as lighting) to residents of Impacted Communities within walking distance of their homes.
- **Policy SC-P2.3:** Within established communities, complete construction of sidewalks and crosswalks and encourage neighborhood design and development that supports safe walking, biking, and other micro-mobility options, convenient access to services and transit, and opportunities for local shopping.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Action LU-A4.1:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to include requirements for Low-Impact Development, use of low-carbon concrete, water and energy conservation, reclaimed water, renewable energy use, green building, and other measures that reduce the environmental impacts of development, based on the best available science.
- **Policy LU-P8.4:** Support rehabilitation of commercial centers, encouraging improvements that enhance appearance, sustainability, and non-motorized (pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) access and safety.

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P1.2:** Prioritize expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to address the significant latent demand for these active transportation modes.
- **Policy TR-P1.3:** Ensure emerging transportation technologies and travel options, such as autonomous and ZEVs and transportation network companies, support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.4:** Reduce single-occupant vehicle usage, at a minimum using strategies defined in the TDM Ordinance.
- **Policy TR-P1.11:** Support transitioning all on-road vehicles, including personal vehicles and business, government, and public transit fleets, to electric power from renewable sources or other zero-emission fuels.
- **Policy TR-P1.12:** Continue to improve ZEV (including electric bicycle) charging/ fueling infrastructure within new development and public rights-of-way, incorporating new technologies whenever possible.
- **Policy TR-P1.13:** *Require designs for new parking facilities to incorporate ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure and maximize opportunities for adaptive reuse.*
- **Action TR-A1.11:** Coordinate with CCTA and other local and regional agencies to implement the Contra Costa Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint and related policies and apply best practices in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure requirements.
- **Action TR-A1.12:** Update the County Ordinance Code as necessary to support advances in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure, including for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.
- **Policy TR-P3.2:** Coordinate planning, construction, and maintenance of streets, transit infrastructure, non-motorized rights-of-way and associated facilities, the countywide bicycle network, and Pedestrian Priority Areas with neighboring jurisdictions and CCTA.
- **Policy TR-P4.1:** Plan, design, and maintain improvement projects involving County roadways in accordance with the County's adopted Complete Streets Policy, other applicable policies (e.g., Vision Zero and other safety initiatives), planning documents such as the County ATP and CCTA Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and best practices (e.g., Caltrans, American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials, and National Association of City Transportation Officials guidance).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Policy TR-P4.2:** *Require transportation infrastructure serving new development to be designed using best practices, contemplating existing and planned land uses, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit facilities, and connections to adjoining areas.*
- **Action TR-A5.1:** Partner with CCTA and neighboring jurisdictions to build out the countywide bicycle and pedestrian network, prioritizing completion of the Low-Stress Countywide Bicycle Network and pedestrian safety improvement projects in the County's Pedestrian Priority Areas, as described in the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- **Action TR-A5.2:** Construct innovative bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including Class IV separated and protected bikeways, bicycle superhighways, and other low-stress facility types, as described in the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and in contemporary, best-practice transportation planning and engineering guidance. Use contextually appropriate green infrastructure and landscaping to separate vehicular lanes from bicycle and pedestrian facilities whenever feasible.

Conservation and Open Space Element

- **Policy COS-P2.11:** Support efforts to protect, maintain, and improve soil health as a carbon sequestration tool.
- **Policy COS-P5.1:** Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- **Action COS-A5.1:** Inventory wetlands, floodplains, marshlands, and adjacent lands that could potentially support climate adaptation (e.g., through flood management, filtration, or other beneficial ecosystem services) and mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration).
- **Policy COS-P6.2:** Encourage planting and propagation of native trees throughout the county to enhance the natural landscape, provide shade, sustain wildlife, absorb stormwater, and sequester carbon.
- **Policy COS-P7.8:** Promote installation of drought-tolerant green infrastructure, including street trees, in landscaped public areas.
- **Policy COS-P14.1:** *Implement Climate Action Plan strategies to improve energy efficiency and conservation, promote carbon-free energy sources, and reduce energy-related GHG emissions.*

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P1.1:** Coordinate air quality planning efforts with State and regional agencies, such as CARB, BAAQMD, and ABAG/MTC.
- **Policy HS-P1.2:** Participate in emission and exposure reduction, public education, engagement, outreach, and other programs that promote improved air quality, focusing on Impacted Communities.
- **Policy HS-P1.3:** *Require new development to adhere to BAAQMD's Planning Healthy Places guidance when local conditions warrant.*
- **Policy HS-P1.4:** *Require new industrial development to locate significant pollution sources as far away from sensitive receptors as possible.*

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Policy HS-P1.5:** *Require new sources of air pollution that will generate significant new air quality impacts or expose sensitive receptors to substantial increases in harmful emissions of TAC to prepare a Health Risk Assessment that identifies appropriate mitigation consistent with BAAQMD California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Air Quality Guidelines, based on the findings of the Health Risk Assessment.*
- **Policy HS-P1.6:** *Require that any mitigation of air quality impacts occur on-site to the extent feasible to provide the greatest benefit to local residents. For mitigation that relies on offsets, require that the offsets be obtained from sources as near to the project site as possible. If the project site is within or adjacent to an Impacted Community, require offsets/ mitigation within that community unless determined infeasible by the County.*
- **Policy HS-P1.7:** *Require construction activities that involve large grading operations to implement additional construction measures identified in BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines to reduce air pollutant emissions.*
- **Policy HS-P1.8:** *Require new or expanded commercial and industrial projects exceeding 25,000 square feet of gross floor area to be near zero-emissions (NZE) operations, including the facilities themselves and the associated fleets. Require all necessary measures, such as the following, to achieve NZE:*
 - a) *Reduce on-site energy consumption and increase on-site energy generation and energy storage.*
 - b) *Provide adequate on-site ZE vehicle-capable parking for all anticipated truck traffic to prevent idling and off-site queuing.*
 - c) *Provide electrified loading docks with receptacles allowing plug-in of refrigerated trailers.*
 - d) *Use heavy-duty trucks that are model year 2014 or later and expedite a transition to ZE trucks by establishing a clear timeline for electrification of trucks as they become commercially available. Ensure contracts with motor carriers include air quality incentives or requirements, such as providing incentives to fleets that meet United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SmartWay standards or requiring use of ZE or NZE trucks.*
 - e) *Use a "clean fleet" of delivery vehicles as they become commercially available, but no later than 2025.*
 - f) *Use ZE yard equipment, such as forklifts, pallet trucks and jacks, and stackers.*
 - g) *Implement practices to control and remove fugitive dust and other contaminants from paved areas.**Uses with fewer than five vehicles domiciled on-site are exempt from this policy.*
- **Policy HS-P1.9:** *Prohibit nonessential diesel engine idling countywide and nonessential idling of all vehicles within 100 feet of sensitive receptors.*
- **Policy HS-P1.10:** *Support efforts to provide HVAC upgrades and portable clean air filters to persons who live in Impacted Communities and other areas burdened by disproportionate exposure to poor air quality.*
- **Action HS-A1.1.** *Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and prepare an Air Quality Community Risk Reduction Plan that applies to areas with high levels of cancer risk, providing a comprehensive strategy to protect community members from the negative health effects of air pollution.*
- **Action HS-A1.2.** *Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to create an Air Pollution Exposure Overlay Zone around freeways that requires new construction in these areas to install enhanced ventilation systems and other strategies to protect people from respiratory, heart, and other health effects associated with breathing polluted air.*

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Action HS-A1.3.** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include an Industrial-Sensitive Receptor Interface Overlay Zone applied to areas where residential land uses and other sensitive receptors interface or directly abut heavy industrial land uses. In the overlay zone, require industrial uses to reduce pollution and employ strategies to mitigate air quality, noise, vibration, odor, light, visual, and safety impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. In addition, require new sensitive receptors to install enhanced ventilation systems and implement other strategies, paid for by neighboring sources of pollution to the extent possible, to protect residents from health and quality of life impacts.
- **Action HS-A1.4:** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations to include a clean construction ordinance that requires projects to implement extra measures to reduce emissions at construction sites in or near places that are already overburdened by air pollution, such as Impacted Communities.
- **Action HS-A1.5:** Adopt an ordinance at least as stringent as the State’s maximum idling law, and coordinate with CARB and law enforcement to achieve compliance.
- **Action HS-A1.6:** Develop a plan to provide convenient and accessible clean air refuges during times when outdoor air quality is deemed unhealthy.
- **Policy HS-P2.1:** *When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use an excess cancer risk of 6.0 per million and a non-cancer (acute and chronic) hazard index greater than 1.0 as thresholds for finding that the project could cause a cumulatively considerable contribution and a significant impact.*
- **Action HS-A2.1:** Partner with community members and regulatory agencies to prepare community-scale plans for reducing and mitigating air pollutant emissions and industrial hazards, such as pipeline risks, accidents, potential water or soil contamination, and impacts to sensitive ecological resources, for each Impacted Community, or group of Impacted Communities, as appropriate. Require future projects to demonstrate consistency with those plans.
- **Action HS-A2.4.** Coordinate with BAAQMD to determine where to focus a targeted permit inspection program in Impacted Communities to help ensure enforcement of air quality permits.

5.3.3.2 PROPOSED CLIMATE ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following proposed CAP strategies and actions pertain to air quality:

Clean and Efficient Built Environment (BE)

Strategy BE-1: Require and incentivize new buildings and additions built in unincorporated Contra Costa County to be low-carbon or carbon neutral.

Strategy BE-1 Actions:

- Consider adopting new or modified reach codes that exceed the California Building Standards Code to require the use of lower-carbon intensive energy sources, to achieve higher feasible levels of energy conservation and efficiency, and to achieve lower feasible levels of GHG emissions.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Maintain, update, publicize, and enforce the County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations amendment requiring new residential buildings, hotels, offices, and retail to be all-electric. Evaluate the feasibility of including other building types as appropriate.
- Design and construct new County facilities to be zero net energy to the extent feasible.
- Study the feasibility of establishing a low-carbon concrete requirement for all new construction and retrofit activities and consider additional strategies to reduce embedded carbon in construction materials. The intent is to determine what the County can and should do to support or exceed State requirements for net-zero emissions for cement use by 2045.

Strategy BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated County, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels.

Strategy BE-2 Actions:

- Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy.
- Require replacement and new water heaters and space heating and cooling systems to be electric if the building electric panel has sufficient capacity in accordance with BAAQMD Regulation 9, Rule 4, and Regulation 9, Rule 6.
- Create a detailed roadmap to convert existing homes and businesses to use low- or zero-carbon appliances. The roadmap should include steps to support converting buildings to rely on low- or zero-carbon energy using an equitable framework that minimizes the risk of displacement or significant disruptions to existing tenants.
- Work to continue to obtain funding with partners such as BayREN and MCE to implement a program or programs to provide reduced-cost or free energy-efficiency and zero-carbon retrofits to local small businesses and households earning less than the area median income, in support of the Contra Costa County Asthma Initiative, Contra Costa County Weatherization Program, similar County programs, other nonprofit partners, and other health equity efforts for Impacted Communities. Support the use of low-emitting materials, including paints and carpeting, in retrofits to improve indoor air quality.
- In partnership with MCE and BayREN, continue to support voluntary home and business energy efficiency retrofits, including all-electric measures.
- Continue to conduct energy and water tracking activities, audits, and upgrades of County facilities, including conversion of feasible County facilities to all-electric space and water heating.
- Implement requirements for cool roofs and light-colored, nonreflective permeable paving materials as part of retrofit, repair, and replacement activities, using recycled materials or other materials with low embedded carbon as feasible and as established by the Building Standards Code.

Strategy BE-3: Increase the amount of electricity used and generated from renewable sources in the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Strategy BE-3 Actions:

- Require new commercial parking lots with 50 or more spaces to mitigate heat gain through installation of shade trees, solar arrays, or other emerging cooling technologies. Prioritize the use of solar arrays where feasible and appropriate.
- Work with MCE to increase enrollment, especially in the Deep Green tier.
- Continue to enroll all eligible, non-solar-equipped County facility electricity accounts in MCE territory in the Deep Green tier.
- Encourage installation of battery storage systems in new and existing buildings, especially buildings with solar energy systems and buildings that provide essential community services.
- Pursue implementation of recommendations of the 2018 Renewable Resource Potential Study.
- Evaluate the least-conflict feasible locations for stand-alone battery storage systems and modify land use regulations to enable such use in these locations.

No Waste Contra Costa (NW)

Strategy NW-4: Reduce emissions from landfill gas.

Strategy NW-4 Actions:

- Encourage efforts at Acme, Keller Canyon, and West Contra Costa landfills to install or enhance existing methane capture technology and associated monitoring systems with a goal of increasing the methane capture rate to the greatest extent feasible.
- Explore opportunities for partnering with agricultural and industrial operations to generate energy from methane gas generated by their ongoing activities.
- Support landfill operators in efforts to transition away from landfill gas flaring.

Clean Transportation Network (TR)

Strategy TR-1: Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-emission commuting, and using public transit to travel within, to, and from the county.

Strategy TR-1 Actions:

- Track over time projects that add pedestrian and bicycle facilities to document the County's implementation of the County Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP); Complete Streets checklist; Vision Zero Report and Action Plan; Active Transportation Plan; and equity-focused plans, programs, and policies.
- Improve the safety and comfort of bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities using best practices to encourage more people to use such facilities.
- Work with CCTA to fill gaps in the countywide Low-Stress Bike Network, as outlined in the 2018 Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Prioritize providing access for Impacted Communities and constructing protected bicycle facilities.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- In collaboration with key partners, support efforts to establish or join a shared mobility program that provides access to conventional bicycle, e-bikes, and other micromobility modes.
- Support efforts to expand the service area and frequency of regional transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, the San Francisco Bay Ferry, and WestCAT.
- Maximize development of jobs and affordable housing near high-quality transit service to support a jobs-housing balance.
- Maintain in place and enforce a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance that reflects best practices, and, at a minimum, conforms to Contra Costa Transportation Authority's adopted model TDM ordinance or resolution.
- Improve county-wide safety for bicyclists by advocating for the passage of Vulnerable Road User Laws.
- Secure additional funding for the maintenance and expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Support efforts to obtain additional funding to maintain and expand public transit operations and infrastructure improvements.
- Support CCTA to develop and implement methods for tracking EV and e-bike charging and availability across jurisdictions.
- Support CCTA and regional transit agencies in providing "last mile" transportation connections and options.
- Encourage and support increased regional integration of transit systems to promote more equitable fare structures, fare integration, easier transfers, including coordinated transfers between different transit systems and reduced wait times, improved information sharing, and generally a more seamless and modern system.

Strategy TR-2: Increase the use of zero-emissions vehicles. Transition to a zero-emission County fleet by 2035 and a community fleet that is at least 50 percent zero-emission by 2030.

Strategy TR-2 Actions:

- Require new County vehicles to be zero emission to the extent a viable vehicle is available on the market, that charging or zero-emission fueling equipment is conveniently located where the vehicle will be stored, and as required by the Advanced Clean Fleet regulations, with the goal that all County vehicles will be zero-emission by 2035.
- Install electric vehicle charging equipment and other infrastructure needed to support the transition to a zero-emission County fleet at County facilities. Consider the appropriate locations, number, and capacity of infrastructure to facilitate the transition of the County fleet to zero-emission vehicles.
- Provide incentives for zero-emission vehicles in partnership with MCE, BAAQMD, and other agencies.
- Work with property owners and other potential partners to pursue installation of zero-emission vehicle charging stations in and near multi-family dwelling units.
- Update off-street parking ordinance to include a requirement for zero-emission vehicle charging infrastructure. Consider including incentives for developers to exceed minimum requirements (i.e., density bonus).

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Increase installation of electric vehicle charging stations for all vehicle types, including bicycles and scooters, at public facilities, emphasizing increased installation in Impacted Communities.
- In partnership with regional agencies, explore providing subsidies for households making less than the area median income to purchase or lease zero-emission vehicles and associated infrastructure.
- Pursue fees and regulatory efforts to convert transportation network company (TNC), taxi, and similar car-hire services to zero-emission vehicles.
- Explore opportunities for implementing electric vehicle sharing programs.
- Work with BAAQMD and other regional agencies to convert off-road equipment to zero-emission clean fuels.
- Work with contractors, fleet operations, logistics companies, and other operators of heavy-duty vehicles to accelerate the transition to zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles.
- Work with Public Works to pursue the use of renewable natural gas (sourced from recovered organic waste) for transportation fuel, electricity, or heating applications in cases where battery-electric, hybrid-electric, and sustainably sourced hydrogen fuel-cell sources are not available.
- Encourage efforts to maximize EV charging during solar peak hours.
- Support implementation of the Contra Costa County Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint.

Resilient Communities and Natural Infrastructure (NI)

Strategy NI-4: Sequester carbon on natural and working lands in Contra Costa County

Strategy NI-4 Actions:

- Pursue implementation of recommendations from carbon sequestration feasibility study, Healthy Lands, Healthy People.
- Continue to support and work with key partners to maintain existing and establish new pilot programs for carbon sequestration on agricultural land.
- Promote restorative agricultural and landscaping techniques that incorporate cover crops, mulching, compost application, field borders, alley cropping, conservation crop rotation, prescribed grazing, and reduced tillage to promote healthy soil and soil conservation.
- Support soil conservation and restoration programs. Encourage agricultural landowners to work with agencies such as the USDA's NRCS and Contra Costa RCD to reduce erosion and soil loss.
- Coordinate with farming groups, ranchers, the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, and the University of California Cooperative Extension to identify and promote varieties of feedstock, livestock, and crops that are resilient to rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns and that increase carbon sequestration.
- Explore ways to increase carbon sequestration on County-owned facilities.
- Partner with regional landowners and agencies to establish carbon sequestration programs and incentives.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Consider the development of carbon offset protocols and guidance for use by carbon sequestration program applicants and County permitting staff to promote appropriate sequestration on natural and developed lands.
- Ensure that any local or regional carbon sequestration program that the County establishes, promotes, supports, or joins must provide benefits to unincorporated communities that face environmental justice issues.
- Explore the potential for the public to support tree planting and maintenance of existing trees.
- Establish a mechanism to support expanded tree planting and maintenance activities, particularly in areas with few trees.
- Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- Inventory wetlands, floodplains, marshlands, and adjacent lands that could potentially support climate adaptation (e.g., through flood management, filtration, or other beneficial ecosystem services) and mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration).
- Explore the creation of a Climate Resilience District.
- Require that any mitigation of air quality impacts occur on-site to the extent feasible to provide the greatest benefit to local residents. For mitigation that relies on offsets, require that the offsets be obtained from sources as near to the project site as possible. If the project site is within or adjacent to an Impacted Community, require offsets or mitigation within that community unless determined infeasible by the County.

5.3.4 Environmental Impacts

5.3.4.1 METHODOLOGY

Emissions Sectors

The air quality analysis was prepared in accordance with the requirements of CEQA to determine if significant air quality impacts are likely to occur in conjunction with future development that would be accommodated by the proposed project. BAAQMD has published the CEQA Air Quality Guidelines that provides local governments with guidance for analyzing and mitigating air quality impacts and was used in this analysis. The County's criteria air pollutant emissions inventory includes the following sectors:

- **Transportation.** Transportation emissions forecasts were modeled using CARB's EMFAC2021, version 1.0.1, web database. Model runs were based on Origin Destination (OD) Method using VMT data provided by Fehr & Peers and calendar year 2019 (existing) and 2045 emission rates. VMT that have an origin or destination in the county use a transportation origin-destination methodology. Accounting of VMT is based on the recommendations of CARB's Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC) created under SB 375. For accounting purposes, there are three types of trips:

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Internal-Internal.** Vehicle trips that originated and terminated within the county (Internal-Internal, I-I). Using the accounting rules established by RTAC, 100 percent of the length of these trips and their emissions are attributed to the county.
- **Internal-External/External-Internal.** Vehicle trips that either originated or terminated (but not both) in the county (Internal-External or External-Internal, I-X and X-I). Using the accounting rules established by RTAC, 50 percent of the trip length for these trips is attributed to the county.
- **External-External.** Vehicle trips that neither originated nor terminated in the county. These trips are commonly called pass-through trips (External-External, X-X). Using the accounting rules established by RTAC, these trips are not counted toward the county's VMT or emissions.
- **Energy:** Emissions associated with natural gas use for residential land uses in the county were modeled based on energy use gathered as part of the proposed CAP (see Appendix 5.3-1 and Appendix 5.8-1). Forecasts were adjusted for increases in population in the county and based on the State actions energy forecast conducted for the CAP (see Appendix 5.3-1 and Appendix 5.8-1).
- **Off-Road Equipment:** Emission rates from CARB's OFFROAD2021, version 1.0.2, web database were used to estimate criteria air pollutant emissions from lawn and garden equipment. OFFROAD is a database of equipment use and associated emissions for each county compiled by CARB. Annual emissions for each of the sectors were compiled using OFFROAD for Contra Costa County for year 2019 and forecasted based on the increase in population.
- **Area Sources:** Area sources are based on the emission factors from the CalEEMod Users Guide for emissions generated from use of consumer products and cleaning supplies.

5.3.4.2 IMPACTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON A PROJECT

BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines include methodology for jurisdictions wanting to evaluate the potential impacts from placing sensitive receptors proximate to major air pollutant sources. For assessing community risk and hazards for siting a new receptor, sources within a 1,000-foot radius of a project site are typically considered. Sources are defined as freeways, high volume roadways (at least 10,000 vehicles/day), major rail or truck yards, ports, rail lines, ferry terminal, large commercial distribution centers, and permitted stationary pollutant sources (BAAQMD 2023b).

Development under the proposed project could result in siting sensitive uses (e.g., residential) near sources of emissions (e.g., freeways and industrial uses). Developing new sensitive land uses near sources of emissions could expose persons that inhabit these sensitive land uses to potential air quality-related impacts. However, the purpose of this environmental evaluation is to identify the significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, not the significant effects of the environment on the proposed project. *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369 (Case No. S213478). Thus, CEQA does not require analysis of the potential environmental effects from siting sensitive receptors near existing sources, and this type of analysis is not provided below in the Impact Analysis section.

While it is generally not within the purview of CEQA to analyze impacts of the environment on a project, the proposed project includes policies that would ensure priority of the health of Contra Costa County residents through enforcement of County Codes and incorporation of design features to minimize air quality impacts

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

and to achieve appropriate health standards. The following proposed policies and actions would serve to protect air quality in the unincorporated county:

- **Policy HS-P1.3.** Require new development to adhere to BAAQMD's Planning Healthy Places guidance when local conditions warrant.
- **Action HS-A1.1.** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and prepare an Air Quality Community Risk Reduction Plan that applies to areas with high levels of cancer risk, providing a comprehensive strategy to protect community members from the negative health effects of air pollution.
- **Action HS-A1.2.** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to create an Air Pollution Exposure Overlay Zone around freeways that requires new construction in these areas to install enhanced ventilation systems and other strategies to protect people from respiratory, heart, and other health effects associated with breathing polluted air.
- **Action HS-A1.3.** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include an Industrial-Sensitive Receptor Interface Overlay Zone applied to areas where residential land uses and other sensitive receptors interface or directly abut heavy industrial land uses. In the overlay zone, require industrial uses to reduce pollution and employ strategies to mitigate air quality, noise, vibration, odor, light, visual, and safety impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. In addition, require new sensitive receptors to install enhanced ventilation systems and implement other strategies, paid for by neighboring sources of pollution to the extent possible, to protect residents from health and quality of life impacts.

Impact 5.3-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the BAAQMD Clean Air Plan. [Threshold AQ-1]

The following describes potential air quality impacts of consistency with the AQMP from the implementation of the proposed project.

Proposed General Plan

Bay Area 2017 Clean Air Plan – Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors

The proposed General Plan plays an important role in local agency project review by linking local planning and individual projects to the *2017 Clean Air Plan*. It fulfills the CEQA goal of informing decision-makers of the environmental efforts of the project under consideration at an early enough stage to ensure that air quality concerns are fully addressed. It also provides the local agency with ongoing information as to whether they are contributing to clean air goals in the Bay Area.

BAAQMD requires a consistency evaluation of a plan with its current AQMP. To have a less than significant impact related to criteria air pollutant and precursor impacts, the long-range plan must satisfy following BAAQMD requirements.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

1) Consistency evaluation of the long-range plan with its current air quality plan (AQP) control measures as follows:

- Does the project support the primary goals of the AQP?
- Does the project include applicable control measures from the AQP?
- Does the project disrupt or hinder implementation of any AQP control measures?

2) Long-range plans must demonstrate consistency with the projected growth rate of vehicle activity in VMT or vehicle trips under the plan, as follows:

- Is the project VMT or vehicle trip increase less than or equal to the projected population increase?

Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2017 Clean Air Plan Goals

The primary goals of the 2017 Clean Air Plan are to attain the State and federal AAQS, reduce population exposure and protect public health in the Bay Area, reduce GHG emissions, and protect the climate. Furthermore, the 2017 Clean Air Plan lays the groundwork for reducing GHG emissions in the Bay Area to meet the State's 2030 GHG reduction target and 2050 GHG reduction goal.

Attain Air Quality Standards

BAAQMD's 2017 Clean Air Plan strategy is based on regional population and employment projections in the Bay Area compiled by ABAG, which are based in part on County's General Plan land use designations. These demographic projections are incorporated into Plan Bay Area. Demographic trends incorporated into Plan Bay Area determine VMT in the Bay Area, which BAAQMD uses to forecast future air quality trends. The SFBAAB is currently designated a nonattainment area for O₃, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀ (State AAQS only).

As discussed in Section 5.14, *Population and Housing*, implementation of the proposed General Plan would exceed current regional projections for housing by 26 percent and population by 18 percent. However, the Land Use Element includes goals, policies, and actions aimed to focus the development in areas where current buildings are aging, vacant, or not maintained and approved/pending projects. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan itself would not introduce a substantial amount of unplanned population in the EIR Study Area and is instead the overriding policy document that plans for such growth.

Thus, the population projections of the proposed General Plan would be consistent with regional projections. The emissions resulting from potential future development associated with the proposed General Plan are included in BAAQMD projections, and future development accommodated under the proposed General Plan would not hinder BAAQMD's ability to attain the California or National AAQS. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Reduce Population Exposure and Protect Public Health

Development under the proposed General Plan could result in new sources of TACs and PM_{2.5}. Stationary sources, including smaller stationary sources (e.g., emergency generators and boilers) are subject to review by BAAQMD as part of the permitting process. Adherence to BAAQMD permitting regulations would ensure

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

that new stationary sources of TACs do not expose populations to significant health risk. Mobile sources of air toxins (e.g., truck idling) are not regulated directly by BAAQMD. Development associated with the proposed General Plan may generate truck traffic; however, CARB regulates limits on diesel truck and bus idling to 5 minutes. Furthermore, individual development projects would be required to achieve the incremental risk thresholds established by BAAQMD. Thus, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not result in introducing new sources of TACs that on a cumulative basis, could expose sensitive populations to significant health risk. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Reduce GHG Emissions and Protect the Climate

Consistency of the proposed General Plan with State, regional, and local plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions are discussed under Impact 5.8-2 in Section 5.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, of this Draft EIR. Future development allowed by the proposed General Plan would be required to adhere to statewide measures that have been adopted to achieve the GHG reduction targets of AB 32 and SB 32, and a trajectory consistent with the carbon neutrality targets of AB 1279. The proposed General Plan is consistent with regional strategies for infill development identified in *Plan Bay Area 2050* and the existing Contra Costa County CAP. While Impact GHG 5.8-1 identifies that the proposed General Plan would generate a substantial increase in emissions, Impact GHG 5.8-2 identifies that the proposed General Plan is consistent with State, regional, and local plans to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed General Plan is consistent with the goal of the 2017 *Clean Air Plan* to reduce GHG emissions and protect the climate, and the impact would be less than significant.

2017 Clean Air Plan Control Measures

Table 5.3-8, *Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan*, identifies the control measures included in the 2017 *Clean Air Plan* that are required by BAAQMD to reduce emissions for a wide range of both stationary and mobile sources. As shown in Table 5.3-8, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with the 2017 *Clean Air Plan* and would not hinder BAAQMD from implementing the control measures in the 2017 *Clean Air Plan*. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-8 Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan

Type	Measure Number / Title	Consistency
Stationary Source Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS 1 – Fluid Catalytic Cracking in Refineries SS 2 – Equipment Leaks SS 3 – Cooling Towers SS 4 – Refinery Flares SS 5 – Sulfur Recovery Units SS 6 – Refinery Fuel Gas SS 7 – Sulfuric Acid Plants SS 8 – Sulfur Dioxide from Coke Calcining SS 9 – Enhanced NSR Enforcement for Changes in Crude Slate SS 10 – Petroleum Refining Emissions Tracking SS 11 – Petroleum Refining Facility-Wide Emission Limits SS 12 – Petroleum Refining Climate Impacts Limit SS 13 – Oil and Gas Production, Processing and Storage SS 14 – Methane from Capped Wells SS 15 – Natural Gas Processing and Distribution SS 16 – Basin-Wide Methane Strategy SS 17 – GHG BACT Threshold SS 18 – Basin-Wide Combustion Strategy SS 19 – Portland Cement SS 20 – Air Toxics Risk Cap and Reduction from Existing Facilities 	<p>Stationary and area sources are regulated directly by BAAQMD; therefore, as the implementing agency, new stationary and area sources within the county would be required to comply with BAAQMD's regulations. BAAQMD routinely adopts/revises rules or regulations to implement the stationary source (SS) control measures to reduce SS emissions.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS 21 – New Source Review for Toxics SS 22 – Stationary Gas Turbines SS 23 – Biogas Flares SS 24 – Sulfur Content Limits of Liquid Fuels SS 25 – Coatings, Solvents, Lubricants, Sealants and Adhesives SS 26 – Surface Prep and Cleaning Solvent SS 27 – Digital Printing SS 28 – LPG, Propane, Butane SS 29 – Asphaltic Concrete SS 30 – Residential Fan Type Furnaces SS 31 – General Particulate Matter Emission Limitation SS 32 – Emergency Backup Generators SS 33 – Commercial Cooking Equipment SS 34 – Wood Smoke SS 35 – PM from Bulk Material Storage, Handling and Transport, Including Coke and Coal SS 36 – PM from Trackout SS 37 – PM from Asphalt Operations SS 38 – Fugitive Dust SS 39 – Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring SS 40 – Odors 	<p>Major stationary source are more commonly associated with industrial manufacturing or warehousing. However, BAAQMD and the County have existing regulations in place to ensure any potential future development under the proposed General Plan would not conflict with the applicable SS control measures. Other non-residential land uses may generate small quantities of stationary source emissions during project operation (e.g., emergency generators, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities); however, these small-quantity generators would require review by BAAQMD for permitted sources of air toxics, which would ensure consistency with the 2017 Clean Air Plan.</p>

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-8 Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan

Type	Measure Number / Title	Consistency
Transportation Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TR 1 – Clean Air Teleworking Initiative • TR 2 – Trip Reduction Programs • TR 3 – Local and Regional Bus Service • TR 4 – Local and Regional Rail Service • TR 5 – Transit Efficiency and Use • TR 6 – Freeway and Arterial Operations • TR 7 – Safe Routes to Schools and Safe Routes to Transit • TR 8 – Ridesharing, Last-Mile Connection • TR 9 – Bicycle and Pedestrian Access and Facilities • TR 10 – Land Use Strategies • TR 11 – Value Pricing • TR 12 – Smart Driving • TR 13 – Parking Policies • TR 14 – Cars and Light Trucks • TR 15 – Public Outreach and Education • TR 16 – Indirect Source Review • TR 17 – Planes • TR 18 – Goods Movement • TR 19 – Medium and Heavy Duty Trucks • TR 20 – Ocean Going Vessels • TR 21 – Commercial Harbor Craft • TR 22 – Construction, Freight and Farming Equipment • TR 23 – Lawn and Garden Equipment 	<p>Transportation (TR) control measures are strategies to reduce vehicle trips, vehicle use, VMT, vehicle idling, and traffic congestion for the purpose of reducing motor vehicle emissions. Although most of the TR control measures are implemented at the regional level—that is, by MTC or Caltrans—the 2017 Clean Air Plan relies on local communities to assist with implementation of some measures.</p> <p>The development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Transportation Element contains the following policies and actions to expand the pedestrian and bicycle network: Policies TR-P1.2, TR-P1.12, TR-P3.2, TR-P4.1 through TR-P4.2, and TR-P5.5 through TR-P5.11, and Actions TR-A5.1 through TR-A5.2.</p>
Energy and Climate Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN 1 – Decarbonize Electricity Production • EN 2 – Renewable Energy Decrease Electricity Demand 	<p>The energy and climate (EN) control measures are intended to reduce energy use as a means of reducing adverse air quality emissions.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Health and Safety Element, Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element, and Public Facilities and Services Element contain the following policies that align with the County's goals to meet the State's carbon neutrality initiatives: Policies HS-P3.2, COS-P14.1 through COS-P14.3, and PFS-P7.11.</p> <p>Furthermore, new development accommodated under the proposed General Plan would be built to comply with the latest Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards. On January 18, 2022, the County also adopted an All-Electric Ordinance requirement for new construction to amend the 2019 California Energy Code and requires residential (including single-family and multi-family buildings) to be all-electric. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not conflict with these EN control measures.</p>

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-8 Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan

Type	Measure Number / Title	Consistency
Buildings Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BL 1 – Green Buildings • BL 2 – Decarbonize Buildings • BL 3 – Market-Based Solutions • BL 4 – Urban Heat Island Mitigation 	<p>The buildings (BL) control measures focus on working with local governments to facilitate adoption of best GHG emissions control practices and policies.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element, Health and Safety Element, and Land Use Element contain the following policies and actions to promote energy efficiency and sustainability: Policies COS-P7.8, COS-P14.1, and HS-P3.2, and Action LU-A4.1.</p> <p>In addition, as stated, new development under the proposed General Plan would be built to comply with the latest Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards. On January 18, 2022, the County also adopted an All-Electric Ordinance requirement for new construction to amend the 2019 California Energy Code and requires residential (including single-family and multi-family buildings) to be all-electric. Thus, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with these BL control measures.</p>
Agriculture Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AG 1 – Agricultural Guidance and Leadership • AG 2 – Dairy Digesters • AG 3 – Enteric Fermentation • AG 4 – Livestock Waste 	<p>Agricultural practices in the Bay Area account for a small portion, roughly 1.5 percent, of the Bay Area GHG emissions inventory. The GHGs from agriculture include methane and nitrous oxide, in addition to carbon dioxide. Section 3.6.1.3, <i>Land Use Designations and Map</i>, describes the various agricultural land uses allowed under the proposed General Plan Agriculture Core and Agricultural Lands designations. The Agriculture (AG) control measures target larger scale farming practices, such as the prime agricultural land within the region.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element contains the following policies and actions that align with the County's goals to support agricultural land conservation and reduce potential impacts to adjacent sensitive receptors: Policies COS-P2.2 and COS-P2.4 through COS-P2.13, and Action COS-A2.4.</p> <p>The County also promotes the use of integrated pest management (IPM) strategies to support healthy crops while reducing the use of harmful chemicals on the environment, as well as the Right-to-Farm Ordinance, which protects farms from nuisance complaints. Therefore,</p>

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-8 Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan

Type	Measure Number / Title	Consistency
		implementation of the proposed General Plan would not conflict with these AG control measures.
Natural and Working Lands Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NW 1 – Carbon Sequestration in Rangelands NW 2 – Urban Tree Planting NW 3 – Carbon Sequestration in Wetlands 	<p>The control measures for the natural and working lands sector focus on increasing carbon sequestration on rangelands and wetlands.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element contains the following policies and actions to promote carbon sequestration: Policies COS-P2.11, COS-P6.2, and COS-P7.8, and Action COS-A5.1.</p>
Water Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WR 1 – Limit GHGs from publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) WR 2 – Support Water Conservation 	<p>The 2017 Clean Air Plan includes measures to reduce water use.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element contains the following policies to increase plumbing water efficiency and reduce landscape water use: Policies COS-P7.1, COS-P7.2, COS-P7.7, and COS-P7.9.</p>
Super-GHG Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SL 1 – Short-Lived Climate Pollutants SL 2 – Guidance for Local Planners SL 3 – GHG Monitoring and Emissions Measurements Network 	<p>Super-GHGs include methane, black carbon, and fluorinated gases. The compounds are sometimes referred to as short-lived climate pollutants because their lifetime in the atmosphere is generally fairly short. Measures to reduce super GHGs are addressed on a sector-by-sector basis in the 2017 Clean Air Plan. Through ongoing implementation of the County's CAP, the County will continue to reduce local GHG emissions and meet State, regional, and local reduction targets, which would ensure implementation of the proposed General Plan would not conflict with these SL control measures.</p> <p>Development under the proposed General Plan would be reviewed for consistency with proposed General Plan policies. The Health and Safety Element and Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element contain the following policies for encouraging use of renewable energy: Policies HS-P3.2 and COS-P14.1 through COS-P14.3.</p>
Further Study Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSM SS 1 – Internal Combustion Engines FSM SS 2 – Boilers, Steam Generator and Process Heaters FSM SS 3 – GHG Reductions from Non Cap-and Trade Sources 	<p>The majority of the further study control measures apply to sources regulated directly by BAAQMD. Because BAAQMD is the implementing agency, new and existing sources of stationary and area sources in the project area would be required to comply with these additional further study control measures in the 2017 Clean Air Plan.</p>

5. Environmental Analysis AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-8 Control Measures from the BAAQMD 2017 Clean Air Plan

Type	Measure Number / Title	Consistency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSM SS 4 – Methane Exemptions from Wastewater Regulation FSM SS 5 – Controlling start-up, shutdown, maintenance, and malfunction (SSMM) Emissions FSM SS 6 – Carbon Pollution Fee FSM SS 7 – Vanishing Oils and Rust Inhibitors FSM SS 8 – Dryers, Ovens and Kilns FSM SS 9 – Omnibus Rulemaking to Achieve Continuous Improvement FSM BL 1 – Space Heating FSM AG 1 – Wineries 	

Source: BAAQMD 2017c.

Regional Growth Projections for VMT and Population

Future potential development allowed by the proposed General Plan would result in additional sources of criteria air pollutants. Growth accommodated by the proposed General Plan could occur throughout the 2045 planning horizon. BAAQMD's approach to evaluating impacts from criteria air pollutants generated by a plan's long-term growth is done by comparing population estimates to the VMT estimates. This is because BAAQMD's AQMP plans for growth in the SFBAAB are based on regional growth projections identified by ABAG and growth in VMT identified by CCTA. Changes in regional, community-wide emissions in the project area could affect the ability of BAAQMD to achieve the air quality goals in the AQMP. Therefore, air quality impacts for a plan-level analysis are based on consistency with the regional growth projections. Table 5.3-9, *Comparison of the Change in Population and VMT in Contra Costa County*, compares the proposed General Plan growth forecast with the projected increase in total VMT.

Table 5.3-9 Comparison of the Change in Population and VMT in Contra Costa County

Category	Existing	2045 With Project	Change from Existing	
			Change	%
Population	174,145	239,718	65,573	38%
Employment	38,757	48,153	9,396	24%
Service Population	212,902	287,871	74,969	35%
Daily VMT ¹	3,530,197	4,272,206	742,009	21%
VMT/person ²	20.3	17.8	-2.4	-12%
VMT/SP	16.6	14.8	-1.7	-10%

Notes:

¹ Modeling of VMT is provided by Fehr and Peers is based on CCTA's Contra Costa Transportation Analysis Guidelines. VMT is from passenger vehicles and trucks that have an origin or destination in the county using a transportation origin-destination methodology. Accounting of VMT is based on the recommendations of CARB's RTAC created under SB 375.

² VMT per person includes VMT from all trip types, including employment and other service-based trips. This methodology differs from that in Section 5.17, *Transportation*, which is used to evaluate SB 743 transportation impacts.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

BAAQMD's AQMP requires that the VMT increase by less than or equal to the projected population increase from the proposed General Plan (i.e., generate the same or less VMT per population). However, because the proposed General Plan accommodates both residential and nonresidential growth, a better indicator of how efficiently the county is growing can be made by comparing the increase in VMT to the increase in service population (e.g., generate the same or less VMT per service population). This approach is similar to the efficiency metrics for GHG emissions, which consider the total service population when calculating project efficiency.

VMT estimates based on data provided by Fehr & Peers were calculated for Contra Costa County. As shown in Table 5.3-9, implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in an increase of daily VMT by 742,009 vehicle miles per day in the unincorporated county (about a 21-percent increase), but lead to a lower VMT per capita than under existing conditions (approximately a 12-percent decrease) and lower VMT per service population than existing conditions (approximately a 10-percent decrease). Thus, the proposed General Plan would be consistent with the goals of the 2017 *Clean Air Plan* and impacts would be less than significant.

Environmental Justice

BAAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines also require an analysis of consistency of the proposed General Plan with applicable Community Emission Reduction Plans (CERPs) and local Environmental Justice policies. Environmentally overburdened, underserved, and economically distressed communities may be subject to a higher risk of pollutant-related health effects than the general population because they may be exposed to higher pollutant concentrations; they may experience a larger health impact at a given pollutant concentration; or they may be adversely affected by lower pollutant concentrations than the general population. The most critical air pollutant affecting health in the Bay Area is PM_{2.5}, which includes DPM. The burden of breathing unhealthy air is often disproportionately borne by low-income communities and communities of color, many of which are situated closer to busy highways, ports, factories, and other pollution sources (BAAQMD 2023b).

Community Emissions Reduction Plans in Unincorporated Contra Costa County

The Richmond-North Richmond-San Pablo AB 617 community (Richmond Area) is partially within the EIR Study Area. The Draft PTCA Plan (Community Emissions Reduction Plan) for the Richmond Area was released for public review in December 2023 (BAAQMD 2023a). The PTCA Plan includes various strategies and actions to address the needs of people who have been disproportionately harmed by environmental injustice. Implementation of Mobile Strategy 6, *Public Transit, Bike, and Pedestrian Infrastructure*, would help to expand access to shared modes of travel and benefit the people who have been historically burdened with lack of viable transportation alternatives. Land Use Strategy 1, *Land Use*, provides recommended strategies to protect sensitive receptors and residential areas from existing and potential future pollution sources and exposure, with an intended outcome of improving community health for all, especially disproportionately impacted communities. Marine & Rail Strategy 1, *Reduce Cancer and Chronic Health Risk from Rail Operations and Facilities*, would directly benefit overburdened communities living adjacent to rail lines and/or operations, such as the Iron Triangle neighborhood in the City of Richmond. Requirements for cleaner rail equipment would improve the health of those most acutely impacted, as well as for the greater community.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Thus, the PTCA Plan considers measures to reduce emissions and improve community health within Overburdened and AB 617 Communities consistent with BAAQMD's environmental justice goals. The proposed General Plan integrates goals, policies, and actions that seek to lessen the environmental burden on disadvantaged populations. Thus, the proposed project would be consistent with the draft PTCA Plan and BAAQMD's environmental justice goals; and impacts would be less than significant.

Contra Costa County Environmental Justice Policies

The proposed General Plan integrates goals, policies, and actions that seek to lessen the environmental burden on disadvantaged populations. The process to develop environmental justice policy guidance involved extensive discussions and many meetings with community members and other stakeholders who live in, work in, or engage with communities that are most impacted by environmental justice issues to ensure the Plan directly responds to the specific needs of Impacted Communities. Engagement included two collaboration meetings with environmental justice stakeholders to identify Impacted Communities and key environmental justice issues, three to four meetings with community members from each Impacted Community in the county, about 15 meetings with community-based organizations who work with Impacted Communities, a three-part meeting series with environmental justice stakeholders to review and refine draft policy guidance, and several meetings with the Board of Supervisors Sustainability Committee and the County's Sustainability Commission and Hazardous Materials Commission to discuss draft policy guidance. The County also conducted a hard copy and online survey to solicit feedback on draft environmental justice policy guidance, working with community partners to distribute hard copies at strategic locations to reach people during the COVID-19 pandemic, including at schools, libraries, farmers markets, food banks, and soup kitchens.

Contra Costa County is home to a high concentration of refineries and other large industrial facilities. To improve the health and safety impacts of these industrial facilities, the County adopted an Industrial Safety Ordinance. This Ordinance requires additional safety measures that go beyond State requirements that protect public health and safety.

In 2022, the County established the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice to address local racial inequality and social injustice issues. The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice is envisioned to enact and sustain principles, policies, practices, and investments that are racially just and equitable across all the County's departments and divisions.

State law, enacted through SB 1000, requires that general plans address environmental justice and respond to this inequity by both alleviating pollution and health impacts and compelling cities and counties to include the voices of previously marginalized residents in planning decisions. Therefore, the proposed General Plan contains certain goals, policies, and actions that help aim to promote environmental justice, especially within Impacted Communities.

Proposed policies within the Stronger Communities and Health and Safety Element would reduce and/or avoid environmental effects on vulnerable populations, include:

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Stronger Communities Element Policies SC-P1.1 through SC-P1.6 and Actions SC-A1.1 through SC-A1.8, which ensure an equitable distribution of resources so that Impacted Communities are not disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution and other hazards.
- Health and Safety Element Policies HS-P1.1 through HS-P1.10 and Actions HS-A1.1 through HS-A1.6, that support community and environmental health.
- Health and Safety Element Policies HS-P2.1 through HS-P2.3 and Actions HS-A2.1 through HS-A2.5 that aim to reduce the disproportionate burden of environmental hazards and health risks in the county.

Thus, the proposed General Plan considers measures to reduce emissions and improve community health within Overburdened and AB 617 Communities consistent with BAAQMD's environmental justice goals. Thus, the proposed General Plan would be consistent with BAAQMD's environmental justice goals and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. The proposed CAP includes the "Clean Transportation Network" group of strategies, including Strategy TR-1, which provides actions for reducing VMT and associated transportation related emissions. As discussed under Impact 5.16-1, this strategy supports the County's existing plans to ensure accessibility and safety for alternative transportation options. Thus, implementation of the proposed CAP would result in beneficial impacts to air quality. Because the proposed CAP does not involve any land uses changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density and intensity, implementation of the proposed CAP would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2017 *Clean Air Plan* and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.3-2: Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards. [Threshold AQ-2]

This section analyzes potential impacts related to air quality that could occur from development under the proposed project in combination with the regional growth in the SFBAAB. The SFBAAB is currently designated a nonattainment area for California and National O₃, California and National PM_{2.5}, and California PM₁₀ AAQS. At a plan level, air quality impacts are measured by the potential for a project to exceed BAAQMD's significance criteria and contribute to the State and federal nonattainment designations in the SFBAAB. Any project that produces a significant regional air quality impact in an area that is in nonattainment

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

adds to the cumulative impact. As described in Impact 5.3-1, the proposed project would be consistent with the 2017 Clean Air Plan. However, the proposed project could generate a substantial increase in criteria air pollutant emissions from construction activities that could exceed the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds.

Proposed General Plan

Construction

Construction activities would temporarily increase criteria air pollutant emissions within the SFBAAB. The primary source of NO_x emissions is the operation of construction equipment. The primary sources of particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) emissions are activities that disturb the soil, such as grading and excavation, road construction, and building demolition and construction. The primary sources of VOC emissions are the application of architectural coating and off-gas emissions associated with asphalt paving. A discussion of health impacts associated with air pollutant emissions generated by construction activities is included under “Air Pollutants of Concern” in Section 5.3.1.2 of this section.

Construction activities associated with the proposed General Plan would occur over the forecast year, causing short-term emissions of criteria air pollutants. Information regarding specific development projects, soil types, and the locations of receptors would be needed in order to quantify the level of impact associated with construction activity. Due to the scale of development activity associated with the proposed General Plan, emissions would likely exceed the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds. In accordance with the BAAQMD methodology, emissions that exceed the regional significance thresholds would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SFBAAB. Emissions of VOC and NO_x are precursors to the formation of O₃. In addition, NO_x is a precursor to the formation of particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). Therefore, the proposed General Plan would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SFBAAB for O₃ and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}).

Future development under the proposed General Plan would be subject to separate environmental review pursuant to CEQA in order to identify and mitigate potential air quality impacts. Subsequent environmental review of development projects would be required to assess potential impacts under BAAQMD's project-level thresholds based on site-specific construction phasing and buildout characteristics. For the proposed General Plan, which is a broad-based policy plan, it is not possible to determine whether the scale and phasing of individual projects would exceed the BAAQMD's short-term regional or localized construction emissions thresholds. As a result, construction activities associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

Existing federal, State, and local regulations and the policies and programs of the proposed General Plan described throughout this section protect local and regional air quality. Continued compliance with these regulations would reduce construction-related impacts and proposed policies would help to reduce construction emissions even further. The following proposed General Plan policies and actions would serve to minimize potential adverse impacts related to particulate matter air pollution:

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Policy HS-P1.5:** Require new sources of air pollution that will generate significant new air quality impacts or expose sensitive receptors to substantial increases in harmful emissions of TACs to prepare a Health Risk Assessment that identifies appropriate mitigation consistent with BAAQMD California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Air Quality Guidelines, based on the findings of the Health Risk Assessment.
- **Policy HS-P1.7:** Require construction activities that involve large grading operations to implement additional construction measures identified in BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines to reduce air pollutant emissions.
- **Policy HS-P1.9:** Prohibit nonessential diesel engine idling countywide and nonessential idling of all vehicles within 100 feet of sensitive receptors.
- **Action HS-A1.4:** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations to include a clean construction ordinance that requires projects to implement extra measures to reduce emissions at construction sites in or near places that are already overburdened by air pollution, such as Impacted Communities.
- **Policy HS-P2.1:** When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use an excess cancer risk of 6.0 per million and a non-cancer (acute and chronic) hazard index greater than 1.0 as thresholds for finding that the project could cause a cumulatively considerable contribution and a significant impact.

While these existing and proposed regulations, policies, and programs have the potential to reduce emissions, potential future development projects accommodated under the proposed General Plan (individually or cumulatively) could still exceed the BAAQMD significance thresholds for construction. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan could result in potentially significant construction-related regional air impacts.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. Since implementation of the proposed CAP would not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of construction-related criteria air pollutant emissions. Furthermore, the proposed CAP would be subject to the same County standards that apply to development under the proposed General Plan, such as the 2017 *Clean Air Plan*. The 2017 *Clean Air Plan* includes a wide range of control measures designed to decrease emissions of the air pollutants that are most harmful to Bay Area residents, such as particulate matter, ozone, and TACs. It also includes control measures to reduce emissions of methane and other GHGs that are potent climate pollutants in the near-term and to decrease emissions of carbon dioxide by reducing fossil fuel combustion.

Therefore, the proposed CAP would contribute to reducing construction-phase criteria air pollutant emissions and result in beneficial air quality impacts. Implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard, and impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-2 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project construction-related air quality impacts to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology for assessing air quality impacts identified in their *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*. If construction-related criteria air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the BAAQMD-adopted construction screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality emissions. Potential measures may include:

- Require implementation of the BAAQMD Best Management Practices for fugitive dust control, such as:
 - All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, grading areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day.
 - All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.
 - All visible mud or dirt trackout onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
 - All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour (mph).
 - All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. Building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
 - All excavation, grading, and/or demolition activities shall be suspended when average wind speeds exceed 20 mph.
 - All trucks and equipment, including their tires, shall be washed off prior to leaving the site.
 - Unpaved roads providing access to sites located 100 feet or further from a paved road shall be treated with a 6- to 12-inch layer of compacted layer of wood chips, mulch, or gravel.
 - Publicly visible signs shall be posted with the telephone number and name of the person to contact at the lead agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. BAAQMD's General Air

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Pollution Complaints number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

Measures shall be incorporated into appropriate construction documents (e.g., construction management plans) submitted to the County and shall be verified by the Department of Conservation and Development.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-2 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.3-3: Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS. [Thresholds AQ-2]

This section analyzes potential impacts related to air quality that could occur from development associated with the proposed project in combination with the regional growth in the SFBAAB. The SFBAAB is currently designated a nonattainment area for California and National O₃, California and National PM_{2.5}, and California PM₁₀ AAQS. At a plan level, air quality impacts are measured by the potential for a project to exceed BAAQMD's significance criteria and contribute to the State and federal nonattainment designations in the SFBAAB. Any project that produces a significant regional air quality impact in an area that is in nonattainment adds to the cumulative impact. As described in Impact 5.3-1, the proposed project would be consistent with the 2017 Clean Air Plan. However, the proposed project could generate a substantial increase in criteria air pollutant emissions from operational activities that could exceed the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds.

Proposed General Plan

Operation

BAAQMD has identified thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions and criteria air pollutant precursors, including VOC, NO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Development projects below the significance thresholds are not expected to generate sufficient criteria pollutant emissions to violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. According to BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines, long-range plans, such as the proposed General Plan, present unique challenges for assessing impacts. Due to the SFBAAB's nonattainment status for ozone and PM and the cumulative impacts of growth on air quality, these plans almost always have significant, unavoidable adverse air quality impacts.

Implementation and adoption of the proposed General Plan would result in an increase in development intensity in the county. Development under the proposed General Plan would result in direct and indirect criteria air pollutant emissions from transportation, energy (e.g., natural gas use), and area sources (e.g., aerosols and landscaping equipment). Mobile-source criteria air pollutant emissions are based on the traffic analysis conducted by Fehr and Peers (see Appendix 5.16-1, *Transportation Data*, of this Draft EIR). The emissions forecast for the county under the proposed General Plan compared to existing conditions is shown in Table 5.3-10, *Scenario 1: Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to Existing Conditions*, and Table 5.3-11, *Scenario 2: Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to the Future No Project Conditions*. As shown in these tables, implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in an increase in criteria air pollutant emissions

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

from existing conditions and the future no project conditions, respectively. As stated previously, Scenario 2 isolates the effects of the proposed General Plan because both the future no project and future with project conditions include emissions reductions from federal and State regulations.

As shown in these tables, development under the proposed General Plan would generate an increase in criteria air pollutant emission from both existing conditions (Scenario 1) as well as the future no project conditions (Scenario 2). Compliance with applicable policies and programs would contribute towards minimizing long-term emissions. However, implementation of the proposed General Plan would still exceed the BAAQMD significance threshold (no net increase) for operation. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan could result in potentially significant long-term regional air quality impacts.

Table 5.3-10 Scenario 1. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to Existing Conditions

Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons per year)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Existing Land Uses (Year 2019)				
Transportation ¹	41	207	26	10
Energy ²	11	206	15	15
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	758	15	115	115
Off-Road Equipment ³	3	3	0	0
Consumer Products ⁴	444	—	—	—
Total Average (Tons/year)	1,254	431	156	140
Proposed General Plan Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	10	43	28	9
Energy ²	13	239	18	18
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	758	15	115	115
Off-Road Equipment ³	4	3	0	0
Consumer Products ⁴	681	—	—	—
Total Average (Tons/year)	1,465	300	161	142
Change from Existing Land Uses	211	-131	5	2
Increase?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (lbs per day)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Existing Land Uses (Year 2019)				
Transportation ¹	234	1,193	151	57
Energy ²	60	1,129	84	84
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	4,152	84	629	629
Off-Road Equipment ³	17	16	1	1
Consumer Products ⁴	2,432	—	—	—
Total Average (Tons/year)	6,895	2,422	865	771

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-10 Scenario 1. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to Existing Conditions

Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons per year)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Proposed General Plan Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	57	247	164	53
Energy ²	70	1,307	98	98
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	4,152	84	629	629
Off-Road Equipment ³	23	17	1	1
Consumer Products ⁴	3,730	—	—	—
Total Average (lbs/day)	8,032	1,656	891	780
Change from Existing Land Uses	1,137	-766	26	9
Increase?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: Emissions may not total to 100 percent due to rounding.

¹ EMFAC2021 V.1.0.2. Based on daily VMT provided by Fehr & Peers (see Appendix 5.16-1).

² Based on natural gas use provided by PG&E and residential & nonresidential fuels identified for the proposed CAP.

³ OFFROAD2021 V.1.02.

⁴ Based on CalEEMod User's Guide methodology to calculate VOC emissions from use of household consumer cleaning products.

Table 5.3-11 Scenario 2. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to the Future No Project Conditions

Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons per year)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Existing Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	8	35	24	8
Energy ²	11	206	15	15
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	758	15	115	115
Off-Road Equipment ³	3	3	0	0
Consumer Products ⁴	444			
Total Average (Tons/year)	1,224	259	154	138
Proposed General Plan Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	10	43	28	9
Energy ²	13	239	18	18
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	758	15	115	115
Off-Road Equipment ³	4	3	0	0
Consumer Products ⁴	681			
Total Average (Tons/year)	1,465	300	161	142
Change from Existing Land Uses	241	41	7	4
Increase?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (lbs per day)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Existing Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	47	201	136	44
Energy ²	60	1,129	84	84
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	4,152	84	629	629

5. Environmental Analysis AIR QUALITY

Table 5.3-11 Scenario 2. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to the Future No Project Conditions

Sectors	Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons per year)			
	VOC	NO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Off-Road Equipment ³	17	16	1	1
Consumer Products ⁴	2,432			
Total Average (Tons/year)	6,708	1,430	850	758
Proposed General Plan Land Uses (Year 2045)				
Transportation ¹	57	247	164	53
Energy ²	70	1,307	98	98
Residential Fuels (wood, kerosene, propane) ²	4,152	84	629	629
Off-Road Equipment ³	23	17	1	1
Consumer Products ⁴	3,730			
Total Average (lbs/year)	8,032	1,656	891	780
Change from Existing Land Uses	1,324	226	41	22
Increase?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Emissions may not total to 100 percent due to rounding.

¹ EMFAC2021 V.1.0.2. Based on daily VMT provided by Fehr & Peers (see Appendix 5.16-1).

² Based on natural gas use provided by PG&E and residential fuels identified for the proposed CAP.

³ OFFROAD2021 V.1.02.

⁴ Based on CalEEMod User's Guide methodology to calculate VOC emissions from use of household consumer cleaning products.

Proposed CAP

As discussed under Impact 5.3-2, implementation of the proposed CAP would not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity; therefore, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of operation-related criteria air pollutant emissions. Furthermore, as discussed under Impact 5.3-2, the proposed CAP would be subject to the same County standards that apply to development under the proposed General Plan, including the 2017 *Clean Air Plan*, which includes a wide range of control measures designed to decrease emissions of air pollutants, potent climate pollutants, and carbon dioxide by reducing fossil fuel combustion.

Additionally, the proposed CAP would have co-benefits with regard to operation-related criteria air pollutant emissions. Building energy efficiency improvements (e.g., proposed CAP Strategies BE-1 through BE-3) would promote sustainable building practices and would result in a decrease in natural gas use and associated criteria air pollutants (i.e., VOC, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}). Likewise, transportation strategies that reduce VMT (e.g., Strategy TR-1) would result in a reduction in criteria air pollutants from the transportation sector.

Therefore, the proposed CAP would contribute to reducing operation-phase criteria air pollutant emissions and result in beneficial air quality impacts. Implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-3 would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Mitigation Measures

AQ-2 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future project applicants shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project operation-phase-related air quality impacts to the Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology in assessing air quality impacts identified in their *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*. If operation-related air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the BAAQMD-adopted operational screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require that applicants for new development projects incorporate mitigation measures to reduce air pollutant emissions during operational activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the conditions of approval. Possible mitigation measures to reduce long-term emissions could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Implementing commute trip reduction programs.
- Unbundling residential parking costs from property costs.
- Expanding bikeway networks.
- Expanding transit network coverage or hours.
- Using cleaner-fueled vehicles.
- Exceeding the current Title 24 Building Envelope Energy Efficiency Standards.
- Establishing on-site renewable energy generation systems.
- Requiring all-electric buildings.
- Replacing gas-powered landscaping equipment with zero-emission alternatives.
- Expanding urban tree planting.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-3 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.3-4: Construction activities associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. [Threshold AQ-3]

Implementation of the proposed project would cause or contribute significantly to elevated pollutant concentration levels such that it would expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations. Unlike regional emissions, localized emissions are typically evaluated in terms of air concentration rather than mass so they can be more readily correlated to potential health effects.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Proposed General Plan

Construction Community Risk and Hazards

Future construction under the proposed General Plan would temporarily elevate concentrations of TACs and DPM in the vicinity of sensitive land uses during construction activities. Since the details regarding future construction activities are not known at this time due to this analysis being conducted at a program level—including phasing of future individual projects, construction duration and phasing, and preliminary construction equipment—construction emissions are evaluated qualitatively in accordance with BAAQMD’s plan-level guidance. Subsequent environmental review of future development projects would be required to assess potential impacts under BAAQMD’s project-level thresholds. However, construction emissions associated with the proposed General Plan could exceed BAAQMD’s project level and cumulative significance thresholds for community risk and hazards. Therefore, construction-related health risk impacts associated with the proposed General Plan are considered potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

As discussed under Impact 5.3-2, implementation of the proposed CAP would not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity; therefore, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of TAC and DPM emissions. In addition, as stated under Impact 5.3-3, implementation of the CAP could result in beneficial long-term air quality impacts from the increase in energy efficiency, usage of clean energy, and reduction in VMT. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of TACs, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-4 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-3 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more and within 1,000 feet of residential and other sensitive land uses (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and day care centers) in the unincorporated county⁷, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds the respective threshold established by the BAAQMD—project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD’s Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000 feet of a BAAQMD

⁷ As measured from the property line of the project site to the property line of the source/edge of the nearest travel lane.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Overburdened Community; ten in a million in all other areas; $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ emissions that exceed $0.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0—the applicant will be required to identify and demonstrate that mitigation measures are capable of reducing potential cancer and non-cancer risks below the respective threshold, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. Measures to reduce risk may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of construction equipment rated as US EPA Tier 4 Interim or higher for equipment of 50 horsepower or more.
- Use of construction equipment fitted with Level 3 Diesel Particulate Filters for all equipment of 50 horsepower or more.

Measures identified in the HRA shall be included in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site development plan as a component of the proposed project. Prior to issuance of any construction permit, the construction contractor shall ensure that all construction plans submitted to the Department of Conservation and Development clearly show incorporation of all applicable mitigation measures.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-4 would be less than significant. Mitigation Measure AQ-3 would ensure that discretionary development projects with construction proximate to sensitive receptors would reduce potential off-site health risks to less than BAAQMD significance criteria of six in one million (6E-06) cancer risk in Impacted Communities and ten in one million (10E-06) in all other areas, $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations of $0.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, or the noncancer hazard index of 1.0. Mitigation Measure AQ-3 would require the use of newer, lower emitting construction equipment, and therefore, the proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Impact 5.3-5: Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. [Threshold AQ-3]

Implementation of the proposed project would cause or contribute significantly to elevated pollutant concentration levels such that it would expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations. Unlike regional emissions, localized emissions are typically evaluated in terms of air concentration rather than mass so they can be more readily correlated to potential health effects. Types of land uses that typically generate substantial quantities of TACs and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ include industrial and manufacturing (stationary sources) and warehousing land uses that have the potential to generate DPM from onsite equipment and mobile sources (trucks). Additionally, operation of new land uses consistent with the proposed project could generate new sources of criteria air pollutants and TACs in the county associated with CO hotspots. The following describes potential localized operational air quality impacts from implementation of the proposed project.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Proposed General Plan

CO Hotspots

Areas of vehicle congestion have the potential to create pockets of CO, called hotspots. These pockets have the potential to exceed the State 1-hour standard of 20 ppm or the 8-hour standard of 9.0 ppm. Since CO is produced in the greatest quantities from vehicle combustion and does not readily disperse into the atmosphere, adherence to AAQS is typically demonstrated through an analysis of localized CO concentrations. Hotspots are typically produced at intersections, where traffic congestion is highest because vehicles queue for longer periods and are subject to reduced speeds.

The CCTA CMP must be consistent with the ABAG/MTC's Plan Bay Area, which is updated periodically. An overarching goal of the Plan Bay Area 2050 is to concentrate development in areas where there are existing services and infrastructure rather than allocate new growth in outlying areas where substantial transportation investments would be necessary to achieve the per capita passenger vehicle VMT and associated GHG emissions reductions.

The proposed General Plan would be consistent with the overall goals of the Plan Bay Area 2050. Additionally, the proposed General Plan would not hinder the capital improvements outlined in the CMP. Thus, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with the CCTA CMP. Furthermore, under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a project would have to increase traffic volumes at a single intersection to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour—or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited—in order to generate a significant CO impact (BAAQMD 2023b). The proposed General Plan would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than BAAQMD screening criteria of 44,000 vehicles per hour or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited (ArcGIS 2023). Therefore, overall, the proposed General Plan would not have the potential to substantially increase CO hotspots at intersections in the county and vicinity. Overall, these components of the proposed General Plan would contribute to reducing congestion and associated emissions. Localized air quality impacts related to mobile-source emissions would therefore be less than significant.

Stationary (Permitted) Sources

Various industrial and commercial processes (e.g., manufacturing and dry cleaning) allowed under the proposed General Plan would be expected to release TACs. TAC emissions generated by stationary and point sources of emissions within the Air Basin are regulated and controlled by BAAQMD. Land uses that would require a permit from BAAQMD for emissions of TACs include chemical processing facilities, chrome-plating facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline-dispensing facilities. Emissions of TACs from stationary sources would be controlled by BAAQMD through permitting and would be subject to further study and health risk assessment prior to the issuance of any necessary air quality permits under Regulation 2, *New Source Review*, as well as Regulation 11, Rule 18, *Reduction of Risk from Air Toxic Emissions at Existing Facilities*.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Review under New Source Review ensures that stationary source emissions (permitted sources) would be reduced or mitigated below BAAQMD community risk and hazards thresholds. Though these sources would incrementally contribute to emissions in the unincorporated county individually, they would be mitigated to BAAQMD standards.

The following proposed General Plan policies and actions would serve to minimize potential adverse impacts on air quality by increasing standards and promoting cooperation with outside agencies:

- **Policy HS-P1.4.** Require new industrial development to locate significant pollution sources as far away from sensitive receptors as possible.
- **Action HS-A1.3.** Consult with BAAQMD and community stakeholders and amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include an Industrial-Sensitive Receptor Interface Overlay Zone applied to areas where residential land uses and other sensitive receptors interface or directly abut heavy industrial land uses. In the overlay zone, require industrial uses to reduce pollution and employ strategies to mitigate air quality, noise, vibration, odor, light, visual, and safety impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. In addition, require new sensitive receptors to install enhanced ventilation systems and implement other strategies, paid for by neighboring sources of pollution to the extent possible, to protect residents from health and quality of life impacts.
- **Action HS-A2.4.** Coordinate with BAAQMD to determine where to focus a targeted permit inspection program in Impacted Communities to help ensure enforcement of air quality permits.

The policies and actions listed above would minimize potential health risk impacts to sensitive receptors. Though the proposed General Plan includes policies to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to pollution, and BAAQMD would ensure that on a project-by-project basis emission achieve their permit thresholds, emissions cannot be determined or modeled until specific development projects are proposed. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan may result in projects that emit TACs and PM_{2.5} throughout the unincorporated county and result in potentially significant localized air quality impacts.

Nonpermitted Sources

TACs and PM_{2.5} from mobile sources when operating at a property (e.g., truck idling) are regulated by statewide rules and regulations, not by BAAQMD, and have the potential to generate substantial concentrations of air pollutants. The primary mobile source of TACs within the unincorporated county includes truck idling and use of off-road equipment.

New warehousing operations could generate substantial DPM and PM_{2.5} emissions from off-road cargo-handling equipment use and truck idling. In addition, some warehousing and industrial facilities may include use of TRUs for cold storage. New land uses in the unincorporated county that would be permitted under the proposed General Plan that use trucks, including trucks with TRUs, could generate an increase in DPM that would contribute to cancer and noncancer health risk in the Air Basin. Additionally, these types of facilities could also generate particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) that may cause an exceedance or contribute to the continuing exceedance of the federal and State AAQS. These new land uses could be near existing sensitive

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

receptors. In addition, trucks would travel on regional transportation routes through the Bay Area, contributing to near-roadway DPM concentrations.

The proposed General Plan would potentially result in an increase of 5 million square feet of industrial land uses. The areas intended for industrial uses would be primarily associated with existing planned and/or permitted industrial development. Additionally, existing residences are close to existing and planned Industrial designations, and overlap with many of the Overburdened and Impacted Communities. As identified in the Figure 3-3, *Proposed General Plan Land Use Map*, industrial areas are proximate to residential areas in several areas of the unincorporated county, including:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| ■ North Richmond | ■ Clyde |
| ■ Bay Point | ■ Vine Hill |
| ■ Byron | ■ Crockett |
| ■ Discovery Bay | ■ Rodeo |
| ■ Pacheco | |

These areas are proximate to sensitive receptors. Until specific future development projects are proposed, the associated emissions and concentrations cannot be determined or modeled.

The County will require project applicants to prepare project-specific analyses of qualifying projects and incorporate project-specific mitigation measures to reduce TACs, per the following policies:

- **Policy HS-P1.5.** Require new sources of air pollution that will generate significant new air quality impacts or expose sensitive receptors to substantial increases in harmful emissions of TACs to prepare a Health Risk Assessment that identifies appropriate mitigation consistent with BAAQMD California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Air Quality Guidelines, based on the findings of the Health Risk Assessment.
- **Policy HS-P2.1.** When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in Impacted Communities, use an excess cancer risk of 6.0 per million and a non-cancer (acute and chronic) hazard index greater than 1.0 as thresholds for finding that the project could cause a cumulatively considerable contribution and a significant impact.

If the results show that the incremental cancer risk exceeds ten in one million (or the risk thresholds in effect at the time a project is considered) or six in one million in Impacted Communities, the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, or $0.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ of $\text{PM}_{2.5}$, or the thresholds as determined by the BAAQMD at the time a project is considered, the applicant is required to mitigate the potential cancer and noncancer risks to an acceptable level.

The following policy in the proposed General Plan would reduce the exposure of sensitive receptors in Impacted Communities and Overburdened Communities to TACs and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$:

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- **Policy HS-P1.8.** Require new or expanded commercial and industrial projects exceeding 25,000 square feet of gross floor area to be near zero-emissions (NZE) operations, including the facilities themselves and the associated fleets. Require all necessary measures, such as the following, to achieve NZE:
 - (a) Reduce on-site energy consumption and increase on-site energy generation and energy storage.
 - (b) Provide adequate on-site ZE vehicle-capable parking for all anticipated truck traffic to prevent idling and off-site queuing.
 - (c) Provide electrified loading docks with receptacles allowing plug-in of refrigerated trailers.
 - (d) Use heavy-duty trucks that are model year 2014 or later and expedite a transition to ZE trucks by establishing a clear timeline for electrification of trucks as they become commercially available. Ensure contracts with motor carriers include air quality incentives or requirements, such as providing incentives to fleets that meet United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SmartWay standards or requiring use of ZE or NZE trucks.
 - (e) Use a “clean fleet” of delivery vehicles as they become commercially available, but no later than 2025.
 - (f) Use ZE yard equipment, such as forklifts, pallet trucks and jacks, and stackers.
 - (g) Implement practices to control and remove fugitive dust and other contaminants from paved areas.

Uses with fewer than five vehicles domiciled on-site are exempt from this policy.

The policies listed above aim to reduce pollution from industrial development to nearby sensitive receptors and would require more project-specific mitigation measures to reduce TACs, especially in Impacted Communities. Policy HS-P1.8 also pushes to reduce truck idling, promotes the replacement of older heavy-duty trucks, and supports near zero emissions operations.

Though the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions to reduce air pollutant emissions exposure within Impacted Communities, the proposed General Plan could result in specific development projects that could emit TACs and PM_{2.5}. The emissions associated with these facilities cannot be determined or modeled until specific development projects are proposed. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan may result in projects that emit TACs and PM_{2.5} in the vicinity of Impacted Communities and sensitive receptors and result in potentially significant localized air quality impacts.

Therefore, without project-specific analysis health risk impacts from nonpermitted sources associated with development of industrial and commercial land uses are considered potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

As discussed under Impact 5.3-2, implementation of the proposed CAP would not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity; therefore, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of operation-related criteria air pollutants, TAC and PM_{2.5} emissions, or generation of vehicle trips to produce CO hotspots. In addition, as stated under Impact 5.3-3, implementation of the CAP could result in beneficial long-term air quality impacts from the increase in energy

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

efficiency, usage of clean energy, and reduction in VMT. A reduction in vehicle trips would contribute to further minimizing the potential creation of CO hotspots. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of TACs, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-5 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-4 Prior to discretionary approval by the County, project applicants for new industrial or warehousing development projects that 1) have the potential to generate 100 or more diesel truck trips per day or have 40 or more trucks with operating diesel-powered transport refrigeration units, and 2) are within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use (e.g., residential, schools, hospitals, nursing homes) or Impacted Community, as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the nearest sensitive use, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the cumulative and project-level incremental cancer risk, noncancer hazard index, and/or PM_{2.5} exceeds the respective threshold, as established by BAAQMD (all areas of the unincorporated county) and project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000 feet of a BAAQMD Overburdened Community; ten in a million in all other areas; PM_{2.5} emissions that exceed 0.3 µg/m³; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the project applicant will be required to identify best available control technologies for toxics (T-BACTs) and appropriate enforcement mechanisms, and demonstrate that they are capable of reducing potential cancer, noncancer risks, and PM_{2.5} to an acceptable level. T-BACTs may include but are not limited to:

- Restricting idling on-site beyond Air Toxic Control Measures idling restrictions
- Electrifying warehousing docks
- Requiring use of newer equipment
- Requiring near-zero or zero-emission trucks for a portion of the vehicle fleet based on opening year
- Truck Electric Vehicle (EV) Capable trailer spaces
- Restricting off-site truck travel through the creation of truck routes

T-BACTs identified in the HRA shall be identified as mitigation measures in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site plan.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-5 would remain significant and unavoidable. Development allowed by the proposed project could result in new sources of TACs or PM_{2.5} near existing or planned sensitive receptors. Review of development projects by BAAQMD for permitted sources of air toxics (e.g., industrial facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities) in addition to proposed General Plan policies and actions would ensure that health risks are minimized. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AIR-4 would ensure mobile sources of TACs not covered under BAAQMD permits are considered during subsequent project-level review by the County. Individual development projects would be required to achieve the incremental risk thresholds established by BAAQMD, and TAC and PM_{2.5} project-level impacts would be less than significant. However, these projects could contribute to significant cumulative risk in the Bay Area that could affect sensitive populations and Overburdened and Impacted Communities. As a result, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative health risk is considered significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.3-6: The proposed project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. [Threshold AQ-4]

Proposed General Plan

Construction-Related Odors

During construction activities of future development in the county, construction equipment exhaust and application of asphalt and architectural coatings would temporarily generate odors. Any construction-related odor emissions would be temporary and intermittent. Additionally, noxious odors would be confined to the immediate vicinity of the construction equipment. By the time such emissions reach any sensitive receptor sites, they would be diluted to well below any level of air quality concern, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operational-Related Odors

Industrial Land Uses

Industrial land uses are the primary types of land uses that have the potential to generate objectionable odors. Future environmental review could be required for industrial projects listed in BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines Table 4 Project Screening Trigger Levels for Potential Odor Sources to ensure that sensitive land uses are not exposed to nuisance odors (BAAQMD 2023b). Consequently, review of projects using BAAQMD's odor screening distances is necessary to ensure that odor impacts are minimized. Odor impacts could be significant for new projects that have the potential to generate odors within the odor screening distances.

Residential and Other Land Uses

Residential and other nonresidential, nonindustrial land uses that would be accommodated by the proposed General Plan could result in the generation of odors such as exhaust from landscaping equipment and from cooking. Unlike industrial land uses, these are not considered potential generators of odor that could affect a substantial number of people.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Furthermore, nuisance odors are regulated under BAAQMD Regulation 7, Odorous Substances, which requires abatement of any nuisance generating an odor complaint. In addition, odors are also regulated under BAAQMD Regulation 1, Rule 1-301, *Public Nuisance*. Compliance with BAAQMD Regulation 7 would ensure that odor impacts associated with the proposed General Plan are minimized to a less than significant level.

Proposed CAP

As discussed under Impact 5.3-2, implementation of the proposed CAP would not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity; therefore, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of odors or other emissions. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.3-6 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.3-6 would be less than significant.

5.3.5 Cumulative Impacts

Construction

The cumulative setting for air quality is the Air Basin. The BAAQMD is designated nonattainment for O₃, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀ under the California and/or National AAQS. Construction of cumulative projects would further degrade the regional and local air quality. Air quality would be temporarily impacted during construction activities. Implementation of mitigation measures for related projects would reduce cumulative impacts. However, project-related construction emissions could still potentially exceed the BAAQMD significance thresholds on a project and cumulative basis. Consequently, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative air quality impacts would be cumulatively considerable and would therefore be significant.

Operation

For operational air quality emissions, any project that does not exceed or can be mitigated to less than the daily regional threshold values is not considered by BAAQMD to be a substantial source of air pollution and does not add significantly to a cumulative impact. Operation of the proposed project would result in emissions in excess of the BAAQMD regional emissions thresholds for long-term operation. Therefore, the proposed project's air pollutant emissions would be cumulatively considerable and therefore significant.

Health Risk (TACs and PM_{2.5})

Development allowed by the proposed General Plan could result in new sources of criteria air pollutant emissions and/or TACs near existing or planned sensitive receptors as well as proximate to other existing and planned major sources of air pollution including high volume roadways, truck distribution centers, ports,

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

railyards and rail lines, refineries, airports, chrome plating facilities, crematoriums, dry cleaners using perchloroethylene, generators, and gasoline dispensing facilities. Review of new development projects by BAAQMD for permitted sources of air toxics (e.g., industrial facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities), in addition to proposed General Plan policies and actions, would ensure that health risks are minimized. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AQ-4 would ensure mobile sources of TACs not covered under BAAQMD permits are considered during subsequent project-level review by the County. Individual development projects would be required to achieve the incremental risk thresholds established by BAAQMD; therefore, project-level impacts would be less than significant. However, cumulative construction plus operation of these projects in areas with high background risk could contribute to significant cumulative risk in the Bay Area that could affect sensitive populations and disadvantaged communities. As a result, the proposed General Plan's contribution to cumulative health risk is considered **significant**.

5.3.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: Impacts 5.3-1, 5.3-5, and 5.3-6.

Without mitigation, these impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.3-2:** Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards.
- **Impact 5.3-3:** Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS.
- **Impact 5.3-4:** Construction activities associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- **Impact 5.3-5:** Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and cumulatively contribute to elevated health risk in the Air Basin.

5.3.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.3-2

AQ-1 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project construction-related air quality impacts to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology for assessing air quality impacts identified in their *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*. If construction-related criteria air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

the BAAQMD–adopted construction screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality emissions. Potential measures may include:

- Require implementation of the BAAQMD Best Management Practices for fugitive dust control, such as:
 - All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, grading areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day.
 - All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.
 - All visible mud or dirt trackout onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
 - All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour (mph).
 - All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. Building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
 - All excavation, grading, and/or demolition activities shall be suspended when average wind speeds exceed 20 mph.
 - All trucks and equipment, including their tires, shall be washed off prior to leaving the site.
 - Unpaved roads providing access to sites located 100 feet or further from a paved road shall be treated with a 6- to 12-inch layer of compacted layer of wood chips, mulch, or gravel.
 - Publicly visible signs shall be posted with the telephone number and name of the person to contact at the lead agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. BAAQMD’s General Air Pollution Complaints number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

Measures shall be incorporated into appropriate construction documents (e.g., construction management plans) submitted to the County and shall be verified by the Department of Conservation and Development.

Impact 5.3-3

AQ-2

Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future project applicants shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project operation-phase-related air quality impacts to the Department of Conservation and

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Development for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) methodology in assessing air quality impacts identified in their *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*. If operation-related air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the BAAQMD-adopted operational screening criteria and thresholds of significance, the Department of Conservation and Development shall require that applicants for new development projects incorporate mitigation measures to reduce air pollutant emissions during operational activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the conditions of approval. Possible mitigation measures to reduce long-term emissions could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Implementing commute trip reduction programs.
- Unbundling residential parking costs from property costs.
- Expanding bikeway networks.
- Expanding transit network coverage or hours.
- Using cleaner-fueled vehicles.
- Exceeding the current Title 24 Building Envelope Energy Efficiency Standards.
- Establishing on-site renewable energy generation systems.
- Requiring all-electric buildings.
- Replacing gas-powered landscaping equipment with zero-emission alternatives.
- Expanding urban tree planting.

Impact 5.3-4

AQ-3 Prior to discretionary approval by the County for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), future development involving construction on 1 acre or more and within 1,000 feet of residential and other sensitive land uses (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and day care centers) in the unincorporated county⁸, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the County Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds the respective threshold, as established by the BAAQMD —project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000 feet of a BAAQMD Overburdened

⁸ As measured from the property line of the project site to the property line of the source/edge of the nearest travel lane.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

Community; ten in a million in all other areas; PM_{2.5} emissions that exceed 0.3 µg/m³; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0—the applicant will be required to identify and demonstrate that mitigation measures are capable of reducing potential cancer and non-cancer risks below the respective threshold, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. Measures to reduce risk may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of construction equipment rated as US EPA Tier 4 Interim for equipment of 50 horsepower or more.
- Use of construction equipment fitted with Level 3 Diesel Particulate Filters for all equipment of 50 horsepower or more.

Measures identified in the HRA shall be included in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site development plan as a component of the proposed project. Prior to issuance of any construction permit, the construction contractor shall ensure that all construction plans submitted to the Department of Conservation and Development clearly show incorporation of all applicable mitigation measures.

Impact 5.3-5

AQ-4

Prior to discretionary approval by the County, project applicants for new industrial or warehousing development projects that 1) have the potential to generate 100 or more diesel truck trips per day or have 40 or more trucks with operating diesel-powered transport refrigeration units, and 2) are within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use (e.g., residential, schools, hospitals, nursing homes) or Impacted Community, as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the nearest sensitive use, shall submit a health risk assessment (HRA) to the Department of Conservation and Development for review and approval. The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the HRA shows that the cumulative and project-level incremental cancer risk, noncancer hazard index, and/or PM_{2.5} exceeds the respective threshold, as established by BAAQMD (all areas of the unincorporated County) and project-level risk of six in one million in Impacted Communities, BAAQMD's Overburdened Communities, and within 1,000 feet of a BAAQMD Overburdened Community; ten in a million in all other areas; PM_{2.5} emissions that exceed 0.3 µg/m³; or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the project applicant will be required to identify best available control technologies for toxics (T-BACTs) and appropriate enforcement mechanisms, and demonstrate that they are capable of reducing potential cancer, noncancer risks, and PM_{2.5} to an acceptable level. T-BACTs may include but are not limited to:

- Restricting idling on-site beyond Air Toxic Control Measures idling restrictions

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Electrifying warehousing docks
- Requiring use of newer equipment
- Requiring near-zero or zero-emission trucks for a portion of the vehicle fleet based on opening year.
- Truck Electric Vehicle (EV) Capable trailer spaces.
- Restricting off-site truck travel through the creation of truck routes.

T-BACTs identified in the HRA shall be identified as mitigation measures in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site plan.

5.3.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.3-2

Development in accordance with the proposed project would generate short-term emissions that would exceed BAAQMD's regional significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SFBAAB. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would reduce construction-related air pollutant emissions to the extent feasible. However, individual projects accommodated under the proposed project may exceed the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds. Therefore, Impact 5.3-2 would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

Impact 5.3-3

Development in accordance with the proposed project would generate long-term emissions that would exceed BAAQMD's regional significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the SFBAAB. Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would reduce air pollutant emissions to the extent feasible. However, Impact 5.3-3 would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

Contributing to the nonattainment status would also contribute to elevating health effects associated to these criteria air pollutants. Known health effects related to ozone include worsening of bronchitis, asthma, and emphysema and a decrease in lung function. Health effects associated with particulate matter include premature death of people with heart or lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Reducing emissions would further contribute to reducing possible health effects related to criteria air pollutants.

It is speculative for this broad-based policy plan to determine how exceeding the regional thresholds would affect the number of days the region is in nonattainment since mass emissions are not correlated with concentrations of emissions, or how many additional individuals in the air basin would be affected by the health effects cited above.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

This EIR quantifies the increase in criteria air pollutants emissions in the unincorporated county. However, at a programmatic level analysis, it is not feasible to quantify the increase in TACs from stationary sources associated with the proposed project or meaningfully correlate how regional criteria air pollutant emissions above the BAAQMD significance thresholds correlate with basinwide health impacts.

To determine cancer and noncancer health risk, the location, velocity of emissions, meteorology and topography of the area, and locations of receptors are equally important as model parameters as the quantity of TAC emissions. The white paper in Appendix C “We Can Model Regional Emissions, But Are the Results Meaningful for CEQA” describe several of the challenges of quantifying local effects—particularly health risks—for large-scale, regional projects, and these are applicable to both criteria air pollutants and TACs. Similarly, the two amicus briefs filed by the air districts on the Friant Ranch case (see Appendix 5.3-1) describe two positions regarding CEQA requirements, modeling feasibility, variables, and reliability of results for determining specific health risks associated with criteria air pollutants. The discussions also include the distinction between criteria air pollutant emissions and TACs with respect to health risks. The following summarizes major points about the infeasibility of assessing health risks of criteria air pollutant emissions and TACs associated with implementation of a general plan.

To achieve and maintain air quality standards, BAAQMD has established numerical emission indicators of significance for regional and localized air quality impacts for both construction and operational phases of a local plan or project. BAAQMD has established the thresholds based on “scientific and factual data that is contained in the federal and state Clean Air Acts” and recommends “that these thresholds be used by lead agencies in making a determination of significance.” The numerical emission indicators are based on the recognition that the air basin is a distinct geographic area with a critical air pollution problem for which ambient air quality standards have been promulgated to protect public health. The thresholds represent the maximum emissions from a plan or project that are expected not to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable national or state ambient air quality standard. By analyzing the plan’s emissions against the thresholds, an EIR assesses whether these emissions directly contribute to any regional or local exceedances of the applicable ambient air quality standards and exposure levels.

BAAQMD currently does not have methodologies that would provide the County with a consistent, reliable, and meaningful analysis to correlate specific health impacts that may result from a proposed project’s mass emissions.⁹ For criteria air pollutants, exceedance of the regional significance thresholds cannot be used to correlate a project to quantifiable health impacts unless emissions are sufficiently high to use a regional model. BAAQMD has not provided methodology to assess the specific correlation between mass emissions generated

⁹ In April 2019, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) published an Interim Recommendation on implementing *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502 (“Friant Ranch”) in the review and analysis of proposed projects under CEQA in Sacramento County. Consistent with the expert opinions submitted to the court in Friant Ranch by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and South Coast AQMD, the SMAQMD guidance confirms the absence of an acceptable or reliable quantitative methodology that would correlate the expected criteria air pollutant emissions of projects to likely health consequences for people from project-generated criteria air pollutant emissions. The SMAQMD guidance explains that while it is in the process of developing a methodology to assess these impacts, lead agencies should follow the Friant Court’s advice to explain in meaningful detail why this analysis is not yet feasible. Since this interim memorandum SMAQMD has provided methodology to address health impacts. However, a similar analysis is not available for projects within the Bay Area.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

and their effect on health (see Appendix C: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District’s amicus brief, and South Coast AQMD’s amicus brief).

Ozone concentrations depend on a variety of complex factors, including the presence of sunlight and precursor pollutants, natural topography, nearby structures that cause building downwash, atmospheric stability, and wind patterns. Secondary formation of particulate matter (PM) and ozone can occur far from sources as a result of regional transport due to wind and topography (e.g., low-level jet stream). Photochemical modeling depends on all emission sources in the entire domain (i.e., modeling grid). Low resolution and spatial averaging produce “noise” and modeling errors that usually exceed individual source contributions. Because of the complexities of predicting ground-level ozone concentrations in relation to the National and California AAQS, it is not possible to link health risks to the magnitude of emissions exceeding the significance thresholds.

Current models used in CEQA air quality analyses are designed to estimate potential project construction and operation emissions for defined projects. The estimated emissions are compared to significance thresholds, which are keyed to reducing emissions to levels that will not interfere with the region’s ability to attain the health-based standards. This serves to protect public health in the overall region, but there is currently no CEQA methodology to determine the impact of emissions (e.g., pounds per day) on future concentration levels (e.g., parts per million or micrograms per cubic meter) in specific geographic areas. CEQA thresholds, therefore, are not specifically tied to potential health outcomes in the region.

The EIR must provide an analysis that is understandable for decision making and public disclosure. Regional-scale modeling may provide a technical method for this type of analysis, but it does not necessarily provide a meaningful way to connect the magnitude of a project’s criteria pollutant emissions to health effects without speculation. Additionally, this type of analysis is not feasible at a general plan level because the location of emissions sources and quantity of emissions are not known. However, because cumulative development within the county would exceed the regional significance thresholds, the proposed project could contribute to an increase in health effects in the basin until the attainment standards are met in the Air Basin.

Impact 5.3-4

Mitigation Measure AQ-3 would require preparation of a construction health risk assessment (HRA) that would identify measures that would reduce DPM and PM_{2.5} emissions below the BAAQMD significance thresholds by requiring use of newer, lower emitting construction equipment, and would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, Impact 5.3-4 would be *less than significant* with mitigation incorporated.

Impact 5.3-5

Development allowed by the proposed General Plan could result in new sources of criteria air pollutant emissions and/or TACs near existing or planned sensitive receptors. Review of development projects by BAAQMD for permitted sources of air toxics (e.g., industrial facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline dispensing facilities), in addition to proposed General Plan policies and actions, would ensure that health risks are minimized. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AQ-4 would ensure mobile sources of TACs not covered under BAAQMD permits are considered during subsequent project-level review by the County. Individual

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

development projects would be required to achieve the incremental risk thresholds established by BAAQMD; therefore, project-level impacts would be less than significant. However, cumulative construction and operation of these projects in areas with high background risk could contribute to significant cumulative risk in the Bay Area that could affect sensitive populations and disadvantaged communities. As a result, Impact 5.3-5 would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

5.3.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. 2021, October. Plan Bay Area 2050. https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-11/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf
- Arc Geographic Information System (ArcGIS), 2023, June 15 (accessed). CCC GPU Model Volumes. <https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=dd62120b2a5a49d291f9cb8e7f63bc45&extent=-122.1814,37.8234,-121.6743,38.0473>.
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 2010. Appendix C: Sample Air Quality Setting, in California Environmental Quality Act Air Guidelines.
- . 2017a, May. California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines. 2017a (revised). http://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/ceqa/ceqa_guidelines_may2017-pdf.
- . 2017b, January 5. Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status. <http://www.baaqmd.gov/research-and-data/air-quality-standards-and-attainment-status#thirteen>.
- . 2017c, April 19. Final 2018 Clean Air Plan. Spare the Air Cool the Climate, A Blueprint for Clean Air And Climate Protection in the Bay Area. http://www.baaqmd.gov/research-and-https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/plans/2017-clean-air-plan/attachment-a_-proposed-final-cap-vol-1-pdf.pdf
- . 2019a, April 19. AB 617 Fact Sheet. San Francisco Bay Area Community Health Protection Program, https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/ab617-community-health/2019_0325_ab617onepager-pdf.pdf?la=en&rev=9f6dcd6de8854fd9853ff0498c6bbdff.
- . 2019b, October 2. West Oakland Community Action Plan, <https://www.baaqmd.gov/community-health/community-health-protection-program/west-oakland-community-action-plan>.
- . 2020, July. AB 617 Richmond-San Pablo Community Air Monitoring Plan. <https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/ab617-community-health/richmond/richmondsanpabloairmonitoringplanjuly2020-pdf.pdf?la=en>.
- . 2022, December. Air Toxics Monitoring Study, Richmond - North Richmond - San Pablo. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/21c9cd2252fe4a7d8ab26ae2fa81ec47>
- . 2023a, December. Draft Path to Clean Air Community Emissions Reduction Plan for Richmond, North Richmond & San Pablo. https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/ab617-community-health/richmond/richmond-ptca-cerp-plan/final-draft-plan_december2023_v2-pdf.pdf?rev=18f908c0da024baeadc8a23c7e84a08e.

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- . 2023b, April. California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines. <https://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/updated-ceqa-guidelines>.
- California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA). 2022, April. CalEEMod, California Emissions Estimator Model User Guide, Version 2022.1. <https://www.caleemod.com/user-guide>
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 1998, April 22. *The Report on Diesel Exhaust*. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/dieseltac/de-fnds.htm>.
- . 1999. *Final Staff Report: Update to the Toxic Air Contaminant List*. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/toxics/tac/update98/update98.htm>.
- . 2005, April. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*. <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/california-air-resources-board-air-quality-and-land-use-handbook-a-community-health-perspective.pdf>.
- . 2016, May 4. *Ambient Air Quality Standards*. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/aaqs2.pdf>.
- . 2017, April. *Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High-Volume Roadways*. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2017-10/rd_technical_advisory_final.pdf.
- . 2023a (Accessed). Maps of State and Federal Area Designations. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations>.
- . 2023b (Accessed). Reduce Your Exposure to Particle Pollution. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/fact-sheets/reduce-your-exposure-particle-pollution>.
- . 2023c (Accessed). Air Pollution Data Monitoring Cards (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021), <https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/topfour/topfour1.php>.
- Contra Costa County. 2021, January 18. Reach Code, Findings in Support of Changes, Additions, and Deletions to California Energy Code to Require Certain Newly Constructed Buildings to be All-Electric Buildings, <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/74714/Ordinance-No-2022-02-Findings-PDF>.
- Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development. 2005, January 18. *Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4732/General-Plan>.
- County of Contra Costa Transportation Authority. 2021, December 15. *Update of the Contra Costa County Congestion Management Program*. https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CMP21_MainDoc_Draft_Final_.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis

AIR QUALITY

- Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). 2015, February. Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Health Risk Assessments. <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/crn/2015guidancemanual.pdf>
- . 2021, October 13. CalEnviroScreen (CES) 4.0 Report. <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen40reportf2021.pdf>.
- . 2023, October 13. CalEnviroScreen (CES) 4.0 Indicator Map. <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>.
- South Coast Air Quality Management District. 2005, May 6. Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/air-quality-guidance/complete-guidance-document.pdf?sfvrsn=4>.
- US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2002, May. *Health Assessment Document for Diesel Engine Exhaust*. Prepared by the National Center for Environmental Assessment, Washington, DC, for the Office of Transportation and Air Quality. EPA/600/8-90/057F. <https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/risk/recordisplay.cfm?deid=29060>.
- . 2020, February 3 (mod.). Health and Environmental Effects of Hazardous Air Pollutants. <https://www.epa.gov/haps/health-and-environmental-effects-hazardous-air-pollutants>.
- . 2022, August 9 (mod.). Criteria Air Pollutants. <https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants>.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section describes the potential impacts on biological resources associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions, identifies criteria used to determine impact significance, provides an analysis of the potential impacts to biological resources, and identifies proposed General Plan policies and actions that could minimize any potentially significant impacts.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies:

- *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report* (Existing Conditions Report), which is included as Appendix 5.4-1 to this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: RareFind Report, Contra Costa County, included as Appendix 5.4-2 to this Draft EIR.

5.4.1 Environmental Setting

5.4.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal and State

Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) of 1973, as amended, protects and conserves any species of plant or animal that is endangered or threatened with extinction, as well as the habitats where these species are found. “Take” of endangered species is prohibited under Section 9 of the FESA. “Take” means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Section 7 of the FESA requires federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on proposed federal actions that may affect any endangered, threatened, or proposed (for listing) species or critical habitat that may support the species. Section 4(a) of the FESA requires that critical habitat be designated by the USFWS “to the maximum extent prudent and determinable, at the time a species is determined to be endangered or threatened.” This provides guidance for planners/managers and biologists by indicating locations of suitable habitat and where preservation of a particular species has high priority. Section 10 of the FESA provides the regulatory mechanism for incidental take of a listed species by private interests and nonfederal government agencies during lawful activities. Habitat conservation plans (HCPs) for the impacted species must be developed in support of incidental take permits to minimize impacts to the species and formulate viable mitigation measures.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA) affirms and implements the United States’ commitment to four international conventions—with Canada, Japan, Mexico, and Russia—to protect shared migratory bird resources. The MBTA governs the take, killing, possession, transportation, and importation of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests. It prohibits the take, possession, import, export, transport, sale, purchase, barter, or

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

offering of these items, except under a valid permit or as permitted in the implementing regulations. USFWS administers permits to take migratory birds in accordance with the MBTA.

Clean Water Act, Section 404

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regulates discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the United States.”¹ Any filling or dredging within waters of the United States requires a permit, which entails assessment of potential adverse impacts to Corps wetlands and jurisdictional waters and any mitigation measures that the Corps requires. Section 7 consultation with USFWS may be required for impacts to a federally listed species. If cultural resources may be present, Section 106 review may also be required. When a Section 404 permit is required, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification is also required from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Clean Water Act, Section 401 and 402

Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) specifies that any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in any discharge into navigable waters shall provide the federal permitting agency with a certification, issued by the state in which the discharge originates, that any such discharge will comply with the applicable provisions of the CWA. In California, the applicable RWQCB must certify that the project will comply with water quality standards. Permits requiring Section 401 certification include Corps Section 404 permits and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Section 402 of the CWA. NPDES permits are issued by the applicable RWQCB. Contra Costa County is Region 2 (San Francisco Bay) and Region 5 (Central Valley).

California Fish and Game Code, Section 1602

Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code requires a project proponent to notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) of any proposed alteration of streambeds, rivers, and lakes. The intent is to protect habitats that are important to fish and wildlife. CDFW may review and place conditions on the project, as part of a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA), that address potentially significant adverse impacts within CDFW’s jurisdictional limits.

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) generally parallels the main provisions of the FESA and is administered by CDFW. Its intent is to prohibit take and protect State-listed endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife, and plants. Unlike its federal counterpart, CESA also applies the take prohibitions to species petitioned for listing (i.e., State candidates). Candidate species may be afforded temporary protection as though they were already listed as threatened or endangered at the discretion of the Fish and Game Commission.

¹ “Waters of the United States,” as applied to the jurisdictional limits of the Corps under the Clean Water Act, includes all waters that are currently used, were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters that are subject to the tide; all interstate waters, including interstate wetlands; and all other waters, such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds whose use, degradation, or destruction could affect interstate or foreign commerce; water impoundments; tributaries of waters; territorial seas; and wetlands adjacent to waters. The terminology used by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act includes “navigable waters,” which is defined at Section 502(7) of the act as “waters of the United States, including the territorial seas.”

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Unlike the FESA, CESA does not include listing provisions for invertebrate species. Under certain conditions, CESA has provisions for take through a Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit or memorandum of understanding (MOU). In addition, some sensitive mammals and birds are protected by the State as “fully protected species.” California “species of special concern” are species designated as vulnerable to extinction due to declining population levels, limited ranges, and/or continuing threats. This list is primarily a working document for the CDFW’s California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), which maintains a record of known and recorded occurrences of sensitive species. Informally listed taxa are not protected per se but warrant consideration in the preparation of biological resources assessments.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the RWQCB regulates actions that would involve “discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the water of the state” (Water Code Section 13260(a)). Waters of the State are defined as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state” (Water Code Section 13050 [e]). The RWQCB regulates all such activities, as well as dredging, filling, or discharging materials into waters of the State, that are not regulated by the Corps due to a lack of connectivity with a navigable water body. The RWQCB may require issuance of waste discharge requirements for these activities. Although all waters of the United States that are within the borders of California are also waters of the State, the converse is not true (i.e., not all waters of the State are also waters of the United States). Thus, California retains authority to regulate discharges of waste into any waters of the State, regardless of whether the Corps has concurrent jurisdiction under CWA Section 404.

California Native Plant Protection Act

The California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 (California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913) was established with the intent to “preserve, protect and enhance rare and endangered plants in this state.” CDFW administers the NPPA. The Fish and Game Commission has the authority to designate native plants as “endangered” or “rare.”

The NPPA prohibits the take of plants listed under it, though the act contains exemptions to this prohibition that have not been clarified by regulation or judicial rule. In 1984, the CESA brought under its protection all plants previously listed as endangered under NPPA. Plants listed as rare under NPPA are not protected under the CESA but are still protected under the provisions of NPPA. The Fish and Game Commission no longer lists plants under NPPA, reserving all listings to the CESA.

California Fish and Game Code Special Protections for Birds

In addition to protections contained within the CESA and California Fish and Game Code Section 3511 described previously, the California Fish and Game Code includes several sections that specifically protect certain birds.

- Section 3800 states that it is unlawful to take nongame birds, such as those occurring naturally in California that are not resident game birds, migratory game birds, or fully protected birds, except when in accordance with regulations of the California Fish and Game Commission or a mitigation plan approved by CDFW for mining operations.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Section 3503 prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of the nest or eggs of any bird.
- Section 3503.5 protects birds of prey (which includes eagles, hawks, falcons, kites, ospreys, and owls) and prohibits the take, possession, or destruction of any birds and their nests.
- Section 3505 makes it unlawful to take, sell, or purchase egrets, ospreys, and several exotic non-native species, or any part of these birds.
- Section 3513 specifically prohibits the take or possession of any migratory nongame bird as designated in the MBTA.

California Fully Protected Species

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 3513, 4700, and 5050 pertain to fully protected wildlife species (i.e., birds in Sections 3511 [discussed previously] and 3513, mammals in Section 4700, and reptiles and amphibians in Section 5050) and strictly prohibit the take of these species. CDFW cannot issue a take permit for fully protected species, except under narrow conditions for scientific research or the protection of livestock, or if a natural community conservation plan has been adopted.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 82-1 – 65/35 Land Preservation Plan

This chapter states that urban development in the county shall be limited to no more than 35 percent of the land in the county. At least 65 percent of all land in the county shall be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other nonurban use. The County's Urban Limit Line (ULL) was established in 1990 and is integral to enforcing the 65/35 Plan.

Chapter 816-6 – Tree Protection and Preservation

Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, provides for the preservation of certain protected trees in the unincorporated area of the county. In addition, this chapter provides for the protection of trees on private property by controlling tree removal while allowing for reasonable enjoyment of private property rights and property development for the following reasons:

1. The County finds it necessary to preserve trees on private property in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare, and to preserve scenic beauty.
2. Trees provide soil stability, improve drainage conditions, provide habitat for wildlife, and provide aesthetic beauty and screening for privacy.
3. Trees are a vital part of a visually pleasing, healthy environment for the unincorporated area of the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Division 1014 – Stormwater Management and Discharge Control

Division 1014, *Stormwater Management and Discharge Control*, provides the conditions and requirements for compliance with the County's MS4 permit issued by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB. The goal of this ordinance is to eliminate illicit discharges to the stormwater system, minimize increase in non-point source pollution, reduce stormwater runoff rates and volumes through stormwater management controls for new development, and promote no adverse impact policies as developed by the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA).

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy developed the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, which provides regional conservation and development guidelines to protect natural resources, including wetlands, while improving and streamlining the permit process for take of State and federally listed species. The 30-year Plan was approved at the local level in 2006 and 2007, and permits were issued by CDFW and USFWS in 2007. The Plan allows Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), and the Cities of Brentwood, Clayton, Oakley, and Pittsburg—a group collectively referred to as the Permittees—to authorize endangered species permitting for activities and projects in the region, performed or approved by the Permittees, while providing comprehensive species, wetlands, and ecosystem conservation and contributing to the recovery of endangered species in Northern California. The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP allows projects that qualify as “covered activities” to obtain federal and State incidental take authorization for listed species. As part of receiving take authorization, East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP participants can expedite their mitigation and compensation requirements through the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, which would be consistent with federal and State recommendations and requirements. The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP implements a conservation strategy designed to achieve a comprehensive set of biological goals and objectives. Furthermore, as a Natural Community Conservation Plan, the Plan provides for broad-based planning to preserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale (East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy 2018).

Over 150 rare species occur in the East County area, including the San Joaquin kit fox, California red-legged frog, Alameda whipsnake, western burrowing owl, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and Diablo helianthella. Growth will occur in East County in habitat for endangered species, setting up a potential conflict between conservation and economic development. The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP seeks to avoid such conflict, providing an opportunity to preserve these diverse ecosystems, unique species, and scenic landscapes while clearing regulatory obstacles to continued economic development and growth.

5.4.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS²

There is a diverse range of habitats and unique species in Contra Costa County. Much of the county's natural environment remains, while substantial areas have already received permanent public protection. The vast majority of privately held lands supporting vegetation and wildlife resources are within the agricultural areas of the county.

² This section is based on the Existing Conditions Report (Appendix 5.4-1), which describes and maps biological resources conditions in the county. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, this EIR focuses on the analysis of potential impacts on lands only within unincorporated Contra Costa County, including land within and outside the ULL and inside each municipality's sphere of influence (SOI), but not inside municipality limits. This area is referred to as the “EIR Study Area” in this document and is shown in Figure 3-2, *EIR Study Area Boundaries*.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The topographic variety of the county, from the summit of Mount Diablo to the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary complex, combines to form the setting for its range of habitat and wildlife. There are unique biotic resources found within Contra Costa County which have biological and wildlife importance. While most of the significant habitat areas are found in unincorporated locations, several important wildlife areas are within city limits. Wetlands are one of the most important habitat resources within the county. Wetlands, especially marshes scattered along the county's shoreline, have been awarded substantial legal and policy protection.

Table 5.4-1, *Inventory of Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County*, lists the most important unique natural areas in the county. Figure 5.4-1, *Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County and Selected Locations of Protected Wildlife and Plant Species Areas*, shows the 41 unique biotic resource areas that have biological and wildlife importance identified in the existing General Plan. Furthermore, the existing General Plan identifies these areas as significant ecological resource areas, most of which contain aquatic habitat, such as freshwater marsh, seasonal and perennial wetlands, alkali mud flats, coastal salt marsh, and riparian vegetation.

Table 5.4-1 Inventory of Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County

#	Ecological Resource Area	Inventory
1.	Point Pinole	Tidal and freshwater marshes, mudflat, grassland, eucalyptus plantation, and fishing pier which extends 1/4 mile into San Pablo Bay. Valuable for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Habitat for soft-haired bird's beak, California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse, possibly for black rail, Samuel's song sparrow and black-shouldered kite. Plantation serves as resting place for migrating monarch butterflies.
2.	San Pablo Creek & Wildcat Creek Marshes	Tidal marsh and mudflat. Potential for same species as described for Point Pinole.
3.	Brooks Island	Tidal marsh, scrub/brushland and coastal prairie grassland. Important stop for migrating waterfowl including Canada goose. Supports a population of California vole with an uncommon pelage (hair) color variation.
4.	Hoffman Marsh	Tidal marsh habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, possibly for California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse.
5.	San Pablo Ridge	The grassland areas on clay and clay loam soils on San Pablo Ridge support a population of Santa Cruz Tarweed which was transplanted from a hillside in Pinole.
6.	Wildcat Creek Canyon	Grassy hillsides with riparian woodland along Wildcat Creek. Habitat for ornate shrew, western pond turtle, northern brown skink and possibly for Alameda whipsnake.
7.	Lone Tree Point	Stratified cliff face demonstrates the underlying trend of coastal uplift. Fossiliferous strata contain many marine-life fossils such as clams and oysters.
8.	Sobrante Ridge Manzanita Grove	A unique "island" stand of chaparral that supports two and possibly three species of manzanita, including the Alameda manzanita.
9.	Siesta Valley	Broadleaf evergreen forest, riparian woodland, grassland and scrub/brushland. Habitat for Alameda whipsnake, Berkeley kangaroo rat, northern brown skink, grasshopper sparrow, and ornate shrew. Readily observed geologic features include a faulted syncline with Siesta Formation outcropping in the fold and Moraga basalt forming the upper slopes of the valley. Some fossils of shells and land mammals.
10.	Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve	Chaparral and broadleaf evergreen forest in this 130-acre preserve supports Alameda manzanita, western leatherwood, and diverse avifauna.
11.	Redwood Regional Park	Fine example of coast redwood forest. Redwoods were extensively logged in the late 1800s; all existing trees are second-growth.
12.	Flicker Ridge	Concentration of many habitats: grassland, native grassland, scrub/brushland, chaparral, open oak woodland, broadleaf evergreen forest, knobcone pine forest, and agriculture. Includes patches of unique pygmy redwoods, stunted due largely to exposure and soil conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-1 Inventory of Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County

#	Ecological Resource Area	Inventory
13.	Briones Hills	Grasslands, oak woodland, riparian, and creeks support Mount Diablo fairy lantern, newts, western pond turtle, northern brown skink, ornate shrew, prairie falcon, mountain lion and possible Alameda whipsnake, grasshopper sparrow, golden eagle, badger, ringtail, and bobcat. Mount Diablo fairy lantern and Diablo helianthella are known and suspected to occur here, respectively.
14.	Shoreline between Martinez Waterfront & Concord Naval Weapons Station	Tidal marsh supports salt marsh harvest mouse, California clapper rail and possibly black rail. Ornate shrew, black-shouldered kite and Suisun song sparrow also occur here.
15.	Lime Ridge	Supports Mt. Diablo manzanita, and a buckwheat subspecies which is endemic to Lime Ridge.
16.	Shell Ridge	Open oak woodland and grasslands. Upturned geologic strata contain many marine fossils.
17.	Las Trampas and Rocky Ridges	Large area of rugged terrain, high ridges, and steep slopes. Grassland, scrub/brushland, chaparral, rock outcrops, open oak woodland, broadleaf evergreen forest, and riparian woodland. Habitat for Alameda whipsnake, black-chinned sparrow, prairie falcon, golden eagle, ringtail, badger, bobcat, and mountain lion.
18.	Blackhawk Ranch Fossil Locality	Upturned fossiliferous Pliocene strata indicates past climate, flora, and fauna. Diverse fossils include those of streamside trees, marine invertebrates, lizards, cranes, small mammals, carnivores, peccaries, camels, horses, and mastodons. Site was the edge of a salt water basin that extended inland to the Sierra Nevada.
19.	Mt. Diablo	Native grassland, serpentine chaparral, large rock outcrops, riparian woodland, dwarfed woodland, Coulter pine forest, knobcone pine forest, and springs. Many rare, endangered, depleted or otherwise unusual plants and animals, including an isolated population of northern sagebrush lizard, inhabit the mountain.
20.	Nortonville–Somersville	Northernmost limit of Coulter pine and black sage, southernmost limit of common manzanita. Mount Diablo manzanita, Diablo rock rose and Brewer's dwarf flax. Grassland, chaparral, open oak woodland, and Coulter pine forest. Area has been heavily mined for coal.
21.	Bay Point Salt Marsh	This marsh area is a habitat for salt marsh harvest mouse and the California black rail.
22.	Entrapment Zone	The entrapment zone is an area where suspended materials concentrate as a result of mixing by the outgoing freshwater flow above the saltwater wedge. Plankton concentrations are influenced by the location of the entrapment zone, and this in turn affects the location and productivity of fish in the bays and Delta. The location of the entrapment zone between the lower Delta and Suisun Bay varies according to the strength and phase of the tides, and the level of freshwater inflow from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers.
23.	Browns Island and Winter Island	Freshwater and estuarine marshes. Habitat for Contra Costa wallflower, Mason's lilaeposis, Suisun song sparrow, black-shouldered kite, and possibly river otter. Black rail might also occur here.
24.	Mount of Contra Costa Canal	Salt water marsh provides habitat for black-shouldered kite.
25.	Antioch San Dunes	Small and only remaining remnants of riverine dunes, once part of the largest river-laid dunes in the state that stretched ten miles along the southern shore of the San Joaquin River. The remaining dunes support rare and/or endangered plants, at least six endangered and/or endemic insects and the California legless lizard.
26.	Los Vaqueros	This area contains fair densities of native bunchgrasses.
27.	Big Break	This is an emergent marsh supporting the California black rail.
28.	Marsh Creek Riparian Corridor and Marsh Creek Reservoir	These areas provide habitat for a variety of sensitive plant and animal species including large-flowered fiddleneck, Hoover cryptantha, Mt. Diablo buckwheat, diamond-petaled California poppy, stink bells, Diablo rock-rose, caper-fruited tropidocarpum, San Joaquin kit fox, California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and molestan blister beetle.
29.	Alakli Meadows and Northern Claypan Vernal Pools	Rare habitats in Contra Costa County and statewide. Specialized flora and invertebrate fauna are adapted to each habitat.

5. Environmental Analysis

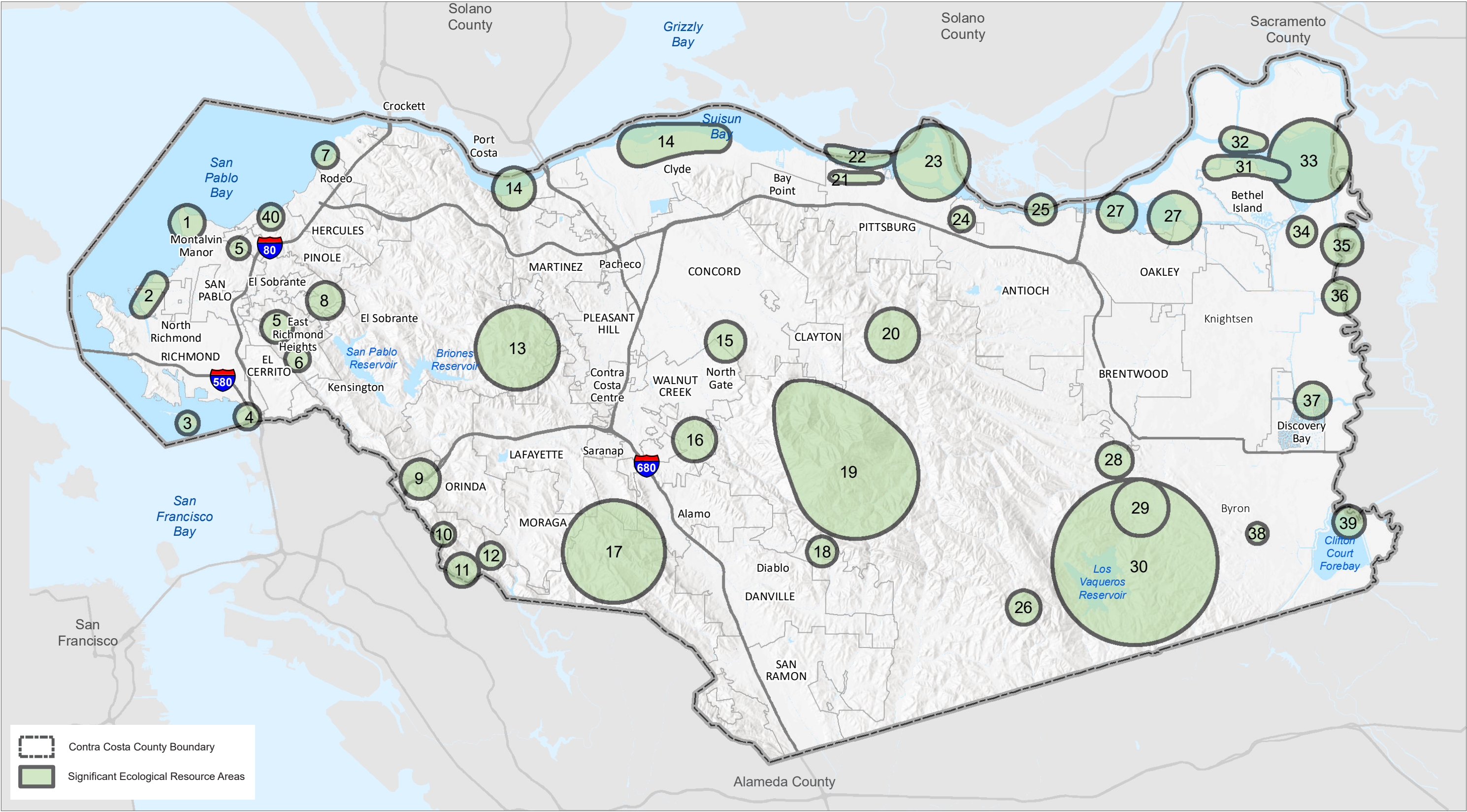
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-1 Inventory of Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County

#	Ecological Resource Area	Inventory
30.	Los Vaqueros	Area of biological importance because of the presence of historical eagle nests and other outstanding natural features. This area provides habitat for the following species: San Joaquin kit fox, Alameda whipsnake, tricolored blackbird, California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, western pond turtle, and freshwater shrimp. Also contains Alkali Meadows and Northern Claypan Vernal Pools, both of which are considered to be rare statewide.
31.	Bethel Island Wetlands	The Bethel Island area supports substantial acreage of seasonal and permanent wetlands. Over a square mile of ruderal wetland/upland also are found in the area. These have high values as biological habitat and are considered critical natural resources by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other resource agencies.
32.	Little Franks Tract	This freshwater marsh habitat contains riparian shrub-brush along the levees which supports black-crowned night heron.
33.	Franks Tract	A flooded, formerly levee-encircled delta island. Freshwater marsh and riparian woodland habitats on borders, delta aquatic habitat with good spawning area for fish (striped bass, largemouth bass, white catfish, others). Possible habitat for giant garter snake.
34.	Sand Mound Slough	This area is an example of habitat found on the tule islands in the central and southern Delta. This area contains tules, bulrushes, common reed, rushes, and other marsh vegetation as well as riparian vegetation which provides a valuable habitat for wintering ducks and other waterfowl.
35.	Connection Slough, Quimby Island, Rhode Island, Old River Complex	A diverse mix of upland habitat, agricultural lands, riparian trees and shrub-brush, marsh and tule islands. Excellent wildlife habitat, particularly for raptors, songbirds, and game species. These areas support the rare California hibiscus.
36.	South Bank of Rock Slough	This area supports a small population of the Suisun marsh aster and California hibiscus.
37.	Indian Slough	California hibiscus is found at the confluence of Indian Slough.
38.	Byron Hot Springs	Alkali mud flats, salt marsh and hot mineral springs. A rare snail (<i>Helminthoglypta</i> spp.) inhabits the area, the site of an old resort-spa now in disrepair. A recently created shallow lake has enhanced the habitat for wildlife. The grassland hills to the west support San Joaquin kit fox.
39.	Eucalyptus Island	A freshwater marsh subject to tidal fluctuation. This area supports a variety of wildlife and is the habitat of the California hibiscus.
40.	Mouth of Pinole Creek	This coastal salt marsh area supports California black rail.
41.	Delta Islands and Peninsula	Additional Delta islands in Contra Costa include Jersey Island, Bradford Island, and Webb Tract. Veale Tract, which is a peninsula off the mainland, has similar habitat. The undeveloped shoreline and interior sections of these islands and peninsula have the potential for supporting the same species as described for Browns and Bethel Islands and Frank Tracts.

Source: Contra Costa County, 2000.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES



Source: ICF, 2019.

0 3.5
Scale (Miles)

Figure 5.4-1
Significant Ecological Resources Areas of Contra Costa County and Selected Locations of Protected Wildlife and Plant Species Areas

5. Environmental Analysis
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-2, *Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County*, and Table 5.4-3, *Special-Status and Covered Wildlife Species in Contra Costa County*, provide a list of the special-status plant and wildlife species that have been documented in the county by CNDDDB and CNPS (see Appendix 5.4-2). For the purpose of this EIR, special-status plant and animal species are defined as those in one or more of the following categories.

- Listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for future listing as threatened or endangered under the FESA;
- Listed or candidates for future listing as threatened or endangered under the CESA;
- Meet the definitions of endangered or rare under Section 15380 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines;
- Identified as a Species of Special Concern (SSC) by the CDFW;
- Plants considered by CNPS to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” (California Rare Plant Rank [CRPR] 1 and 2);
- Plants listed as rare under the California NPPA, California Fish and Game Code, Section 1900 et seq.; or
- Are fully protected in California in accordance with the California Fish and Game Code, Sections 3511 (birds), 4700 (mammals), 5050 (amphibians and reptiles), and 5515 (fishes).

Tables 5.4-2 and 5.4-3 also include those designated as “covered species” in the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, which includes 11 plant species and 17 wildlife species. Covered species means those species of plants and animals whose conservation and management are provided for by the HCP/NCCP and for which limited take is authorized pursuant to the State and federal permits. Three covered plant species have no CNDDDB or CNPS occurrences within Contra Costa County, and one of these three plants has no federal, State, or CNPS listing. Additionally, one covered wildlife species has no federal or State listing.

Table 5.4-2 Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹				Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	CNPS	HCP		
Large-flowered fiddleneck <i>Amsinckia grandiflora</i>	FE	SE	1B.1	-	-	4 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Bent-flowered fiddleneck <i>Amsinckia lunaris</i>	FE	SE	1B.2	-	-	25 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Mount Diablo manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos auriculata</i>	-	-	1B.3	CS	-	17 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Contra Costa County manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos manzanita</i> ssp. <i>laevigata</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	10 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Pallid manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos pallida</i>	FT	SE	1B.2		-	6 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Alkali milkvetch <i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	4 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Heartscale <i>Atriplex cordulata</i> var. <i>cordulata</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Brittlescale <i>Atriplex depressa</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	11 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
San Joaquin spearscale <i>Atriplex joaquiniana</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	No CNDDDB or CNPS occurrences in CCC
Big tarplant <i>Blepharizonia plumosa</i>	FT	SE	1B.1	CS	-	28 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Mount Diablo fairy lantern <i>Calochortus pulchellus</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	50 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-2 Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹				Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	CNPS	HCP		
Coastal bluff morning-glory <i>Calystegia purpurata</i> ssp. <i>saxicola</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Chaparral harebell <i>Campanula exigua</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	5 CNDDB and 0 CNPS occurrences in CCC
Bristly sedge <i>Carex comosa</i>	-	-	2B.1	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Congdon's tarplant <i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>congdonii</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	22 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Soft bird's-beak <i>Cordylanthus mollis</i> ssp. <i>mollis</i>	FE	SR	1B.2	-	X	22 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Bolander's water-hemlock <i>Cicuta maculata</i> var. <i>bolanderi</i>	-	-	2B.1	-	-	4 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Franciscan thistle <i>Cirsium andrewsii</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Mt. Diablo bird's-beak <i>Cordylanthus nidularius</i>	-	SR	1B.1	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Hoover's cryptantha <i>Cryptantha hooveri</i>	-	-	1A	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Hospital Canyon larkspur <i>Delphinium californicum</i> ssp. <i>interius</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	6 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Recurved larkspur <i>Delphinium recurvatum</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	3 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Western Leatherwood <i>Dirca occidentalis</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	24 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Lime Ridge eriogonum <i>Eriogonum erterae</i>	-	CE	1B.1	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Antioch Dunes buckwheat <i>Eriogonum nudum</i> var. <i>psychicola</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Round-leaved filaree <i>Erodium macrophyllum</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	No CNDDB or CNPS occurrences in CCC
Mount Diablo buckwheat <i>Eriogonum truncatum</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	6 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Jepson's coyote-thistle <i>Eryngium jepsonii</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	7 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Delta button-celery <i>Eryngium racemosum</i>	-	SE	1B.1	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Spiny-sealed button-celery <i>Eryngium spinosepalum</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Contra Costa wallflower <i>Erysimum capitatum angustatum</i>	FE	SE	1B.1	-	X	4 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Diamond-petaled California poppy <i>Eschscholzia rhombipetala</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
San Joaquin spearscale <i>Extriplex joaquinana</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	45 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Fragrant fritillary <i>Fritillaria liliacea</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	8 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Dark-eyed gilia <i>Gilia millefoliata</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Toren's grimmia <i>Grimmia torenii</i>	-	-	1B.3	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Diablo heliathella <i>Helianthella castanea</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	96 CNDDB occurrences in CCC

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-2 Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹				Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	CNPS	HCP		
Brewer's western flax <i>Hesperolinon breweri</i>	-	-	1B.2	CS	-	20 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Woolly rose-mallow <i>Hibiscus lasiocarpus</i> var. <i>occidentalis</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	36 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Loma Prieta hoita <i>Hoita strobilina</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Santa Cruz Tarplant <i>Holocarpha macradenia</i>	FT	SE	1B.1	-	X	13 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Carquinez goldenbush <i>Isocoma arguta</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Contra Costa goldfields <i>Lasthenia conjugens</i>	FE	-	1B.1	-	X	4 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Delta tule pea <i>Lathyrus jepsonii</i> ssp. <i>jepsonii</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	27 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Mason's lilaeopsis <i>Lilaeopsis masonii</i>	-	SR	1B.1	-	-	69 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Delta mudwort <i>Limosella subulate</i>	-	-	2B.1	-	-	18 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Showy golden madia <i>Madia radiata</i>	-	-	1B.1	CS	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Hall's bush mallow <i>Malacothamnus hallii</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	8 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Oregon meconella <i>Meconella oregana</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	4 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Woodland woollythreads <i>Monolopia gracilens</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	8 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Lime Ridge navarretia <i>Navarretia gowenii</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Shining navarretia <i>Navarretia nigelliformis</i> ssp. <i>radians</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	3 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Adobe navarretia <i>Navarretia nigelliformis</i> ssp. <i>nigelliformis</i>	-	-	-	CS	-	No CNDDDB or CNPS occurrences in CCC
Antioch dunes evening primrose <i>Oenothera deltoides</i> <i>howellii</i>	FE	SE	1B.1	-	X	9 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Mount Diablo phacelia <i>Phacelia phacelioides</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	6 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Eel-grass pondweed <i>Potamogeton zosteriformis</i>	-	-	2B.2	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Rock sanicle <i>Sanicula saxatilis</i>	-	SR	1B.2	-	-	4 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Marsh skullcap <i>Scutellaria galariculata</i>	-	-	2B.2	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Chaparral ragwort <i>Senecio aphanactis</i>	-	-	2B.2	-	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Long-styled sand-spurrey <i>Spergularia macrotheca</i> var. <i>longistyla</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	10 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Most beautiful jewelflower <i>Streptanthus albidus</i> ssp. <i>peramoenus</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	5 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Mount Diablo jewelflower <i>Streptanthus hispidus</i>	-	-	1B.3	-	-	8 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Northern slender pondweed <i>Stuckenia filiformis</i> ssp. <i>alpina</i>	-	-	2B.2	-	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-2 Special-Status and Covered Plant Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹				Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	CNPS	HCP		
California seablite <i>Suaeda californica</i>	FE	-	1B.1	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Suisun Marsh aster <i>Symphotrichum lentum</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	35 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Saline clover <i>Trifolium hydrophilum</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Coastal triquetrella <i>Triquetrella californica</i>	-	-	1B.2	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Caper-fruited tropidocarpum <i>Tropidocarpum capparideum</i>	-	-	1B.1	-	-	5 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Oval-leaved viburnum <i>Viburnum ellipticum</i>	-	-	2B.3	-	-	6 CNDDB occurrences in CCC

Sources: CNDDB 2023; CNPS 2023; and Jones & Stokes 2006.

¹ Status Explanations

Federal

FE = listed as endangered under the FESA.

FT = listed as threatened under the FESA.

- = no listing under the FESA.

State

SE = listed as endangered under the CESA.

SR = listed under the California NPPA as rare.

CE = candidate for endangered status under the CESA.

California Native Plant Society

1A = List 1A species: presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere

1B = List 1B species: rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

2B = List 2 species: rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.

- = no listing by the California Native Plant Society.

Code Extensions

.1 = seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened and/or have high degree and immediacy of threat).

.2 = fairly endangered in California (20%–80% of occurrences threatened and/or have moderate degree and immediacy of threat).

.3 = not very endangered in California (< 20% of occurrences threatened and/or have low degree and immediacy of threats or no current threats known).

East County Costa County HCP/NCCP

CS = Covered Species

- = no listing under the HCP/NCCP

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-3 Special-Status and Covered Wildlife Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹			Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	HCP		
Invertebrates					
Bay checkerspot butterfly <i>Euphydryas editha bayensis</i>	FT	-	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Lange's metalmark butterfly <i>Apodemia mormo langei</i>	FE	SE	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Longhorn fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta longiantenna</i>	FE	-	CS	X	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Midvalley fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta mesoalliensis</i>	-	-	CS	-	3 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Monarch (overwintering population) <i>Danaus plexippus plexippus</i> pop. ¹	FC	-	-	-	2 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	FT	-	CS	X	19 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i>	FT	-	CS	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Western bumble bee <i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	-	CE	-	-	20 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Amphibians					
California tiger salamander (Central Coast DPS) <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT	ST	CS	-	216 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
California red-legged frog <i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	FT	SSC	CS	X	61 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Foothill yellow-legged frog (Central Coast DPS) <i>Rana boylei</i> pop. ⁴	PT	SE	CS	-	9 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
Reptiles					
Alameda whipsnake <i>Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus</i>	FT	ST	CS	X	97 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
California glossy snake <i>Arizona elegans occidentalis</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Coast horned-lizard <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	-	SSC	-	-	4 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Giant garter snake <i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	FT	ST	CS	-	5 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Northern California legless lizard <i>Anniella pulchra</i>	-	SSC	CS	-	8 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
San Joaquin whipsnake <i>Masticophis flagellum ruddocki</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Western pond turtle <i>Emys marmorata</i>	-	SSC	CS	-	61 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC
Birds					
Alameda song sparrow <i>Melospiza melodia pusillula</i>	-	SSC	-	-	3 CNDDDB occurrences in CCC
American peregrine falcon (nesting) <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	D	FP	-	-	1 CNDDDB occurrence in CCC

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-3 Special-Status and Covered Wildlife Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹			Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	HCP		
Black-crowned night heron (rookery) <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	-	-	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
California black rail <i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	-	ST, FP	-	-	30 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
California least tern (nesting colony) <i>Sterna antillarum browni</i>	FE	SE, FP	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
California Ridgway's rail <i>Rallus obsoletus obsoletus</i>	FE	SE, FP	-	-	12 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Double-crested cormorant (rookery) <i>Phalacrocorax auratus</i>	-	-	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Golden eagle (nesting and wintering) <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	-	FP	CS	-	16 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Loggerhead shrike (nesting) <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Northern harrier (nesting) <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Saltmarsh common yellowthroat <i>Geothlypis trichas sinuosa</i>	-	SSC	-	-	5 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
San Pablo song sparrow <i>Melospiza melodia samuelis</i>	-	SSC	-	-	6 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Short-eared owl (nesting) <i>Asio flammeus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Snowy egret (rookery) <i>Egretta thula</i>	-	-	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Song sparrow ("Modesto" population) <i>Melospiza melodia</i> (pop. 1)	-	SSC	-	-	14 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Suisun song sparrow <i>Melospiza melodia maxillaris</i>	-	SSC	-	-	14 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Swainson's hawk (nesting) <i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	-	ST	CS	-	41 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Tricolored blackbird (nesting colony) <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	-	ST, SSC	CS	-	11 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Western burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	-	SSC	CS	-	110 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
White-tailed kite (nesting) <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	-	FP	-	-	8 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Yellow-headed blackbird <i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Yellow rail <i>Coturnicops noveboracensis</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 5.4-3 Special-Status and Covered Wildlife Species in Contra Costa County

Name (Common and Scientific)	Status ¹			Designated Critical Habitat in Contra Costa County (CCC)	Notes
	Federal	State	HCP		
Mammals					
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	11 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Big free-tailed bat <i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	12 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat <i>Neotoma fuscipes annectens</i>	-	SSC	-	-	5 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Saltmarsh harvest mouse <i>Reithrodontomys raviventris</i>	FE	SE/FP	-	-	5 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Salt marsh wandering shrew <i>Sorex vagrans halicoetes</i>	-	SSC	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
San Joaquin kit fox <i>Vulpes macrotus mutica</i>	FE	ST	CS	-	24 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
San Pablo vole <i>Microtus californicus sanpabloenis</i>	-	SSC	-	-	8 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Townsend's western big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii townsendii</i>	-	SSC	CS	-	4 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus frantzii</i>	-	SSC	-	-	1 CNDDB occurrence in CCC
Fish					
Delta smelt <i>Hypomseus transpacificus</i>	FT	SE	-	X	8 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Green sturgeon (southern DPS) <i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	FT	-	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Eulachon <i>Thaleichthys pacificus</i>	FT	-	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Longfin smelt <i>Spirinchus thaleichthys</i>	C	ST	-	-	10 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Sacramento perch <i>Archoplites interruptus</i>	-	SSC	-	-	3 CNDDB occurrences in CCC
Steelhead (Central valley DPS) <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> pop. 11	FT	-	-	-	2 CNDDB occurrences in CCC

Sources: CNDDB 2023; Jones & Stokes 2006.

¹ Status Explanations

Federal

FE = listed as endangered under the FESA.
FT = listed as threatened under the FESA.
C = candidate for threatened or endangered status.
PT = proposed for threatened status.
D = delisted.
-- = no listing under the FESA.

State

SE = listed as endangered under the CESA.
ST = listed as threatened under the CESA.
FP = fully protected under the California Fish and Game Code.
SSC = species of special concern in California.
-- = no listing under the CESA.

East County Costa County HCP/NCCP

CS = Covered Species
-- = no listing under the HCP/NCCP

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Existing Conditions Report (Appendix 5.4-1) includes a detailed description of the natural communities and land cover types in the county.

5.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- B-1 Have a substantial effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- B-2 Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- B-3 Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- B-4 Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- B-5 Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- B-6 Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

5.4.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.4.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to biological resources. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Goal LU-2.** Growth and conservation that are balanced to preserve and enhance the quality of life, protect the environment and public safety, and benefit all those who live or work in Contra Costa County.
 - ***Policy LU-P2.1:*** *Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.*
 - ***Policy LU-P2.2:*** *Enhance the ULL's effectiveness by supporting efforts to acquire and permanently protect land along the ULL boundary.*

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- **Policy LU-P2.3:** *Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.*
- **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Goal COS-1.** Preserved open space for environmental protection, resource management and production, recreation, scenic value, and climate resilience and adaptation.
 - **Policy COS-P1.1:** Support efforts by public agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire and permanently protect open space areas containing important ecological or scenic resources and areas that connect protected lands to form a cohesive system of open space. Plan infrastructure to avoid interfering with such acquisitions whenever possible.
 - **Policy COS-P1.2:** Pursue opportunities for permanent open space dedication for habitat, scenic, or passive recreation benefits as part of future development approvals and major capital improvement projects.
 - **Policy COS-P1.3:** *Discourage conversion of land designated Resource Conservation or Parks and Recreation to urban uses. If such conversion occurs, require mitigation through permanent protection of other open space or park lands for habitat, scenic, or recreation benefits at a ratio to be determined based on the biological, scenic, or recreational value of the land, but not less than 3:1.*
 - **Policy COS-P1.4:** *Require new projects adjacent to protected open space areas, such as EBRPD lands, to establish buffers on their properties as necessary to minimize conflicts and protect the open space. If conflicts arise between protected open spaces and other uses, prioritize maintaining the viability of the open space functions.*
 - **Action COS-A1.1:** Convene an annual staff-level meeting with involved agencies (e.g., East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, EBRPD), land trusts, and conservation groups to review current and planned efforts to protect and maintain open space.
- **Goal COS-4.** Preserved and enhanced ecological resources and wildlife habitat.
 - **Policy COS-P4.1:** *Maintain ecologically significant resource areas in their natural state to the greatest extent possible. Limit development in and near these areas to compatible low-intensity uses with adequate provisions to protect sensitive resources, including setbacks around resource areas. Prohibit projects that would lead to fragmentation of ecologically significant resource areas.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.2:** Support land conservation and restoration consistent with the HCP/NCCP and discourage development in areas where such conservation is planned, as shown on Figure COS-3. Support actions to preserve land and resources within PCAs mapped by ABAG, as shown on Figure COS-4.
 - **Policy COS-P4.3:** *Require a biological resources assessment prepared according to State and federal protocols for projects with the potential to impact rare, threatened, endangered, or special-status species or their habitat, and implement appropriate mitigation for identified impacts.*

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- **Policy COS-P4.4:** *Protect habitat and wildlife migration corridors, and support projects that enhance these areas.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.5:** *Discourage the use of fencing that poses risks to wildlife.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.6:** *Require appropriately-timed, comprehensive floristic and vegetation surveys prepared according to State and federal protocols when development is proposed on land with potentially suitable habitat for special-status plant species, including areas mapped by the California Native Plant Society as Botanical Priority Protection Areas.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.7:** *Require avoidance and protection of sensitive ecological resources not approved for disturbance or removal during project entitlement, and require restitution in exceedance of standard mitigation ratios for inadvertent damage to these resources.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.8:** *Require majority use of native plant species in landscaping for new developments, and require construction practices that avoid spread of invasive plant species by minimizing surface disturbance; seeding, and mulching disturbed areas with certified weed-free native mixes; disinfecting/ decontaminating equipment; and using native, noninvasive, drought-resistant species in erosion-control plantings.*
 - **Action COS-A4.1:** *For the portion of the county not covered by the HCP/NCCP, prepare and maintain a similarly detailed inventory of ecologically significant resource areas, including unique natural areas, wetlands, floodplains, riparian resources, and the habitat of rare, threatened, endangered, and other uncommon and protected species.*
 - **Action COS-A4.2:** *Amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to include development standards, and possibly adopt accompanying design guidelines, for urban land uses that interface with ecologically significant resource areas and other protected conservation lands, addressing, at minimum:*
 - (a) *Setbacks on urban properties to provide a buffer for resource areas.*
 - (b) *Clustering of development to maximize ecological and conservation benefits.*
 - (c) *Lighting, fencing, screening, and landscaping/ vegetation that support, and do not interfere with, wildlife migration and other conservation purposes.*
- **Goal COS-5.** Protected and restored natural watercourses, riparian corridors, and wetland areas that improve habitat, water quality, wildlife diversity, stormwater flows, and scenic values.
- **Policy COS-P5.1:** Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
 - **Policy COS-P5.2:** *Require new public infrastructure and development projects to preserve, and whenever possible enhance, natural watercourses, floodplains, and riparian habitat.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.3:** *Require avoidance, minimization, and/ or compensatory mitigation for development that would impact a wetland, wetland species, or adjacent upland habitat areas. Where feasible, compensation shall be in-kind (i.e., the same type of habitat), provided on-site, and based on a ratio that provides a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success and accounting for the relative functions and values of the lost and created wetlands.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.4:** *Require new buildings and structures on private property be set back at least 75 feet from the edge of any wetland area, unless a peer-reviewed, site-specific evaluation indicates that a different setback is appropriate for protecting the wetland and adjacent upland habitat areas. Allow encroachment into a required wetland setback area only when a parcel would otherwise be rendered unbuildable, or impacts have been adequately mitigated.*

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- **Policy COS-P5.5:** *Acquire deeded development rights to setback areas surrounding wetlands, floodplains, and natural watercourses to ensure preservation of the resource and protect adjacent improvements.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.6:** *Require increased setbacks for animal-handling uses whenever necessary to protect natural watercourses, riparian habitat, or erosion-prone soils. Setback increases can be applied to all aspects of the use, such as manure storage areas, and are not limited to buildings and structures.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.8:** *Prohibit direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into marsh, creek, and wetland areas from outfalls serving urban development.*
 - **Action COS-A5.1:** *Inventory wetlands, floodplains, marshlands, and adjacent lands that could potentially support climate adaptation (e.g., through flood management, filtration, or other beneficial ecosystem services) and mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration).*
 - **Action COS-A5.2:** *Amend the County Ordinance Code to include the wetland setback requirement described in Policy COS-P5.4.*
 - **Action COS-A5.3:** *Amend the County Ordinance Code to apply the creek setback requirements in Title 9 - Subdivisions to all projects, including those that are not part of a subdivision.*
- **Goal COS-6.** Preserved and enhanced native upland habitat, including woodlands, grasslands, and rangelands.
- **Policy COS-P6.1:** *Preserve natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species.*
 - **Policy COS-P6.2:** *Encourage planting and propagation of native trees throughout the county to enhance the natural landscape, provide shade, sustain wildlife, absorb stormwater, and sequester carbon.*
 - **Policy COS-P6.3:** *Support protection of native trees, especially oaks, in foothill woodlands and agricultural areas by encouraging voluntary installation of fencing around individuals or clusters of trees to prevent grazing and promoting replanting of native species.*
 - **Policy COS-P6.4:** *Encourage removal of invasive, non-native tree species, especially those known to pose threats to public safety.* **Policy COS-P6.5:** *Encourage revegetation of native species in areas that were previously converted for agriculture, but are no longer in production.*
 - **Action COS-A6.1:** *Update County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6 – Tree Protection and Preservation, to enhance tree protections and strengthen mitigation requirements/restitution for tree removal.*
 - **Action COS-A6.2:** *Develop an Oak Woodland Conservation Program that establishes special mitigation ratios for removal of oak trees, along with specific tree replacement and planting standards to ensure long-term growth and survival. Amend the County Ordinance Code as needed to implement the program.*
- **Goal COS-8.** Protected quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
- **Policy COS-8.1:** *Protect public water supplies by denying applications for projects that would introduce significant new pollution sources in groundwater basins and watersheds feeding major reservoirs, and support efforts to acquire and permanently protect reservoir watersheds.*
 - **Policy COS-8.2:** *Coordinate with other agencies to control point and non-point sources of water pollution and maintain water quality standards.*

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- **Policy COS-8.3:** Support development and implementation of a long-term, area-wide integrated vegetation management program to control invasive weeds in a way that reduces pesticide use and preserves water quality.
- **Policy COS-8.4:** *Require new development to retain natural vegetation and topography whenever feasible and require projects involving erosion-inducing activities to use best management practices to minimize erosion.*
- **Goal COS-9.** Protected, preserved, and enhanced scenic quality, recreational value, and natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline.
 - **Policy COS-9.1:** Advocate for increased freshwater flow into, through, and from the Delta into San Francisco Bay, and support other efforts to protect and improve Delta water quality.
 - **Policy COS-9.2:** Support continued maintenance and improvement of Delta levees to protect water quality, ecosystems, agricultural land, and at-risk communities.
 - **Policy COS-9.3:** Oppose all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance (e.g., peripheral canal, tunnel) or any other water diversion system that reduces Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system.
 - **Policy COS-9.4:** *Plan for land uses along shorelines that do not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats.*
 - **Action COS-A9.1:** *Amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to incorporate the following requirements for new or expanded marinas and docks:*
 - (g) *Compatibility with nearby conservation/ habitat lands.*
- **Goal COS-12.** Protected natural features with high scenic value, such as visual landmarks, major ridges, prominent hillsides, and stands of mature trees.
 - **Policy COS-P12.1:** *Prohibit destruction of unique and irreplaceable natural features.*
 - **Policy COS-P12.5:** *Require restoration of natural contours and vegetation after grading and other land disturbances.*
 - **Policy COS-P12.6:** *Prohibit extreme topographic modification, such as filling in canyons or removing prominent hilltops. Exemptions may be considered for landfills, mining operations, and public or semi-public projects that necessitate such modifications.*
 - **Policy COS-P12.7:** Support preservation and enhancement of natural and human-made features that contribute to the scenic quality of the landscape and viewshed along designated scenic routes, and discourage projects that interfere with public views of those features.
 - **Action COS-A12.2:** Adopt design guidelines to preserve views, vistas, and defining natural features along designated scenic routes.

5.4.3.2 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to biological resources:

Strategy NI-1: Protect against and adapt to changes in sea levels and other shoreline flooding conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Strategy NI-1 Actions:

- Require new development to locate habitable areas of buildings above the highest water level expected accounting for sea level rise and other changes in flood conditions, or construct natural and nature-based features, or a levee, if necessary, adequately designed to protect the project for its expected life.
- Support the use of natural infrastructure, including ecosystem restoration and green infrastructure, to protect against sea level rise and associated shoreline flooding.
- Coordinate with State and regional agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, property owners, utilities, and others to prepare a sea level rise adaptation plan.
- Seek funding and pursue implementation of wetland restoration and other adaptation efforts for sea level rise.
- Convene a working group that includes local jurisdictions, local shoreline communities, community-based organizations, property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders to collaborate on shoreline flooding adaptation strategies.
- Identify opportunities for employing natural areas as buffers against rising sea levels.

Strategy NI-4: Sequester carbon on natural and working lands in Contra Costa County.

Strategy NI-4 Actions:

- Pursue implementation of recommendations from carbon sequestration feasibility study, Healthy Lands, Healthy People.
- Continue to support and work with key partners to maintain existing and establish new pilot programs for carbon sequestration on agricultural land.
- Promote restorative agricultural and landscaping techniques that incorporate cover crops, mulching, compost application, field borders, alley cropping, conservation crop rotation, prescribed grazing, and reduced tillage to promote healthy soil and soil conservation.
- Support soil conservation and restoration programs. Encourage agricultural landowners to work with agencies such as the USDA's NRCS and Contra Costa RCD to reduce erosion and soil loss.
- Coordinate with farming groups, ranchers, the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, and the University of California Cooperative Extension to identify and promote varieties of feedstock, livestock, and crops that are resilient to rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns and that increase carbon sequestration.
- Explore ways to increase carbon sequestration on County-owned facilities.
- Partner with regional landowners and agencies to establish carbon sequestration programs and incentives.
- Consider the development of carbon offset protocols and guidance for use by carbon sequestration program applicants and County permitting staff to promote appropriate sequestration on natural and developed lands.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Ensure that any local or regional carbon sequestration program that the County establishes, promotes, supports, or joins must provide benefits to unincorporated communities that face environmental justice issues.
- Explore the potential for the public to support tree planting and maintenance of existing trees.
- Establish a mechanism to support expanded tree planting and maintenance activities, particularly in areas with few trees.
- Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- Inventory wetlands, floodplains, marshlands, and adjacent lands that could potentially support climate adaptation (e.g., through flood management, filtration, or other beneficial ecosystem services) and mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration).
- Encourage and support conservation of natural lands outside the urban limit line in the unincorporated county.
- Explore the creation of a Climate Resilience District.
- Require that any mitigation of air quality impacts occur on-site to the extent feasible to provide the greatest benefit to local residents. For mitigation that relies on offsets, require that the offsets be obtained from sources as near to the project site as possible. If the project site is within or adjacent to an Impacted Community, require offsets or mitigation within that community unless determined infeasible by the County.

Strategy NI-5: Minimize heat island effects through the use of cool roofs and green infrastructure.

Strategy NI-5 Actions:

- Require landscaping for new development to be drought-tolerant, filter and retain runoff, and support flood management and groundwater recharge.
- Promote installation of drought-tolerant green infrastructure, including street trees, in landscaped public areas.
- Increase tree planting in urbanized areas, and open spaces where ecologically appropriate, emphasizing areas with limited existing tree cover, using low-maintenance native tree species that are low fire risk and ensuring water supply resources are not compromised.
- Consider preparing and implementing a Tree Master Plan for the unincorporated county.
- Provide shade trees or shade structures at parks, plazas, and other outdoor spaces.
- Update County tree ordinance to consider whether factors for approval of tree removal and/or replanting requirements are adequately considering Impacted Communities (e.g., tree cover, replanting standard).
- Support efforts to develop incentive programs for home and business owners, school districts, and other local and regional property owners to increase the adoption of cool roofs and green infrastructure on private property.

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

5.4.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.4-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plan, policies, or regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS. [Threshold B-1]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially result in impacts on special-status species in the EIR Study Area.

Tables 5.4-2 and 5.4-3 list all the special-status plant and wildlife species in the county (including the EIR Study Area) that have been documented in the CNDDDB and CNPS. The county contains 66 special-status plant species that are found across the diverse and, in some cases, specialized habitats in the county. Special-status plants are more abundant in the eastern portions of the EIR Study Area, which retains a rural development pattern that is compatible with the habitat needs of many of the special-status plant species. A total of 59 special-status wildlife species are known to occur in the EIR Study Area. Similar to its benefits for special-status plant species, the rural eastern portion of the county provides some of the best remaining undeveloped habitat for special-status wildlife species. Often, these special-status wildlife species occur in protected areas, such as Mount Diablo State Park or Los Vaqueros Reservoir, or in various East Bay regional parks.

As detailed in Tables 5.4-2 and 5.4-3, critical habitat occurs in the county (including the EIR Study Area) for five plant and five wildlife species. Impacts on special-status species would include the direct loss of individuals or localized populations, elimination or degradation of habitat, and isolation of subpopulations due to habitat fragmentation. The conversion of existing natural habitat to urban development, roadways, or other infrastructure could result in the elimination of populations of special-status species where present within the limits of development. Indirect impacts could include disruption of critical functions, affecting reproductive success; degradation of habitat quality to such an extent that occupied habitat would no longer be suitable for individual survival; and other influences. Indirect impacts on special-status species could also occur because of increases in stormwater runoff, erosion and downstream sedimentation, and the use of pesticides for agriculture and landscaping. However, given that most development under the proposed General Plan is anticipated to occur within the ULL, specific impacts may be lessened through implementation of the goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan.

As detailed in Section 5.4.1.1, there are a number of federal and State regulations in place to protect biological resources, including special-status species and their habitat, within the EIR Study Area. In addition, the proposed General Plan policies take a comprehensive approach to the protection of biological resources, including special-status species and their habitats. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on special-status species and their habitats, including policies and actions associated with goals that aim to preserve and enhance ecological resources and wildlife habitat (Goal COS-4); protect and restore natural watercourses, riparian corridors, and wetland areas (Goal COS-5); preserve and enhance native upland habitat (Goal COS-6); and protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline (Goal COS-9). For example, Policy COS-P4.3 requires a biological resources

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

assessment to be prepared according to State and federal protocols for projects with the potential to affect rare, threatened, endangered, or special-status species or their habitat, with appropriate mitigation implemented for identified impacts; Policy COS-P4.6 requires well-timed, comprehensive floristic and vegetation surveys to be prepared according to State and federal protocols when development is proposed on land with potentially suitable habitat for special-status plant species, including areas mapped by CNPS as Botanical Priority Protection Areas; Policy COS-P5.3 requires avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation for development that would affect a wetland, wetland species, or adjacent upland habitat areas; and Policy COS-9.3 opposes all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance (e.g., peripheral canal, tunnel) or any other water diversion system that would reduce Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system. In addition, Action COS-A4.1 directs the County to prepare and maintain a detailed inventory of ecologically significant resource areas, including unique natural areas, wetlands, floodplains, riparian resources, and the habitat of rare, threatened, endangered, and other uncommon and protected species, for the portion of the county not covered by the HCP/NCCP. Furthermore, Land Use Element Goal LU-2 seeks to balance growth and conservation while protecting the environment, including special-status species and their habitat, through policies to preserve natural habitat and open space (Policy LU-P2.1); enhance the effectiveness of the ULL (Policy LU-P2.2); limit development outside the ULL (Policy LU-P2.3); encourage infill in already-developed areas (Policy LU-P2.5); and reduce the footprint of development (Policy LU-P2.6). The protection of natural features with high scenic value (see Policies COS-P12.1 through COS-P12.7) provides a further benefit by preserving important habitat areas that provide space for a variety of special-status species.

The goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan, in combination with existing policies and regulations under the FESA, MBTA, CESA, California Fish and Game Code, CWA, and NPPA, as well as consistency with the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, would ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed General Plan on special-status species would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact special-status species. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan, applicable provisions of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, and existing policies and regulations under the FESA, MBTA, CESA, California Fish and Game Code, CWA, and NPPA. Compliance with the aforementioned policies and regulations would reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on special-status species to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.4-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Impact 5.4-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS. [Threshold B-2]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially result in impacts on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities in the EIR Study Area.

As explained in Appendix 5.4.2, riparian habitat (i.e., riparian woodland) makes up only 0.16 percent of the county, which includes the EIR Study Area. Most creeks and streams in the EIR Study Area are disconnected from their historic floodplains by levees and channelization. Many of these streams are maintained as flood control channels, which support little or no riparian vegetation, and most drainages outside the urbanized areas are ephemeral or intermittent, generally supporting narrow floodplains with limited riparian habitat (Jones & Stokes 2006). Additional sensitive natural communities in the EIR Study Area include shrublands, woodlands, conifer forests, wetlands and ponds, and baylands. Altogether, nine sensitive natural communities are mapped in the CNDDDB as occurring within the county, which includes the EIR Study Area. All but two of these communities are aquatic; thus, most of the sensitive natural communities mapped in the CNDDDB are located along the edge of the Delta and/or San Francisco Bay. The eastern portion of the EIR Study Area, in the vicinity of the Los Vaqueros Watershed and Bryon Hills/Vasco Caves, is also a hot spot for sensitive habitats. It contains one of the upland vegetation communities, valley needlegrass grassland. The other upland community, serpentine bunchgrass, is found on the Contra Costa-Alameda County boundary, southwest of the cities in vicinity of Oakland.

Construction activities could have direct and indirect impacts on riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities. Construction projects in the EIR Study Area could also affect sensitive natural communities by spreading or introducing invasive plant species to currently uninfected areas. Invasive species spread aggressively and crowd out native species, potentially altering the species composition of natural communities. A predominance of invasive species reduces the overall habitat quality for native plants and wildlife. However, given that most development under the proposed General Plan is anticipated to occur within the ULL, specific impacts may be lessened through implementation of the goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, including policies and actions associated with goals that aim to preserve open space for environmental protection (Goal COS-1); preserve and enhance ecological resources and wildlife habitat (Goal COS-4); protect and restore natural watercourses, riparian corridors, and wetland areas (Goal COS-5); preserve and enhance native upland habitat (Goal COS-6); protect water quality (Goal COS-8); and protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline (Goal COS-9). For example, Policy COS-P1.3 requires permanent protection of open space or parklands; Policy COS-P4.6 requires avoidance, protection, and restitution related to sensitive ecological resources; Policy COS-P5.2 requires new public infrastructure and development projects to preserve and, whenever possible, enhance natural watercourses, floodplains, and riparian habitat; Policy COS-P5.3 requires avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation for development that would affect a wetland, wetland species, or adjacent upland habitat areas; Policy COS-P6.1 requires the preservation of natural

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

woodlands and significant trees; and Policy COS-9.4 requires plans for land uses along shorelines to not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats. In addition, Action COS-A4.1 directs the County to prepare and maintain a detailed inventory of ecologically significant resource areas, including unique natural areas, wetlands, floodplains, and riparian resources, for the portion of the county not covered by the HCP/NCCP; Action COS-A6.1 directs the County to update County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6, Tree Protection and Preservation, to enhance protection for specified native trees and strengthen mitigation requirements for tree removal; and Action COS-A6.2 directs the County to develop an Oak Woodland Conservation Program that establishes special mitigation ratios for the removal of oak trees, along with specific tree replacement and planting standards to ensure long-term growth and survival. In addition, Land Use Element Goal LU-2 seeks to balance growth and conservation while protecting the environment, including sensitive natural communities, through policies to preserve natural habitat and open space (Policy LU-P2.1); enhance the effectiveness of the ULL (Policy LU-P2.2); limit development outside the ULL (Policy LU-P2.3); encourage infill in already-developed areas (Policy LU-P2.5); and reduce the footprint of development (Policy LU-P2.6).

Regarding the spread or introduction of invasive plant species, Policy COS-P4.8 requires the use of native plant species in the majority of landscaping for new developments as well as construction practices that avoid the spread of invasive plant species by minimizing surface disturbance, seeding and mulching disturbed areas with certified weed-free native mixes, disinfecting/decontaminating equipment, and using native noninvasive, drought-resistant species in erosion-control plantings. Policy COS-P6.4 encourages the removal of invasive non-native tree species, and Policy COS-P8.3 supports development and implementation of a long-term, area-wide integrated vegetation management program to control invasive weeds in a way that reduces pesticide use and preserves water quality. Furthermore, any disturbance or alteration of streams, lakes, or non-federally protected (non-jurisdictional) wetlands would require a permit with conditions that would protect sensitive natural communities. A Section 1602 SAA would be needed from the CDFW prior to initiation of project construction activities that would divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake or use material from a streambed. Non-jurisdictional wetlands include wetland features that are not hydrologically connected to navigable waters in rivers and are not under Corps jurisdiction. These wetlands would still be considered waters of the State and would be regulated according to the waste discharge requirements that would be issued by the RWQCB.

Implementation of proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, including conditions associated with SAAs and waste discharge requirements, would ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed General Plan on riparian corridors and other sensitive natural communities would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact riparian corridors and other sensitive natural communities. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan as well as conditions associated with SAAs and waste discharge requirements. Compliance with the

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

aforementioned policies and regulations would reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on riparian corridors and other sensitive natural communities to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.4-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact 5.4-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. [Threshold B-3]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially result in impacts on State or federally protected wetlands in the EIR Study Area.

The EIR Study Area contains waters of the United States, which include jurisdictional wetlands and other waters. Construction activities could have direct and indirect impacts on waters of the United States. However, given that most development under the proposed General Plan is anticipated to occur within the ULL, specific impacts may be lessened through implementation of the goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on wetlands, including policies and actions associated with goals that aim to protect and restore natural watercourses, riparian corridors, wetland areas (Goal COS-5) and water quality (Goal COS-8). For example, Policy COS-P5.1 supports the protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands; Policy COS-P5.2 requires new public infrastructure and development projects to preserve and, whenever possible, enhance natural watercourses, floodplains, and riparian habitat; Policy COS-P5.3 requires avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation for development that would affect a wetland, wetland species, or adjacent upland habitat areas; Policy COS-P5.4 requires new buildings and structures on private property to be set back from the edge of any wetland area and allows encroachment into a required wetland setback area only when a parcel would otherwise be rendered unbuildable and impacts have been adequately mitigated; Policy COS-P5.5 requires acquisition of deeded development rights to setback areas surrounding wetlands, floodplains, and natural watercourses to ensure preservation of the resources and protect adjacent improvements; Policy COS-P5.8 prohibits direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into marsh, creek, and wetland areas from outfalls serving urban development; and Policy COS-8.2 requires coordination with other agencies to control point and non-point sources of water pollution and maintain water quality standards. In addition, Action COS-A4.1 directs the County to prepare and maintain a detailed inventory of ecologically significant resource areas, including wetlands, for the portion of the county not covered by the HCP/NCCP. Action COS-A5.2 directs the County to amend the County Ordinance Code to include the wetland setback requirement described in Policy COS-P5.4. Land Use Element Goal LU-2 seeks to balance growth and conservation while protecting the environment, including wetland habitat, through policies that preserve natural habitat and open space (Policy LU-P2.1); enhance the effectiveness of the ULL (Policy LU-P2.2); limit development outside the ULL (Policy

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

LU-P2.3); encourage infill in already-developed areas (Policy LU-P2.5); and reduce the footprint of development (Policy LU-P2.6).

Implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and actions that would require project-specific analyses and the incorporation of mitigation, in addition to the conditions associated with Section 404 permits and Section 401 water quality certifications, would ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed General Plan on State and federally protected wetlands would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact federally protected wetlands. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan, conditions associated with Section 404 permits and Section 401 water quality certifications, as well as additional mitigation protection for wetlands during construction activities. Compliance with the aforementioned policies and regulations would reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on federally protected wetlands to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.4-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact 5.4-4:	Implementation of the proposed project could interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. [Threshold B-4]
----------------------	--

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites in the EIR Study Area.

The definition of “wildlife corridor,” along with an explanation of critical linkages, natural landscape blocks, and essential connectivity areas that occur in the county, are provided in the Existing Conditions Report (Appendix 5.4-1, Figure 3-5). Two linkages that are crucial to maintaining connectivity for wildlife between large landscape blocks³ within and adjacent to the nine-county Bay Area, as well as overlapping Contra Costa County, are the East Bay Hills: Diablo Range linkage and the Mount Diablo: Diablo Range linkage. Natural landscape blocks⁴ and essential connectivity areas⁵ overlap the Diablo Range in the county. Furthermore, the

³ Protected areas, areas with conservation easements, and roadless areas with more than 500 acres (Penrod et al. 2013).

⁴ Natural habitat blocks that support native biodiversity (Spencer et al. 2010).

⁵ Areas essential for ecological connectivity between natural landscape blocks (Spencer et al. 2010).

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP identifies four potential movement routes (i.e., Round Valley, Briones Valley, Deer Valley, and Horse and Lone Tree Valleys) between the Los Vaqueros Watershed and Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve.

Regarding movement within natural communities, the baylands west of the EIR Study Area's western boundary and the Baylands along the EIR Study Area's northern boundary serve as a migratory corridor for anadromous fish, including green sturgeon and steelhead. The riparian woodland community also provides movement corridors for fish and wildlife species. The grassland natural community is an important movement corridor for species such as American badger, Alameda whipsnake, and San Joaquin kit fox. Grasslands in the eastern county connect to grassland communities in counties to the south, including Alameda County and San Joaquin County, providing a movement corridor to greater habitat patches and facilitating a genetic exchange with other populations of San Joaquin kit fox and American badger. Aquatic habitats such as streams and ponds provide breeding habitat for California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander, while the matrix of upland grassland habitats between the aquatic habitats and riparian corridors provide dispersal habitat.

Development under the proposed General Plan could restrict local or regional movement of native wildlife and fish species by fragmenting intact habitat areas. Development in natural or open space areas serves to fragment habitat areas, which reduces the number of special-status species within these areas. This reduction in habitat, including movement corridors or wildlife nursery areas, affects the ability of special-status species to increase in number and increases the probability that such species will be affected by other environmental factors (e.g., disease, catastrophic weather, and predation). However, given that most development under the proposed General Plan is anticipated to occur within the ULL, specific impacts may be lessened through implementation of the goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan.

The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts associated with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. This includes policies and actions that are associated with goals that aim to preserve open space for environmental protection (Goal COS-1); preserve and enhance ecological resources and wildlife habitat (Goal COS-4); protect and restore natural watercourses, riparian corridors, and wetland areas (Goal COS-5); preserve and enhance native upland habitat (Goal COS-6); and protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline (Goal COS-9). For example, Policy COS-P1.1 supports efforts to acquire and permanently protect areas that connect protected lands in order to form a cohesive system of open space and plan infrastructure so as to avoid interfering with such acquisitions whenever possible; Policy COS-P1.3 discourages the conversion of designated Resource Conservation or Parks and Recreation land to urban uses; Policy COS-P1.4 requires new projects adjacent to protected open space areas to establish buffers; Policy COS-P4.1 requires setbacks around ecologically significant resource areas and prohibits projects that would lead to fragmentation of ecologically significant resource areas; Policy COS-P4.4 protects habitat and wildlife migration corridors; Policy COS-P4.5 discourages the use of fencing that poses risks to wildlife; Policy COS-P5.1 supports protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands; Policy COS-P5.2 requires new public infrastructure and development projects to preserve and, whenever possible, enhance natural watercourses, floodplains, and riparian habitat; Policy COS-P5.3 requires avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation for development that would affect a wetland or adjacent upland habitat; Policy COS-P5.4 requires

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

new buildings and structures on private property to be set back from wetlands; and Policy COS-P6.1 requires preserving natural woodlands and significant trees. In addition, Action COS-A1.1 directs the County to convene an annual staff-level meeting with involved agencies (e.g., East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and EBRPD), land trusts, and conservation groups to review current and planned efforts to protect and maintain open space and prioritize acquisitions. Action COS-A4.2 directs the County to amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 to include development standards and possibly adopt accompanying design guidelines for urban land uses that interface with ecologically significant resource areas and other protected conservation lands, addressing, at minimum, (a) setbacks on urban properties that provide a buffer to resource areas, (b) the clustering of development to maximize ecological and conservation benefits, and (c) the provision of fencing, lighting, screening, and landscaping/vegetation that supports, and does not interfere with, wildlife migration and other conservation purposes. Action COS-A5.2 directs the County to amend the County Ordinance Code to include the wetland setback requirement described in Policy COS-P5.4. Furthermore, Land Use Element Goal LU-2 seeks to balance growth and conservation while protecting the environment, including wildlife corridors and nursery sites, through policies that preserve natural habitat and open space (Policy LU-P2.1); enhance the effectiveness of the ULL (Policy LU-P2.2); limit development outside the ULL (Policy LU-P2.3); encourage infill -development (Policy LU-P2.5); and reduce the footprint of development (Policy LU-P2.6).

As detailed in Section 5.4.1.1, a number of federal and State regulations are in place to protect wildlife movement, wildlife corridors, and nursery sites within Contra Costa County. However, even with implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, the regulations would not fully reduce potential impacts associated with the movement of wildlife species, migratory wildlife corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites. Additional project-specific analysis would be required to ensure that development does not impede wildlife movement in the identified areas. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact wildlife species, migratory wildlife corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan, as well as a number of federal and State regulations that are in place to protect wildlife movement, wildlife corridors, and nursery sites, as detailed in Section 5.4.1.1. However, even with implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, the regulations would not fully reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP associated with the movement of wildlife species, migratory wildlife corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.4-4 would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Prior to the issuance of a building permit for projects not exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, the County shall require a habitat connectivity/wildlife corridor evaluation for future development that may impact existing connectivity areas and wildlife linkages. The evaluation shall identify project design features that would reduce potential impacts and maintain habitat and wildlife movement. To this end, the County shall incorporate the following measures, to the extent practicable, for projects impacting wildlife movement corridors:

- Encourage clustering of development
- Avoid known sensitive biological resources
- Provide shielded lighting adjacent to sensitive habitat areas
- Encourage development plans that maximize wildlife movement
- Provide buffers between development and wetland/riparian areas
- Protect wetland/riparian areas through regulatory agency permitting process
- Encourage wildlife-passable fence designs (e.g., three-strand barbless wire fence) on property boundaries.
- Encourage preservation of native habitat on developed parcels
- Minimize road/roadway development to help prevent loss of habitat due to roadkill and habitat loss
- Use native, drought-resistant plant species in landscape design
- Encourage participation in local/regional recreational trail design efforts

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.4-4 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.4-5: The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. [Thresholds B-5 and B-6]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources in the EIR Study Area.

As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, in 1990 voters adopted Measure C-1990, which created the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and ULL. County Ordinance Code Chapter 82-1, Section 82-1.010, *Urban Limit Line*, establishes the ULL to ensure the enforcement of the 65/35 Standard set forth in Section 82-1.006 of the County Ordinance Code. The 65/35 Standard limits the amount of land that can be devoted to urban

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

development, while the ULL limits the areas where such development can occur. The 65/35 Standard limits urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land area of the county. The remaining 65 percent must be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses. Institutional/public uses such as schools, transit facilities, fire and police stations, water and wastewater treatment plants, correctional facilities, and airports are also categorized as non-urban. Urban and non-urban uses are allowed inside the ULL while only non-urban uses are allowed outside. Any expansion of the ULL that exceeds 30 acres is subject to a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors and requires countywide voter approval. In addition, County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6, *Tree Protection and Preservation*, requires preservation of significant trees and outlines permitting requirements for projects proposing to remove or otherwise impact such trees.

The policies in the proposed General Plan would not conflict with existing aforementioned County ordinances for the protection of biological resources but, rather, would expand on them to address issues regarding sensitive biological resources. Regarding County Ordinance Code Chapter 82-1, Policy LU-P2.1 requires continued implementation of the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County ULL to focus development while preserving agricultural land, rangeland, natural habitats, watersheds, and open space; Policy LU-P2.2 enhances the ULL's effectiveness by supporting efforts to acquire and permanently protect land along the ULL boundary; and Policy LU-P2.3 limits development outside the ULL to non-urban uses. Regarding County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6, Policy COS-P6.1 requires the preservation of natural woodlands and significant trees, particularly mature native species; Policy COS-P6.3 supports the protection of native trees, especially oaks, in foothill woodlands and agricultural areas by encouraging the voluntary installation of fencing around individuals or clusters of trees to prevent grazing and promoting the replanting of native species. Action COS-A6.1 directs the County to update County Ordinance Code Chapter 816-6 to enhance tree protections of specified native trees and strengthen mitigation requirements/restitution for tree removal; Action COS-A6.2 directs the County to develop an Oak Woodland Conservation Program that establishes special mitigation ratios for the removal of oak trees, along with specific tree replacement and planting standards to ensure long-term growth and survival and amendments to the County Ordinance Code as needed to implement the program.

The proposed General Plan also includes policies supporting the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP. For example, Policy COS-P4.2 supports land conservation and restoration consistent with the HCP/NCCP and discourages development in areas where such conservation is planned. Additional policies for the protection of biological resources are also consistent with the HCP/NCCP, including Policy COS-P4.3, which requires a biological resources assessment, prepared according to State and federal protocols, for projects with the potential to affect rare, threatened, endangered, or special-status species or their habitat and implementation of appropriate mitigation for identified impacts; Policy COS-P4.4, which protects habitat and wildlife migration corridors; Policy COS-P4.6, which requires floristic and vegetation surveys, prepared according to State and federal protocols, when development is proposed on land with potentially suitable habitat for special-status plant species, including areas mapped by CNPS as Botanical Priority Protection Areas; and Policy COS-P5.1, which supports the protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands.

Implementation of proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, as well as conditions associated with County Ordinance Code Chapters 82-1 and 816-6, would ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed General Plan related to local policies or ordinances for the protection of biological resources or an adopted

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially conflict with local policies or ordinances for the protection of biological resources or an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan as well as conditions associated with County Ordinance Code Chapters 82-1 and 816-6. Compliance with the aforementioned policies and regulations would reduce potential conflicts of the proposed CAP with local policies or ordinances for the protection of biological resources or an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.4-5 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.4.5 Cumulative Impacts

As discussed in Section 4.4, *Assumptions Regarding Cumulative Impacts*, in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*, this Draft EIR analyzes the environmental impacts of projected development under the proposed General Plan. As a result, this Draft EIR addresses the cumulative impacts of the proposed General Plan within the county and Bay Area region, as appropriate. The area considered for cumulative impacts on biological resources is the entire county, including inside the city or town limits of incorporated municipalities.

In general, cumulative impacts to biological resources would occur when a series of actions contribute to the ongoing conversion of undeveloped lands that support sensitive biological resources, including special-status species, sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, and wildlife and fish movement corridors in the county to developed uses. Cumulative projects could result in the loss and degradation of natural communities, wetlands, and riparian or other sensitive habitats. Implementation of the proposed General Plan in combination with other cumulative projects in the area could result in the cumulative loss of habitat and sensitive natural communities, which could potentially contribute to a general decline for the county, and might result in the loss or displacement of wildlife that would have to compete for suitable habitats with existing adjacent populations. Therefore, there would be a significant cumulative impact to biological resources.

The proposed General Plan contains goals, policies, and actions to mitigate impacts on undeveloped lands that support sensitive biological resources, including special-status species, sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, and wildlife and fish movement corridors, and minimize the effects of development on biological resources in general. Projected development that could occur under the proposed General Plan would contribute to the ongoing loss of undeveloped lands that support such sensitive biological resources in the

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

county. The cumulative loss of habitat and sensitive natural communities in the county could contribute to a general decline for such habitats and communities in the region and result in the loss or displacement of wildlife, which would have to compete for suitable habitats within existing adjacent populations. This potential change would occur as an intrinsic part of the land use changes allowed under the proposed General Plan to accommodate the expected continued growth in population and economic activity in the county. Furthermore, development within incorporated municipalities is beyond the County's ability to regulate or control. Therefore, the incremental effects of future development resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan would add substantially to the effects of the cumulative projects, and the proposed project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable.

5.4.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: Impact 5.4-1, Impact 5.4-2, Impact 5.4-3, and Impact 5.4-5.

Without mitigation, these impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.4-4:** Implementation of the proposed project could interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

5.4.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.4-4

BIO-1 Prior to the issuance of a building permit for projects not exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, the County shall require a habitat connectivity/wildlife corridor evaluation for future development that may impact existing connectivity areas and wildlife linkages. The evaluation shall identify project design features that would reduce potential impacts and maintain habitat and wildlife movement. To this end, the County shall incorporate the following measures, to the extent practicable, for projects impacting wildlife movement corridors:

- Encourage clustering of development
- Avoid known sensitive biological resources
- Provide shielded lighting adjacent to sensitive habitat areas
- Encourage development plans that maximize wildlife movement
- Provide buffers between development and wetland/riparian areas
- Protect wetland/riparian areas through regulatory agency permitting process
- Encourage wildlife-passable fence designs (e.g., three-strand barbless wire fence) on property boundaries.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Encourage preservation of native habitat on developed parcels
- Minimize road/roadway development to help prevent loss of habitat due to roadkill and habitat loss
- Use native, drought-resistant plant species in landscape design
- Encourage participation in local/regional recreational trail design efforts

5.4.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.4-4

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require projects that may impact wildlife migration corridors to conduct an evaluation that identifies potential impacts and project design features that can be feasibly implemented to reduce impacts. This would ensure that impacts to wildlife migration corridors are identified and reduced to the extent possible under project-level review. As such, impacts would be **less than significant**.

5. Environmental Analysis

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

5.4.9 References

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2023. *California Natural Diversity Database*. RareFind 5, Version 5.3.0, Records search of the Contra Costa County. Sacramento, CA. Accessed March 29, 2023. <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/rarefind/view/RareFind.aspx>.
- California Native Plant Society. 2023. *Rare Plant Program*. Rare Plant Inventory (online edition, v9.5). Accessed April 17, 2023. <https://www.rareplants.cnps.org>.
- Contra Costa County. 2000. *Contra Costa County General Plan, Conservation Element*. Accessed April 5, 2023. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4732/General-Plan>.
- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan Association. 2006, October. *The Final East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan*. Accessed April 29, 2023. <https://www.cocohcp.org/DocumentCenter/View/93/Habitat-Conservation-Plan--Natural-Community-Conservation-Plan-Overview-Booklet-PDF>.
- ICF. 2019, January. *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report*. Appendix 5.4-1 to this Draft EIR.
- ICF, 2019, January. *California Department of Fish and Wildlife: RareFind Report, Contra Costa County*. Appendix 5.4-2 to this Draft EIR.
- Jones & Stokes. 2006. *Final East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan*. October. Prepared for the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan Association. Accessed April 5, 2023. <http://www.cocohcp.org/221/Final-HCP-NCCP>.
- Penrod, K., P.E. Garding, C. Paulman, P. Beier, S. Weiss, N. Schaefer, R. Branciforte, and K. Gaffney. 2013. *Critical Linkages: Bay Area and Beyond*. Produced by Science and Collaboration for Connected Wildlands, Fair Oaks, CA (www.scwildlands.org), in collaboration with the Bay Area Open Space Council's Conservation Lands Network (www.BayAreaLands.org).
- Spencer, W.D., P. Beier, K. Penrod, K. Winters, C. Paulman, H. Rustigian-Romos, J. Strittholt, M. Parisi, and A. Pettler. 2010. *California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project: A Strategy for Conserving a Connected California*. Prepared for the California Department of Transportation, California Department of Fish and Game, and Federal Highway Administration. Accessed April 29, 2023. <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=18366>.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section describes the potential impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions, identifies criteria used to determine impact significance, provides an analysis of the potential cultural and tribal cultural resources impacts, and identifies proposed General Plan policies and actions that could minimize any potentially significant impacts.

The analysis in this section is based in part on the *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report* (Existing Conditions Report), which is included as Appendix 5.5-1 to this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Correspondence with tribes pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 is included as Appendix 5.5-2 in this Draft EIR.

5.5.1 Environmental Setting

5.5.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) coordinates public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the nation's historic and archaeological resources. The act authorized the National Register of Historic Places, which lists districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

Section 106 (Protection of Historic Properties) of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Section 106 review ensures that historic properties are considered during federal project planning and implementation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, administers the review process with assistance from state historic preservation offices.

Archaeological Resources Protection Act

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 regulates the protection of archaeological resources and sites on federal and Native American lands.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a federal law passed in 1990 that mandates museums and federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items—such as human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony—to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated Native American tribes.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Secretary's Standards) promote responsible practices that help protect the nation's irreplaceable cultural resources. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive, and cannot, in and of themselves, be used to make essential decisions about which features of the historic building should be saved and which can be changed. But once a treatment is selected, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards provide for philosophical consistency in the work. An individual set of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards has been formulated for each of four identified treatment approaches: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. The four approaches are defined below:

- *Preservation* requires retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, along with the building's historic form, features, and detailing as they have evolved over time.
- *Rehabilitation* acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.
- *Restoration* allows for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials from the period of significance and removing materials from other periods.
- *Reconstruction* establishes a limited framework for recreating a vanished or nonsurviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.

Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards

The Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards define minimum education and experience required to perform historic resources identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities. The areas of expertise defined by the Professional Qualifications Standards include History, Archaeology, Architectural History, Architecture, and Historic Architecture.

State

California Public Resources Code

Archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites are protected under a wide variety of State policies and regulations in the California Public Resources Code (PRC). In addition, cultural and paleontological resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and receive protection under the PRC and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

PRC Section 5097.9–5097.991 provides protection to Native American historical and cultural resources and sacred sites and identifies the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). It also requires notification to descendants of discoveries of Native American human remains and provides for treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods.

PRC Section 5097.993 establishes that a person who unlawfully and maliciously excavates, removes, destroys, or defaces a Native American historic, cultural, or sacred site that is listed or may be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is guilty of a misdemeanor if the act was

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

committed with specific intent to vandalize, deface, destroy, steal, convert, possess, collect, or sell a Native American artifact, art object, inscription, feature, or site. Civil penalties include imprisonment and fines up to \$50,000 per violation.

Traditional Tribal Cultural Places

Government Code Sections 65352.3, 65352.4, 65562.5, and 65092 establish the responsibilities of cities and counties with respect to contacting and providing notice to California Native American tribes. The term “California Native American tribe” is defined as “a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC.” Prior to the adoption or amendment of a city or county’s general plan or adoption or amendment of specific plans, the city or county must consult with California Native American tribes for the purpose of preserving specified places, features, and objects within the city or county’s jurisdiction.

California Health and Safety Code

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that if human remains are discovered on a project site, disturbance of the site shall halt and remain halted until the coroner has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and recognizes or has reason to believe the human remains are those of Native American descent, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the NAHC.

California Register of Historic Resources

The California Register of Historic Resources is the State version of the National Register of Historic Resources Program. It was enacted in 1992 and became official on January 1, 1993. The California Register was established to serve as an authoritative guide to the state’s significant historical and archaeological resources. Resources that may be eligible for listing include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts. According to PRC Section 5024.1(c), a resource may be listed as a historical resource in the California Register if it meets any of the four National Register criteria.

California Senate Bill 18

Existing law provides limited protection for Native American prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial places. These places may include sanctified cemeteries, religious sites, ceremonial sites, shrines, burial ground, prehistoric ruins, archaeological or historic sites, Native American rock art inscriptions, or features of Native American historic, cultural, and sacred sites.

SB 18 was signed into law in September 2004 and went into effect on March 1, 2005. It placed new requirements on local governments for developments within or near “traditional tribal cultural places” (TTCP). The law requires local jurisdictions to provide opportunities for involvement of California Native American tribes in the land planning process for the purpose of preserving traditional tribal cultural places. The Final Guidelines recommend that the NAHC provide written information as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

receiving a request to inform the lead agency if the proposed project is determined to be in proximity to a TTCP and another 90 days for tribes to respond to a local government if they want to consult to determine whether the project would have an adverse impact on the TTCP. There is no statutory limit on the consultation duration. Forty-five days before the action is publicly considered, the local government refers action to agencies, following the CEQA public review timeframe. The CEQA public distribution list may include tribes listed by the NAHC who have requested consultation, or it may not.

SB 18 is triggered before the adoption, revision, amendment, or update of a city's or county's general plan. In addition, SB 18 provides a new definition of TTCP requiring a traditional association of the site with Native American traditional beliefs, cultural practices, or ceremonies, or the site must be shown to actually have been used for activities related to traditional beliefs, cultural practices, or ceremonies (previously, the site was defined to require only an association with traditional beliefs, practices, lifeways, and ceremonial activities). SB 18 also amended Civil Code Section 815.3 and adds California Native American tribes to the list of entities that can acquire and hold conservation easements for the purpose of protecting their cultural places.

Assembly Bill 52

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 took effect July 1, 2015, and requires inclusion of a new section in CEQA documents titled Tribal Cultural Resources, which includes heritage sites. Under AB 52, a tribal cultural resource is defined as similar to tribal cultural places under SB 18—sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included or eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources or included in a local register of historical resources. Or the lead agency, supported by substantial evidence, chooses at its discretion to treat the resources as a tribal cultural resource.

Similar to SB 18, AB 52 requires consultation with tribes at an early stage to determine whether a project would have an adverse impact on a tribal cultural resource (TCR) and define mitigation to protect them. Per AB 52, within 14 days of deciding to undertake a project or determining that a project application is complete, the lead agency must provide formal written notification to all tribes who have requested it. The tribe then has 30 days of receiving the notification to respond if it wishes to engage in consultation. The lead agency must initiate consultation within 30 days of receiving the request from the tribe. Consultation concludes when both parties have agreed on measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, or a party, after a reasonable effort in good faith, decides that mutual agreement cannot be reached. Regardless of the outcome of consultation, the CEQA document must disclose significant impacts on TCRs and discuss feasible alternatives or mitigation that avoid or lessen the impact.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.5.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS¹

The Existing Conditions Report (Appendix 5.5-1) includes a detailed description of the built historic resources, archaeological resources, and tribal communities in the county.

Archaeological Resources

As of the date of preparation of this document, the county has not been subject to a large, comprehensive survey for archaeological resources. The potential remains for as-yet undocumented resources to be present within the county. The existing General Plan identified approximately 600 archaeological sites within the county. An additional 155 archaeological sites were identified as a result of a records search conducted in December 2018 at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC). The 2018 records search was limited to sites documented in the county since 2005 to capture those that were formally documented since publication of the existing General Plan. A total of 755 archaeological sites were identified in the county, including 274 historic-era sites; 418 prehistoric sites; 54 multi-component sites, which have both historic-era and prehistoric components; and nine sites of unknown age. The results of the 2018 records search for archaeological sites are included in Appendix 5.5-1 (see Appendix B to that appendix).

Built Historic Resources

The existing General Plan references a Historic Resources Inventory (HRI), the result of a 1976 collaboration between Contra Costa County local historical societies. The HRI is the official approved list of historical resources within the unincorporated areas of the county. The most recent update to the HRI was approved and published by the Contra Costa County Historic Landmarks Advisory Committee (HLAC) in 2016. The 2016 Draft HRI identifies a total of 376 built historic resources in the unincorporated areas of the county. In total, there are 380 built historical resources in the unincorporated areas of the county, including the 376 built historic resources identified in the 2016 Draft HRI, three built historic resources added to the HRI by the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, and one built historic resource identified in a 2018 updated records search. Buildings, structures, sites, objects, districts, and landscapes associated with important historical themes that are found to meet the criteria for listing in the California Register or that are listed in the County's HRI would qualify as CEQA historical resources.

The proposed General Plan Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element provides the following overview of the important historical trends in the county:

Although the Spanish explored Contra Costa County as early as 1772, significant European settlements were not established until the nineteenth century. In 1822, the newly independent Mexican government began issuing land grants, called ranchos, to its citizens in California. Sixteen ranchos were located in what is now Contra Costa County, and most of the land was used for grazing or growing wheat. One rancho

¹ This section is based on the Existing Conditions Report (Appendix 5.5-1), which describes and maps cultural resources conditions in the county. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, this EIR focuses on the analysis of potential impacts on lands only in unincorporated Contra Costa County, including land within and outside the ULL and inside each municipality's sphere of influence (SOI), but not inside municipality limits. This area is referred to as the "EIR Study Area" in this document and is shown in Figure 3-2, *EIR Study Area Boundaries*.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

was later purchased by a settler named John Marsh in 1837. It became known as Marsh's Landing, near present day Antioch, and grew into an important commercial center along the San Joaquin River during the California Gold Rush. The success of Marsh's Landing encouraged other American immigrants to purchase land in the area, and permanent communities began to take shape. Following the Gold Rush, agriculture was the economic driver in the region, boosted by the Southern Pacific Railroad's expansion into the area in the late nineteenth century.

Industrial development and associated residential development to house workers shaped the western portions of Contra Costa County from the early twentieth century. In 1906, the C&H Sugar Factory was established in Crockett, taking advantage of cargo ship access via the Carquinez Strait. Petroleum refineries were also developed during the late 1800s and early 1900s. World War II brought rapid expansion of industrial development to support war efforts, including the famous Kaiser Richmond Shipyards.

Over centuries, people have immigrated to the region from other cities, states, and countries, and the diverse population forms the unique fabric of modern-day Contra Costa County. This history is represented in the almost 400 historic sites, buildings, and other structures that have been identified in Contra Costa County's Historic Resources Inventory. They range from historic buildings that were part of the early industrialization of the western county, like the C&H Sugar Factory, to historic ranches and homes, like the home of John Muir, which is part of the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez.

In 2019, the United States Congress established the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA), which runs from the east side of San Pablo Bay through the Carquinez Strait to the Delta. The Delta NHA is recognized as a cohesive, nationally significant landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by the geography. As of 2023, the Delta Protection Commission is drafting a management plan to promote historic preservation, cultural conservation, education and interpretation, development of recreational assets, nature conservation, tourism, and economic development throughout the Delta NHA.

Tribal Communities

The county is in an area where the traditional territories of three tribal communities converged: Bay Miwok, Northern Valley Yokuts, and Ohlone. The proposed General Plan Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element provides the following overview of the history of tribal communities in the county:

Contra Costa County is in an area where traditional territories of three Native American tribal communities – the Bay Miwok, Northern Valley Yokuts, and Ohlone – converged.

The Bay Miwok inhabited the inner Coast Range, with territory stretching through eastern Contra Costa County, from Mount Diablo into the Delta. The Bay Miwok were politically organized by tribelet, which consisted of one or more villages and camps within a defined territory.

The Northern Valley Yokuts are the historical occupants of the central and northern San Joaquin Valley, and their territory extended into eastern Contra Costa County. Their main settlements were built atop low mounds on or near the banks of large watercourses for protection against flooding. Each subtribe was autonomous with a headman, and populations averaged around 300 individuals.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The territory of the Ohlone people extended along the coast from the Golden Gate south to just below Carmel, as well as along several inland valleys that led from the coastline. The Ohlone were also politically organized by tribelet, with each having a designated territory.

All of these tribal communities were primarily hunter-gatherers; they hunted animals like mule deer, tule elk, pronged antelope, mountain lions, whales, and waterfowl. They would travel seasonally into the foothills or plains to gather specific plant resources, such as acorns, buckeye nuts, hazelnuts, and pine nuts, as well as seeds, roots, and berries. These and other resources likely supported hundreds of individual villages throughout what is now Contra Costa County.

Despite the violence and displacement that accompanied European and Mexican settlement of this area and decimated indigenous communities, the indigenous inhabitants of the land are still present. Today, there are several Ohlone nations in Contra Costa, Alameda, Solano, Napa, and San Joaquin Counties, each with its own culture and language, including the Lisjan (Ohlone), Karkin (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok, Delta Yokut, and Napian (Patwin).

This rich tribal history and living tribal culture are reflected in a range of tribal cultural resources throughout the county. Tribal cultural resources often are less tangible than an object or a site itself. For example, sometimes the importance is tied to views of or access to a sacred site. Therefore, consultation with culturally affiliated Native American tribes is key to identifying tribal cultural resources, as required by Assembly Bill 52.

A record search of the NAHC Sacred Lands File (SLF) was completed and confirmed negative results for the EIR Study Area (see Appendix 5.5-2). This does not, however, mean that no resources exist within the EIR Study Area. In accordance with SB 18 requirements, the County sent letters to representatives of the Native American tribes provided by the NAHC on January 15, 2021, formally inviting tribes to consult with the County on the upcoming General Plan Update. The Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation Tribe requested consultation and consulted with the County in November 2021 regarding the draft goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan Update. In accordance with AB 52 requirements, an updated invitation for consultation was sent out to the County's AB 52 Tribal Consultation List on October 5, 2023. The Lisjan Tribe responded on October 25, 2023, and requested additional information about the proposed project, which was provided to the tribe. No other tribes responded and no consultation was requested.

During the SB 18 consultation process in 2021, the Lisjan Tribe provided comments and edits for the General Plan in addition to mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the proposed project as Mitigation Measures TCR-5 through TCR-9. No further consultation was requested from the Lisjan Tribe.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.5.2 Thresholds of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 provides direction on determining significance of impacts to archaeological and historical resources. Generally, a resource shall be considered “historically significant” if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- Is associated the with lives of persons important in our past;
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (PRC Section 5024.1; 14 CCR Section 4852).

The fact that a resource is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources, not determined to be eligible for listing, or not included in a local register of historical resources does not preclude a lead agency from determining that it may be a historical resource.

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- C-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- C-2 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- C-3 Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.
- TCR-1 Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
 - i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or
 - ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c). In applying the criteria set forth in Public Resource Code Section 5024.1(c), the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.5.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.5.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to cultural resources and tribal cultural resources. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Goal COS-10:** Archaeological, cultural, and historic resources that are identified and preserved.
 - ***Policy COS-P10.1:*** *Prioritize preservation and adaptive reuse of buildings, sites, and areas having identifiable archaeological, cultural, or historic significance. Require new construction and renovation projects in historic areas to incorporate compatible and high-quality design that protects the overall historic integrity of the area and adjacent historic resources.*
 - **Policy COS-P10.2:** Encourage sensitive restoration and adaptive reuse of historic resources following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, including additions and alterations to buildings that do not diminish historic integrity.
 - **Policy COS-P10.3:** Encourage owners of historic properties to make use of the State of California Historic Building Code to protect and rehabilitate historic resources.
 - **Policy COS-P10.4:** Encourage owners of eligible historic properties to apply for State and federal designation as historic properties and participate in tax incentive programs, such as allowed under the Mills Act, for historic preservation.
 - ***Policy COS-P10.5:*** *When a project involves a resource that is listed in the County's Historic Resources Inventory, or as otherwise necessitated by the CEQA process, require applicants to engage a qualified consultant to prepare an evaluation of potential and previously identified archaeological, cultural, and historic resources that may be present on the project site.*
 - **Policy COS-P10.6:** Upon discovery of significant historic or prehistoric archaeological artifacts or fossils during project construction, require ground-disturbing activities to halt within a 50-foot radius of the find until its significance can be determined by a qualified historian, archaeologist, or paleontologist and appropriate protection and preservation measures developed.
 - ***Policy COS-P10.7:*** *Require significant historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources to be either preserved onsite or adequately documented as a condition of removal.*
 - **Policy COS-P10.8:** Emphasize native people, immigrant populations, and the environmental and cultural heritage of the region as significant themes related to historic preservation. Consider natural, agricultural, ranching, mining, commercial, industrial, residential, political, transportation, recreation, education, maritime, and military themes when evaluating the significance of historic resources.
 - **Policy COS-P10.9:** Ensure new cultural/historic resource evaluations consider potential social and cultural significance of resources in addition to architectural significance.
 - **Policy COS-P10.10:** Coordinate with cities and special districts to identify and preserve archaeological, cultural, and historic resources countywide.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- **Policy COS-P10.11:** Partner with other agencies, culturally affiliated tribes, private entities, and nonprofit organizations to establish programs and funding mechanisms to preserve, restore, and enhance cultural, historic, and archaeologic sites.
- **Action COS-A10.1:** Beginning in 2024, then every five years thereafter, review and update the County's Historic Resources Inventory and Archaeological Sensitivity Map in consultation with culturally affiliated tribes to ensure these remain useful tools for evaluating potential cultural resources impacts and guiding preservation efforts. As part of the 2024 update to the Historic Resources Inventory, create a map of the listed historic resources, and update the map upon each update to the Historic Resources Inventory. Ensure tribal cultural resources identified through these updates remain confidential.
- **Action COS-A10.2:** Evaluate and implement one or more measures to protect and preserve historic and cultural resources, such as a historic and cultural resources ordinance, overlay district, and/or design guidelines.
- **Action COS-A10.3:** Prepare a historic context statement that provides necessary background information about historic, archaeological, and cultural resources and a framework for identifying and evaluating historic resources. The context statement should include the overarching significance themes described in Policy COS-P10.8.
- **Action COS-A10.4:** Partner with the Delta Protection Commission to support preparation and implementation of the management plan for the Delta National Heritage Area.
- **Goal COS-11:** Robust tribal collaboration to preserve, restore, and enhance tribal cultural resources.
 - **Policy COS-P11.1:** *Respect and protect tribal cultural resources, including historic, cultural, and sacred sites; cultural landscapes; views of or access to resources; and objects with cultural value to California Native American tribes.*
 - **Policy COS-P11.2:** *Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with local Native American tribal representatives to facilitate tribal consultation and preservation of tribal cultural resources.*
 - **Policy COS-P11.3:** *Consult with culturally affiliated tribes on General Plan and Specific Plan amendments with potential to impact tribal cultural resources. If an amendment redesignates a tribal cultural resource site for open space purposes, evaluate the appropriateness of developing a treatment and management plan for tribal cultural resources in the affected area.*
 - **Policy COS-P11.4:** *Consult with culturally affiliated tribes to identify and appropriately address tribal cultural resources through the discretionary development review process.*
 - **Policy COS-P11.5:** *Consult with culturally affiliated tribes to assess the sensitivity of sites and protect recorded and unrecorded tribal cultural resources.*
 - **Policy COS-P11.6:** Encourage voluntary landowner efforts to protect tribal cultural resources.
 - **Policy COS-P11.7:** Support tribal acquisition of conservation easements on terms mutually satisfactory to the tribe and landowner for purposes of protecting tribal cultural resources.
 - **Policy COS-P11.8:** Encourage special districts, such as EBRPD, to consult with culturally affiliated tribes when pursuing land acquisitions for recreation or other public purposes to ensure tribal access to tribal cultural resources.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- **Policy COS-P11.9:** *Avoid impacts of development on Native American archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources whenever possible. When impacts cannot be avoided, mitigate to the maximum feasible extent.*
- **Policy COS-P11.10:** *Consult with culturally affiliated tribes when developing mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts on tribal cultural resources. Mitigation could include, but is not limited to, a cultural resources treatment agreement between the developer and affected tribe(s) that addresses the treatment and disposition of cultural resources and human remains and tribal monitoring during earth-disturbing activities.*
- **Policy COS-P11.11:** *Upon discovery of a burial, human remains, or suspected human remains, require immediate halt to ground-disturbing activities such as excavation or grading, protection of the area surrounding the find, notification of the County Coroner, and compliance with the provisions of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, including California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if applicable. If human remains are determined to be Native American, require the applicant to consult with the Most Likely Descendants list to determine appropriate treatment, as prescribed in Public Resources Code Section 5097 et seq.*
- **Policy COS-P11.12:** Encourage landowners to relinquish ownership of Native American cultural artifacts found on project sites to the culturally affiliated tribe for proper treatment and disposition.
- **Action COS-A11.1:** In consultation with local Native American tribes, prepare informational materials about living Native American culture in the region, the history of Native Americans in what is now Contra Costa County, and how the County's relationship with local Native American tribes has evolved. Make these materials easily accessible to the public, project applicants, and County staff.
- **Action COS-A11.2:** Work with local Native American tribes to establish programs and secure funding to implement actions aimed at preserving tribal cultural resources.

5.5.3.2 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) that are applicable to cultural resources or tribal cultural resources.

5.5.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.5-1: Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. [Threshold C-1]

Proposed General Plan

Section 15064.5 (b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines defines a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource to be the “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.” Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially result in impacts on historical resources in the EIR Study Area. Specifically, direct impacts could occur if buildings determined to be historic are demolished or significantly altered as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As detailed in Section 5.5.1.1, there are a number of federal and State regulations in place to protect historical resources within the EIR Study Area. Currently known or future historic sites or resources listed in the National or California Registers or the Contra Costa County HRI would be protected through State and federal regulations restricting alteration, relocation, and demolition of historical resources. Compliance with the State and federal regulations is intended to ensure that development would not result in adverse impacts to identified historic and cultural resources. Historical resources are protected under the regulations of the NHPA when projects involve federal agencies. In addition, the proposed General Plan policies take a comprehensive approach to the protection of historical resources. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on historical resources, including through the policies and actions under Goal COS-10, which aims to identify and preserve historic resources. For example, Policies COS-P10.1 and COS-P10.2 encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic resources. This includes using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, where possible. Policy COS-P10.11 seeks to incentivize preservation and adaptive reuse by establishing programs and funding mechanisms that support the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites. Policy COS-P10.5 requires applicants to engage a qualified consultant to prepare an evaluation of historic resources that may be present on a project site when a project involves a resource listed on the County's HRI or as otherwise necessitated through the CEQA process. Policy COS-P10.7 requires significant historic resources to be either preserved onsite or adequately documented as a condition of removal. Actions COS-A10.1 through COS-A10.4 support these policies, ensuring that surveys of existing and as-yet unknown resources are performed and updated regularly, and that planning tools, such as ordinances, design guidelines, context statements, and management plans are put in place to support implementation of the policies.

The proposed General Plan would not substantially alter any policies regarding the significance of impacts on historical resources. In addition, the proposed General Plan would not alter the significance of impacts on historical resources compared to existing conditions. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan would not modify the procedures or policies regarding how historical resources are identified or evaluated for historical significance, nor would it change how impacts on historical resources are assessed or mitigated under the General Plan.

The goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan, in combination with existing federal and State regulations in place to protect historical resources within the EIR Study Area, are intended to ensure that development would not result in adverse impacts to identified historic and cultural resources; however, it is always a potential. Under CEQA, conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties would normally mitigate impacts to a less-than-significant level. Because the proposed project is a program-level effort, it is not possible to determine whether individual future projects would be able to conform with the Secretary of Interior's Standards. However, CEQA would require that future projects with the potential to significantly impact historic resources be subject to project-level CEQA review wherein the project's potential to affect the significance of a surrounding historic resource would be evaluated and mitigated to the extent feasible. The requirement for subsequent CEQA review would minimize the potential for new development to indirectly affect the significance of historic resources to the maximum extent practicable.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Even with implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, the regulations would not fully reduce potential impacts on historic resources at the programmatic level. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could adversely impact historic resources in the EIR Study Area through changes to accommodate adaptive use, removal, or reconstruction. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan as well as federal and State regulations in place to protect historic resources within the EIR Study Area. However, even with implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, the regulations would not fully reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on historic resources. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.5-1 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

There are no mitigation measures available to reduce impacts to less than significant. Policies and actions in the proposed General Plan, in addition to State regulations, would reduce impacts to the extent possible and additional project-specific mitigation measures would be incorporated pursuant to future project-specific review.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.5-1 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.5-2: Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. [Threshold C-2]

Proposed General Plan

Archaeological resources are known to be present in the EIR Study Area. Implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially result in direct or indirect impacts on both prehistoric and historic archaeological resources in the EIR Study Area. If archaeological resources are present in the areas where development is planned, they could be damaged by earth-disturbing construction activities, such as those associated with excavating foundations, placing fill, trenching for utility systems, or grading the site for roads and staging areas. In particular, construction activities may disturb resources by exposing them to potential vandalism or causing them to be displaced from the original context. This could result in a significant impact on archaeological resources.

As detailed in Section 5.5.1.1, there are a number of federal and State regulations in place to protect archaeological resources within the EIR Study Area. Compliance with the State and federal regulations is intended to ensure that development would not result in adverse impacts to identified archaeological resources.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

In addition, the proposed General Plan policies take a comprehensive approach to the protection of archaeological resources. The proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on archaeological resources, including through the policies and actions under Goal COS-10, which aims to identify and preserve archaeological resources. For example, Policy COS-P10.1 encourages the preservation of sites and areas having identifiable archaeological significance. Policy COS-P10.5 requires applicants to engage a qualified consultant to prepare an evaluation of archaeological resources that may be present on a project site when warranted through the CEQA process. Policy COS-P10.6 requires that upon discovery of a significant archaeological artifact during construction, ground disturbing activities must halt within a 50-foot radius of the find until its significance can be determined by a qualified archeologist and appropriate protection and preservation measures developed. Policy COS-P10.7 requires significant archaeological resources to be either preserved onsite or adequately documented as a condition of removal, COS-A10.1 through COS-A10.4 support these policies, ensuring that surveys of existing and as-yet unknown resources are performed and updated regularly, and that planning tools, such as ordinances, design guidelines, context statements, and management plans are put in place to support implementation of the policies.

The proposed General Plan would not substantially alter any policies regarding the significance of impacts on archaeological resources. In addition, the proposed General Plan would not alter the significance of impacts on archaeological resources compared to the existing General Plan. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan would not modify the procedures or policies regarding how archaeological resources are identified or evaluated for historical significance, nor would it change how impacts on archaeological resources are assessed or mitigated under the General Plan.

As noted previously, the proposed General Plan includes multiple policies that attempt to mitigate impacts on archaeological resources through preservation and evaluation. The proposed General Plan also includes policies and actions that attempt to provide better documentation and improve the review of archaeological resources to protect known and as-yet unknown historic resources. Overall, the goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan, in combination with existing federal and State regulations in place to protect archaeological resources within the EIR Study Area, would help to avoid adverse impacts to archaeological resources; however, they do not prevent ground-disturbing activities from occurring that could potentially impact archaeological resources. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact archaeological resources in the EIR Study Area. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan as well as federal and State regulations in place to protect archaeological resources within the EIR Study Area. However, even with implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, the regulations would not fully reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on archaeological resources. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.5-2 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

CUL-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant shall be required to retain an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professionally Qualified Standards to conduct a cultural records search. If the records search identifies sensitivity for archaeological resources, the archaeologist shall be retained on an on-call basis. The project applicant shall defer to the recommendations of the consulting archaeologist, in consultation with culturally affiliated tribes and their designated monitors, regarding the evaluation and treatment of any cultural resources discovered on the project site.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.5-2 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.5-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries. [Threshold C-3]

Proposed General Plan

The EIR Study Area has been long inhabited by Native Americans. Therefore, Native American burials may be found in the future on sites where no record of such burials exists. Buried human remains that were not identified during previous research and field studies could be inadvertently unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, possibly resulting in damage to the remains. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially damage or destroy human remains in the EIR Study Area.

In the event that human remains are discovered during grading or construction activities, compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which includes specific provisions for the protection of human remains in the event of discovery, would be required. The treatment of Native American human remains is regulated by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, as amended by AB 2641, which addresses the disposition of Native American burials, protects remains, and appoints the NAHC to resolve disputes. In addition, California Health and Safety Code Section 7052 makes the willful mutilation, disinterment, or removal of human remains a felony. The Health and Safety Code is applicable to any project where ground disturbance would occur. The proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element of the General Plan includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on human remains. Specifically, in the event of the discovery of a burial, human remains, or suspected human remains, Policy POS-P11.11 requires excavation and grading activities to halt immediately, protection of the area surrounding the find, notification of the County Coroner, and compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5.

The proposed General Plan policy guidance, in combination with existing federal and State regulations in place to protect human remains within the EIR Study Area, would ensure that the potential impacts of the proposed General Plan on human remains would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact human remains in the EIR Study Area. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Compliance with these policies and regulations would reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on human remains to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.5-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact 5.5-4:	Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or determined to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c). [Threshold TCR-1]
----------------------	---

Proposed General Plan

TCRs are known to be present in the EIR Study Area. Ground-disturbing activities could occur on sites that may have sensitive TCRs. Grading and construction activities of undeveloped areas or redevelopment that requires more intensive soil excavation than needed for the existing development could potentially cause disturbance to TCRs by potentially unearthing previously unknown or unrecorded TCRs. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed General Plan could potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of TCRs in the EIR Study Area.

In compliance with the tribal consultation requirements discussed, invitations for consultation were sent to representatives of the Native American tribes provided by the NAHC on January 15, 2021, and to the County's AB 52 Tribal Consultation List on October 5, 2023. The Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation Tribe requested consultation and consulted with the County in November 2021 regarding the draft goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan Update. During this process, the Lisjan Tribe provided comments and edits for the General Plan that have been incorporated as new and modified policies and actions. Additionally, the tribe provided mitigation measures that have been incorporated as Mitigation Measures TCR-1 and TCR-2 and within Mitigation Measure CUL-1. No further consultation was requested from the Lisjan Tribe. The tribe also responded on October 25, 2023, to the updated consultation invitation, requesting information about the proposed project that was sent to the tribe. No additional consultation was requested.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As detailed in Section 5.5.1.1, there are a number of federal and State regulations in place to protect TCRs within the EIR Study Area. Compliance with the State and federal regulations is intended to ensure that development would not result in adverse impacts to TCRs. In addition, the proposed General Plan policies and actions take a comprehensive approach to the protection of TCRs. The proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element includes policies and actions that would mitigate potential impacts on TCRs, including policies and actions under Goal COS-11, which aims to preserve, restore, and enhance TCRs. For example, Policy COS-P11.1 encourages respecting and protecting TCRs. Policies COS-P11.2, COS-P11.3, COS-P11.4, COS-P11.5, and COS-P11.8 promote establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with local Native American tribal representatives as well as consulting with culturally affiliated tribes to identify and protect TCRs. In addition, Policies COS-P11.9 and COS-P11.10 require avoiding impacts of development on Native American TCRs whenever possible and consulting with culturally affiliated tribes when developing mitigation measures (e.g., cultural resources treatment agreement between a developer and the appropriate tribe[s] that address tribal monitoring during earth-disturbing activities).

The goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan and mitigation measures requested by the Lisjan Tribe, in combination with existing federal and State regulations in place to protect TCRs within the EIR Study Area, would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. Without mitigation, though, impacts would be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects. However, projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP, which could potentially impact TCRs in the EIR Study Area. Projects that would implement the proposed CAP strategies and actions would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan, applicable provisions of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, and SB 18 and AB 52. Compliance with the aforementioned policies and regulations and Mitigation Measures would reduce potential impacts of the proposed CAP on TCRs to a less-than-significant level, though impacts would be potentially significant before mitigation.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.5-4 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

TCR-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant may be required to enter into a cultural resources treatment agreement with the culturally affiliated tribe. If required, the agreement would address the treatment and disposition of cultural resources and human remains that may be impacted as a result of the development as well as provisions for tribal monitors. If an agreement is required, the applicant must provide a copy of the cultural resources treatment agreement to the County prior to issuance of a grading or building permit. Regardless of whether an agreement is

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

required, if cultural resources are discovered during project construction, all work in the area shall cease and a qualified archaeologist and representatives of the culturally affiliated tribe shall be retained by the project sponsor to investigate the find and make recommendations as to treatment and mitigation.

- TCR-2 Tribal monitors from the culturally affiliated tribe shall be allowed to monitor all grading, excavation, and ground-breaking activities, including archaeological surveys, testing, and studies for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and that would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.5-4 would be less than significant.

5.5.5 Cumulative Impacts

As discussed in Section 4.4, *Assumptions Regarding Cumulative Impacts*, in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting*, this Draft EIR analyzes the environmental impacts of projected development under the proposed General Plan. As a result, this Draft EIR addresses the cumulative impacts of the proposed General Plan within the county and Bay Area region, as appropriate. The area considered for cumulative impacts on cultural resources is the area within a one-half-mile radius for historical and archaeological resources. The area considered for cumulative impacts on TCRs is based on the local Native American tribe's culturally significant areas, which includes, but are not limited to, cultural landscapes and regions to specific heritage sites and other tribal cultural places.

In general, cumulative impacts to cultural resources sites would occur when a series of actions leads to the loss of a substantial type of site, building, or resource. For example, while the loss of a single historic building may not be significant to the character of a neighborhood or streetscape, continued loss of such resources on a project-by-project basis could constitute a significant cumulative effect. This is most obvious in historic districts, where destruction or alteration of a percentage of the contributing elements may lead to a loss of integrity of the district overall. Changes to the setting or character of an area, for example, by adding modern structures on all sides of a historically significant building, thus altering the aesthetics of the streetscape, would create a significant impact. Destruction or relocation of historic buildings would also significantly impact the setting. Cumulative projects could result in changes (e.g., demolition and new construction) to the built environment within a one-half-mile radius of historical resources. Cumulative projects could also entail ground disturbance, which has the potential to impact known or as of yet unidentified archaeological and TCRs. Implementation of the proposed General Plan, in combination with other cumulative projects in the area, has the potential to affect the same cultural resources and TCRs. Therefore, there would be a significant cumulative impact to cultural resources and TCRs.

The proposed General Plan contains goals, policies, and actions to minimize the effects of development on cultural resources in general. Projected development that could occur under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with AB 52, PRC Section 5097.9–5097.991, and California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which address accidental discoveries of archaeological sites and resources, including TCRs, as well as human remains. Thus, the proposed project's contribution to impacts on archaeological resources or TCRs would not be cumulatively considerable. However, demolition of historic structures cannot be mitigated,

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

and as such, the proposed project's contribution to impacts on built historic resources would be cumulatively considerable.

5.5.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: Impact 5.5-3.

Without mitigation, these impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.5-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.
- **Impact 5.5-2:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.
- **Impact 5.5-4:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or determined to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c).

5.5.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.5-1

No feasible mitigation measures are available. Policies and actions in the proposed General Plan, including Policy COS-P10.5 requiring evaluation of historic resources for projects that may impact a resource listed in the County's Historic Resources Inventory, and Policy COS-P10.7 requiring significant historic resources to be either preserved on-site or adequately documented as a condition of removal, in addition to federal and State regulations, would reduce impacts to the extent possible and additional project-specific mitigation measures would be incorporated pursuant to future project-specific review.

Impact 5.5-2

CUL-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant shall be required to retain an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professionally Qualified Standards to conduct a cultural records search. If the records search identifies sensitivity for archaeological resources, the archaeologist shall be retained on an on-call basis. The project applicant shall defer to the recommendations of the consulting archaeologist, in consultation with culturally affiliated tribes and their designated monitors, regarding the evaluation and treatment of any cultural resources discovered on the project site.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Impact 5.5-4

- TCR-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant may be required to enter into a cultural resources treatment agreement with the culturally affiliated tribe. If required, the agreement would address the treatment and disposition of cultural resources and human remains that may be impacted as a result of the development as well as provisions for tribal monitors. If an agreement is required, the applicant must provide a copy of the cultural resources treatment agreement to the County prior to issuance of a grading or building permit. Regardless of whether an agreement is required, if cultural resources are discovered during project construction, all work in the area shall cease and a qualified archaeologist and representatives of the culturally affiliated tribe shall be retained by the project sponsor to investigate the find and make recommendations as to treatment and mitigation.
- TCR-2 Tribal monitors from the culturally affiliated tribe shall be allowed to monitor all grading, excavation, and ground-breaking activities, including archaeological surveys, testing, and studies for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and that would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County.

5.5.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.5-1

Development allowed by the proposed General Plan could result in new development affecting historic sites. Policies in the proposed General Plan, including COS-P10.5 and COS-P10.7, would help to identify potential impacts to historic resources for subsequent projects and would require documentation or preservation of such resources. Additionally, compliance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for projects that would impact historic resources would also help to reduce impacts to less than significant. However, these measures do not prevent the reuse or modification of historic sites and project-specific analyses for future projects would be needed to ensure that impacts are less than significant. Therefore, at this programmatic-level, Impact 5.5-1 would be **significant and unavoidable**.

Impact 5.5-2

Development under the proposed project could impact undiscovered archaeological resources during ground disturbing activities. Mitigation Measure CUL-1 requires project applicants to retain a qualified archaeologist to monitor ground-disturbing activities for non-CEQA exempt projects that involve ground disturbance on previously disturbed sites or as directed by the County. This would ensure that potential resources are identified and protected. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, Impact 5.5-2 would be *less than significant*.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Impact 5.5-4

Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-2 would ensure that tribal cultural resources would be properly handled if identified during development under the proposed project. Compliance with these measures would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to *less than significant*.

5. Environmental Analysis

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.5.9 References

Grimmer, Anne. 2017. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*.
<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf>

ICF. 2019, January. *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report*.
Appendix 5.5-1 to this Draft EIR.

See all additional references for this section in Appendix 5.5-1.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.6 ENERGY

This section describes the potential energy impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project. This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions, identifies criteria used to determine impact significance, provides an analysis of the potential energy impacts, and identifies proposed General Plan policies and feasible mitigation measures that could mitigate any potentially significant impacts.

5.6.1 Environmental Setting

Section 21100(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) include a detailed statement setting for the mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects on the environment, including but not limited to, measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. Appendix F of State CEQA Guidelines states that, to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, the potential energy implications of a project shall be considered in an EIR, to the extent relevant and applicable to the project. Appendix F further states that a project's energy consumption and proposed conservation measures may be addressed, as relevant and applicable, in the project description, environmental setting, and impact analysis portions of technical sections, as well as through mitigation measures and alternatives.

In accordance with Appendices F and G of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR includes relevant information and analyses that address the energy implications of the proposed project. This section summarizes the proposed project's anticipated energy needs, impacts, and conservation measures. Information found herein, as well as related aspects of the proposed project's energy implications, are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this EIR, including Sections 5.3, *Air Quality*; 5.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*; and 5.16, *Transportation*.

5.6.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 was established in response to the 1973 oil crisis. The Act created the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, established vehicle fuel economy standards, and prohibited the export of U.S. crude oil (with a few limited exceptions). It also created Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for passenger cars starting in model year 1978. The CAFE Standards are updated periodically to account for changes in vehicle technologies, driver behavior, and/or driving conditions.

The federal government issued new CAFE standards in 2012 for model years 2017 to 2025 that required a fleet average of 54.5 miles per gallon (MPG) for model year 2025. However, on March 30, 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) finalized updated CAFE and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks, covering model years 2021 through 2026, known as the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Final Rule for Model Years 2021–2026. Under SAFE, the fuel economy standards will increase 1.5 percent per year compared to the 5 percent per year under the CAFE

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

standards established in 2012. Overall, SAFE requires a fleet average of 40.4 MPG for model year 2026 vehicles (85 Federal Register 24174 [April 30, 2020]).

On December 21, 2021, under direction of Executive Order (EO) 13990 issued by President Biden, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration repealed SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One, which had preempted state and local laws related to fuel economy standards. In addition, on March 31, 2022, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration finalized new fuel standards in response to EO 13990. Fuel efficiency under the standards proposed will increase 8 percent annually for model years 2024 to 2025 and 10 percent for model year 2026. Overall, the new CAFE standards require a fleet average of 49 MPG for passenger vehicles and light trucks for model year 2026, which would be a 10 MPG increase relative to model year 2021 (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2022).

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140) seeks to provide the nation with greater energy independence and security by increasing the production of clean renewable fuels; improving vehicle fuel economy; and increasing the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles. The Act sets increased CAFE standards; the Renewable Fuel Standard; appliance energy efficiency standards; building energy efficiency standards; and accelerated research and development tasks on renewable energy sources (e.g., solar energy, geothermal energy, and marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies), carbon capture, and sequestration (USEPA 2022).

Energy Policy Act of 2005

Passed by Congress in July 2005, the Energy Policy Act includes a comprehensive set of provisions to address energy issues. This Act includes tax incentives for energy conservation improvements in commercial and residential buildings, fossil fuel production and clean coal facilities, and construction and operation of nuclear power plants, among other things. Subsidies are also included for geothermal, wind energy, and other alternative energy producers.

National Energy Policy

Established in 2001 by the National Energy Policy Development Group, the National Energy Policy is designed to help the private sector and state and local governments promote dependable, affordable, and environmentally sound production and distribution of energy for the future. Key issues addressed by the energy policy are energy conservation, repair and expansion of energy infrastructure, and ways of increasing energy supplies while protecting the environment.

Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968

The Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 authorizes the U.S. Department of Transportation to regulate pipeline transportation of flammable, toxic, or corrosive natural gas and other gases as well as the transportation and storage of liquefied natural gas. The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration within the Department of Transportation develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.6 million-mile pipeline transportation system.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

State

Warren-Alquist Act

Enacted in 1974, the Warren-Alquist Act created the California Energy Commission (CEC) in response to the energy crisis of the early 1970s and the state's unsustainable growing demand for energy resources. As discussed further below, the CEC's core responsibilities include advancing State energy policy, encouraging energy efficiency, certifying thermal power plants, investing in energy innovation, developing renewable energy, transforming transportation, and preparing for energy emergencies. The Warren-Alquist Act is updated annually to address current energy needs and issues, and its latest edition is from January 2023.

California Energy Commission

The CEC was created in 1974 as the State's principal energy planning organization in order to meet the energy challenges facing the state in response to the 1973 oil embargo. The CEC is charged with six basic responsibilities when designing State energy policy:

- Forecast statewide electricity needs.
- License power plants to meet those needs.
- Promote energy conservation and efficiency measures.
- Develop renewable energy resources and alternative energy technologies.
- Promote research, development, and demonstration.
- Plan for and direct the State's response to energy emergencies.

California Public Utilities Commission

In September 2008, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted the Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan, which provides a framework for energy efficiency in California through the year 2020 and beyond. It articulates a long-term vision, as well as goals for each economic sector, identifying specific near-term, mid-term, and long-term strategies to assist in achieving these goals. This Plan sets forth the following four goals, known as Big Bold Energy Efficiency Strategies, to achieve significant reductions in energy demand (CPUC 2011):

- All new residential construction in California will be zero net energy (ZNE) by 2020;¹
- All new commercial construction in California will be ZNE by 2030;
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning commonly referred to as "HVAC" will be transformed to ensure that its energy performance is optimal for California's climate; and
- All eligible low-income customers will be given the opportunity to participate in the low-income energy efficiency program by 2020.

¹ ZNE buildings are buildings in which the total amount of energy used on an annual basis is equal to or less than the amount of renewable energy created on the site.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

With respect to the commercial sector, the Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan notes that commercial buildings, which include schools, hospitals, and public buildings, consume more electricity than any other end-use sector in California. The commercial sector's five billion-plus square feet of space accounts for 38 percent of the state's power use and over 25 percent of natural gas consumption. Lighting, cooling, refrigeration, and ventilation account for 75 percent of all commercial electric use, while space heating, water heating, and cooking account for over 90 percent of gas use. In 2006, office, retail, and schools and colleges were in the top five facility types for electricity and gas consumption, accounting for approximately 10 percent of state's electricity and gas use (CPUC 2011).

The CPUC and CEC have adopted the following goals to achieve ZNE levels by 2030 in the commercial sector:

- **Goal 1.** New construction will increasingly embrace ZNE performance (including clean, distributed generation), reaching 100 percent penetration of new starts in 2030.
- **Goal 2.** 50 percent of existing buildings will be retrofit to ZNE by 2030 through achievement of deep levels of energy efficiency and with the addition of clean distributed generation.
- **Goal 3.** Transform the commercial lighting market through technological advancement and innovative utility initiatives.

Renewables Portfolio Standard

Senate Bills 1078, 107, X1-2, and Executive Order S-14-08

The California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program was established in 2002 under Senate Bill (SB) 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). The RPS program required investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase the use of eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020. Initially under the RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent in order to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010. Executive Order S-14-08 was signed in November 2008, which expanded the State's Renewable Energy Standard to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). The CPUC is required to provide quarterly progress reports on progress toward RPS goals. This has accelerated the development of renewable energy projects throughout the state. For year 2020, the three largest retail energy utilities provided an average of 43 percent of their supplies from renewable energy sources. Community choice aggregators provided an average of 41 percent of its supplies from renewable sources (CPUC 2021).

Senate Bill 350

Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 350 on October 7, 2015, which expanded the RPS by establishing a goal of 50 percent of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year to be from renewable sources by December 31, 2030. In addition, SB 350 included a goal to double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses (such as heating, cooling, lighting, or class of energy uses on which an energy efficiency program is focused) of retail customers through energy conservation and efficiency. The bill also required the CPUC, in consultation with the CEC, to establish efficiency targets for electrical and gas corporations consistent with this goal. SB 350 also provided for the transformation of the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) into a regional organization to promote the development of regional

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

electricity transmission markets in the western states and to improve the access of consumers served by the CAISO to those markets, pursuant to a specified process.

Senate Bill 100

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed SB 100, which replaces the SB 350 requirements, now requiring 50 percent renewable by 2026 and 60 percent by 2050. SB 100 also establishes RPS requirements for publicly owned utilities that consist of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. The bill establishes an overall State policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all State agencies by December 31, 2045. Under the bill, the State cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resources shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Senate Bill 1020

SB 1020 was signed into law on September 16, 2022. It requires renewable energy and zero-carbon resources to supply 90 percent of all retail electricity sales by 2035 and 95 percent by 2040. Additionally, SB 1020 requires all State agencies to procure 100 percent of electricity from renewable energy and zero-carbon resources by 2035.

Energy Efficiency

Appliance Efficiency Regulations

California's Appliance Efficiency Regulations contain energy performance, energy design, water performance, and water design standards for appliances (including refrigerators, ice makers, vending machines, freezers, water heaters, fans, boilers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners, pool equipment, and plumbing fittings) that are sold or offered for sale in California (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 20, Parts 1600–1608). These standards are updated regularly to allow consideration of new energy efficiency technologies and methods (CEC 2023a).

California Building Energy Code: Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy efficiency standards for new development were adopted by the California Energy Resource Conservation and Development Commission (now the CEC) in June 1977 and most recently revised in 2022 (CCR Title 24, Part 6). Title 24, Part 6, *Building Energy Code* (“Energy Code”) requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated every 3 years and replace the preceding code cycle. The 2022 standards became effective and replaced the 2019 standards on January 1, 2023.

The Energy Code contains mandatory requirements, which are required for all new development and include standards covering space conditioning, water heating, cooking and furnace equipment, building insulation, lighting controls, electrical distribution, and solar readiness. In addition to the mandatory requirements, for a new development to demonstrate compliance with the Energy Code, it must demonstrate compliance with either the *Prescriptive Approach* or *Performance Approach*. The *Prescriptive Approach* contains various prescribed features, such as solar water heaters, solar panel arrays, and battery storage, depending on the building

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

occupancy types and location. For instance, the single-family and low-rise (three or fewer habitable stories) multifamily residential occupancy types would require a photovoltaic (solar) system but no battery storage under the prescriptive pathway, while high-rise (greater than three habitable stories) multifamily residential, grocery, office, financial institution, unleased tenant space, retail, school, warehouse, auditorium, convention center, hotel, motel, library, medical office building/clinic, restaurant, and theater occupancy types would require both solar and battery storage systems under the *Prescriptive Approach*.

Under the *Prescriptive Approach*, a new development's building design is called the "Standard Design Building," which represents the energy efficiency performance of that project should it include all prescribed features (e.g., solar, battery storage) with no additional energy efficiency features beyond what is required at minimum under the mandatory requirements and prescriptive pathway. A project may instead demonstrate compliance with the Energy Code using the *Performance Approach* without including prescriptive features like solar or battery storage; however, that building design must match or exceed the energy efficiency performance of the Standard Design Building—that is, what the building's energy efficiency performance would be if it were to include solar and battery storage. For example, if a project would be required to include solar and battery storage under the *Prescriptive Approach*, it can instead choose to comply with the *Performance Approach* and not include solar and battery storage so long as it can demonstrate that it would achieve the same energy efficiency performance as if solar and battery storage were included, as applicable.

California Building Code: Title 24, Part 11, Green Building Standards

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (CCR Title 24, Part 11, known as "CALGreen") was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code (CBSC). It includes mandatory requirements for new residential and nonresidential buildings throughout California. CALGreen is intended to: 1) reduce GHG emissions from buildings; 2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, healthier places to live and work; 3) reduce energy and water consumption; and 4) respond to the directives by the governor. The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011, and were last updated in 2022. The 2022 CALGreen update, which was approved as part of the 2022 Energy Code, became effective on January 1, 2023, and provides updates to the residential and non-residential voluntary measures.

Overall, the Code reduces construction waste, makes buildings more efficient in the use of materials and energy, and reduces environmental impacts during and after construction. CALGreen contains requirements for construction site selection, stormwater control during construction, construction waste reduction, indoor water use reduction, materials selection, natural resource conservation, and site irrigation conservation, among other requirements. It provides for design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. CALGreen also requires building commissioning, which is a process for verifying that all building systems (e.g., heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems) are functioning at their maximum efficiency (CBSC 2022).

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations

The 2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR Section 1601–1608) were adopted by the CEC on October 11, 2006, and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on December 14, 2006. The regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non–federally regulated appliances. They contain energy performance, energy design, water performance, and water design standards for appliances (including refrigerators, ice makers, vending machines, freezers, water heaters, fans, boilers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners, pool equipment, and plumbing fittings) that are sold or offered for sale in California (CCR Title 20, Parts 1600–1608). These standards are updated regularly to allow consideration of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

Off-Road Equipment and Transportation-Related Regulations

Assembly Bill 1493

California vehicle GHG emission standards were enacted under Assembly Bill (AB) 1493 (Pavley I). Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduced GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles (i.e., light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016 and was anticipated to reduce GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles by 30 percent in 2016. California implemented the Pavley I Standards through a waiver granted to California by the USEPA. In 2012, the USEPA issued a Final Rulemaking that set even more stringent fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for model year 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles. In January 2012, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved the Pavley Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combined the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases and requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single package of standards. Under California's Advanced Clean Car program, by 2025, new automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer global warming gases and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions (CARB 2017).

Title 13, Chapter 9, Article 4.8, Section 2449

Section 2449 of the CCR, Title 13, Chapter 9, Article 4.8 was adopted on May 2, 2008, limiting non-essential idling of fleets to no more than five consecutive minutes at any location. This idling restriction applies to all vehicles in California with a diesel-fueled or alternative diesel-fueled off-road engine, unless a waiver provides sufficient justification that such idling is necessary.

Senate Bill 375

In 2008, SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was adopted to connect the GHG emissions reductions targets established in the State's 2008 Scoping Plan for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles (i.e., it excludes emissions associated with goods movement) by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicle trips. Specifically, SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction targets for each of the 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the state. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is the MPO for the Bay Area region, which includes Contra Costa County. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), CARB adopted per capita reduction targets for each of the MPOs rather than a total magnitude reduction target.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Executive Order N-79-20

On September 23, 2020, Executive Order N-79-20 was issued, which sets a time frame for the transition to zero-emissions (ZE) passenger vehicles and trucks in addition to off-road equipment. It directs CARB to develop and propose the following:

- Passenger vehicle and truck regulations requiring increasing volumes of new zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) sold in California toward the target of 100 percent of in-state sales by 2035.
- Medium- and heavy-duty vehicle regulations requiring increasing volumes of new ZE trucks and buses sold and operated in California toward the target of 100 percent of the fleet transitioning to ZEVs by 2045 everywhere feasible, and for all drayage trucks (i.e., short-haul transport, typically in an urban area) to be ZE by 2035.

On August 25, 2022, CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) regulations that codify the EO goal of 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger vehicles and trucks be ZE by 2035. Starting in year 2026, ACC II requires that 35 percent of new vehicles sold be ZE or plug-in hybrids.

Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation

In April 2023, CARB released the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) regulation to accelerate the transition to ZE medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (CARB 2023). In conjunction with the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) regulation, the ACF regulations help to ensure that medium- and heavy-duty ZEVs are brought to the market by requiring certain fleets to purchase ZEVs. The ACF ZEV phase-in approach, which provides initial focus where the best fleet electrification opportunities exist, sets clear targets for regulated fleets to make a full conversion to ZEVs and creates a catalyst to accelerate development of a heavy-duty public infrastructure network.

The ACF regulations cover four main elements:

- **Manufacturer sales mandate.** Manufacturers may sell only ZE medium- and heavy-duty vehicles starting in 2036.
- **Drayage fleets.** Beginning January 1, 2024, trucks must be registered in the CARB Online System to conduct drayage activities in California. Non-ZE “legacy” drayage trucks may register in the CARB Online System through December 31, 2023. Legacy drayage trucks can continue to operate through their minimum useful life. Beginning January 1, 2024, only ZE drayage trucks may register in the CARB Online System. All drayage trucks entering seaports and intermodal railyards would be required to be ZE by 2035.
- **High-priority and federal fleets.** High priority and federal fleets must comply with the Model Year Schedule or may elect to use the optional ZEV Milestones Option to phase ZEVs into their fleets:
 - **Model Year Schedule:** Fleets must purchase only ZEVs beginning 2024 and, starting January 1, 2025, must remove internal combustion engine vehicles at the end of their useful life as specified in the regulation.
 - **ZEV Milestones Option (Optional):** Instead of the Model Year Schedule, fleets may elect to meet ZEV targets as a percentage of the total fleet starting with vehicle types that are most suitable for electrification.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

- **State and local agencies.** State and local government fleets, including city, county, special district, and State agency fleets, are required to ensure 50 percent of vehicle purchases are ZE beginning in 2024 and 100 percent are ZE by 2027. Small government fleets (those with 10 or fewer vehicles) and those in designated counties would start their ZEV purchase requirements beginning in 2027. Alternately, State and local government fleet owners may elect to meet ZEV targets using the ZEV Milestones Option. State and local government fleets may purchase either ZEVs or near-ZEVs, or a combination of ZEVs and near-ZEVs, until 2035. Starting in 2035, only ZEVs will meet the requirements.

The ACF regulations also establish requirements that transform the medium- and heavy-duty vehicle sector and demonstrate independent utility through achievement of the following objectives:

- Achieve criteria and GHG emissions reductions consistent with the goals identified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) Strategy and Scoping Plan.
- Provide emissions reductions in disadvantaged communities (DAC), thereby supporting the implementation of AB 617 (Garcia, C., Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017).
- Support the goals of Executive Order N-79-20, which call for accelerated ZEV deployment with these targets:
 - 100 percent ZE drayage by 2035
 - 100 percent ZE trucks and buses where feasible by 2045
- Ensure requirements, such as ZEV deployment schedules and related infrastructure buildout, are technologically feasible, cost-effective, and support market conditions.
- Lead the transition away from petroleum fuels and towards electric drivetrains.
- Contribute towards achieving carbon neutrality in California pursuant to SB 100, and in accordance with Executive Order B-55-18.
- Mindfully set requirements to allow time for public ZE infrastructure buildout for smaller fleets or for regional haul applications who would be reliant on a regional network of public chargers.
- Ensure manufacturers and fleets work together to place ZEVs in service suitably and successfully as market expands.
- Establish a fair and level playing field among fleet owners.
- Ensure institutional capacity for CARB to manage, implement, and enforce requirements.

Energy Storage

California has set ambitious long-term goals for energy storage beyond 2026 to support its clean energy and climate goals. The State aims to reach 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2045, which will require significant investment in renewable energy sources like wind and solar, as well as energy storage technologies, to balance the variability of these sources.

CAISO has a total energy storage capacity of more than 3,160 megawatts (MW) as of June 2022 (CAISO 2022). This includes both large-scale and distributed energy storage systems, such as batteries, pumped hydroelectric storage, and thermal storage. CAISO is responsible for managing the electricity grid for much of California, and it has set a target of adding 3,300 MW of additional energy storage capacity by 2024 to support the

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

integration of more renewable energy sources like wind and solar (CAISO 2022). As part of SB 100, load serving entities (LSEs) were required to procure no less than 1.3 gigawatts (GW) of energy storage capacity by 2020, and 3 GW by 2030. Additionally, the CPUC has established a target of 15 GW of energy storage capacity by 2030 (CPUC 2022).

The Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)

CAISO develops a coordinated grid management plan to integrate the generation and storage capacities of LSEs, called the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is a comprehensive planning document that outlines CAISO's forecasts for electricity demand, supply, and transmission needs over a 20-year planning horizon, as well as its strategies for integrating renewable energy resources and other grid services to meet those needs. The IRP is developed in collaboration with LSEs, regulators, and other stakeholders, and is updated periodically to reflect changes in the energy landscape and evolving policy goals. Overall, the IRP plays a critical role in ensuring the reliability and resilience of California's electricity grid as the state continues to transition to a cleaner and more sustainable energy system.

When an individual Battery Energy Storage (BES) facility or generation infrastructure (i.e., solar panels) comes online in California, it is typically included in the IRP through a process known as the Interconnection Queue. The Interconnection Queue is managed by the CAISO, which oversees the operation of the State's electricity grid.

The Interconnection Queue

The Interconnection Queue is an application process that functions as a waiting list of proposed electricity generation and storage projects that are seeking to connect to the grid. When a new BES facility or generation infrastructure is proposed, the developer submits an application to CAISO to request an interconnection to the grid. CAISO evaluates the application to ensure that the facility meets technical and operational requirements, such as voltage regulation and frequency response, and that it can be integrated effectively into the grid.

Once the BES facility or generation infrastructure is approved by CAISO, it is assigned a point of interconnection on the grid, and its output is added to the IRP as a resource that can provide electricity and other grid services, such as frequency regulation or ramping support. The facility is then dispatched by CAISO based on its bids into the day-ahead and real-time electricity markets, and its output is used to help balance supply and demand on the grid in real-time.

Overall, the Interconnection Queue is an important mechanism for integrating new BES facilities and other electricity resources into the California grid, and for ensuring that the grid remains reliable and resilient as the State continues to transition to a cleaner and more sustainable energy system.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Regional

Plan Bay Area 2050

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and ABAG adopted *Plan Bay Area 2050* on October 21, 2021 (ABAG/MTC 2021a). *Plan Bay Area 2050* provides transportation and environmental strategies to continue to meet the regional transportation-related GHG reduction goals of SB 375. Under the *Plan Bay Area 2050* strategies, just under half of all Bay Area households would live within one half-mile of frequent transit by 2050, with this share increasing to over 70 percent for households with low incomes. Transportation and environmental strategies that support active and shared modes, combined with a transit-supportive land use pattern, are forecasted to lower the share of Bay Area residents that drive to work alone from over 50 percent in 2015 to 36 percent in 2050. GHG emissions from transportation would decrease significantly as a result of these transportation and land use changes, and the Bay Area would meet the State mandate of a 19-percent reduction in per-capita emissions by 2035 — but only if all strategies are implemented (ABAG/MTC 2021a).

To achieve MTC's/ABAG's sustainable vision for the Bay Area, the *Plan Bay Area* land use concept plan for the region concentrates the majority of new population and employment growth in the region in Priority Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs are transit-oriented, infill development opportunity areas within existing communities. An overarching goal of the regional plan is to concentrate development in areas where there are existing services and infrastructure rather than allocate new growth to outlying areas where substantial transportation investments would be necessary to achieve the per capita passenger vehicle, VMT, and associated GHG emissions reductions. Several PDAs have been designated in the EIR Study Area (ABAG/MTC 2021b).

Bay Area Clean Air Plan

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) adopted the 2017 Clean Air Plan, Spare the Air, Cool the Climate on April 19, 2017. The 2017 Clean Air Plan also lays the groundwork for reducing GHG emissions in the Bay Area to meet the State's 2030 GHG reduction target and 2050 GHG reduction goal. It also includes a vision for the Bay Area in a post-carbon year 2050 that encompasses the following:

- Construct buildings that are energy efficient and powered by renewable energy.
- Walk, bicycle, and use public transit for the majority of trips and use electric-powered autonomous public transit fleets.
- Incubate and produce clean energy technologies.
- Live a low-carbon lifestyle by purchasing low-carbon foods and goods in addition to recycling and putting organic waste to productive use (BAAQMD 2017).

A comprehensive multipollutant control strategy has been developed to be implemented in the next three to five years to address public health and climate change and to set a pathway to achieve the 2050 vision. The control strategy includes 85 control measures to reduce emissions of ozone, particulate matter, toxic air contaminants, and GHG from a full range of emission sources. These control measures cover the following sectors: (1) stationary (industrial) sources; (2) transportation; (3) energy; (4) agriculture; (5) natural and working lands; (6) waste management; (7) water; and (8) super-GHG pollutants. Overall, the proposed control strategy is based on the following key priorities:

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

- Reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from all key sources.
- Reduce emissions of “super-GHGs” such as methane, black carbon, and fluorinated gases.
- Decrease demand for fossil fuels (i.e., gasoline, diesel, and natural gas).
 - Increase efficiency of the energy and transportation systems.
 - Reduce demand for vehicle travel and high-carbon goods and services.
- Decarbonize the energy system.
 - Make the electricity supply carbon-free.
 - Electrify the transportation and building sectors.

Local

Contra Costa County Congestion Management Program

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) is Contra Costa County’s designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA). It is responsible for implementing programs to ensure traffic levels remain manageable. As the CMA, CCTA is in charge of coordinating land use, air quality, and transportation planning among local jurisdictions.

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) outlines transportation demand management efforts and a land use evaluation program – both of which are built on CCTA’s Growth Management Program established by Measure J. The CMP strives to enhance sensitivity to the environment, improve air quality, reduce GHG emissions, and promote sustainable communities (CCTA 2021).

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 718-12, *Solar Energy Systems*, of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code requires a building permit to install a solar energy system. The County has an expedited, streamlined permitting process that applies for small residential rooftop solar energy systems, as described in Section 718-14.004, *Review of Applications for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Energy Systems*.

Chapter 88-3, *Wind Energy Conversion Systems*, of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code promotes the effective and efficient use of wind energy conversion systems, regulates their placement, and establishes safeguards to ensure public health, safety, and welfare.

Chapter 88-30, *Solar Energy Facilities*, of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code regulates the establishment of commercial solar energy facilities.

Ordinance No. 2022-02, *All-Electric Ordinance (New Construction)*, amends the 2019 California Energy Code to require the following building types to be all-electric:

- Residential (including single-family and multi-family buildings)
- Detached Accessory Dwelling Units
- Hotel
- Office
- Retail

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

The County Ordinance Code includes other various directives pertaining to energy, including:

- Division 76, *Electrical Code*, adopts the 2022 California Electrical Code as the rules, regulations, and standards within the county as to all matters except as changes, additions, and deletions set forth in the County Ordinance Code.
- Division 74, *Building Code*, adopts the 2022 California Building Code, the 2022 California Residential Code, the 2022 California Existing Building Code, and the 2022 California Energy Code as amended by the changes, additions, and deletions set forth in the County Ordinance Code. This includes local amendments regarding electric vehicle charging and space design for different types of new constructions.

5.6.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Energy Providers

Two energy providers, Marin Clean Energy (MCE) and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), serve the EIR Study Area. Both entities provide electrical services to the unincorporated county. PG&E is the sole provider for natural gas services. PG&E provides distribution of electrical services to the county, while MCE provides the electrical commodity for its customers. MCE works in conjunction with PG&E to provide electricity to consumers through the use of PG&E's distribution infrastructure and network. Both utilities are regulated by CPUC.

MCE

As of October 2023, the majority of Contra Costa County residents (i.e., residents in Concord, Danville, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, and the unincorporated areas) are buying electricity from MCE, a not-for-profit clean energy provider (Contra Costa 2023). On March 24, 2020, the Board of Supervisors voted to go Deep Green 100 percent renewable (i.e., all power which customers buy comes from 100 percent non-polluting wind and solar power) with MCE for the majority of the County's accounts (MCE 2020).

Customers also have the option of selecting MCE's Light Green, which provides 60 percent renewable electricity (MCE 2023). Conversely, customers have the option to opt out of MCE renewable energy sources and receive their energy service from PG&E. PG&E is responsible for maintaining transmission lines, handling customer billing, and responding to new service requests and emergencies. MCE determines the power source or electric generation, while PG&E continues to deliver the electricity, maintain power lines, provide repairs, and send customers a monthly bill within the MCE service area.

PG&E

PG&E is a publicly traded utility company that generates, purchases, and transmits energy under contract with the CPUC. Its service territory is 70,000 square miles in area, roughly extending north to south from Eureka to Bakersfield, and east to west from the Sierra Nevada range to the Pacific Ocean.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

In 2021, roughly half of PG&E's energy generated came from renewable resources including biopower, geothermal, small hydroelectric, solar, and wind power. PG&E's portfolio consists of 7 percent natural gas, 39 percent non-emitting nuclear generation, 4 percent large hydroelectric facilities, and 50 percent eligible renewable energies, which includes small hydroelectric and wind (PG&E 2023c).

Electricity

The electricity distribution system of PG&E consists of 106,681 circuit miles of electric distribution lines and 18,466 circuit miles of interconnected transmission lines (PG&E 2023a). PG&E owns and maintains above and below ground networks of electric and gas transmission and distribution facilities throughout the unincorporated county.

PG&E electricity is generated by a combination of sources such as nuclear power plants and hydro-electric dams, as well as newer sources of energy, such as wind turbines and photovoltaic plants or "solar farms." "The Grid," or bulk electric grid, is a network of high-voltage transmission lines, linked to power plants within the PG&E system. The distribution system, made up of lower voltage secondary lines, is at the street and neighborhood level, and consists of overhead or underground distribution lines, transformers, and individual service "drops" that connect to the individual customer.

Natural Gas

PG&E gas transmission pipeline systems serve approximately 4.5 million gas customers in northern and central California (PG&E 2023a). The system is operated under an inspection and monitoring program. The system operates in real time on a 24-hour basis, and includes leak inspections, surveys, and patrols of the pipelines. PG&E also adopted the Pipeline 2020 program, which aims to modernize critical pipeline infrastructure, expand the use of automatic or remotely operated shut-off valves, catalyze development of next-generation inspection technologies, develop industry-leading best practices, and enhance public safety partnerships with local communities, public officials, and first responders. Total natural gas consumption in PG&E's service area was 4,493,020,712 kilo-BTU (KBTU) in 2021 (CEC 2023b).

Electricity and Natural Gas

Electricity is quantified using kilowatts (kW) and kilowatt-hours (kWh). A kW is a measure of 1,000 watts of electrical power and a kWh is a measure of electrical energy equivalent to a power consumption of 1,000 watts for one hour. The kWh is commonly used as a billing unit for energy delivered to consumers by electric utilities. According to the CEC's "Tracking Progress" regarding statewide energy demand, total electric energy usage in California was 277,764 gigawatt hours in 2021 (CEC 2021b). A gigawatt is equal to one million kilowatts.

Natural gas is measured in therms. A therm is a measurement of the amount of heat energy in natural gas, equal to 100,000 British thermal units (BTUs). The volumetric billing unit used for natural gas delivered to customers is typically expressed in hundreds of cubic feet (Ccf)—approximately 0.01 therm per Ccf—or thousands of cubic feet (Mcf)—approximately 10.37 therms per Mcf (USEIA 2023).

The existing electricity and natural gas demand in Contra Costa County is shown in Table 5.6-1, *Estimated Existing Electricity and Natural Gas Demand*.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

Table 5.6-1 Estimated Existing Electricity and Natural Gas Demand

Land Use	Electricity Usage (kWh per year)	Natural Gas Usage (Therms per year)
Residential	293,561,300	30,100,640
Nonresidential	626,049,910	13,784,410
Total	919,611,210	43,885,050

Source: Natural gas and electricity use for residential and nonresidential land uses in the county were modeled based on data provided by PG&E and MCE as part of the proposed CAP (Appendix 5.8-1).

Note: Electricity total makes use of a five-year (2016–2020) annual electricity consumption average based on data provided by PG&E and MCE.

Propane

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), or propane, is a mixture of hydrocarbon gases predominantly composed of propane and butane and is used as an alternative source of fuel. Propane is commonly used for residential and commercial heating, cooking, transportation, agriculture, industrial processes, power generation, refrigeration, and air conditioning. Within Contra Costa County, propane suppliers include Suburban Propane, AmeriGas, US Alloys, Pacific States Petroleum, and Allied Propane Services, which generally supply propane for residential uses. Nonresidential propane consumption is not a substantial contribution to propane consumption in the unincorporated county.

The existing propane demand in Contra Costa County is shown in Table 5.6-2, *Estimated Existing Propane Demand*.

Table 5.6-2 Estimated Existing Propane Demand

Land Use	Propane Usage (gallons per year)	Propane Usage (MMBTU per year)
Residential	1,021,340	92,942
Total	1,021,340	92,942

Source: Activity data sourced as part of the proposed CAP (see Appendix 5.3-1 & Appendix 5.8-1).

Note: Only residential propane demand was evaluated as part of the proposed CAP.

Transportation Energy

California is among the top producers of petroleum in the country, with crude oil pipelines throughout the state connecting to oil refineries in the Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay, and Central Valley regions. In addition to producing petroleum, California is also one of the top consumers of fuel for transportation. California's transportation sector accounted for approximately 35 percent of California's total energy demand in 2020, amounting to approximately 2,355.5 trillion BTUs (USEIA 2020a). In addition, in 2020, California's transportation sector consumed approximately 433 million barrels of petroleum fuels (USEIA 2020b).

According to the CEC, California's 2021 fuel sales were approximately 13,818 million gallons of gasoline and 3,744 million gallons of diesel (CEC 2022). In Contra Costa County, approximately 374 million gallons of gasoline and 28 million gallons of diesel fuel were sold in 2021 (CEC 2022).

Alternative fuels for the transportation sector, such as hydrogen, biodiesel, and electricity, are used to reduce the demand of petroleum. Use of these fuels is encouraged through statewide regulations and plans, including the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) and SB 32. In particular, use of electricity within the transportation sector has become more prominent. Electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles may rely directly on electricity from

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

the power grid. In addition, emerging technology such as fuel cells are currently being explored to use electricity generated from the vehicle to power motors. California currently has 14,132 electric vehicle charging stations, with approximately 37,970 charging ports across all station locations (USDE 2023).

Table 5.6-3, *Existing Transportation-Related Annual Fuel Usage*, shows the fuel usage associated with VMT currently generated in the EIR Study Area under existing baseline conditions based on fuel usage data obtained from EMFAC2021, Version 1.0.1, and VMT data provided by Fehr and Peers (see Appendix 5.16-1, *Transportation Data*, of this Draft EIR). VMT is based on vehicle trips beginning and ending in the county and from external/internal trips (i.e., trips that either begin or end in the county).

Table 5.6-3 Existing Transportation-Related Annual Fuel Usage

	Gas		Diesel		Compressed Natural Gas		Electricity	
	VMT	Gallons	VMT	Gallons	VMT	Gallons	VMT	kWh
Existing Baseline	1,055,664,330	46,151,714	62,129,682	7,412,023	1,070,505	213,066	18,046,572	6,503,224

Source: EMFAC2021, version 1.0.1.

Note: VMT based on daily VMT provided by Fehr and Peers. VMT per year based on a conversion of VMT x 347 days per year to account for less travel on weekend, consistent with CARB statewide GHG emissions inventory methodology (CARB 2008).

5.6.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- E-1 Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.
- E-2 Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.
- E-3 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded energy facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

5.6.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.6.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to energy impacts. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

- **Action LU-A4.1:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to include requirements for Low-Impact Development, use of low-carbon concrete, water and energy conservation, reclaimed water, renewable energy use, green building, and other measures that reduce the environmental impacts of development, based on the best available science.

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P1.3:** Ensure emerging transportation technologies and travel options, such as autonomous and ZEV's and transportation network companies, support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.4:** *Reduce single-occupant vehicle usage, at a minimum using strategies defined in the TDM Ordinance.*
- **Policy TR-P1.11:** Support transitioning all on-road vehicles, including personal vehicles and business, government, and public transit fleets, to electric power from renewable sources or other zero-emission fuels.
- **Policy TR-P1.13:** *Require designs for new parking facilities to incorporate ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure and maximize opportunities for adaptive reuse.*
- **Policy TR-P2.3:** Require installation of or provide energy-efficient street lighting to improve public safety and comfort in urbanized areas. Prioritize installation in Impacted Communities, particularly at parks, transit stops, alleyways, bike and pedestrian paths, trails, and other appropriate areas, consistent with community preferences.
- **Policy TR-P4.7:** Encourage walkability and safety by streamlining implementation of traffic-calming measures through the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.
- **Policy TR-P5.2:** Coordinate with Caltrans to provide safe and comfortable highway interchange crossings for people of all ages and abilities who walk, bike, or use micromobility.
- **Policy TR-P5.7:** Encourage walking, bicycling, and micromobility as the travel modes of choice for short to medium-length trips, such as trips to schools, parks, transit stops, local shopping areas, and neighborhood services.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P7.1:** *Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.*
- **Goal COS-14:** Increased generation of and reliance on renewable, sustainable, and zero-carbon energy and reduced energy use.
 - **Policy COS-P14.1:** Implement Climate Action Plan strategies to improve energy efficiency and conservation, promote carbon-free energy sources, and reduce energy-related GHG emissions.
 - **Policy COS-P14.2:** Partner with regional and State agencies (e.g., California Public Utilities Commission, California Energy Commission, and ABAG/MTC) to support energy efficiency and renewable energy planning efforts.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

- **Policy COS-P14.3:** Support distributed electricity generation, including development of microgrids, renewable energy sources, storage capacity, and associated technologies. Encourage these throughout urban areas, and in nonurban areas when significant environmental impacts can be avoided or successfully mitigated.
- **Policy COS-P14.5:** Support development of energy recovery projects (e.g., methane recovery from landfills and wastewater treatment plants).
- **Policy COS-P14.6:** Support efforts to convert existing buildings to be low-carbon or carbon-neutral.
- **Policy COS-P14.7:** Encourage installation of battery storage systems in new and existing buildings, especially buildings with solar energy systems and buildings that provide essential community services.
- **Policy COS-P14.8:** *Design and construct new County facilities to be zero net energy to the extent feasible.*
- **Policy COS-P14.9:** Work with energy service providers and the Bay Area Regional Energy Network to encourage property owners to participate in weatherization, education, rate incentive, and other programs and measures to improve energy efficiency in existing buildings.
- **Policy COS-P14.10:** Require replacement and new water heaters and space heating and cooling to be electric if the building electric panel has sufficient capacity in accordance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District Regulation 9, Rule 4, and Regulation 9, Rule 6.
- **Action COS-A14.2:** Amend County Ordinance Code Division 88, Special Land Uses, to consolidate Chapters 88-3 and 88-30 governing wind energy conversion systems and solar energy facilities, respectively, into a new renewable energy chapter, with added provisions related to microgrids and battery energy storage systems.
- **Action COS-A14.3:** Amend County Ordinance Code Chapter 88-3 – Wind Energy Conversion Systems to require that decommissioned wind farms be returned to a condition consistent with the natural environment in the area at the time of decommissioning, rather than a return to pre-project condition. The following issues must be specifically addressed:
 - Unnecessary and poorly constructed roads that are sources of erosion.
 - Remaining turbine foundations/footings and underground conduit.
 - Abandoned equipment yards, turbine components, and other debris.
- **Action COS-A14.4:** Consider adopting new or modified reach codes that exceed the California Building Standards Code to require the use of lower-carbon intensive energy sources, to achieve higher feasible levels of energy conservation and efficiency, and to achieve lower feasible levels of GHG emissions.
- **Action COS-A14.5:** Maintain, update, publicize, and enforce the County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations amendment requiring new residential buildings, hotels, offices, and retail to be all-electric. Evaluate the feasibility of including other building types as appropriate.
- **Action COS-A14.6:** Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

- **Action COS-A14.9:** Ensure County-led and supported retrofit programs incentivize and prioritize conversion of buildings built before 1980 and emphasize assistance to owners of properties that are home to very low-, low-, and moderate- income residents or located in Impacted Communities, as permitted by available funding.
- **Action COS-A14.10:** Support legislative efforts to establish a green bank able to equitably finance sustainability projects, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and green infrastructure, for residential and commercial customers.

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P1.8:** *Require new or expanded commercial and industrial projects exceeding 25,000 square feet of gross floor area to be near zero-emissions (NZE) operations, including the facilities themselves and the associated fleets. Require all necessary measures, such as the following, to achieve NZE:*
 - a) *Reduce on-site energy consumption and increase on-site energy generation and energy storage.*
 - b) *Provide adequate on-site ZE vehicle-capable parking for all anticipated truck traffic to prevent idling and off-site queuing.*
 - c) *Provide electrified loading docks with receptacles allowing plug-in of refrigerated trailers.*
 - d) *Use heavy-duty trucks that are model year 2014 or later and expedite a transition to ZE trucks by establishing a clear timeline for electrification of trucks as they become commercially available. Ensure contracts with motor carriers include air quality incentives or requirements, such as providing incentives to fleets that meet United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SmartWay standards or requiring use of ZE or near NZE trucks.*
 - e) *Use a “clean fleet” of delivery vehicles as they become commercially available, but no later than 2025.*
 - f) *Use ZE yard equipment, such as forklifts, pallet trucks and jacks, and stackers.*
 - g) *Implement practices to control and remove fugitive dust and other contaminants from paved areas.**Uses with fewer than five vehicles domiciled on-site are exempt from this policy.*
- **Policy HS-P3.2:** Facilitate carbon-neutral development projects and communities that support a circular economy, net-zero-emission modes of transportation, reliable and renewable energy resources, energy-efficient buildings, zero waste, water efficiency and conservation, green infrastructure, soil conservation, and a system of natural and working lands that support carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

5.6.3.2 PROPOSED CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) strategies and actions pertain to energy:

Clean and Efficient Built Environment (BE)

Strategy BE-1: Require and incentivize new buildings or additions built in unincorporated Contra Costa County to be low-carbon or carbon neutral.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Strategy BE-1 Actions:

- Maintain, update, publicize, and enforce the County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations amendment requiring new residential buildings, hotels, offices, and retail to be all-electric. Evaluate the feasibility of including other building types as appropriate.
- Design and construct new County facilities to be zero net energy to the extent feasible.
- Study the feasibility of establishing a low-carbon concrete requirement for all new construction and retrofit activities and consider additional strategies to reduce embedded carbon in construction materials. The intent is to determine what the County can and should do to support or exceed State requirements for net-zero emissions for cement use by 2045.
- Promote additional sustainable building strategies and designs, including small and “tiny” homes, to project applicants as site appropriate. Consider requiring additional sustainable features as a condition of approval, including reuse of materials to minimize embedded carbon.

Strategy BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated county, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels.

Strategy BE-2 Actions:

- Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy.
- Require replacement and new water heaters and space heating and cooling systems to be electric if the building electric panel has sufficient capacity in accordance with BAAQMD Regulation 9, Rule 4, and Regulation 9, Rule 6
- Create a detailed roadmap to convert existing homes and businesses to use low- or zero-carbon appliances. The roadmap should include steps to support converting buildings to rely on low- or zero-carbon energy using an equitable framework that minimizes the risk of displacement or significant disruptions to existing tenants.
- Ensure County-led and supported retrofit programs incentivize and prioritize conversion of buildings built before 1980 and emphasize assistance to owners of properties that are home to very low-, low-, and moderate- income residents and/or located in Impacted Communities, as permitted by available funding.
- In partnership with MCE and BayREN, continue to support voluntary home and business energy efficiency retrofits, including all-electric measures.
- Facilitate participation by homes and businesses in demand response programs.
- Continue to conduct energy and water tracking activities, audits, and upgrades of County facilities, including conversion of feasible County facilities to all-electric space and water heating.
- Implement requirements for cool roofs and light-colored, non-reflective permeable paving materials as part of retrofit, repair, and replacement activities, using recycled materials or other materials with low embedded carbon as feasible and as established by the Building Standards Code.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Strategy BE-3: Increase the amount of electricity used and generated from renewable sources in the county.

Strategy BE-3 Actions:

- Require new commercial parking lots with 50 or more spaces to mitigate heat gain through installation of shade trees, solar arrays, or other emerging cooling technologies. Prioritize the use of solar arrays where feasible and appropriate.
- Work with MCE to increase enrollment, especially in the Deep Green tier.
- Continue to enroll all eligible, non-solar-equipped County facility electricity accounts in MCE territory in the Deep Green tier.
- Pursue implementation of recommendations of the 2018 Renewable Resource Potential Study.
- Evaluate the least-conflict feasible locations for stand-alone battery storage systems and modify land use regulations to enable such use in these locations.

No Waste Contra Costa (NW)

Strategy NW-4: Reduce emissions from landfill gas.

Strategy NW-4 Actions:

- Encourage efforts at Acme, Keller Canyon, and West Contra Costa landfills to install or enhance existing methane capture technology and associated monitoring systems with a goal of increasing the methane capture rate to the greatest extent feasible.
- Explore opportunities for partnering with agricultural and industrial operations to generate energy from methane gas generated by their ongoing activities.
- Support landfill operators in efforts to transition away from landfill gas flaring.

Reduce Water Use and Increase Drought Resilience (DR)

Strategy DR-1: Reduce indoor and outdoor water use.

Strategy DR-1 Actions:

- Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.
- Require homes and businesses to install water-efficient fixtures at time of retrofit activities, in accordance with the California Building Standards Code.
- Continue to enforce the Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance and encourage the use of native and drought-tolerant landscaping for exempt residential and commercial landscapes through partnership with local and regional water agencies and other organizations.
- Partner with water and wastewater service providers, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide.
- Identify opportunities for graywater use in public spaces and implement them as feasible.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

- Promote the installation of composting toilets at appropriate County facilities in locations without wastewater service.

Strategy DR-2: Ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies.

Strategy DR-2 Actions:

- Require new development to demonstrate the availability of a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound water delivery and wastewater treatment systems with adequate capacity.
- Require the use of permeable surfaces for new or reconstructed hardscaped areas.
- Work with water suppliers to expand recycled water systems as feasible, including considering additional treatment to allow for additional recycled water uses.

Clean Transportation Network (TR)

Strategy TR-1: Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-emission commuting, and using public transit to travel within, to, and from the county.

Strategy TR-1 Actions:

- Track over time projects that add pedestrian and bicycle facilities to document the County's implementation of the County Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP); Complete Streets checklist; Vision Zero Report and Action Plan; Active Transportation Plan; and equity-focused plans, programs, and policies.
- Improve the safety and comfort of bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities using best practices to encourage more people to use such facilities.
- Work with CCTA to fill in gaps in the countywide Low Stress Bike Network, as outlined in the 2018 Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Prioritize providing access for Impacted Communities and constructing protected bike facilities.
- Support efforts to expand the service area and frequency of regional transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, the San Francisco Bay Ferry, and WestCAT.
- Maximize development of jobs and affordable housing near high-quality transit service to support a jobs-housing balance.
- Maintain in place and enforce a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance that reflects best practices, and, at a minimum, conforms to Contra Costa Transportation Authority's adopted model TDM ordinance or resolution.
- Secure additional funding for the maintenance and expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Support efforts to obtain additional funding to maintain and expand public transit operations and infrastructure improvements.
- Support CCTA to develop and implement methods for tracking EV and e-bike charging and availability across jurisdictions.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

- Support CCTA and regional transit agencies in providing “last mile” transportation connections and options.

Strategy TR-2: Increase the use of zero-emissions vehicles. Transition to a zero-emission County fleet by 2035 and a community fleet that is at least 50 percent zero-emission by 2030.

Strategy TR-2 Actions:

- Require new County vehicles to be zero emission to the extent a viable vehicle is available on the market, that charging or zero-emission fueling equipment is conveniently located where the vehicle will be stored, and as required by the Advanced Clean Fleet regulations, with the goal that all County vehicles will be zero-emission by 2035.
- Install electric vehicle charging equipment and other infrastructure needed to support the transition to a zero-emission County fleet at County facilities. Consider the appropriate locations, number, and capacity of infrastructure to facilitate the transition of the County fleet to zero-emission vehicles.
- Work with property owners and other potential partners to pursue installation of zero-emission vehicle charging stations in and near multifamily dwelling units.
- Update off-street parking ordinance to include a requirement for zero-emission vehicle charging infrastructure. Consider including incentives for developers to exceed minimum requirements (i.e., density bonus).
- Increase installation of electric vehicle charging stations for all vehicle types, including bicycles and scooters, at public facilities, emphasizing increased installation in Impacted Communities.
- In partnership with regional agencies, explore providing subsidies for households making less than the area median income to purchase or lease zero-emission vehicles and associated infrastructure.
- Pursue fees and regulatory efforts to convert transportation network company (TNC), taxi, and similar car-hire services to zero-emission vehicles.
- Work with BAAQMD and other regional agencies to convert off-road equipment to zero-emission clean fuels.
- Work with contractors, fleet operations, logistics companies, and other operators of heavy-duty vehicles to accelerate the transition to zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles.
- Work with Public Works to pursue the use of renewable natural gas (sourced from recovered organic waste) for transportation fuel, electricity, or heating applications in cases where battery-electric, hybrid-electric, and sustainably sourced hydrogen fuel-cell sources are not available.
- Support implementation of the Contra Costa County Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

5.6.4 Environmental Impacts

5.6.4.1 METHODOLOGY

To determine whether the proposed project would result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, this analysis uses the guidance provided in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines as well as the analytical precedent set by *League to Save Lake Tahoe Mountain etc. v. County of Placer* (2022) (75 Cal.App.5th 63, 164-168).

According to Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, the goal of conserving energy is translated to include decreasing overall per capita energy consumption; decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, and oil; and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. In *League to Save Lake Tahoe Mountain etc. v. County of Placer* (2022) (75 Cal.App.5th 63, 164-168), the Appellate Court concluded that the analysis of wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary energy consumption was not adequate because it did not consider whether additional renewable energy features could be added to the project.

The proposed project would be considered to result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Considering the guidance provided by Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines and the Appellate Court decision in *League to Save Lake Tahoe Mountain etc. v. County of Placer* (2022) (75 Cal.App.5th 63, 164-168), the proposed project would be considered to result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources if it would conflict with the following energy conservation goals:

- Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption;
- Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, or oil; and
- Increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

The following is a summary of the assumptions used for this energy analysis:

- **On-Road Transportation.** Fuel use was based on Origin-Destination Method VMT provided by Fehr and Peers in the unincorporated county (see Section 5.16, *Transportation*). The VMT provided includes the full trip length for land uses in the county (origin-destination approach) and 50 percent of the trip length for external-internal/internal-external trips, consistent with the recommendations of CARB's Regional Targets Advisory Committee.
- **Energy (Natural Gas and Electricity).** Emissions associated with natural gas and electricity use for residential land uses in the county were modeled based on data provided by PG&E and MCE as part of the CAP Update (Appendix 5.3-1 to this Draft EIR). Propane use was approximated for residential use only as part of CAP Update. Forecasts are adjusted for increases in population in the county based on the energy forecast with State actions conducted for the CAP Update.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

Impact 5.6-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.

Proposed General Plan

Short-Term Construction Impacts

Development projects constructed under the proposed General Plan would create temporary demands for electricity. Natural gas is not generally required to power construction equipment, and therefore is not anticipated during construction phases. Electricity use would fluctuate according to the phase of construction. Additionally, it is anticipated that most electric-powered construction equipment would be hand tools (e.g., power drills, table saws, compressors) and lighting, which would result in minimal electricity usage during construction activities.

Construction of development projects facilitated by the proposed General Plan would also temporarily increase demands for energy associated with transportation. Transportation energy use depends on the type and number of trips, VMT, fuel efficiency of vehicles, and travel mode. Energy use during construction would come from the transport and use of construction equipment, delivery vehicles and haul trucks, and construction employee vehicles that would use diesel fuel or gasoline. The use of energy resources by these vehicles would fluctuate according to the phase of construction and would be temporary. It is anticipated that most off-road construction equipment, such as those used during demolition and grading, would be gas or diesel powered. In addition, all operation of construction equipment would cease on completion of project construction.

Furthermore, the construction contractors would be required to minimize nonessential idling of construction equipment during construction in accordance with the CCR Title 13, Chapter 9, Article 4.8, Section 2449. Such required practices would limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption. Also, future projects within the EIR Study Area would be similar to projects currently in development within Contra Costa County. Overall, there would be no unusual project characteristics anticipated that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of California. Therefore, short-term construction activities that occur as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan would not result in inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption.

Long-Term Impacts During Operation

Operation of potential future development accommodated under the proposed General Plan would create additional demands for electricity and natural gas compared to existing conditions. Operational use of electricity and natural gas would include heating, cooling, and ventilation of buildings; water heating; operation of electrical systems; use of on-site equipment and appliances; lighting; and charging electric vehicles. Land uses accommodated under the proposed General Plan would also result in additional demands for transportation fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel, compressed natural gas, and electricity) associated with on-road vehicles.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Decreasing Overall per Capita Energy Consumption

Building Electricity

Electrical service to the county is provided by PG&E and MCE through connections to existing off-site electrical lines and new on-site infrastructure. As shown in Table 5.6-4, *Year 2045 Forecast Electricity Consumption*, by horizon year 2045, electricity use in the EIR Study Area is estimated to increase by 47,697,580 kWh/year, or approximately 5 percent, from existing conditions. As a result, the per service population electricity consumption is estimated to decrease from 4,319 kWh per person per year in existing baseline to 3,360 kWh per person per year in 2045, or a reduction of approximately 959 kWh per person annually.

Table 5.6-4 Year 2045 Forecast Electricity Consumption

Area	Electricity Usage, kWh per year (Subtotal)		
	Existing Baseline ¹	Year 2045 Forecast ²	Net Change
Residential	293,561,300	328,353,050	34,791,750
Nonresidential	626,049,910	638,955,740	12,905,830
Total	919,611,210	967,308,790	47,697,580
Service Population	212,910	287,870	74,960
Per Service Population Annual Consumption	4,319	3,360	-959

¹ Electricity usage is provided by PG&E and MCE.

² Residential and nonresidential energy forecasts are adjusted for increases in housing in the EIR Study Area and account for reductions due to increases in energy efficiency from compliance with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen.

As previously discussed, all new development facilitated by the proposed General Plan would be required to demonstrate compliance with the current Energy Code and CALGreen standards in effect at the time the individual development applications are submitted and can therefore be expected to be more energy-efficient than the use being replaced, resulting in reductions in electricity consumption on a per dwelling unit and per square foot basis when compared to existing development. It should be noted that it is unknown how much more energy-efficient future iterations of the Energy Code and CALGreen standards would be in 2045 compared to existing conditions as those code updates are released on a 3-year cycle.

Moreover, the proposed General Plan Policies COS-P7.1, COS-P14.7, COS-P14.8, HS-P1.8, and HS-P3.2 would serve to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption in new development facilitated by the proposed General Plan. As a result of compliance with Title 24 energy efficiency standards and implementation of the above proposed General Plan policies and actions, per service population building electricity consumption is expected to decrease in 2045 compared to existing conditions.

Building Natural Gas and Propane

As shown in Table 5.6-5, *Year 2045 Forecast Natural Gas and Propane Consumption*, existing natural gas use and propane use in the EIR Study Area totals 43,885,050 therms and 92,942 million British thermal units (MMBTU) annually. By 2045, natural gas use in the EIR Study Area would increase by 6,972,060 therms annually, or approximately 16 percent, from existing conditions to a total of 50,857,110 therms per year. Future development is unlikely to require propane in more rural areas of the county, especially due to the County's all-

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

electric requirements for new construction. Therefore propane use in the EIR Study Area is anticipated to remain the same, for a total of 92,942 MMBTU per year.

As a result, the per service population natural gas consumption is estimated to decrease from 206 therms per person per year in existing baseline to 177 therms per person per year in 2045. Propane is also estimated to decrease from 0.44 MMBTU per person per year to 0.32 MMBTU per person per year in 2045.

Table 5.6-5 Year 2045 Forecast Natural Gas and Propane Consumption

Area	Natural Gas Usage, therms per year		
	Existing Baseline ¹	Year 2045 Forecast ²	Net Change
Residential	30,100,640	35,500,210	5,399,570
Nonresidential	13,784,410	15,356,900	1,572,490
Total	43,885,050	50,857,110	6,972,060
Service Population	212,910	287,870	74,960
Per Service Population Annual Consumption	206	177	-29
Area	Propane Usage, MMBTU per year ³		
	Existing Baseline ¹	Year 2045 Forecast ²	Net Change
Residential	92,942	92,942	0
Service Population	212,910	287,870	74,960
Per Service Population Annual Consumption	0.44	0.32	-0.12

¹ Natural gas usage data provided by PG&E.

² Residential and nonresidential energy forecasts are adjusted for increases in housing and employment, respectively, in the EIR Study Area and account for reductions due to increases in energy efficiency from compliance with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen.

³ Propane use is approximated for residential uses only.

Similar to electricity consumption, all new development facilitated by the proposed General Plan would be required to demonstrate compliance with the current CBSC and CALGreen and would result in reductions in heating fuel (i.e., natural gas or propane) consumption on a per dwelling unit and per square foot basis when compared to existing development in the county. As stated previously, the proposed General Plan Policies COS-P7.1, COS-P14.7, COS-P14.8, HS-P1.8, and HS-P3.2 would serve to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption in new development facilitated by the proposed General Plan. As a result, per service population heating fuel consumption is expected to decrease in 2045 compared to existing baseline conditions.

Transportation Energy

The growth accommodated under the proposed General Plan would consume transportation energy from the use of motor vehicles (e.g., gasoline, diesel, compressed natural gas, and electricity). Table 5.6-6, *Operation-Related Annual Fuel Usage: Net Change from Existing*, shows the net change in VMT, fuel usage, and fuel efficiency under forecast year 2045 proposed General Plan conditions from existing baseline year conditions.

As shown in Table 5.6-6, when compared to existing baseline year conditions, the proposed General Plan would result in a decrease in VMT for gasoline-, compressed natural gas-, and diesel-powered vehicles, but not for electric-powered vehicles. The decrease in fuel usage for gasoline-powered vehicles and large increase in VMT and fuel usage for electric-powered vehicles are primarily based on the assumption in EMFAC that a greater mix of light-duty automobiles would be electric-powered in future years based on regulatory (e.g., Advanced

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Clean Cars) and consumer trends. Furthermore, per service population VMT generation would decrease by an estimated 722 VMT/SP from baseline conditions.

Table 5.6-6 Operation-Related Annual Fuel Usage: Net Change from Existing

Fuel Type	Existing Baseline Year	Forecast Year 2045	Net Change from Existing Baseline
Gasoline			
VMT ¹	1,055,664,330	198,793,298	-856,871,032
Gallons	49,151,714	6,219,583	-39,932,132
Miles Per Gallon	22.89	31.96	9.09
Diesel			
VMT ¹	67,129,682	19,693,685	-42,435,997
Gallons	7,412,023	2,129,844	-5,282,178
Miles Per Gallon	8.38	9.25	0.86
Compressed Natural Gas			
VMT ¹	1,070,505	551,190	-519,316
Gallons	213,066	95,605	-117,461
Miles Per Gallon	5.02	5.77	0.74
Electricity			
VMT ¹	18,046,572	1,110,350,001	1,092,303,429
kWh	6,503,224	539,203,303	532,700,078
Miles Per kWh	2.78	2.06	-0.72
Total VMT	1,136,911,090	1,329,388,174	192,477,084
Service Population (SP)	212,910	287,870	74,960
VMT/SP	5,340	4,618	-722

Source: EMFAC2021 Version 1.0.2.

Notes:

¹ Based on daily VMT provided by Fehr and Peers. VMT per year based on a conversion of VMT x 347 days per year to account for less travel on weekend, consistent with CARB statewide GHG emissions inventory methodology (CARB 2008).

The overall VMT as shown in the table would be primarily attributable to the overall growth associated with the proposed General Plan compared to existing conditions. As discussed in Section 5.14, *Population and Housing*, implementation of the proposed General Plan would exceed current regional projections for housing by 26 percent and population by 18 percent. However, it is important to note that regional projections used were from *Plan Bay Area 2040* and not the updated *Plan Bay Area 2050*, which does not differentiate between Contra Costa County as a whole and only the unincorporated portion of the county.

As identified in Section 5.16, *Transportation*, the proposed General Plan Land Use Element includes goals, policies, and actions to minimize VMT and therefore reduce emissions from automobiles. Please see the impact discussion in Section 5.16 for a complete list of these goals, policies, and actions. Additionally, fuel efficiency of vehicles under year 2045 conditions would improve compared to existing baseline year conditions. The improvement in fuel efficiency would be attributable to regulatory compliance (e.g., CAFE standards), resulting in new cars that are more fuel efficient and the attrition of older, less fuel-efficient vehicles. The CAFE standards are not directly applicable to residents or land use development projects, but to car manufacturers. Thus, Contra Costa County and its residents do not have direct control in determining the fuel efficiency of vehicles manufactured and that are made available. However, compliance with the CAFE standards by car manufacturers would ensure that vehicles produced in future years have greater fuel efficiency and would generally result in an overall benefit of reducing fuel usage by providing the population of the county more fuel-efficient vehicle options.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

While the demand in electricity would increase under the proposed General Plan, in conjunction with the regulatory (i.e., Renewables Portfolio Standard, SB 350, and SB 100) and general trend toward increasing the supply and production of energy from renewable sources, it is anticipated that a greater share of electricity used to power electric vehicles would be from renewable sources in future years (e.g., individual photovoltaic systems, purchased electricity from PG&E, and/or purchased electricity from MCE that is generated from renewable sources). In addition to regulatory compliance that would contribute to more fuel-efficient vehicles and less demand in fuels, the proposed General Plan includes policies that will contribute to minimizing overall VMT, and thus associated fuel usage (see Section 5.16, *Transportation*). In combination with improvements in fuel economy standards through 2045, the proposed General Plan would result in a decrease in transportation energy consumption. As a result, the proposed General Plan would result in an overall decrease in energy consumption through 2045.

Decreasing Reliance on Fossil Fuels

The proposed General Plan would be considered to conflict with this criterion if it did not take steps to decrease the reliance on fossil fuels. As discussed in Section 5.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, individual development projects accommodated by the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with the CBSC that is current at the time of their building application submittal. As the current CBSC is the 2022 CBSC, individual development projects going through the application process today would result in greater energy efficiency than the current performance of existing structures in the EIR Study Area. In addition, the 2022 CBSC currently includes provisions for development projects to include rooftop photovoltaic systems and BES infrastructure or demonstrate energy efficiency performance equivalent to including photovoltaic and BES features.

In addition to improvements in energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy generation and energy storage requirements, SB 100 requires that LSEs incrementally increase their energy procurement sources to include eligible renewable and carbon-free sources. By January 1, 2046, all LSEs in California are required to source 100 percent of their in-state electricity sales from renewable and carbon-free sources. As a result, individual development projects accommodated by the proposed General Plan would improve their energy efficiency through compliance with the CBSC current at the time of their building application submittal and LSEs would supply electricity that is increasingly sourced from carbon-free sources.

Moreover, consistent with Executive Order N-79-20 and CARB's Advanced Clean Cars II Regulation, which require that 100 percent of new passenger vehicles sold in-state are ZE (i.e., battery electric, hybrid plug-in electric, and fuel cell electric vehicles) by 2035, vehicles utilized by future residents and employees accommodated by the proposed General Plan are expected to consist more of EVs than what is experienced under existing conditions. In addition, the proposed General Plan includes policies that are intended to reduce the use of nonrenewable energy. Specifically, Policies COS-P14.7, COS-P14.8, HS-P1.8, and HS-P3.2 encourage the reduction of nonrenewable energy use and the utilization of new energy sources and building electrification. As a result, the proposed General Plan would incrementally decrease reliance on fossil fuel energy resources through 2045.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Increasing Reliance on Renewable Energy

As previously discussed, the 2022 CBSC currently requires a variety of development projects that don't meet specific exceptions or exemptions to include rooftop photovoltaic systems and BES infrastructure or otherwise match or exceed the energy efficiency performance experienced by including photovoltaic and BES systems, as applicable. In addition, it is anticipated that each new Code cycle for the CBSC will improve on the last one by requiring higher performance for energy efficiency and incorporating additional requirements for on-site renewable energy and EV charging infrastructure. Future development projects accommodated by the proposed General Plan would therefore result in a net increase from existing conditions in on-site photovoltaic electricity generation and EV charging stations and associated infrastructure, further supporting and accelerating the adoption of EVs and the use of renewable energy in future years.

Similarly, LSEs that serve future development projects accommodated by the proposed General Plan, such as PG&E and MCE, would be required to incrementally increase their energy procurement sources to include eligible renewable and carbon-free sources through 2045 under SB 100. As a result, electricity consumed by individual development projects under the proposed General Plan, as well as existing structures in the county, would rely more on renewable and carbon-free sources for electricity in future years than is experienced under existing conditions.

Moreover, the proposed General Plan includes various policies that are intended to support the use of renewable energy beyond compliance with the CBSC, including creating a walkable urban environment to encourage future residents and employees in the county to use active modes of transportation instead of motorized vehicles.

The following proposed General Plan policies focus on minimizing VMT through land use and transportation planning efforts that work in conjunction, including:

- **Policy TR-P1.4:** Reduce single-occupant vehicle usage, at a minimum using strategies defined in the TDM Ordinance.
- **Policy TR-P4.7:** Encourage walkability and safety by streamlining implementation of traffic-calming measures through the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.
- **Policy TR-P5.2:** Coordinate with Caltrans to provide safe and comfortable highway interchange crossings for people of all ages and abilities who walk, bike, or use micromobility.
- **Policy TR-P5.7:** Encourage walking, bicycling, and micromobility as the travel modes of choice for short to medium-length trips, such as trips to schools, parks, transit stops, local shopping areas, and neighborhood services.
- **Policy TR-P5.10:** Require generous parking for bicycles and other mobility devices at key destinations, such as shopping centers, schools, workplaces, transit stations, and multiple-family housing.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Summary

Compliance with federal, State, and local regulations (e.g., Energy Code, CALGreen, Renewables Portfolio Standard, and CAFE standards) would increase building energy efficiency and vehicle fuel efficiency. Compliance would also reduce building energy demand and transportation-related fuel usage in the future. Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes policies related to land use and transportation planning, energy efficiency, promotion of housing near public and active transit, and renewable energy generation that will contribute to minimizing building and transportation-related energy demands overall. As stated, development that could occur under the proposed General Plan would reduce the per capita transportation energy consumption, decrease reliance on fossil fuels, and increase reliance on renewable energy sources.

Implementation of policies under the proposed General Plan, in conjunction with and complementary to regulatory requirements, would ensure that energy demand associated with growth under the proposed General Plan would decrease overall energy consumption, decrease reliance on fossil fuels, and increase reliance on renewable energy. As such, the energy consumption under the proposed General Plan would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary. Therefore, energy impacts associated with implementation and operation of land uses accommodated under the proposed General Plan would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions; it does not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity. Because there is no specific land use component associated with the proposed CAP, its implementation would not directly result in energy impacts.

Furthermore, the proposed CAP would help reduce GHG emissions and energy demand generated by existing and proposed land uses in the EIR Study Area. For example, proposed CAP transportation strategies that reduce VMT (e.g., Strategy TR-1) would result in a reduction in transportation-related fuel usage. Likewise, the proposed CAP also promotes building energy-efficiency improvements (e.g., Strategies BE-1 and BE-2), increasing water efficiency (e.g., Strategy DR-1 and DR-2), and reducing energy demand through renewable energy sources (e.g., Strategy BE-3) to minimize energy sector emissions. In addition, the proposed CAP supports the East Bay Energy Watch, which is a partnership between PG&E and local governments in the East Bay region to conduct energy efficiency outreach to residents and businesses, retrofit existing government facilities to improve energy efficiency, and provide training to agency staff. Thus, implementation of the proposed CAP would result in beneficial impacts to energy consumption. Overall, implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.6-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.6-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.6-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Proposed General Plan

The state's electricity grid is transitioning to renewable energy under California's RPS Program. Renewable sources of electricity include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. In general, California has RPS requirements of 33 percent renewable energy by 2020 (SB X1-2), 40 percent by 2024 (SB 350), 50 percent by 2026 (SB 100), 60 percent by 2030 (SB 100), and 100 percent by 2045 (SB 100). SB 100 also establishes RPS requirements for publicly owned utilities that consist of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. Additionally, SB 1020 requires all State agencies to procure 100 percent of electricity from renewable energy and zero-carbon resources by 2035.

The statewide RPS requirements do not directly apply to individual development projects, but to utilities and energy providers such as PG&E and MCE, whose compliance with RPS requirements would contribute to the State's objective of transitioning to renewable energy. In addition, the County Board of Supervisors voted to go Deep Green 100 percent renewable (i.e., all power which customers buy comes from 100 percent non-polluting wind and solar power) with MCE for the majority of the County's accounts. Even if customers in the county were to opt-out of the Deep Green program, and therefore receive all their electricity from PG&E, 33 percent of PG&E's electricity has been generated from renewable energy since 2017 (PG&E 2023b). By 2030, PG&E is set to meet the State's new 60 percent renewable energy mandate set forth in SB 100.

The land uses accommodated under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with the current and future iterations of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. Furthermore, as described for Impact Discussion 5.6-1, the proposed General Plan includes policies that would support the statewide goal of transitioning the electricity grid to renewable sources. The net increase in energy demand associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan would be within the service capabilities of MCE and PG&E and would not impede their ability to implement California's renewable energy goals. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of California's Renewables Portfolio Standard program, and the impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions; it does not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity. As discussed under Impact Discussion 5.6-1, the proposed CAP transportation strategies would reduce VMT (e.g., Strategy TR-1) to aid in the reduction in transportation-related fuel usage. Likewise, the proposed CAP also promotes building energy-efficiency improvements (e.g., Strategies BE-1 and BE-2), increasing water efficiency (e.g., Strategy DR-1 and DR-2), and reducing energy demand through renewable energy sources (e.g., Strategy BE-3) to minimize energy sector emissions. Furthermore, the proposed CAP supports the East Bay Energy Watch, which is a partnership between PG&E and local governments in the East Bay region to conduct energy efficiency outreach to residents and businesses,

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

retrofit existing government facilities to improve energy efficiency, and provide training to agency staff. Therefore, the proposed CAP would complement the statewide goal of transitioning the electricity grid to renewable sources. Implementation of the proposed CAP would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.6-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.6-2 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.6-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded energy facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Proposed General Plan

The proposed General Plan would accommodate future growth in the EIR Study Area that would require new or expanded energy facilities; however, the proposed General Plan would not directly result in the construction of new or expanded energy facilities that would not otherwise be reviewed and mitigated to reduce potentially significant environmental effects. As discussed in Section 5.6.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, the IRP is the principal planning document that identifies CAISO's forecasts for electricity demand, supply, and transmission needs over a 20-year planning horizon, as well as its strategies for integrating renewable energy resources and other grid services to meet those needs. These forecasts account for the expected growth in population and development in corresponding LSE's service areas, such as the population and development envisioned under the proposed General Plan within PG&E and MCE's service area.

The IRP is developed in collaboration with LSEs, regulators, and other stakeholders, and is updated periodically to reflect changes in the energy landscape and evolving policy goals (CEC 2020). Overall, the IRP plays a critical role in ensuring the reliability and resilience of California's electricity grid as the state continues to transition to a cleaner and more sustainable energy system. When an LSE identifies that new or expanded energy facilities are needed to accommodate the population and development growth in its service area, those proposed improvements are reviewed to identify consistency with local, State, and federal regulatory compliance as well as potential environmental effects that may result. For on-site systems, such as rooftop solar, the review would be conducted by the applicable lead agency as part of that individual development project. For energy infrastructure improvements that involve the construction of new or expansion of existing transmission lines, generation systems, or BES facilities separate from an individual development project, the review would be conducted by the CPUC and/or CEC depending on the type of facility. The CEC typically acts as a CEQA lead or responsible agency for energy infrastructure improvements involving generation or BES systems, whereas the CPUC typically acts as a CEQA lead or responsible agency for improvements involving transmission lines or other distribution infrastructure.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Once the new or expanded energy facility is reviewed and approved, incorporating any necessary and appropriate mitigation, it is assigned a point of interconnection on the grid, and its output is added to the IRP as a resource that can provide electricity and other grid services, such as frequency regulation or ramping support. The facility is then dispatched by CAISO based on its bids into the day-ahead and real-time electricity markets, and its output is used to help balance supply and demand on the grid in real-time. CAISO operates a wholesale electricity market in which LSEs can participate by offering to buy or sell electricity and other grid services, such as demand response or energy storage. This market helps to ensure that the electricity system operates efficiently and reliably by providing economic incentives for electricity providers to use their resources effectively.

In addition to the IRP, which principally governs the planning efforts for new and expanded electricity and natural gas facilities, the CPUC in December 2022 adopted a new framework to comprehensively review utility natural gas infrastructure investments in order to help the State transition away from natural-gas-fueled technologies and avoid stranded assets in the gas system. The new framework requires utilities to seek CPUC approval of natural gas infrastructure projects of \$75 million or more or those with significant air quality impacts. The new framework is intended to capture natural gas projects likely to have the most substantial community and environmental impacts and to require demonstrate project compliance with CEQA (CPUC 2022). Therefore, while the proposed General Plan may result in increased energy resource demand by facilitating population and development growth in the EIR Study Area, and subsequently in PG&E and MCE's service area, any new or expanded facilities needed as a result of meeting that increased demand would undergo its own review to mitigate potentially significant environmental effects and demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements. As such, the proposed General Plan would not result in new or expanded energy facilities which may cause significant environmental effects. This impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions; it does not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity. Because there is no specific land use component associated with the proposed CAP, its implementation would not directly result in relocation or construction of new or expanded energy facilities.

As discussed under Impact Discussion 5.6-1, the proposed CAP promotes building energy-efficiency improvements (e.g., Strategies BE-1 through BE-2) and reducing energy demand through renewable energy sources (e.g., Strategy BE-3) to minimize energy sector emissions. Furthermore, the proposed CAP supports the East Bay Energy Watch, which is a partnership between PG&E and local governments in the East Bay region to conduct energy efficiency outreach to residents and businesses, retrofit existing government facilities to improve energy efficiency, and provide training to agency staff. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not directly result in new or expanded energy facilities which may cause significant environmental effects and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.6-3 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.6-3 would be less than significant.

5.6.5 Cumulative Impacts

All development projects within the vicinity of the EIR Study Area are within the service areas of MCE and PG&E. These projects would result in a long-term increase in operational energy demand for electricity and natural gas use associated with population and housing growth. In addition, construction activities would require the use of energy for purposes such as the operation of construction equipment and tools, and construction of development projects may overlap. However, all projects developed within the MCE and PG&E service area would implement the requirements of the Energy Code (CCR, Title 24, Part 6) and the California Green Building Code (CCR, Title 24, Part 11). Furthermore, new buildings would use new energy-efficient appliances and equipment, pursuant to the Appliance Efficiency Regulations.

Future housing development would also increase annual fuel consumption and VMT within the county. However, vehicles would be subject to the CAFE standards for vehicular fuel efficiency, and average corporate fuel economy continues to increase as a result of State and federal laws, including the Advanced Clean Cars II standards. Furthermore, as described in Impact Discussion 5.6-2, the proposed General Plan includes policies that would contribute toward minimizing inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary transportation energy consumption. These policies, as well as the other proposed General Plan policies listed in Impact Discussion 5.6-1, would ensure compliance with State, regional, and local plans for renewable energy. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact on energy consumption.

5.6.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.6.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.6.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

5.6.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. 2021a, October 21. *Plan Bay Area 2050*. Accessed June 2, 2023. https://www.planbayarea.org/sites/default/files/documents/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf.
- _____. 2021b. *Priority Development Areas (PDAs)*. Accessed June 2, 2023. <https://opendata-mtc.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4df9cb38d77346a289252ced4ffa0ca0/explore?location=37.892240%2C-122.289021%2C9.00>.
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), 2017, *Spare the Air: Cool the Climate, Final 2017 Clean Air Plan*. Accessed June 3, 2023. <https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/plans/2017-clean-air-plan/attachment-a-proposed-final-cap-vol-1-pdf.pdf?la=en>.
- California Independent System Operator (CAISO). 2022, June 14. “A golden age of energy storage.”, Accessed June 3, 2023. <http://www.caiso.com/about/Pages/Blog/Posts/A-golden-age-of-energy-storage.aspx>.
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2008, October. *Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change*. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.
- _____. 2017, January 18. California’s Advanced Clean Cars Midterm Review. Accessed June 3, 2023. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-01/ACC%20MTR%20Summary_Ac.pdf.
- _____. 2023, April 14. Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation. Accessed May 16, 2022. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-fleets/about>.
- California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). 2022, July. 2022 California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11. Accessed June 6, 2023. <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/CAGBC2022P2/copyright>.
- California Energy Commission (CEC). 2020, February 20. Final 2019 Integrated Energy Policy Report including Errata. Accessed June 6, 2023. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2019-integrated-energy-policy-report>.
- _____. 2021a, *Amendments to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (2022 Energy Code) Draft Environmental Report*. CEC-400-2021-077-D.
- _____. 2021b. 2021 Total System Electric Generation. Accessed April 18, 2023. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/california-electricity-data/2021-total-system-electric-generation>.

5. Environmental Analysis ENERGY

- _____. 2022a, June 3 (accessed). Appliance Efficiency Proceedings – Title 20. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/rules-and-regulations/appliance-efficiency-regulations-title-20/appliance-efficiency-proceedings>.
- _____. 2023b, June 3 (accessed). Gas Consumption by Planning Area. <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbyplan.aspx>.
- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). 2011, January. *CA Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan*. Accessed June 6, 2023. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/files/legacyfiles/c/5303-caenergyefficiencystrategicplan-jan2011.pdf>.
- _____. 2021, May. 2021 Padilla Report: Costs and Savings for the RPS Program (Public Utilities Code Section 913.3). Accessed June 6, 2023. https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/industries-and-topics/documents/energy/rps/2021-padilla-report_final.pdf.
- _____. 2022, December 1. CPUC Creates New Framework to Advance California’s Transition Away From Natural Gas. Accessed June 6, 2023. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2019-integrated-energy-policy-report>.
- Contra Costa County. 2015, December 15. *Contra Costa County Climate Action Plan*. Accessed April 18, 2023. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/39791/Contra-Costa-County-Climate-Action-Plan?bidId=>.
- _____. 2023, June 2 (accessed). Energy and Water. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6859/Energy-and-Water>.
- Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). 2021. *Update of the Contra Costa Congestion Management Program*. https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CMP21_MainDoc_Draft_Final_.pdf.
- Marin Clean Energy (MCE). 2020. 2019 Power Content Label. Accessed April 18, 2023. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/filebrowser/download/3240>.
- _____. 2023, June 2 (accessed). Your Energy Choices. <https://www.mcecleanenergy.org/>.
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. 2022, April 1. USDOT Announces New Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards for Model year 2024-2026. Accessed April 18, 2023. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/usdot-announces-new-vehicle-fuel-economy-standards-model-year-2024-2026>.
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). 2023a. *Company profile*. Accessed June 2, 2023. https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/company-information/profile/profile.page.
- _____. 2023b. Renewable Energy. Accessed June 2, 2023. https://www.pgecorp.com/corp_responsibility/reports/2018/bu07_renewable_energy.html#:~:text=PG%26E%20delivers%20some%20of%20the,and%20various%20forms%20of%20bioenergy.

5. Environmental Analysis

ENERGY

- _____. 2023c. Exploring clean energy solutions. Accessed June 2, 2023.
https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20roughly%20half%20of,nuclear%20and%20large%20hydroelectric%20power.
- Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE). 2020, April 30. *Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks: Final Rule*. Vol. 85 Federal Register, No. 84.
- United States Department of Energy (USDE). 2023. Alternative Fuels Data Center: Electric Vehicle Charging Station Locations. Accessed April 18, 2023.
https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/electricity_locations.html#/analyze?region=US-CA&fuel=ELEC&ev_levels=all, United States Department of Energy Website.
- United States Energy Information Administration (USEIA). 2020a. Table F33: Total Energy Consumption, Price, and Expenditure Estimates, United States Energy Information Administration Website. Accessed April 18, 2023. https://www.eia.gov/state/seds/sep_fuel/html/pdf/fuel_te.pdf.
- _____. 2020b. Table F16: Total Petroleum Consumption Estimates, United States Energy Information Administration Website. Accessed April 18, 2023.
https://www.eia.gov/state/seds/sep_fuel/html/pdf/fuel_te.pdf.
- _____. 2023. United States Energy Information Administration, June 1, 2023 (updated), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=45&t=7>.
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2022, May 12 (updated). Summary of the Energy Independence and Security Act Public Law 110-140 (2007). <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-energy-independence-and-security-act>.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing geologic and soil conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential impacts on geologic and soil resources from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.7.1 Environmental Setting

5.7.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to protect structures for human occupancy from the hazard of surface faulting. In accordance with the Act, the State Geologist has established regulatory zones—called earthquake fault zones—around the surface traces of active faults and has published maps showing these zones. Buildings for human occupancy cannot be constructed across surface traces of faults that are determined to be active. Because many active faults are complex and consist of more than one branch that may experience ground surface rupture, earthquake fault zones extend approximately 200 to 500 feet on either side of the mapped fault trace.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act was passed in 1990 following the Loma Prieta earthquake to reduce threats to public health and safety and to minimize property damage caused by earthquakes. This Act requires the State Geologist to delineate various seismic hazard zones, and cities, counties, and other local permitting agencies to regulate certain development projects within these zones. For projects that would locate structures for human occupancy within designated Zones of Required Investigation, the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act requires project applicants to perform a site-specific geotechnical investigation to identify the potential site-specific seismic hazards and corrective measures, as appropriate, prior to receiving building permits. The CGS Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards (Special Publication 117A) provides guidance for evaluating and mitigating seismic hazards (CGS 2008). Contra Costa County is intersected by multiple faults which are discussed in detail in Section 5.7.1.2, *Existing Conditions*. Additionally, the eastern portion of Contra Costa County contains land mapped in liquefaction hazard and landslide hazard zones.

California Building Code

The State of California provides minimum standards for building design through the California Building Code (CBC [California Code of Regulations, Title 24]). The CBC is based on the Uniform Building Code (UBC), which is used widely throughout the United States (generally adopted on a state-by-state or district-by-district basis) and has been modified for conditions in California. State regulations and engineering standards related to geology, soils, and seismic activity in the UBC are reflected in the CBC requirements. Through the CBC, the

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

State of California provides a minimum standard for building design and construction. The 2022 CBC became effective on January 1, 2023.

The CBC contains specific requirements for seismic safety, excavation, foundations, retaining walls, and site demolition. It also regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control. Contra Costa County enforces the CBC through its Ordinance Code. The County Building Code (Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Division 72) incorporates the CBC, including recent changes.

California General Plan Law

State law (Government Code Section 65302) requires cities and counties to adopt a comprehensive long-term general plan that includes a safety element. The safety element is intended to provide guidance for protecting the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides; subsidence; liquefaction; other seismic hazards identified by Public Resources Code Sections 2691 et. Seq.; and other geologic hazards known to the legislative body. The safety element must also include mapping of known seismic and geologic hazards from the California Geological Survey and a series of responsive goals, policies, and implementation programs to improve public safety.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 and Section 30244

State requirements for management of paleontological resources are included in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.5 and Section 30244. These statutes prohibit the removal of any paleontological site or feature from public lands without permission of the jurisdictional agency, define the removal of paleontological sites or features as a misdemeanor, and require reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts on paleontological resources from developments on public (e.g., State, county, city, or district) lands.

Paleontological Assessment Standards

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) also directs agencies to assess whether a project would have an adverse effect on unique paleontological resources. The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) has established guidelines for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of adverse impacts on nonrenewable paleontological resources. Most practicing paleontologists in the United States adhere closely to the SVP's assessment, mitigation, and monitoring requirements as outlined in these guidelines, which were approved through a consensus of professional paleontologists. The SVP has helped define the value of paleontological resources and, in particular, indicates that geologic units of high paleontological potential are those from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate or plant fossils have been recovered in the past (i.e., are represented in institutional collections). Only invertebrate fossils that provide new information on existing flora or fauna or on the age of a rock unit would be considered significant. Geologic units of low paleontological potential are those that are not known to have produced a substantial body of significant paleontological material. As such, the sensitivity of an area with respect to paleontological resources hinges on its geologic setting and whether significant fossils have been discovered in the area or in similar geologic units.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Local

Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) serves to reduce injury, loss of life, property damage, and loss of services from natural disasters. This LHMP provides a comprehensive analysis of the natural and human-caused hazards that threaten the county, with a focus on mitigation, allowing the County to remain eligible to receive additional federal and State funding to assist with emergency response and recovery, as permitted by the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and California Government Code Sections 8685.9 and 65302.6; it also complements the efforts undertaken by the existing General Plan Safety Element. The LHMP complies with all requirements set forth under the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and received approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2021. Contra Costa County updated its LHMP in 2018.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Division 74- Building Code

Chapter 74-2.002 of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code adopts the 2022 CBC, with amendments, as the County's Building Code (Ordinance No. 2022-35). As such, all new construction within the county is required to adhere to its seismic safety standards. The Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the CBC.

Division 716- Grading

Division 716 of the County Ordinance Code contains the County's grading ordinance, which sets forth regulations for control of excavation, grading, and earthwork construction, including fills or embankments and related work. Section 716-4.202 requires that a grading permit be obtained for property on which a subdivision is proposed and that such a permit may not be issued until reviewed by the Public Works Department for compliance with the requirements of Title 9, *Subdivisions*. Section 716-2.418, *Critically Expansive Soil or Other Soil Problems*, states that critically expansive soil or other soil problems must be tested by acceptable procedures to provide data suitable for making adequate designs for the improvements. Article 716-8.8, *Erosion Control Planting*, additionally requires that the surface of all erodible cut slopes more than five feet in height and fill slopes more than three feet in height are protected against erosion by planting with grass or ground cover plants.

Section 94-4.420- Soil Report

As indicated in Section 94-4.420, *Soil Report*, of Title 9, *Subdivisions*, a preliminary soil investigation report is required for subdivisions and must be reviewed by a building inspector or designated representative. The report must indicate the presence of any critically expansive soils or any other soil problems which, if not corrected, could lead to defects in structures, buildings, or other improvements. If the report indicates such soil problems, it must further report on an investigation of each lot of the subdivision, including recommended corrective action that is likely to prevent structural damage to each building, structure, or improvement to be constructed. The recommended actions and procedures contained in the report must also become a condition of approval and must be incorporated in the development of the subdivision.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Section 82-1.016 – Hillside Protection

Pursuant to Section 82-1.016, *Hillside Protection*, development on open hillsides and significant ridgelines throughout the county is restricted, and hillsides with a grade of 26 percent or greater are required to be protected through implementing zoning measures and other appropriate actions.

5.7.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Regional Geology

The primary bedrock in Contra Costa County includes sedimentary rocks, volcanic rock intrusions, and alluvial deposits. Regional basement rocks consist of the highly deformed Great Valley Sequence, which include massive beds of marine sandstone intermixed with siltstone and shale, and marine sandstone and shale overlain by soft non-marine units. Unconsolidated alluvial deposits, artificial fill, and estuarine deposits underlie the coastal areas along San Pablo Bay, the Carquinez Strait, and Suisun Bay. Landslides in the region typically occur in weak, easily weathered bedrock on relatively steep slopes. Bedrock geology for the area is not entirely mapped. Lack of detailed mapping in most cases precludes determining specific site stability without a site investigation. However, it may be valid to conclude varying degrees of relative risk based on general mapping of rock units when averaged over time (Contra Costa 2018a).

Two distinct depositional environments exist in Contra Costa County. Since much of the county is mountainous with steep, rugged topography, a sequence of alluvial fan and fan-delta deposits have developed in most of the western part of the county. The second environment is a combination of eolian dune and river delta deposits in the San Joaquin Valley in eastern Contra Costa County (Contra Costa 2018a).

Soils

Contra Costa County is in California's Central Coast Range, with northwest trending mountain ranges and valleys. Alluvium, terrace deposits, and bay mud, primarily composed of sand, silt, clay, and gravel, are prevalent in the lowlands. The intermountain valleys and foothills contain alluvial soils and terrace deposits. In the east, north, and northwest parts of the county, the soils generally consist of bay muds. Mapping units and maps presented in the Natural Resources Conservation Service's soil survey for this region describe the prevailing soils and include information about parent rock materials, soil depth, erosion, and slope. Contra Costa County's soils may be classified into three general categories:

- Lowland Soil Associations—Six characteristic Lowland Soil associations range from nearly level to strongly sloping landscapes. They also range from somewhat excessively drained to poorly drained soils typically found in valley fill, low terraces, basins, floodplains and on alluvial fans. Lowland soils are also slowly permeable, highly expansive and corrosive, with slight erosion hazards. They make up 25 percent of the soils in Contra Costa County.
- Tidal Flat-Delta-Marsh Lowland Associations—Three Tidal Flat-Delta-Marsh Lowland soil associations are described as being poorly drained on level land within deltas, floodplains, saltwater marshes and tidal flats. Formed in mineral alluvium and from the remains of hydrophytic plants, these soils are clay loam, muck, silty clay and clay. Tidal Flat-Delta-Marsh Lowland soils make up 10 percent of the county's soils. Soils of these associations are highly expansive due to the clay content and are highly corrosive.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- Upland Soil Associations—Five Upland Soil groups make up 64 percent of Contra Costa County’s soils. Upland soils are on level terraces or steep mountain uplands and range from being moderately well drained to excessively drained. These soils range from loams to clays and form in weakly consolidated alluvial sediments, weathered sedimentary rock interbeds and some igneous rock. Upland soils are typically highly expansive and corrosive, with slow to moderate permeability.

Soils have varying levels of susceptibility to erosion, but each soil type benefits from conservation management techniques to prevent erosion. Soil erosion in Contra Costa County occurs as a result of intensive land use, wind, and water erosion. Erosion may be most severe where urbanization, development, recreational activities, logging, and agricultural practices take place. Extreme rainfall events, lack of vegetative cover, fragile soils, and steep slopes combine to accelerate erosion. Wind erosion is the primary factor for soil losses in the Delta areas. Agricultural crops are subject to the erosive forces of water and hillside grazing pastures have been strained by reduced root structure due to years of drought conditions. The conversion of agricultural lands to housing and other development may cause exposed soils to become susceptible to erosion. With proper drainage and landscaping techniques, these altered soils may return to pre-construction stability.

Expansive soils contain clay and silt that expand in volume in response to increased water content and shrink in volume after drying. Expansive soils are a geologic hazard because an increase in soil volume can exert forces on structures and, thus, damage building foundations, walls, and floors. Much of the soil in the county is considered expansive (Contra Costa 2018a). Section 94-4.420 of the County Ordinance Code requires that a preliminary soil investigation report be prepared for a subdivision project. If soil instability issues arise, a report including the recommended corrective actions taken to prevent structural damage to buildings, structures, or improvements must also be submitted.

Faults

Contra Costa County is in a region of high seismicity with numerous local faults. The primary seismic hazard for the county is potential ground shaking from these faults, especially the Hayward, Calaveras North, Concord-Green Valley, Mount Diablo, and Greenville faults, which are further described below. The location of these faults can be seen in Figure 5.7-1 - *Regional Fault Map*. The following information was compiled by the County in its LHMP 2018 update.

Calaveras (North Central) Fault

The Calaveras (North Central) Fault is a major branch of the San Andreas Fault, east of the Hayward Fault. It extends 76 miles from the San Andreas Fault near Hollister to Danville at its northern end. The Calaveras Fault is one of the most geologically active and complex faults in the Bay Area (Contra Costa 2018a). The probability of experiencing a Magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake along the Calaveras Fault in the next 30 years is 26 percent.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Concord-Green Valley Fault

The Concord-Green Valley Fault, named for being located under the City of Concord, is connected to the main Green Valley Fault. The fault extends approximately 11 miles east of the West Napa Fault, from Mount Diablo to the Carquinez Strait. It is considered to be under high stress and has a 16 percent probability of experiencing a Magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake in the next 30 years.

Greenville Fault

The Greenville Fault is in the eastern Bay Area in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. This dextral strike-slip fault zone borders the eastern side of Livermore Valley and is considered to be part of the larger San Andreas fault system in the central Coast Ranges. The fault zone extends from northwest of Livermore Valley along the Marsh Creek and Clayton faults toward Clayton Valley.

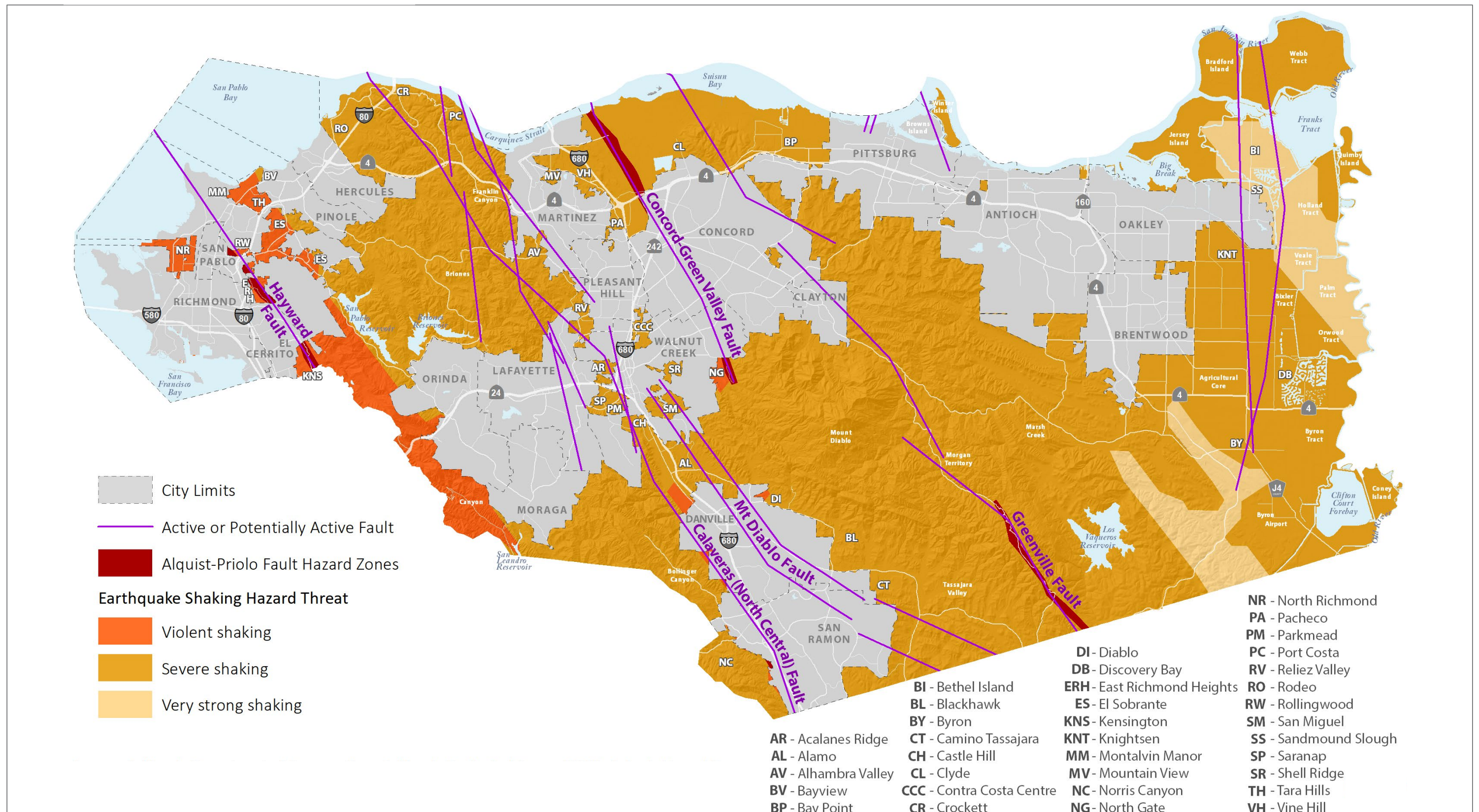
Hayward Fault

The Hayward Fault is an approximately 45-mile-long fault that runs through densely populated areas in the East Bay, parallel to the San Andreas Fault. The Hayward Fault extends through some of the Bay Area's most populated areas, including San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley. The Hayward Fault is a right-lateral slip fault. The Hayward Fault is increasingly becoming a hazard priority throughout the Bay Area because of its increased chance for activity and its intersection with highly populated areas and critical infrastructure. The probability of experiencing a Magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake along the Hayward Fault in the next 30 years is 33 percent. An earthquake of this magnitude has regional implications for the entire Bay Area, as the Hayward Fault crosses transportation and resource infrastructure, such as multiple highways and the Hetch-Hetchy Aqueduct.

Mount Diablo Fault

The Mount Diablo Fault is a thrust fault in the vicinity of Mount Diablo. The fault lies between the Calaveras Fault, Greenville Fault, and Concord Fault, all right-lateral strike slip faults, and appears to transfer movement from the Calaveras and Greenville Faults to the Concord Fault, while continuing to uplift Mount Diablo.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS



Source: California Department of Conservation - California Geological Survey (CGS)'s Seismic Hazard Zones; United States Geological (USGS)'s Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Assessment; Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast, Version 3.



Figure 5.7-1
Regional Fault Map

5. Environmental Analysis
GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Earthquakes

The Bay Area region lies within the active boundary between the Pacific and the North American tectonic plates. The Pacific Plate is constantly moving northwest past the North American Plate at a rate of about 2 inches per year (Contra Costa 2018a). Earthquakes in the San Francisco Bay region result from strain energy constantly accumulating across the region because of the motion of the Pacific Plate relative to the North American Plate. The San Andreas Fault, on which earthquakes of magnitude 7.8 and 7.9 have occurred in the past, including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, is the fastest slipping fault along the plate boundary.

The county has been subjected to numerous seismic events, originating both on faults within the county and in other parts of the region. Six major Bay Area earthquakes have occurred since 1800 that impacted the county, and at least two of the faults that produced them run through or into the county. Contra Costa County was included in one FEMA major disaster/emergency declaration for the Loma Prieta Earthquake, which occurred in October 1989 (Contra Costa 2018a).

Secondary Hazards

Landslides are often caused by earthquakes. River valleys are vulnerable to slope failure, often as a result of loss of cohesion in clay-rich soils. A secondary effect of seismic activity is liquefaction, which occurs when sandy or silty soil materials become saturated during ground shaking, losing strength, causing the ground to liquefy. This can damage pipelines, cause roadways and airport runways to buckle, and damage or destroy building foundations.

There are estimated to be 369,779 people living on soils with moderate to very high liquefaction potential in the county. This is about 32 percent of the total population (Contra Costa 2018). Figure 5.7-2, *Liquefaction Hazard Zones*, uses USGS to map the susceptibility of land to liquefaction in the county. As shown in the figure, areas along the Bay coastline and in the Delta are most susceptible to liquefaction. Additionally, according to the LHMP, there are approximately 1,851 acres of developable land in high and very high liquefaction susceptibility areas. Of the total acres, 72.9 percent is residential, 20.4 percent is commercial-industrial, and 6.7 percent is mixed use.

In Contra Costa County, landslides are often triggered by heavy rain, so the potential for landslides largely coincides with severe storms that saturate steep, loose soils. Earthquakes can also trigger landslides, and upland areas in Contra Costa County are highly susceptible to landslides, as shown in Figure 5.7-3, *Landslide Hazards*. The LHMP estimates that 166,205 people currently live in areas of “moderate landslide risk” of landslides, 221,672 people live in “high landslide risk” areas, and 1,900 people live in areas of “very high landslide” risk.

Paleontological Sensitivity

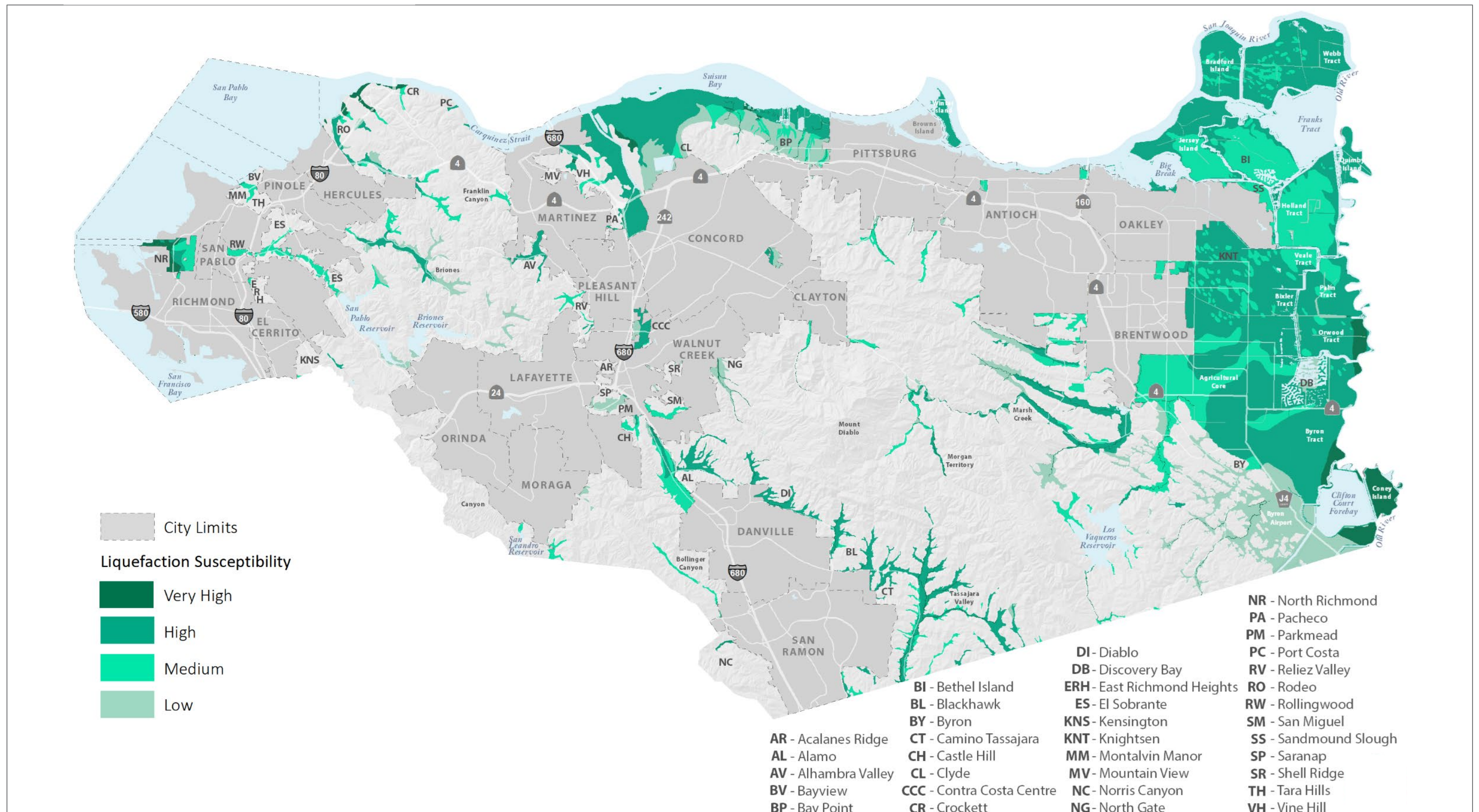
In the Bay Area, fossilized plants, animals, and microorganisms occur primarily in marine and non-marine (fluvial) sedimentary rock. The potential to preserve fossils in a particular rock formation depends on the depositional environment in which it was formed. For example, fast moving currents that form deposits of gravel and cobbles are less likely to preserve the remains of organisms than gently flowing currents that deposit mud and silt. Thus, the most fossil-bearing geologic units in the county occur in rocks that formed in relic

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

marine environments such as inland embayment, coastal areas, and extensive inland bays. There are a total of 2,577 fossil localities in Contra Costa County according to the UC Museum of Paleontology Localities database. Most of these are invertebrate; 261 are vertebrates (UCMP 2022).

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

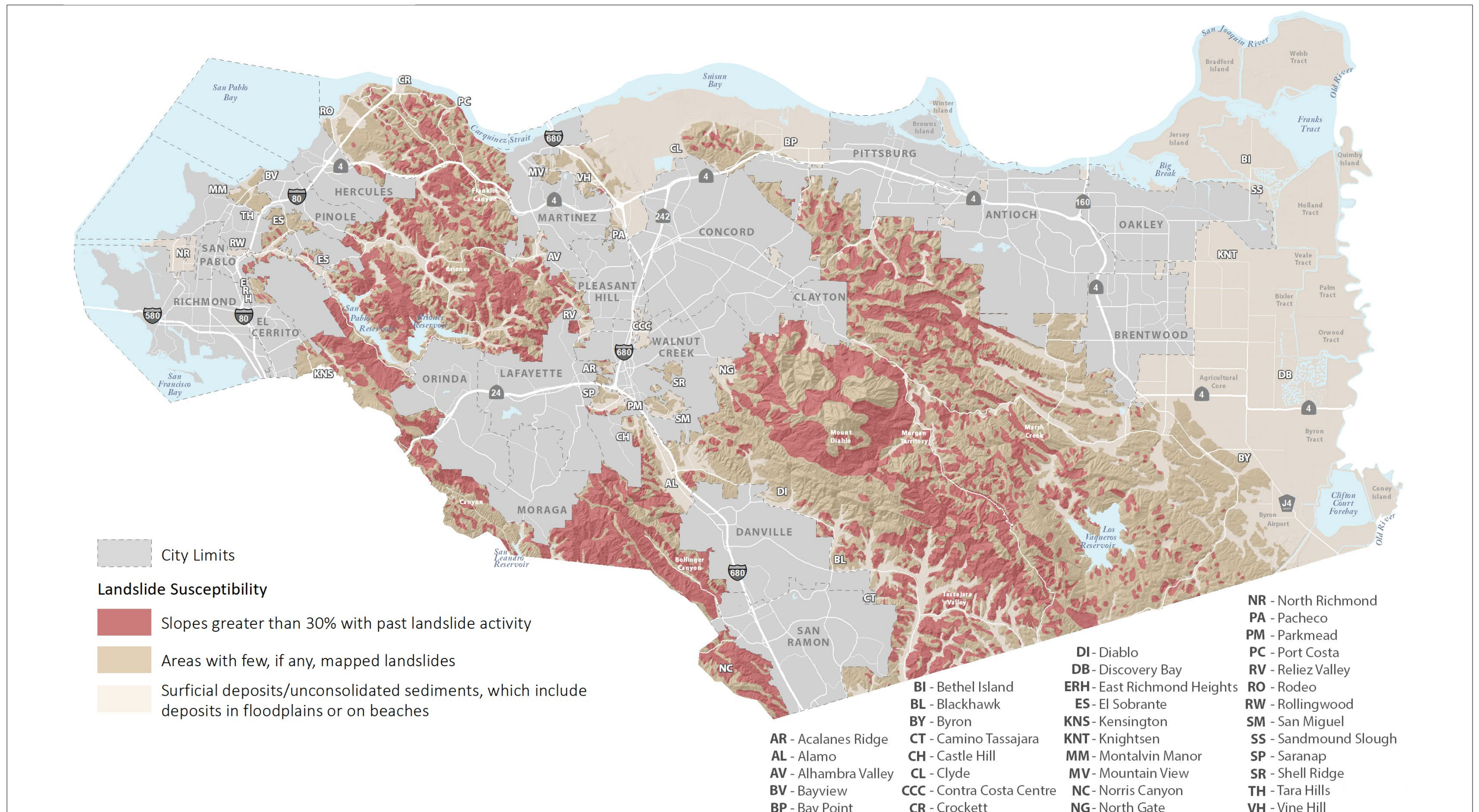


Source: United States Geological Survey (USGS).



Figure 5.7-2
Liquefaction Hazard Zones

GEOLOGY AND SOILS



Source: United States Geological Survey (USGS).



Figure 5.7-3
Landslide Hazards

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Additionally, approximately 600 archaeological sites have been identified within the county according to the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University (Contra Costa 2005). According to the County, identification of these archaeological sites is largely the result of sporadic surveys conducted in association with development proposals. Large areas of the county that have been retained in agriculture have never been surveyed and may yield prehistoric settlement patterns.

5.7.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- G-1 Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault. (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)
 - ii) Strong seismic ground shaking.
 - iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.
 - iv) Landslides.
- G-2 Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- G-3 Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- G-4 Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.
- G-5 Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.
- G-6 Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

5.7.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.7.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to geology and soils. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P2.10:** Support soil conservation and restoration programs. Encourage agricultural landowners to work with agencies such as the USDA's NRCS and Contra Costa RCD to reduce erosion and soil loss.
- **Policy COS-P8.4:** Require new development to retain natural vegetation and topography whenever feasible and require projects involving erosion-inducing activities to use best management practices to minimize erosion.
- **Policy COS-P10.6:** Upon discovery of significant historic or prehistoric archaeological artifacts or fossils during project construction, require ground-disturbing activities to halt within a 50-foot radius of the find until its significance can be determined by a qualified historian, archaeologist, or paleontologist and appropriate protection and preservation measures developed.
- **Policy COS-P10.7:** Require significant historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources to be either preserved onsite or adequately documented as a condition of removal.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Policy PFS-P7.10:** *Require that new landfills provide the following:*
 - a) *An appropriate leachate collection and recovery system.*
 - b) *An approved erosion-control and drainage plan.*
 - c) *Geotechnical studies, including stability analysis, to determine the most appropriate engineering design.*
 - d) *A habitat enhancement plan that provides for at least a 3:1 replacement for lost significant habitat.*

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P4.1:** When considering development proposals and land use changes, treat susceptibility to hazards and threats to health and human life as primary considerations.
- **Policy HS-P4.3:** *Discourage new below-market-rate housing in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the Wildland-Urban Interface, and Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. If below-market-rate housing must be constructed within these zones, require it to be hardened or make use of nature-based solutions to remain habitable to the greatest extent possible.*
- **Policy HS-P4.6:** *In hazard-prone areas, such as slopes exceeding 15 percent, mapped floodplains, High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones allow for decreased residential density, including below the minimum density requirement for the applicable land use designation, as the severity of risk increases.*
- **Goal HS-11:** Communities and infrastructure that are protected from seismic and geologic hazards, including severe ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, landslides, and unstable slopes.
 - **Policy HS-P11.1:** *For projects in areas of known or suspected seismic or other geologic hazards, such as Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones, liquefiable soils, landslides, and steep slopes, require submittal of a geotechnical report and ensure effective mitigation measures are incorporated into the project design.*

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- **Policy HS-P11.2:** *Prohibit construction of buildings intended for human occupancy in areas where seismic and other geologic hazards (e.g., landslides, liquefaction, and fault lines) cannot be adequately mitigated.*
- **Policy HS-P11.3:** *Discourage construction of critical facilities and buildings intended for human occupancy in Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. Where such development already exists, encourage earthquake retrofitting. If there is no feasible alternative to developing inside the Fault Zone, buildings must be sited, designed, and constructed to withstand the anticipated seismic stresses.*
- **Policy HS-P11.4:** Refer geotechnical and soils reports to the County Geologist for review and approval whenever necessary.
- **Policy HS-P11.5:** Discourage development on slopes exceeding 15 percent, and prohibit development on slopes exceeding 25 percent, to avoid slope instability, extensive grading, and unnecessary land disturbance. Exceptions may be considered for infrastructure projects and development on existing legal lots where no other feasible building sites exist.
- **Policy HS-P11.6:** *Do not accept public road dedications or allow construction of private roads in unstable hillside or in landslide hazard areas unless potential hazards have been mitigated to the County's satisfaction.*
- **Policy HS-P12.1:** Continue implementing the Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors and certified by FEMA and is incorporated into this Health and Safety Element.
- **Policy HS-P12.2:** Locate facilities and uses on the County's designated critical facilities list outside of identified hazard areas whenever possible, accounting for how climate change may increase frequency and intensity of hazards. If critical facilities must be in hazard areas, ensure these facilities and their access routes are protected from the hazard risks inherent to each location.

5.7.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to geology and soils.

Strategy NI-6: Protect the community against additional hazards created or exacerbated by climate change.

Strategy NI-6 Actions:

- Treat susceptibility to hazards and threats to human health and life as primary considerations when reviewing all development proposals and changes to land uses.
- Promote, and develop as necessary, available funding sources to create incentives for residents and businesses to prepare for natural disasters, particularly members of Impacted Communities.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.7.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.7-1: The proposed project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: (i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault; (ii) Strong seismic ground shaking; (iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or (iv) Landslides, mudslides, or other similar hazards. [Thresholds G-1i, G-1ii, G-1iii, and G-1iv]

Proposed General Plan

Surface Rupture of a Fault

As shown in Figure 5.7-1, there are five major faults that run through Contra Costa County including the Calaveras (North Central), Concord-Green Valley, Greenville, Hayward, and Mount Diablo Faults. The EIR Study Area also includes Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. Future development within the EIR Study Area could have potential impacts in regard to seismic activities at or from nearby faults. However as required by the Alquist-Priolo Act Fault Zoning Act, the approval of projects within Earthquake Fault Zones must be in accordance with the policies and criteria established by the Surface Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) (CPRC, Division 2, Chapter 7.5, Section 2623 (a)). SMGB regulations require that fault investigation reports be prepared by a professional geologist registered in the State of California (CCR, Title 14, Division 2, Chapter 8.1.3, Section 3603 (d)). Additionally, the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act requires projects for human-occupancy that are within mapped fault zones to obtain a site-specific geotechnical report prior to the issuance of individual grading permits, and each new development would be required to retain a licensed geotechnical engineer to design new structures to withstand probable seismically induced ground shaking.

The proposed General Plan Health and Safety Element includes policies aimed at reducing potential impacts from development in and near areas with known faults. In particular, Policy HS-P4.3 discourages new below-market-rate housing in Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones; Policy HS-P11.1 requires geotechnical reports for all sites in areas of known or suspected seismic or other geologic hazards with effective mitigation measures incorporated into the project design; Policy HS-P11.2 prohibits the construction of buildings for human occupancy in areas where seismic and other geologic hazards cannot be adequately mitigated; and Policy HS-P11.3 discourages construction of critical facilities and buildings in Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones, encourages earthquake retrofitting, and requires critical facilities and buildings to be sited, designed, and constructed to withstand seismic stresses.

Furthermore, all new development in California is subject to the seismic design criteria of the CBC, which requires that all improvements be constructed to withstand anticipated ground shaking from regional fault sources. The CBC standards require all new developments to be designed consistent with a site specific, design-level geotechnical report, which would be fully compliant with the seismic recommendations of a California-registered professional geotechnical engineer. Adherence to the applicable CBC requirements, Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act, Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, and proposed General Plan policies would ensure that implementation of the proposed General Plan would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. Compliance with State and

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

local regulations would therefore mitigate impacts due to rupture of a known fault to a less than significant level.

Ground Shaking

Due to the location and underlying geology of Contra Costa County, all future development in the EIR Study Area would likely be subject to strong seismic ground shaking. Several policies in the proposed Health and Safety Element help to mitigate impacts from ground shaking. Policy HS-P11.2 prohibits construction of buildings for human occupancy in areas where seismic and geologic hazards cannot be mitigated. Policy HS-P11.3 discourages construction of critical facilities and buildings in Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones, encourages earthquake retrofitting, and requires critical facilities and buildings to be sited, designed, and constructed to withstand seismic stresses. Additionally, all future residential development would be required to conform to CBC requirements and standards established to prevent significant damage due to ground shaking during seismic events. Adhering to these requirements would make impacts associated with ground shaking less than significant.

Liquefaction

As shown in Figure 5.7-2, several areas of the county are susceptible to liquefaction hazards. Therefore, future development under the proposed General Plan has the potential to be subject to liquefaction hazards. However, the proposed General Plan Health and Safety Element includes policies that address development in areas prone to liquefaction hazards and help to mitigate the risks posed by liquefaction. Policy HS-P11.1 requires geotechnical reports for all sites in areas of known or suspected seismic or other geologic hazards, including liquefiable soils, and requires effective mitigation measures incorporated into the project design. In addition, Policy HS-P11.2 prohibits construction of buildings intended for human occupancy in areas where geologic hazards, such as liquefaction, cannot be adequately mitigated.

Additionally, all future development would be required to conform to CBC requirements and standards established to prevent significant damage due to ground shaking during seismic events. Therefore, impacts associated with liquefaction would be considered less than significant.

Landslides

As shown on Figure 5.7-3, large areas of the EIR Study Area with hill terrain are susceptible to landslides. The County restricts development on open hillsides and ridgelines and generally prohibits development on hillsides with slopes exceeding 25 percent, as referenced in Section 82-1.016, *Hillside Protection*, of the County Ordinance Code. Compliance with CBC requirements, including implementation of recommendations provided in site-specific geotechnical reports would reduce or avoid impacts related to landslides. In addition, the proposed General Plan Health and Safety Element includes policies that help to mitigate impacts related to landslides and unstable geologic conditions. For example, Policy HS-P11.5 discourages development on slopes exceeding 15 percent and prohibits development on slopes exceeding 25 percent to avoid instability, extensive grading, and unnecessary land disturbance, and Policy HS-P11.6 prohibits road dedications or private road construction in unstable hillside and landslide hazard areas without adequate mitigation.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Based on the existing and proposed County regulations, policies, and actions, combined with CBC requirements, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not directly or indirectly result in adverse effects related to landslides, and the impact would be less than significant.

Summary

Overall, implementation of the above proposed policies and actions, as well as compliance with State, regional, and local regulations pertaining to structural safety regarding fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslides, would ensure that potential future development that results from implementation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from activities in the county. The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects that could cause potential substantial adverse impacts, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known active fault trace, or involving seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, or landslides. In addition, the proposed CAP includes actions under Strategy CE-1 and Strategy NI-6 that require new housing for low-income households to be outside of hazard-prone areas, including for landslides. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.7-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.7-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.7-2: Development under the proposed project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. [Threshold G-2]

Proposed General Plan

Future development facilitated by the proposed General Plan would involve soil disturbance, construction, and operation of developed land uses that could be subject to unstable soils conditions. However, the proposed General Plan is a policy-level document and does not include any development proposals or development entitlements that would directly result in the construction or expansion of any new development.

As described further in Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of this Draft EIR, any new development that would require the disturbance of one or more acres during construction would be subject to the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharge Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit). The

5. Environmental Analysis GEOLOGY AND SOILS

NPDES permit requires the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would include Best Management Practices (BMPs) designed to control and reduce soil erosion. The BMPs may include dewatering procedures, storm water runoff quality control measures, watering for dust control, and the construction of silt fences, as needed. In addition, County Ordinance Code Section 716-4.202 requires standard erosion control practices to be implemented for all construction. These State and local regulations would effectively mitigate construction stormwater runoff impacts from development under the proposed General Plan.

Furthermore, the proposed General Plan also includes policies aimed at mitigating soil erosion. The Health and Safety Element includes Policy HS-P11.5, which discourages development on slopes exceeding 15 percent to avoid excessive grading. The Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element includes Policy COS-P8.4, which requires new development to retain vegetation and topography and use BMPs to minimize erosion. The Public Facilities and Services Element includes Policy PFS-P7.10, which requires that new landfills provide an approved erosion control and drainage plan.

Implementation of these State and local requirements, as well as policies in the proposed General Plan would effectively ensure that future projects would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil from construction activities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from activities in the county. Although the proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects, projects could be facilitated by proposed CAP actions that involve construction activity and soil disturbance, creating the potential for soil erosion. However, such projects would be subject to the same State and local requirements and proposed General Plan policies described above for the discussion of proposed General Plan impacts. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.7-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.7-2 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.7-3: Development under the proposed project would not subject people or structures to hazards from unstable soil or expansive soil conditions. [Thresholds G-3 and G-4]

Proposed General Plan

Development on unstable or expansive soils could create substantial risks to life or property and result in adverse impacts such as on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. As shown in Figures 5.7-1, 5.7-2, and 5.7-3, there are seismic and geologic hazards throughout the EIR Study Area. In addition, as mentioned in Section 5.7.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, the three classified soils in the county have

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

expansive capabilities; therefore, future development within the EIR Study could have potentially significant impacts if located in these hazardous areas.

However, the proposed General Plan policies listed in Impact Discussion 5.7-1 would ensure geologic hazards such as unstable soils, liquefaction, subsidence, and other potential geologic or soil stability issues be addressed and mitigated. In addition, the County Ordinance Code Section 94-4.420 requires the preparation of a preliminary soil report to accompany a tentative parcel for a subdivision, and Section 716-2.418 requires a soil investigation for all development identified to have the potential for hazards related to soil conditions such as expansive soils, so the project can mitigate impacts through site-specific design. In addition, all new projects within the EIR Study Area must comply with the CBC, which contains provisions for soil preparation and conditioning to minimize geologic hazards such as unstable soils, liquefaction, subsidence, and other potential geologic or soil stability issues. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from activities within the county. Although the proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects, projects could be facilitated by proposed CAP actions that would place structures on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable. However, such projects would be subject to the same State and local requirements and proposed General Plan policies described above for the discussion of proposed General Plan impacts. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.7-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.7-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.7-4: Development under the proposed project would connect to existing sewer lines or comply with State and local regulations for on-site septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. [Threshold G-5].

Proposed General Plan

Most new development would connect to existing sewer lines, and on-site septic systems and alternative wastewater disposal systems would be limited to rural areas. Any new development within the EIR Study Area that would include the utilization of a septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal system would be regulated by the Contra Costa Health Services Environmental Health Division. Obtaining a permit would be required prior to the construction of any septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal system, and each system would be constructed within the parameters of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (SWRCB 2012), as well as the Contra Costa County Health Officer Regulations for Sewage Collection and Disposal (Contra Costa 2018b). As this procedure would be required prior to construction of any and all septic systems and alternative wastewater disposal systems, all new development under the proposed General Plan would be subject to these State and local requirements. Proper soils are essential for installation and

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

maintenance of septic systems and alternative wastewater disposal systems; compliance with these State and local requirements would ensure that impacts related to adequate soils for supporting such systems are less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from activities within the county. Although the proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects, projects could be facilitated by proposed CAP actions that include structures that connect to existing sewer lines, on-site septic systems, and/or alternative wastewater disposal systems. If a septic system or alternative wastewater disposal system installation is proposed, a testing and permitting process would be completed before installation based on individual project-level review, as described above for the discussion of proposed General Plan impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.7-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.7-4 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.7-5: Development under the proposed project could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature. [Threshold G-6]

Proposed General Plan

Unique Geologic Features

The most notable geological feature in the county is Mount Diablo, located between Clayton and Danville. At almost 4,000 feet tall, the mountain dominates the landscape in Contra Costa County and is a popular attraction for hiking in the region. Mount Diablo is also a State Park and there are varied types of protected lands on and around Mount Diablo that total more than 90,000 acres. The mountain has historically been an important landmark for navigation because of its presence and visibility throughout the Bay Area and beyond (California State Parks 2023). While this geologic resource is already protected as a State Park, the proposed General Plan supports this protection by designating it Parks and Recreation and including Policy COS-P13.4, which requires applications for new or expanded quarrying operations adjacent to Mount Diablo State Park to include an analysis of potential impacts to the park's natural features.

Furthermore, any future development under the proposed project would need to follow the County's Ordinance Code. Section 814-2.1004, Environmental Design, of the County Code mandates that grading must consider the land's environmental characteristics, such as geological features, stream beds, and tree cover, and employ the best engineering practices to minimize erosion, slides, or flooding, ensuring minimal impact on the environment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Paleontological Resources

Contra Costa County is underlain by a number of distinct geologic rock units (i.e., formations) with varying paleontological sensitivities. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), 24 percent of the county is underlain by quaternary alluvium and marine deposits of the Pleistocene to Holocene eras, which generally have lower paleontological sensitivity due to their young age (USGS 2022). Additionally, 18 percent of the county is underlain by Pleo-Pleistocene and Pliocene loosely consolidated deposits, 15 percent by Miocene marine rocks, and 14 percent by upper cretaceous marine rocks (USGS 2022). These geologic units typically have higher paleontological sensitivity based on their rock type, which is primarily sandstone and shale.

Development under the proposed General Plan would occur in areas of varying levels of paleontological sensitivity and would require site-specific investigations by a professional archaeologist/paleontologist to determine the potential of such resources to be present on site. Excavations could occur in association with development of these sites that could affect paleontological resources buried at greater depths. Therefore, it is possible that project-related ground-disturbing activities associated with development allowed under the proposed General Plan could uncover previously unknown paleontological resources. Unanticipated discoveries during project implementation have the potential to affect significant paleontological resources. The proposed General Plan includes Policy COS-P10.7, which requires that significant paleontological resources be either preserved on-site or adequately documented as a condition of removal. In addition, Policy COS-P10.6 states that upon discovery of any significant fossils during project construction, ground-disturbing activities must halt within a 50-foot radius of the find until its significance can be determined by a qualified paleontologist and appropriate protection and preservation measures are developed. While adherence to these proposed policies would preserve or document a resource in the event of its discovery, it does not prevent ground-disturbing activities from occurring that could potentially impact paleontological resources. Therefore, this paleontological resource impact is potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from activities within the county. Although the proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include specific projects, projects could be facilitated by proposed CAP actions that include construction activity and ground disturbance, which could uncover and impact previously unknown paleontological resources, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.7-5 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

GEO-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant shall be required to retain a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to determine the project's potential to significantly impact paleontological resources according to Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. If necessary, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall recommend mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.7-5 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.7.5 Cumulative Impacts

Geology and Soils

Geological impacts tend to be site-specific rather than cumulative in nature. For example, seismic events may damage or destroy a building on a project site, but the construction of a development project on one site would not cause any adjacent parcels to become more susceptible to seismic events, nor can a project affect local geology in such a manner as to increase risks regionally.

The cumulative setting includes growth within the EIR Study Area in combination with projected growth in the rest of Contra Costa County. All new development in the county would have to comply with the CBC, which requires stringent earthquake-resistant design parameters and common engineering practices requiring special design and construction methods that reduce or eliminate potential expansive soil-related impacts. Furthermore, any development involving clearing, grading, or excavation that causes soil disturbance of one or more acres, or any project involving less than one acre that is part of a larger development plan and includes clearing, grading, or excavation, is subject to NPDES Storm Water Construction General Permit provisions. These requirements would significantly reduce the potential for substantial erosion or topsoil loss to occur in association with new development by requiring an approved stormwater pollution prevention plan that provides a schedule for the implementation and maintenance of erosion control measures and a description of erosion control practices, including appropriate design details and a time schedule.

Implementation of NPDES requirements and CBC standards as discussed under Impacts 5.7-1 through 5.7-3 above would reduce cumulative impacts associated with geology and soils throughout the region. Furthermore, site-specific review, including geotechnical reports, required by Contra Costa County and compliance with the proposed General Plan policies would reduce the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts to less than cumulatively considerable.

Unique Geologic Features and Paleontological Resources

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts to unique geologic features and paleontological resources includes the EIR Study Area and adjacent areas with unique geologic features or where deposits with a high potential to contain paleontological resources could be disturbed. If there are unique geologic features or potential paleontological resources that extend across areas of ground disturbance of the potential development under the proposed General Plan and cumulative projects, the projects could result in the loss of unique geologic features or paleontological resources, which is a potentially significant impact. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 and proposed General Plan policies discussed under Impact 5.7-5, implementation of the proposed project would effectively avoid the potential loss of unique geologic features or paleontological resources in the event of inadvertent discovery during construction. Therefore, while implementation of cumulative projects could have a significant effect related to unique geologic features and paleontological resources, the project's contribution to such effect would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.7.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: 5.7-1, 5.7-2, 5.7-3 and 5.7-4.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Without mitigation, this impact would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.7-5:** Development under the proposed project could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature.

5.7.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.7-5

GEO-1 Prior to initiation of construction activities for discretionary projects that are not exempt from CEQA and would involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites, or as otherwise directed by the County, the project applicant shall be required to retain a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to determine the project's potential to significantly impact paleontological resources according to Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. If necessary, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall recommend mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

5.7.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.7-5

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would require non-ministerial projects not exempt from CEQA that involve ground-disturbing activities on previously undisturbed sites to consult with a Qualified Professional Paleontologist to assess potential impacts on paleontological resources, and if necessary, recommend mitigation measures to minimize these impacts to a less-than-significant level. Impact 5.7-5 would be *less than significant* with mitigation incorporated.

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.7.9 References

- California Geologic Survey. 2008. Special Publication 117A - Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards in California.
https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/Documents/Publications/Special-Publications/SP_117a.pdf
- California State Parks. 2023, December 11 (Accessed). Mount Diablo State Park.
<https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/517/files/MountDiabloFinalWebLayout2018.pdf>
- Contra Costa, County of. 2005. Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020 - Chapter 10: Safety Element, Chapter 9: Open Space Element. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4732/General-Plan>
- . 2018a, January. *Contra Costa Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
http://64.166.146.245/docs/2018/CCCFPD/20180612_1115/33997_Attachment%20-%20Contra%20Costa%20County%20Draft%20LHMP%20Final_Vol1.pdf
- . 2018b. Health Officer Regulations for Sewage Disposal. (Contra Costa County Ord. Section 420-6.606). National Resources Conservation Service. 2022, May 13 (Accessed). Web Soil Survey. Septic Tank Absorption Fields—Contra Costa County, California.
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), 2012. Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Water Treatment Systems.
- United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2022, June 6 (Accessed). Geologic units in Contra Costa County, California. <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state/fips-unit.php?code=f06013>
- University of California, Berkeley, Museum of Paleontology. 2022, May 12 (Accessed). University of California, Berkeley, Museum of Paleontology Collections Database.
https://ucmpdb.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/ucmp_query2

5. Environmental Analysis

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section evaluates the potential for the adoption and implementation of the proposed project to impact greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in a local and regional context. Because no single project is large enough to result in a measurable increase in global concentrations of GHG, climate change impacts of a project are considered on a cumulative basis based on the GHG emissions reduction goals identified in the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) 2022 Scoping Plan. GHG emissions modeling is based on emissions inventory, targets, and forecast in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) included in Appendix 5.8-1, *Climate Action Plan*, of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

5.8.1 Environmental Setting

5.8.1.1 TERMINOLOGY

The following are definitions for terms used throughout this section.

- **Greenhouse gases (GHG).** Gases in the atmosphere that absorb infrared light, thereby retaining heat in the atmosphere and contributing to a greenhouse effect.
- **Global warming potential (GWP).** Metric used to describe how much heat a molecule of a GHG absorbs relative to a molecule of carbon dioxide (CO₂) over a given period of time (20, 100, and 500 years). CO₂ has a GWP of 1.
- **Carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO₂e).** The standard unit to measure the amount of GHGs in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would cause the same amount of warming. CO₂e is based on the GWP ratios between the various GHGs relative to CO₂.
- **MTCO₂e.** Metric ton of CO₂e.
- **MMTCO₂e.** Million metric tons of CO₂e.

5.8.1.2 GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Scientists have concluded that human activities are contributing to global climate change by adding large amounts of heat-trapping gases, known as GHGs, to the atmosphere. The primary source of these GHGs is fossil fuel use. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified four major GHGs—water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and ozone (O₃)—that are the likely cause of an increase in global average temperatures observed in the 20th and 21st centuries. Other GHGs identified by the IPCC that contributes to global warming to a lesser extent are nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆),

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons (IPCC 2001).^{1,2} The major GHGs applicable to the proposed project are briefly described.

- **Carbon dioxide (CO₂)** enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels (i.e., oil, natural gas, and coal), solid waste, trees and wood products, and respiration, and also as a result of other chemical reactions (e.g., manufacture of cement). Carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere (i.e., sequestered) when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle.
- **Methane (CH₄)** is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. Methane emissions also result from livestock and other agricultural practices and from the decay of organic waste in landfills and water treatment facilities.
- **Nitrous oxide (N₂O)** is emitted during agricultural and industrial activities as well as during the combustion of fossil fuels and solid waste.

GHGs are dependent on the lifetime, or persistence, of the gas molecule in the atmosphere. Some GHGs have stronger greenhouse effects than others. These are referred to as high GWP gases. The GWP of GHG emissions are shown in Table 5.8-1, *GHG Emissions and Their Relative Global Warming Potential Compared to CO₂*. The GWP is used to convert GHGs to CO₂-equivalence (CO₂e) to show the relative potential that different GHGs have to retain infrared radiation in the atmosphere and contribute to the greenhouse effect. For example, under the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) GWP values for CH₄, 10 MT of CH₄ would be equivalent to 280 MT of CO₂.

Table 5.8-1 GHG Emissions and Their Relative Global Warming Potential Compared to CO₂

GHGs	Fourth Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹	Fifth Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹	Sixth Assessment Report Global Warming Potential Relative to CO ₂ ¹
Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂)	1	1	1
Methane (CH ₄) ²	25	28	30
Nitrous Oxide (N ₂ O)	298	265	273

Source: IPCC 2007, 2013, and 2022.

Notes: The IPCC published updated GWP values in its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) that reflect new information on atmospheric lifetimes of GHGs and an improved calculation of the radiative forcing of CO₂. However, GWP values identified in AR5 are used by the 2022 Scoping Plan for long-term emissions forecasting. Therefore, this analysis utilizes AR5 GWP values consistent with the current Scoping Plan.

¹ Based on 100-year time horizon of the GWP of the air pollutant compared to CO₂.

² The methane GWP includes direct effects and indirect effects due to the production of tropospheric ozone and stratospheric water vapor. The indirect effect due to the production of CO₂ is not included.

¹ Water vapor (H₂O) is the strongest GHG and the most variable in its phases (vapor, cloud droplets, ice crystals); however, water vapor is not considered a pollutant because it is considered part of the feedback loop rather than a primary cause of change.

² Black carbon contributes to climate change both directly, by absorbing sunlight, and indirectly, by depositing on snow (making it melt faster) and by interacting with clouds and affecting cloud formation. Black carbon is the most strongly light-absorbing component of particulate matter (PM) emitted from burning fuels such as coal, diesel, and biomass. The share of black carbon emissions from transportation is dropping rapidly and is expected to continue to do so between now and 2030 as a result of California's air quality programs. The remaining black carbon emissions will come largely from woodstoves/fireplaces, off-road applications, and industrial/commercial combustion (CARB 2022). However, State and national GHG inventories do not include black carbon due to ongoing work resolving the precise global warming potential of black carbon. Guidance for CEQA documents does not yet include black carbon.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Human Influence on Climate Change

For approximately 1,000 years before the Industrial Revolution, the amount of GHGs in the atmosphere remained relatively constant. During the 20th century, scientists observed a rapid change in the climate and the quantity of climate change pollutants in the Earth's atmosphere that is attributable to human activities.

The recent IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) summarizes the latest scientific consensus on climate change. It finds that atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ have increased by 50 percent since the Industrial Revolution and continue to increase at a rate of two parts per million each year. By the 2030s, and no later than 2040, the world will exceed 1.5°C warming (CARB 2022b). These recent changes in the quantity and concentration of climate change pollutants far exceed the extremes of the ice ages, and the global mean temperature is warming at a rate that cannot be explained by natural causes alone. Human activities are directly altering the chemical composition of the atmosphere through the buildup of climate change pollutants (CAT 2006). In the past, gradual changes in the Earth's temperature changed the distribution of species, availability of water, and other conditions. Human activities are accelerating this process so that environmental impacts associated with climate change no longer occur in a geologic time frame but within a human lifetime (IPCC 2007).

Like the variability in the projections of the expected increase in global surface temperatures, the environmental consequences of gradual changes in the Earth's temperature are hard to predict. Projections of climate change depend heavily on future human activity. Therefore, climate models are based on different emission scenarios that account for historical trends in emissions and on observations of the climate record that assess the human influence of the trend and projections for extreme weather events. Climate-change scenarios are affected by varying degrees of uncertainty. For example, there are varying degrees of certainty on the magnitude of the trends for:

- Warmer and fewer cold days and nights over most land areas.
- Warmer and more frequent hot days and nights over most land areas.
- An increase in the frequency of warm spells and heat waves over most land areas.
- An increase in frequency of heavy precipitation events (or proportion of total rainfall from heavy falls) over most areas.
- Larger areas affected by drought.
- Intense tropical cyclone activity increases.
- Increased incidence of extreme high sea level (excluding tsunamis).

Potential Climate Change Impacts for California

There is at least a greater than 50 percent likelihood that global warming will reach or exceed 1.5°C in the near-term, even for the very low GHG emissions scenario (IPCC 2022). Climate change is already impacting California and will continue to affect it for the foreseeable future. For example, the average temperature in most areas of California is already 1°F higher than historical levels, and some areas have seen average increases in excess of 2°F (CalOES 2020). The California Fourth Climate Change Assessment identifies the following climate change impacts under a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario, in which no new actions are taken to curb GHG emissions:

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Annual average daily high temperatures in California are expected to rise by 2.7°F by 2040, 5.8°F by 2070, and 8.8°F by 2100 compared to observed and modeled historical conditions. These changes are statewide averages. Heat waves are projected to become longer, more intense, and more frequent.
- Warming temperatures are expected to increase soil moisture loss and lead to drier seasonal conditions. Summer dryness may become prolonged, with soil drying beginning earlier in the spring and lasting longer into the fall and winter rainy season.
- High heat increases the risk of death from cardiovascular, respiratory, cerebrovascular, and other diseases.
- Droughts are likely to become more frequent and persistent through 2100.³
- Climate change is projected to increase the strength of the most intense precipitation and storm events affecting California.
- Mountain ranges in California are already seeing a reduction in the percentage of precipitation falling as snow. Snowpack levels are projected to decline significantly by 2100 due to reduced snowfall and faster snowmelt. California's water storage system is designed with the expectation that snow will stay frozen for many months, and that as it melts, it will be stored in a series of reservoirs and dams, many of which are used to generate electricity. Changing waterfall patterns therefore impact both water supply and electricity supply.
- Marine layer clouds are projected to decrease, though more research is needed to better understand their sensitivity to climate change.
- Extreme wildfires (i.e., fires larger than 10,000 hectares or 24,710 acres) are expected to occur 50 percent more frequently. The maximum area burned statewide may increase 178 percent by the end of the century. Drought and reduced water supplies can increase wildfire risk.
- Exposure to wildfire smoke is linked to increased incidence of respiratory illness.
- Sea-level rise is expected to continue to increase erosion of beaches, cliffs, and bluffs (CalOES 2020).

Global climate change risks to California are shown in Table 5.8-2, *Summary of GHG Emissions Risks to California*, and include impacts to public health, water resources, agriculture, coastal sea level, forest and biological resources, and energy.

³ Overall, California has become drier over time, with five of the eight years of severe to extreme drought occurring between 2007 and 2016, and with unprecedented dry years in 2014 and 2015 (OEHHA 2018). Statewide precipitation has become increasingly variable from year to year, with the driest consecutive four years occurring from 2012 to 2015 (OEHHA 2018).

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Table 5.8-2 Summary of GHG Emissions Risks to California

Impact Category	Potential Risk
Public Health Impacts	Heat waves will be more frequent, hotter, and longer Fewer extremely cold nights Poor air quality made worse Higher temperatures increase ground-level ozone levels Deaths due to extreme heat
Water Resources Impacts	Decreasing Sierra Nevada snowpack Challenges in securing adequate water supply Potential reduction in hydropower Loss of winter recreation
Agricultural Impacts	Increasing temperature Increasing threats from pests and pathogens Expanded ranges of agricultural weeds Declining productivity Irregular blooms and harvests
Coastal Sea Level Impacts	Accelerated sea-level rise Increasing coastal floods Shrinking beaches Worsened impacts on infrastructure
Forest and Biological Resource Impacts	Increased risk and severity of wildfires Lengthening of the wildfire season Movement of forest areas Conversion of forest to grassland Declining forest productivity Increasing threats from pests and pathogens Shifting vegetation and species distribution Altered timing of migration and mating habits Loss of sensitive or slow-moving species
Energy Demand Impacts	Potential reduction in hydropower Increased energy demand

Sources: CEC 2006, 2009; CCCC 2012; CNRA 2014; CalEOS 2020

5.8.1.3 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) announced on December 7, 2009, that GHG emissions threaten the public health and welfare of the American people and that GHG emissions from on-road vehicles contribute to that threat. The USEPA's final findings respond to the 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision that GHG emissions fit within the Clean Air Act definition of air pollutants. The findings do not impose any emission reduction requirements but allowed the USEPA to finalize the GHG standards proposed in 2009 for new light-duty vehicles as part of the joint rulemaking with the Department of Transportation (USEPA 2009).

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

To regulate GHGs from passenger vehicles, the USEPA was required to issue an endangerment finding (USEPA 2023). The finding identified emissions of six key GHGs—CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and SF₆—that have been the subject of scrutiny and intense analysis for decades by scientists in the United States and around the world. The first three are applicable to the proposed project's GHG emissions inventory because they constitute the majority of GHG emissions and, according to guidance by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), are the GHG emissions that should be evaluated as part of a project's GHG emissions inventory.

US Mandatory Report Rule for GHGs (2009)

In response to the endangerment finding, the USEPA issued the Mandatory Reporting of GHG Rule that requires substantial emitters of GHG emissions (e.g., large stationary sources) to report GHG emissions data. Facilities that emit 25,000 MT or more of CO₂e per year are required to submit an annual report.

Update to Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards (2017 to 2026)

The federal government issued new Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards in 2012 for vehicle model years 2017 to 2025, requiring a fleet average of 54.5 miles per gallon (MPG) in 2025. However, on March 30, 2020, the USEPA finalized updated CAFE and GHG emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks, covering model years 2021 through 2026, known as the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Final Rule for Model Years 2021 to 2026. Under SAFE, the fuel economy standards will increase 1.5 percent per year compared to the 5 percent per year under the CAFE standards established in 2012. Overall, SAFE requires a fleet average of 40.4 MPG for model year 2026 vehicles (85 Federal Register 24174 (April 30, 2020)).

On December 21, 2021, under the direction of Executive Order (EO) 13990 issued by President Biden, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) repealed SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One, which had preempted state and local laws related to fuel economy standards. In addition, the NHTSA announced new proposed fuel standards on March 31, 2022. Fuel efficiency under the new standards proposed will increase 8 percent annually for model years 2024 to 2025 and 10 percent for model year 2026. Overall, the new CAFE standards require a fleet average of 49 MPG for passenger vehicles and light trucks for model year 2026, which would be a 10 MPG increase relative to model year 2021 (NHTSA 2022).

State

Current State of California guidance and goals for reductions in GHG emissions are generally embodied in EO S-03-05, EO B-30-15, EO B-55-18, Assembly Bill (AB) 32, AB 1279, Senate Bill (SB) 32, and SB 375.

Executive Order S-03-05

EO S-03-05 was signed June 1, 2005, and set the following GHG reduction targets for the State:

- 2000 levels by 2010
- 1990 levels by 2020
- 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act (2006)

AB 32 was passed by the California State legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its contribution of GHG emissions. AB 32 follows the 2020 tier of emissions reduction targets established in EO S-03-05. CARB prepared the 2008 Scoping Plan to outline a plan to achieve the GHG emissions reduction targets of AB 32.

Executive Order B-30-15

EO B-30-15, signed April 29, 2015, set a goal of reducing GHG emissions in the state to 40 percent of 1990 levels by year 2030. EO B-30-15 also directed CARB to update the Scoping Plan to quantify the 2030 GHG reduction goal for the State and requires State agencies to implement measures to meet the interim 2030 goal as well as the long-term goal for 2050 in EO S-03-05. It also requires the Natural Resources Agency to conduct triennial updates of the California adaption strategy, *Safeguarding California*, in order to ensure climate change is accounted for in State planning and investment decisions.

Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197

In September 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 32 and AB 197 into law, making the EO goal for year 2030 into a statewide mandated legislative target. AB 197 established a joint legislative committee on climate change policies and requires CARB to prioritize direct emissions reductions rather than the market-based cap-and-trade program for large stationary, mobile, and other sources.

Executive Order B-55-18

EO B-55-18, signed September 10, 2018, sets a goal “to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter.” EO B-55-18 directs CARB to work with relevant State agencies to ensure future scoping plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal. The goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 is in addition to other State goals, meaning not only should emissions be reduced to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, but that, by no later than 2045, the remaining emissions be offset by equivalent net removals of CO_{2e} from the atmosphere, including through sequestration in forests, soils, and other natural landscapes.

Assembly Bill 1279

AB 1279, signed by Governor Newsom in September 2022, codifies the carbon neutrality targets of EO B-55-18 for year 2045 and sets a new legislative target for year 2045 of 85 percent below 1990 levels for anthropogenic GHG emissions. CARB was required to update the Scoping Plan to identify and recommend measures to achieve the net-zero and GHG emissions-reduction goals.

2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan

CARB adopted the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan) on December 15, 2022, which lays out a path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier and to reduce the state’s anthropogenic GHG emissions (CARB 2022b). The Scoping Plan was updated to address the carbon neutrality goals of EO B-55-18 and the ambitious GHG reduction target as directed by AB 1279. Previous scoping plans focused on

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

specific GHG reduction targets for industrial, energy, and transportation sectors—to meet 1990 levels by 2020, and then the more aggressive 40 percent below that for the 2030 target. This Plan expands on earlier scoping plans with a target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. Carbon neutrality takes it one step further by expanding actions to capture and store carbon, including through natural and working lands and mechanical technologies, while drastically reducing anthropogenic sources of carbon pollution at the same time.

The path forward was informed by the recent IPCC AR6; the measures would achieve 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045 in accordance AB 1279. CARB’s 2022 Scoping Plan identifies strategies as shown in Table 5.8-3, *Priority Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Plans*, that would be most impactful at the local level for ensuring substantial process towards the State’s carbon neutrality goals.

Table 5.8-3 Priority Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Plans

Priority Area	Priority Strategies
Transportation Electrification	Convert local government fleets to zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) and provide electric vehicle (EV) charging at public sites.
	Create a jurisdiction-specific ZEV ecosystem to support deployment of ZEVs statewide (such as building standards that exceed State building codes, permit streamlining, infrastructure siting, consumer education, preferential parking policies, and ZEV readiness plans).
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Reduction	Reduce or eliminate minimum parking standards.
	Implement complete streets policies and investments, consistent with general plan circulation element requirements.
	Increase access to public transit by increasing density of development near transit, improving transit service by increasing service frequency, creating bus priority lanes, reducing or eliminating fares, microtransit, and other approaches.
	Increase public access to clean mobility options by planning for and investing in electric shuttles, bike share, car share, and walking.
	Implement parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies.
	Amend zoning or development codes to enable mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented, and compact infill development (such as increasing allowable density of the neighborhood).
	Preserve natural and working lands by implementing land use policies that guide development toward infill areas and do not convert “greenfield” land to urban uses (e.g., green belts, strategic conservation easements).
Building Decarbonization	Adopt all-electric new construction reach codes for residential and commercial uses.
	Adopt policies and incentive programs to implement energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings, such as weatherization, lighting upgrades, and replacing energy-intensive appliances and equipment with more efficient systems (such as Energy Star-rated equipment and equipment controllers).
	Adopt policies and incentive programs to electrify all appliances and equipment in existing buildings such as appliance rebates, existing building reach codes, or time of sale electrification ordinances.
	Facilitate deployment of renewable energy production and distribution and energy storage on privately owned land uses (e.g., permit streamlining, information sharing).
	Deploy renewable energy production and energy storage directly in new public projects and on existing public facilities (e.g., solar photovoltaic systems on rooftops of municipal buildings and on canopies in public parking lots, battery storage systems in municipal buildings).

Source: CARB 2022b

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Residential and mixed-use development projects including the following key project attributes would accommodate growth in a manner consistent with State GHG reduction and equity prioritization goals. This is the first approach the State recommends for qualitatively determining whether a proposed residential or mixed-use residential development would align with the State's climate goals while simultaneously advancing fair housing.

Key residential and mixed-use project attributes that reduce GHGs:

- **Transportation Electrification**
 - Provide EV charging infrastructure that, at a minimum, meets the most ambitious voluntary standards in the California Green Building Standards Code at the time of project approval.
- **VMT Reduction**
 - Is located on infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses and reuses or redevelops previously undeveloped or underutilized land that is presently served by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, and sewer).
 - Does not result in the loss or conversion of the state's natural and working lands.
 - Consists of transit-supportive densities (minimum of 20 residential dwelling units/acre), or is in proximity to existing transit stops (within a half mile), or satisfies more detailed and stringent criteria specified in the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).
 - Reduces parking requirements by:
 - Eliminating parking requirements or including maximum allowable parking ratios (i.e., the ratio of parking spaces to residential units or square feet); or
 - Providing residential parking supply at a ratio of <1 parking space per dwelling unit; or
 - For multifamily residential development, requiring parking costs to be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit.
 - At least 20 percent of the units are affordable to lower-income residents.
 - Result in no net loss of existing affordable units.
- **Building Decarbonization**
 - Use all electric appliances without any natural gas connections and does not use propane or other fossil fuels for space heating, water heating, or indoor cooking.

The second approach to project-level alignment with State climate goals is net zero GHG emissions, especially for new residential development. The third approach to demonstrating project-level alignment with State climate goals is to align with GHG thresholds of significance, which many local air quality management (AQMDs) and air pollution control districts (APCDs) have developed or adopted (CARB 2022b).

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Senate Bill 375

SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was adopted in 2008 to connect the GHG emissions reduction targets established in the 2008 Scoping Plan for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles (i.e., excluding emissions associated with goods movement) by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce VMT and vehicle trips. Specifically, SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction targets for each of the 18 metropolitan planning organizations (MPO). The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the MPO for the Bay Area region, which includes Contra Costa County. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, CARB adopted per capita reduction targets for each of the MPOs rather than a total magnitude reduction target.

2017 Update to the SB 375 Targets

CARB is required to update the targets for the MPOs every eight years. In June 2017, CARB released updated targets and technical methodology, and then released another update in February 2018, which became effective in October 2018. CARB adopted the updated targets and methodology on March 22, 2018. All SCSs adopted after October 1, 2018, are subject to these new targets. The updated targets consider the need to further reduce VMT, as identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan Update, while balancing the need for additional and more flexible revenue sources to incentivize positive planning and action toward sustainable communities. The updated SB 375 targets are in units of percentage per capita reduction in GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks compared to 2005. This excludes reductions anticipated from implementation of State technology and fuels strategies and any potential future State strategies such as statewide road user pricing. The updated targets call for greater per-capita GHG emission reductions from SB 375 than were currently in place, which for 2035 translates into updated targets that either match or exceed the emission reduction levels in the MPOs' currently adopted SCSs. CARB's updated targets result in an additional reduction of over 8 MMTCO_{2e} in 2035 compared to the prior targets (CARB 2018).

Transportation Sector Specific Regulations

Advanced Clean Fleets and Advanced Clean Trucks

CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) regulation in 2023 to accelerate the transition to zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. In conjunction with the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) regulation, the ACF regulations helps to ensure that medium- and heavy-duty ZEVs are brought to the market, by requiring certain fleets to purchase ZEVs. The ACF ZEV phase-in approach provides initial focus where the best fleet electrification opportunities exist, sets clear targets for regulated fleets to make a full conversion to ZEVs, and creates a catalyst to accelerate development of a heavy-duty public charging infrastructure network.

Assembly Bill 1493

California vehicle GHG emission standards were enacted under AB 1493 (Pavley I). Pavley I is a clean-car standard that reduces GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles (light-duty auto to medium-duty vehicles) from 2009 through 2016 and was anticipated to reduce GHG emissions from new passenger vehicles by

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

30 percent in 2016. California implements the Pavley I standards through a waiver granted to California by the USEPA. In 2012, the USEPA issued a Final Rulemaking that set even more stringent fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for model years 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles. (See also the previous discussion in federal regulations under “*Update to Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards [2017 to 2026]*.”)

In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and GHGs with requirements for greater numbers of ZEVs into a single package of standards. Under California’s Advanced Clean Car program, by 2025 new automobiles will emit 34 percent less GHG emissions and 75 percent less smog-forming emissions.

Executive Order S-01-07

On January 18, 2007, the State set a new low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) for transportation fuels sold in the state. EO S-01-07 set a declining standard for GHG emissions measured in CO₂e gram per unit of fuel energy sold in California. The LCFS required a reduction of 2.5 percent in the carbon intensity of California’s transportation fuels by 2015 and a reduction of at least 10 percent by 2020. The standard applied to refiners, blenders, producers, and importers of transportation fuels, and used market-based mechanisms to allow these providers to choose the most economically feasible methods for reducing emissions during the “fuel cycle.”

Executive Order B-16-2012

On March 23, 2012, the State directed CARB, the California Energy Commission (CEC), the Public Utilities Commission, and other relevant agencies to work with the Plug-in Electric Vehicle Collaborative and the California Fuel Cell Partnership to establish benchmarks to accommodate ZEVs in major metropolitan areas, including infrastructure to support them (e.g., EV charging stations). EO B-16-2012 also directed the number of ZEVs in California’s State vehicle fleet to increase through the normal course of fleet replacement so that at least 10 percent of fleet purchases of light-duty vehicles are ZE by 2015 and at least 25 percent by 2020. The EO also established a target for the transportation sector of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Executive Order N-79-20

On September 23, 2020, Governor Newsom signed EO N-79-20, establishing a goal that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be ZE by 2035. Additionally, the fleet goals for trucks are that 100 percent of drayage trucks are ZE by 2035, and 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state are ZE by 2045, where feasible. The EO’s goal for the State is to transition to 100 percent ZE off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035, where feasible.

Renewables Portfolio: Carbon Neutrality Regulations

Senate Bills 1078, 107, and XI-2 and Executive Order S-14-08

A major component of California’s Renewable Energy Program is the renewables portfolio standard established under Senate Bills 1078 (Sher) and 107 (Simitian). Under the RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent in order to reach at

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

least 20 percent by December 30, 2010. EO S-14-08, signed in November 2008, expanded the State's renewable energy standard to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). Renewable sources of electricity include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. The increase in renewable sources for electricity production decreases indirect GHG emissions from development projects because electricity production from renewable sources is generally considered carbon neutral.

Senate Bill 350

SB 350 (de Leon) was signed into law in September 2015 and establishes tiered increases to the RPS—40 percent by 2024, 45 percent by 2027, and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350 also set a new goal to double the energy-efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas through energy efficiency and conservation measures.

Senate Bill 100

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed SB 100. Under SB 100, the RPS for public-owned facilities and retail sellers consists of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. SB 100 also established a new RPS requirement of 50 percent by 2026. Furthermore, the bill establishes an overall State policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all State agencies by December 31, 2045. Under the bill, the State cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resource shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Senate Bill 1020

SB 1020 was signed into law on September 16, 2022. SB 1020 provides interim RPS targets (90 percent renewable energy by 2035 and 95 percent renewable energy by 2040) and requires renewable energy and zero-carbon resources to reach 100 percent clean electricity by 2045.

Energy Efficiency Regulations

California Building Code: Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Energy conservation standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings were adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission (now the CEC) in June 1977 (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow for the consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

CEC adopted the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards on August 11, 2021, and they went into effect on January 1, 2023. The 2022 standards encourage efficient electric heat pumps, establish electric-ready requirements for new homes, expand solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthen ventilation standards, among other approaches. The 2022 standards require mixed-fuel single-family homes to be electric-ready to accommodate replacement of gas appliances with electric appliances. In addition, the new standards include prescriptive photovoltaic system and battery requirements for high-rise, multi-family buildings (i.e.,

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

more than three stories) and noncommercial buildings such as hotels, offices, medical offices, restaurants, retail stores, schools, warehouses, theaters, and convention centers (CEC 2021).

California Building Code: CALGreen

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (24 CCR, Part 11, known as "CALGreen") was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code. CALGreen established planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants.⁴ The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011, and were last updated in 2022. The 2022 CALGreen standards became effective on January 1, 2023.

2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations

The 2006 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (20 CCR Sections 1601–1608) were adopted by the CEC on October 11, 2006, and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on December 14, 2006. The regulations include standards for both federally regulated appliances and non–federally regulated appliances. Though these regulations are now often viewed as "business as usual," they exceed the standards imposed by all other states, and they reduce GHG emissions by reducing energy demand.

Solid Waste Diversion Regulations

Assembly Bill 939: Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989

California's Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, Public Resources Code Section 40050 et seq.) set a requirement for cities and counties throughout the state to divert 50 percent of all solid waste from landfills by January 1, 2000, through source reduction, recycling, and composting. In 2008, the requirements were modified to reflect a per capita requirement rather than tonnage. To help achieve this, the Act requires that each city and county prepare and submit a source reduction and recycling element. AB 939 also established the goal for all California counties to provide at least 15 years of ongoing landfill capacity.

Assembly Bill 341

AB 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) increased the statewide goal for waste diversion to 75 percent by 2020 and requires recycling of waste from commercial and multi-family residential land uses. Section 5.408 of CALGreen also requires that at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse.

Assembly Bill 1327

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act (AB 1327, Public Resources Code Section 42900 et seq.) requires areas to be set aside for collecting and loading recyclable materials in development projects. The Act required the California Integrated Waste Management Board to develop a model ordinance for

⁴ The green building standards became mandatory in the 2010 edition of the Code.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

adoption by any local agency requiring adequate areas for collection and loading of recyclable materials as part of development projects. Local agencies are required to adopt the model or an ordinance of their own.

Assembly Bill 1826

In October 2014, Governor Brown signed AB 1826, requiring businesses to recycle their organic waste on and after April 1, 2016, depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. This law also requires that on and after January 1, 2016, local jurisdictions across the state implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses and multi-family residential dwellings with five or more units. Organic waste means food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed with food waste.

Water Efficiency Regulations

Senate Bill X7-7

The 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan was issued by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in 2010 pursuant to SB 7, which was adopted during the 7th Extraordinary Session of 2009–2010 and therefore dubbed “SBX7-7.” SBX7-7 mandated urban water conservation and authorized DWR to prepare a plan implementing urban water conservation requirements, which DWR did through the 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan. In addition, it required agricultural water providers to prepare agricultural water management plans, measure water deliveries to customers, and implement other efficiency measures. SBX7-7 required urban water providers to adopt a water conservation target of a 20 percent reduction in urban per capita water use by 2020 compared to 2005 baseline use.

Assembly Bill 1881: Water Conservation in Landscaping Act

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881) requires local agencies to adopt the updated DWR model ordinance or an equivalent. AB 1881 also requires CEC to consult with DWR to adopt, by regulation, performance standards and labeling requirements for landscape irrigation equipment, including irrigation controllers, moisture sensors, emission devices, and valves, to reduce the wasteful, uneconomic, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy or water.

Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy

On September 19, 2016, the Governor signed SB 1383 to supplement the GHG reduction strategies in the Scoping Plan to consider short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon and methane. Black carbon is the light-absorbing component of fine particulate matter produced during the incomplete combustion of fuels. SB 1383 required CARB, no later than January 1, 2018, to approve and begin implementing a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants to achieve a reduction in methane by 40 percent, hydrofluorocarbon gases by 40 percent, and anthropogenic black carbon by 50 percent below 2013 levels by 2030. The bill also established targets for reducing organic waste in landfills. On March 14, 2017, CARB adopted the Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy, which identifies the State’s approach to reducing anthropogenic and biogenic sources of short-lived climate pollutants. Anthropogenic sources of black carbon include on- and off-road transportation, residential wood burning, fuel combustion (charbroiling), and industrial processes. According to CARB, ambient levels of black carbon in California are 90 percent lower

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

than in the early 1960s, despite the tripling of diesel fuel use (CARB 2017a). In-use on-road rules were expected to reduce black carbon emissions from on-road sources by 80 percent between 2000 and 2020.

Regional

Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

MTC and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 on October 21, 2021 (ABAG/MTC 2021). Plan Bay Area 2050 provides transportation and environmental strategies to continue to meet the regional transportation-related GHG reduction goals of SB 375. Under the Plan Bay Area 2050 strategies, just under half of all Bay Area households would live within one half-mile of frequent transit by 2050, with this share increasing to over 70 percent for households with low incomes. Transportation and environmental strategies that support active and shared modes, combined with a transit-supportive land use pattern, are forecasted to lower the share of Bay Area residents that drive to work alone from over 50 percent in 2015 to 36 percent in 2050. GHG emissions from transportation would decrease significantly as a result of these transportation and land use changes, and the Bay Area would meet the State mandate of a 19-percent reduction in per-capita emissions by 2035 — but only if all strategies are implemented (ABAG/MTC 2021).

To achieve this sustainable vision for the Bay Area, the Plan Bay Area land use concept plan for the region concentrates the majority of new population and employment growth in the region in Priority Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs are transit-oriented, infill development opportunity areas within existing communities. An overarching goal of the regional plan is to concentrate development in areas where there are existing services and infrastructure rather than allocate new growth to outlying areas where substantial transportation investments would be necessary to achieve the per capita passenger vehicle, VMT, and associated GHG emissions reductions. Parts of the EIR Study Area lie within identified PDAs (MTC 2023).

Bay Area Clean Air Plan

BAAQMD adopted the 2017 *Clean Air Plan, Spare the Air, Cool the Climate* (Clean Air Plan) on April 19, 2017. The 2017 Clean Air Plan also lays the groundwork for reducing GHG emissions in the Bay Area to meet the State's 2030 GHG reduction target and 2050 GHG reduction goal. It also includes a vision for the Bay Area in a post-carbon year 2050 that encompasses the following:

- Construct buildings that are energy efficient and powered by renewable energy.
- Walk, bicycle, and use public transit for the majority of trips and use electric-powered autonomous public transit fleets.
- Incubate and produce clean energy technologies.
- Live a low-carbon lifestyle by purchasing low-carbon foods and goods in addition to recycling and putting organic waste to productive use.

A comprehensive multipollutant control strategy has been developed to be implemented in the next three to five years to address public health and climate change and to set a pathway to achieve the 2050 vision. The control strategy includes 85 control measures to reduce emissions of ozone, particulate matter, toxic air contaminants, and GHG from a full range of emission sources. These control measures cover the following

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

sectors: (1) stationary (industrial) sources; (2) transportation; (3) energy; (4) agriculture; (5) natural and working lands; (6) waste management; (7) water; and (8) super-GHG pollutants. Overall, the proposed control strategy is based on the following key priorities:

- Reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from all key sources.
- Reduce emissions of “super-GHGs,” such as methane, black carbon, and fluorinated gases.
- Decrease demand for fossil fuels (i.e., gasoline, diesel, and natural gas).
 - Increase efficiency of the energy and transportation systems.
 - Reduce demand for vehicle travel and high-carbon goods and services.
- Decarbonize the energy system.
 - Make the electricity supply carbon-free.
 - Electrify the transportation and building sectors.

Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program

Under Air District Regulation 14, Model Source Emissions Reduction Measures, Rule 1, Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program, employers with 50 or more full-time employees within the BAAQMD are required to register and offer commuter benefits to employees. In partnership with BAAQMD and MTC, the Rule’s purpose is to improve air quality, reduce GHG emissions, and decrease the Bay Area’s traffic congestion by encouraging employees to use alternative commute modes, such as transit, vanpool, carpool, bicycling, and walking. The benefits program allows employees to choose from one of four commuter benefit options, including a pre-tax benefit, employer-provided subsidy, employer-provided transit, and alternative commute benefit.

Local

Contra Costa County Congestion Management Program

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) is Contra Costa County’s designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA). It is responsible for implementing programs to ensure traffic levels remain manageable. As the CMA, CCTA is in charge of coordinating land use, air quality, and transportation planning among local jurisdictions.

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) outlines transportation demand management efforts and a land use evaluation program – both of which are built on CCTA’s Growth Management Program established by Measure J. The CMP strives to enhance sensitivity to the environment, improve air quality, reduce GHG emissions, and promote sustainable communities (CCTA 2021).

Contra Costa County Climate Emergency Resolution

In September 2020 the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 2020/256 declaring a climate emergency that threatens the long-term economic and social well-being, health, safety, and security of the county. The resolution demands accelerated actions on the climate crisis and calls on local and regional partners to join together to address climate change.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Ordinance No. 2022-02, All-Electric Ordinance (New Construction), amends the 2019 California Energy Code to require the following building types to be all-electric:

- Residential (including single-family and multi-family buildings)
- Detached Accessory Dwelling Units
- Hotel
- Office
- Retail

Contra Costa County Commuter Benefit Program

The County provides full-time or part-time (over 20 hours per week) employees commuter benefits to cover work related, public transportation expenses such as ferry, train and bus fees, and parking expenses.

5.8.1.4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

California's GHG Sources and Relative Contribution

In 2022, the statewide GHG emissions inventory was updated for 2000 to 2020 emissions using the GWPs in IPCC's AR4, and reported that California produced 369.2 MMTCO_{2e} GHG emissions in 2020 (CARB 2022a), which was 35.3 MMTCO_{2e} lower than 2019 levels and 61.8 MMTCO_{2e} below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 MMTCO_{2e}. The 2019 to 2020 decrease in emissions is likely due in large part to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, since the peak level in 2004, California's GHG emissions have generally followed a decreasing trend. In 2014, statewide GHG emissions dropped below the 2020 GHG Limit and have remained below the Limit since that time. Per capita GHG emissions in California have dropped from a 2001 peak of 13.8 metric tons per person to 9.3 metric tons per person in 2020, a 33-percent decrease (CARB 2022a).

California's transportation sector remains the largest generator of GHG emissions, producing 37 percent of the state's total emissions in 2020. Industrial sector emissions made up 20 percent and electric power generation made up 16 percent of the state's emissions inventory. Other major sectors of GHG emissions include commercial and residential (4 percent), agriculture and forestry (8.6 percent), high-GWP gases (5.8 percent), and recycling and waste (2 percent) (CARB 2022a).

Transportation emissions continued to decline for the past three consecutive years with the rise of fuel efficiency for the passenger vehicle fleet and an increase in battery electric vehicles. The deployment of renewable and less carbon-intensive resources and higher energy efficiency standards have facilitated the continuing decline in fossil fuel electricity generation. The industrial sector trend has been relatively flat in recent years but saw a decrease of 7.1 MMTCO_{2e} in 2020. Commercial and residential emissions saw a decrease of 1.7 MMTCO_{2e}. Emissions from high-GWP gases have continued to increase as they replace ozone depleting substance (ODS) that are being phased out under the 1987 Montreal Protocol. Emissions from other sectors have remained relatively constant in recent years. Overall trends in the inventory also continue to demonstrate that the carbon intensity of California's economy (i.e., the amount of carbon pollution per million dollars of

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

gross domestic product [GDP]) is declining. From 2000 to 2020, the carbon intensity of California's economy decreased by 49 percent while the GDP increased by 56 percent (CARB 2022a).

Existing Community-wide GHG Emissions

The existing land uses in the EIR Study Area consist of single- and multi-family residences and retail, office, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. Operation of these land uses generates GHG emissions from natural gas used for energy, heating, and cooking; electricity usage; vehicle trips for employees and residents; area sources such as landscaping equipment and consumer cleaning products; water demand; waste generation; and solid waste generation.⁵ Table 5.8-4, *Unincorporated Contra Costa County 2005 and Existing GHG Emissions Inventory*, shows the emissions associated with existing land uses in the EIR Study Area.

Table 5.8-4 Unincorporated Contra Costa County 2005 and Existing GHG Emissions Inventory

Sector	2005 (MTCO ₂ e/year)	Existing (MTCO ₂ e/year)	Percentage of Total
On-Road Transportation	628,200	464,040	44%
Residential Energy	294,930	191,780	18%
Nonresidential Energy	118,740	159,520	15%
Solid Waste/Landfills	243,940	220,760	21%
Agriculture	33,350	36,130	3%
Off-road Equipment	34,160	54,010	5%
Water and Wastewater	8,080	4,870	<1%
BART	1,040	190	<1%
Land Use and Sequestration	-70,860	-70,860	-7%
Total Community Emissions	1,291,580	1,060,440	100%

Source: Proposed CAP (see Appendix 5.8-1 to this Draft EIR).

5.8.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- GHG-1 Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- GHG-2 Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

BAAQMD's *CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts from Land Use Projects and Plans* contains instructions on how to evaluate, measure, and mitigate GHG impacts generated from land use development projects and plans. For purposes of this analysis, Contra Costa County is using BAAQMD's current GHG plan-level significance thresholds to evaluate the proposed project's potential impacts related to GHG emissions.

⁵ Emissions from water demand and wastewater are emissions associated with electricity used to supply, treat, and distribute water.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

5.8.2.1 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION IMPACTS

BAAQMD, in its Justification Report: *CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts From Land Use Projects and Plans* (GHG Justification Report 2022), recommends the use of one of two plan-level criteria to determine the GHG emission impact resulting from a proposed plan. If a proposed plan cannot demonstrate consistency with the BAAQMD-recommended Criterion A or Criterion B, that plan would result in a potentially significant impact related to GHG emissions.

- A. The plan must be consistent with a local GHG reduction strategy that meets the criteria under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b); or
- B. The plan must meet the State's goals to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2045.

5.8.2.2 CONTRA COSTA COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), *Tiering and Streamlining the Analysis of Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, allows for lead agencies to analyze and mitigate the significant effects of GHG emissions at a programmatic level. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), later project-specific environmental documents may tier from and/or incorporate by reference the GHG reduction plan so long as it includes the following plan elements:

- Quantify GHG emissions, both existing and projected over a specified time period, resulting from activities within a defined geographic area;
- Establish a level, based on substantial evidence, below which the contribution to GHG emissions from activities covered by the plan would not be cumulatively considerable;
- Identify and analyze the GHG emissions resulting from specific actions or categories of actions anticipated within the geographic area;
- Specify measures or a group of measures, including performance standards, that substantial evidence demonstrates, if implemented on a project-by-project basis, would collectively achieve the specified emissions level;
- Establish a mechanism to monitor the plan's progress toward achieving the level and to require amendment if the plan is not achieving specified levels;
- Be adopted in a public process following environmental review.

The proposed CAP is an update to the County's 2015 CAP. The proposed CAP provides an updated baseline emissions inventory and forecast for the unincorporated areas, which aligns the County's GHG reduction efforts with State-recommended targets of AB 1279. The proposed CAP demonstrates consistency with BAAQMD's significance criteria of meeting the State's goals to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2045; demonstrates consistency with Appendix C "*Guidance for Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies*" of BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines; and meets all of the criteria listed above from CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b). The proposed CAP is a component of the proposed project and is utilized for establishing the significance criteria for the unincorporated county. Additionally, once adopted, the proposed

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

CAP may be used for streamlined GHG analyses for future individual development projects, consistent with the proposed project and with the provisions contained in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5.

5.8.2.3 CONSISTENCY WITH STATEWIDE GHG REDUCTION TARGETS

The proposed General Plan and CAP forecast growth in the EIR Study Area through year 2045; therefore, this EIR analyzes the potential for the proposed project to conflict with statewide GHG reduction goals identified in the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan that are applicable to local governments. This includes AB 1279, which requires an 85 percent reduction in GHG emissions by 2045 to stabilize CO_{2e} emissions and avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change, as well as to make substantial progress toward carbon neutrality.⁶

The proposed CAP outlines strategies and GHG reduction measures to achieve the SB 32 target for year 2030 and the long-range target of AB 1279 for year 2045. The proposed CAP covers GHG emissions reductions through the proposed General Plan's 2045 horizon year. The targets of the proposed CAP are consistent with the statewide GHG emissions reduction goals of AB 1279. Based on the proposed CAP, a trajectory consistent with the State's GHG emissions targets for the proposed project in year 2030 and year 2045 would be:⁷

- Year 2030 (40 percent below the 1990 levels): 658,700 MTCO_{2e}.
- Year 2045 (85 percent below the 1990 levels): 164,680 MTCO_{2e}.

The proposed CAP is intended to meet the CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 plan requirements for CEQA streamlining for development projects consistent with the proposed CAP and General Plan in unincorporated Contra Costa County.

5.8.2.4 MASS EMISSIONS AND HEALTH EFFECTS

On December 24, 2018, in *Sierra Club et al. v. County of Fresno et al.* (Friant Ranch), the California Supreme Court determined that the EIR for the proposed Friant Ranch project failed to adequately analyze the project's air quality impacts on human health. The EIR prepared for the project, which involved a master planned retirement community in Fresno County, showed that project-related mass emissions would exceed the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's regional significance thresholds. In its findings, the California Supreme Court affirmed the holding of the Court of Appeal that EIRs for projects must not only identify impacts to human health, but also provide an "analysis of the correlation between the project's emissions and human health impacts" related to each criterion air pollutant that exceeds the regional significance thresholds or explain why

⁶ The 2022 Scoping Plan includes statewide measures to achieve the State's carbon neutrality goals under EO B-55-18, such as carbon dioxide removal (CDR), that are not applicable to local governments. Carbon neutrality goals are a "no impact" level and not a "less than significant" impact level for climate change effects. There are presently no reliable means of forecasting how future technological developments related to CDR may affect future emissions in a planning jurisdiction. Therefore, carbon neutrality targets are not directly applicable to local governments and CEQA projects to mitigate GHG emissions impacts of a proposed project. Moreover, AB 1279 GHG reduction targets for 2045 are in line with the scientifically established levels needed in the U.S. to limit global warming below 1.5 to 2.0 degrees Celsius, the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be major climate disruptions such as super droughts and rising sea levels. For these reasons, the targets of AB 1279 are applicable to the EIR. However, the proposed CAP includes measures that align with the State's carbon neutrality goals under AB 1279, EO B-55-18, and SB 32.

⁷ Unincorporated Contra Costa County GHG emissions in 2005 were 1,291,580 MTCO_{2e}, translating to a 1990 GHG emissions level of 1,097,840 MTCO_{2e} (see Appendix 5.8-1 to this Draft EIR). The 2030 target for SB 32 is a 40 percent reduction from 1990 levels, which equates to 658,700 MTCO_{2e}.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

it could not make such a connection. In general, the ruling focuses on the correlation of emissions of toxic air contaminants and criteria air pollutants and their impact to human health.

In 2009, the USEPA issued an endangerment finding for six GHGs (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆) in order to regulate GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. The endangerment finding is based on evidence that shows an increase in mortality and morbidity associated with increases in average temperatures, which increase the likelihood of heatwaves and ozone levels. The effects of climate change are summarized in Table 5.8-2. Though identified effects such as sea-level rise and increased extreme weather can indirectly impact human health, neither the USEPA nor CARB has established ambient air quality standards for GHG emissions. The State's GHG reduction strategy outlines a path to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change. Yet the State's GHG reduction goals and strategies are based on the State's path toward reducing statewide cumulative GHGs as outlined in AB 32, SB 32, and AB 1279.

As mentioned above, the two significance thresholds that the County uses to analyze GHG impacts are based on achieving the statewide GHG reduction goals (GHG-1) and relying on consistency with policies or plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions (GHG-2). Further, because no single project is large enough to result in a measurable increase in global concentration of GHG emissions, climate change impacts of a project are considered on a cumulative basis. Without federal ambient air quality standards for GHG emissions, and given the cumulative nature of GHG emissions and the County's significance thresholds, which are tied to reducing the State's cumulative GHG emissions, it is not feasible at this time to connect the project's specific GHG emissions to the potential health impacts of climate change.

5.8.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.8.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to GHG emissions. *Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.*

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
- **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.
- **Action LU-A4.1:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to include requirements for Low Impact Development, the use of low-carbon concrete, water and energy conservation, reclaimed water, renewable energy use, green building, and other measures that reduce the environmental impacts of development, based on the best available science.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P1.3:** Ensure emerging transportation technologies and travel options, such as autonomous and ZEVs and transportation network companies, support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.4:** *Reduce single-occupant vehicle usage, at a minimum using strategies defined in the TDM Ordinance.*
- **Policy TR-P1.11:** Support transitioning all on-road vehicles, including personal vehicles and business, government, and public transit fleets, to electric power from renewable sources or other zero-emission fuels.
- **Policy TR-P1.12:** Continue to improve ZEV (including electric bicycle) charging/fueling infrastructure within new development and public rights-of-way, incorporating new technologies whenever possible.
- **Policy TR-P1.13:** *Require designs for new parking facilities to incorporate ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure and maximize opportunities for adaptive reuse.*
- **Action TR-A1.4:** Implement programs to encourage transit use, bicycling, walking, telecommuting, and use of alternative vehicle fuels by County employees.
- **Action TR-A1.11:** Coordinate with CCTA and other local and regional agencies to implement the Contra Costa Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint and related policies and apply best practices in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure requirements.
- **Action TR-A1.12:** Update the County Ordinance Code as necessary to support advances in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure, including for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.
- **Policy TR-P6.5:** Work with railroads to preserve non-operational contiguous railroad rights-of-way, and highly encourage construction of grade-separated railroad crossings along active lines to support current and future rail operations and ensure the long-term viability of these rail corridors. When no longer in operation, maintain options for future use of the corridors for trails or other public purposes.
- **Policy TR-P7.7:** Embrace emerging aviation-related technologies, such as drones, electric-powered aviation, and vertical takeoff and landing aircraft, to promote economic development and support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P14.1:** Implement Climate Action Plan strategies to improve energy efficiency and conservation, promote carbon-free energy sources, and reduce energy-related GHG emissions.

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P3.1:** Prioritize implementation of the Contra Costa County Climate Action Plan to reduce GHG emissions from community-wide sources and adapt to changing climate conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- **Policy HS-P3.3:** *Require new development projects using the Contra Costa County Climate Action Plan to streamline their environmental review of GHG emissions, as permitted by CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, to demonstrate consistency with the Climate Action Plan and incorporate applicable GHG -reduction and climate change adaptation measures.*

5.8.3.2 PROPOSED CLIMATE ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following proposed CAP strategies and actions pertain to GHG emissions:

Clean and Efficient Built Environment (BE)

Strategy BE-1: Require and incentivize new buildings and additions built in unincorporated Contra Costa County to be low-carbon or carbon neutral.

Strategy BE-1 Actions:

- Maintain, update, publicize, and enforce the County Ordinance Code Title 7 – Building Regulations amendment requiring new residential buildings, hotels, offices, and retail to be all-electric. Evaluate the feasibility of including other building types as appropriate.
- Study the feasibility of establishing a low-carbon concrete requirement for all new construction and retrofit activities and consider additional strategies to reduce embedded carbon in construction materials. The intent is to determine what the County can and should do to support or exceed State requirements for net-zero emissions for cement use by 2045. (HS-A3.2)

Strategy BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated County, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels.

Strategy BE-2 Actions:

- Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy. (COS-A14.6)
- Require replacement and new water heaters and space heating and cooling systems to be electric if the building electric panel has sufficient capacity in accordance with BAAQMD Regulation 9, Rule 4, and Regulation 9, Rule 6. (COS-P14.10)
- Implement requirements for cool roofs and light-colored, nonreflective permeable paving materials as part of retrofit, repair, and replacement activities, using recycled materials or other materials with low embedded carbon as feasible and as established by the Building Standards Code.

Strategy BE-3: Increase the amount of electricity used and generated from renewable sources in the county.

Strategy BE-3 Actions:

- Require new commercial parking lots with 50 or more spaces to mitigate heat gain through installation of shade trees, solar arrays, or other emerging cooling technologies. Prioritize the use of solar arrays where feasible and appropriate. (HS-P8.3)
- Work with MCE to increase enrollment, especially in the Deep Green tier.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Continue to enroll all eligible, non-solar-equipped County facility electricity accounts in MCE territory in the Deep Green tier.

No Waste Contra Costa (NW)

Strategy NW-1: Increase composting of organic waste.

Strategy NW-1 Actions:

- Ensure, through franchise agreements and other relationships with waste haulers, a source-separated organics collection service for all residential and commercial customers in County-controlled collection franchise areas.
- Require that new and expanded landfill operations significantly reduce GHG emissions to meet or exceed State targets to the extent feasible, and work toward carbon-neutral landfills.
- Work with wastewater providers to explore the use of organic waste as feedstock for anaerobic digesters to produce biogas that can generate electricity or fuel.
- Require local restaurants, grocery stores, and other edible food generators that handle large quantities of food to partner with food rescue organizations to divert edible food that would be otherwise disposed in landfills for distribution to those in need, in accordance with SB 1383.
- Procure compost or other products made from recovered organic waste in accordance with the County's Recovered Organic Waste Product and Recycled Paper Procurement Policy.

Strategy NW-2: Reduce waste from County operations.

Strategy NW-2 Actions:

- Establish a source-separated organics collection service at all County-owned facilities that includes recovering food waste (scraps) and food-soiled paper.
- Conduct waste audits of County facilities, including assessing the volume and composition of all waste streams, to identify challenges with waste activities and develop educational or operational changes to address issues and reduce waste generation.
- Obtain material for capital projects from local and low-carbon sources to the greatest extent feasible, including allocating additional funds to allow for such materials, and integrate appropriate standards into the County's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) policy.

Strategy NW-3: Increase community-wide recycling and waste minimization programs.

Strategy NW-3 Actions:

- Create a source-reduction program in partnership with regional agencies to promote rethinking, refusing, reducing, reusing, and regenerating of materials.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Strategy NW-4: Reduce emissions from landfill gas.

Strategy NW-4 Actions:

- Encourage efforts at Acme, Keller Canyon, and West Contra Costa landfills to install or enhance existing methane capture technology and associated monitoring systems with a goal of increasing the methane capture rate to the greatest extent feasible.

Reduce Water Use and Increase Drought Resilience (DR)

Strategy DR-1: Reduce indoor and outdoor water use.

Strategy DR-1 Actions:

- Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.
- Require homes and businesses to install water-efficient fixtures at time of retrofit activities, in accordance with the California Building Standards Code.
- Continue to enforce the Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance and encourage the use of native and drought-tolerant landscaping for exempt residential and commercial landscapes through partnership with local and regional water agencies and other organizations.
- Partner with water and wastewater service providers, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide. (COS-P7.2)
- Encourage the installation of graywater and rainwater catchment systems, particularly for new construction, as feasible for wastewater infrastructure. Reduce regulatory barriers for these systems and explore creating incentives for installing these systems in new and existing buildings.
- Identify opportunities for graywater use in public spaces and implement them as feasible.
- Promote the installation of composting toilets at appropriate County facilities in locations without wastewater service.

Strategy DR-2: Ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies.

Strategy DR-2 Actions:

- Work with water suppliers to expand recycled water systems as feasible, including considering additional treatment to allow for additional recycled water uses.

Clean Transportation Network (TR)

Strategy TR-1: Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-carbon commuting, and using public transit for travel within, to, and from the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Strategy TR-1 Actions:

- Track over time projects that add pedestrian and bicycle facilities to document the County's implementation of the County Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP); Complete Streets checklist; Vision Zero Report and Action Plan; Active Transportation Plan; and equity-focused plans, programs, and policies.
- Improve the safety and comfort of bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities using best practices to encourage more people to use such facilities.
- Work with CCTA to fill gaps in the countywide Low-Stress Bike Network, as outlined in the 2018 Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Prioritize providing access for Impacted Communities and constructing protected bicycle facilities.
- In collaboration with key partners, support efforts to establish or join a shared mobility program that provides access to conventional bicycle, e-bikes, and other micromobility modes.
- Support efforts to expand the service area and frequency of regional transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, the San Francisco Bay Ferry, and WestCAT.
- Maximize development of jobs and affordable housing near high-quality transit service to support a jobs-housing balance.
- Maintain in place and enforce a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance that reflects best practices, and, at a minimum, conforms to Contra Costa Transportation Authority's adopted model TDM ordinance or resolution.
- Support CCTA to develop and implement methods for tracking EV and e-bike charging and availability across jurisdictions.
- Support CCTA and regional transit agencies in providing "last mile" transportation connections and options.
- Encourage and support increased regional integration of transit systems to promote more equitable fare structures, fare integration, easier transfers, including coordinated transfers between different transit systems and reduced wait times, improved information sharing, and generally a more seamless and modern system.

Strategy TR-2: Increase the use of zero-emissions vehicles. Transition to a zero-emission County fleet by 2035 and a community fleet that is at least 50 percent zero-emission by 2030.

Strategy TR-2 Actions:

- Require new County vehicles to be zero emission to the extent a viable vehicle is available on the market, that charging or zero-emission fueling equipment is conveniently located where the vehicle will be stored, and as required by the Advanced Clean Fleet regulations, with the goal that all County vehicles will be zero-emission by 2035.
- Install electric vehicle charging equipment and other infrastructure needed to support the transition to a zero-emission County fleet at County facilities. Consider the appropriate locations, number, and capacity of infrastructure to facilitate the transition of the County fleet to zero-emission vehicles.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Provide incentives for zero-emission vehicles in partnership with MCE, BAAQMD, and other agencies.
- Work with property owners and other potential partners to pursue installation of zero-emission vehicle charging stations in and near multifamily dwelling units.
- Update off-street parking ordinance to include a requirement for zero-emission vehicle charging infrastructure. Consider including incentives for developers to exceed minimum requirements (i.e., density bonus).
- Increase installation of electric vehicle charging stations for all vehicle types, including bicycles and scooters, at public facilities, emphasizing increased installation in Impacted Communities.
- In partnership with regional agencies, explore providing subsidies for households making less than the area median income to purchase or lease zero-emission vehicles and associated infrastructure.
- Pursue fees and regulatory efforts to convert transportation network company (TNC), taxi, and similar car-hire services to zero-emission vehicles.
- Explore opportunities for implementing electric vehicle sharing programs.
- Work with BAAQMD and other regional agencies to convert off-road equipment to zero-emission clean fuels.
- Work with contractors, fleet operations, logistics companies, and other operators of heavy-duty vehicles to accelerate the transition to zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles.
- Work with Public Works to pursue the use of renewable natural gas (sourced from recovered organic waste) for transportation fuel, electricity, or heating applications in cases where battery-electric, hybrid-electric, and sustainably sourced hydrogen fuel-cell sources are not available.
- Encourage efforts to maximize EV charging during solar peak hours.
- Support implementation of the Contra Costa County Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint.

Resilient Communities and Natural Infrastructure (NI)

Strategy NI-4: Sequester carbon on natural and working lands in Contra Costa County

Strategy NI-4 Actions:

- Pursue implementation of recommendations from carbon sequestration feasibility study, Healthy Lands, Healthy People.
- Continue to support and work with key partners to maintain existing and establish new pilot programs for carbon sequestration on agricultural land.
- Coordinate with farming groups, ranchers, the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, and the University of California Cooperative Extension to identify and promote varieties of feedstock, livestock, and crops that are resilient to rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns and that increase carbon sequestration.
- Explore ways to increase carbon sequestration on County-owned facilities.
- Partner with regional landowners and agencies to establish carbon sequestration programs and incentives.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Consider the development of carbon offset protocols and guidance for use by carbon sequestration program applicants and County permitting staff to promote appropriate sequestration on natural and developed lands.
- Explore the potential for the public to support tree planting and maintenance of existing trees.
- Establish a mechanism to support expanded tree planting and maintenance activities, particularly in areas with few trees.
- Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- Inventory wetlands, floodplains, marshlands, and adjacent lands that could potentially support climate adaptation (e.g., through flood management, filtration, or other beneficial ecosystem services) and mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration).
- Encourage and support conservation of natural lands outside the urban limit line in the unincorporated county.
- Require that any mitigation of air quality impacts occur on-site to the extent feasible to provide the greatest benefit to local residents. For mitigation that relies on offsets, require that the offsets be obtained from sources as near to the project site as possible. If the project site is within or adjacent to an Impacted Community, require offsets or mitigation within that community unless determined infeasible by the County.

5.8.4 Environmental Impacts

5.8.4.1 METHODOLOGY

This GHG evaluation was prepared in accordance with the requirements of CEQA to determine if significant GHG impacts are likely to occur in conjunction with future development in the EIR Study Area. The GHG emissions inventory and forecast is based on data compiled for the proposed CAP and is included as Appendix 5.8-1 to the Draft EIR. The GHG emissions inventory was compiled using the following protocols:

- **Local Government Operations Protocol.** The County operations GHG inventory relies on the *Local Government Operations Protocol* (LGOP), which was first developed in 2008 and updated in 2010. The LGOP is a tool for accounting and reporting GHG emissions of local government (municipal) operations and is used throughout California and the United States. The LGOP includes guidance from several existing programs as well as the State's mandatory GHG reporting regulations.
- **U.S. Community Protocol.** The community-wide GHG inventory uses the *United States Community Protocol for Accounting and Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions* (U.S. Community Protocol), which was first developed in 2012 and last updated in 2019. The California Governor's Office of Planning and Research encourages cities and counties in California to follow the U.S. Community Protocol for community-wide GHG emissions.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- **Global Protocol.** The *Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (Global Protocol) was first developed in 2014 and is intended for preparing international community-scale GHG inventories. It is largely consistent with the U.S. Community Protocol, although it contains additional guidance and resources to support a wider range of activities in other countries. This protocol is used to assess GHG emissions from sources that are not covered in the U.S. Community Protocol.

Sectors

- **On-Road Transportation** includes GHG emissions created by driving on-road vehicles in the unincorporated county, including passenger and freight vehicles, based on data from CARB.
- **Residential Energy** includes GHG emissions attributed to the use of electricity and natural gas and other home heating fuels in residential buildings, based on data from Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) and Marin Clean Energy (MCE).
- **Solid Waste** includes the GHG emissions released from trash collected in the EIR Study Area based on data from CalRecycle, as well as collective annual emissions from waste already in place at the Acme, Keller Canyon, and West Contra Costa Landfills.
- **Off-Road Equipment** includes GHG emissions from equipment that does not provide on-road transportation (excluding agricultural equipment), such as tractors for construction or equipment used for landscape maintenance.
- **Agriculture** includes GHG emissions from various agricultural activities, including agricultural equipment, crop cultivation and harvesting, and livestock operations.
- **Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)** includes GHG emissions associated with the operation of BART for unincorporated county residents.
- **Water and Wastewater** accounts for the electricity used to transport every gallon of water or wastewater to and from unincorporated county residents and businesses as well as direct emissions resulting from processing of wastewater material.
- **Land Use and Sequestration** includes GHG emissions absorbed and stored in trees and soils on locally controlled lands as part of healthy ecosystems and released into the atmosphere from development of previously undeveloped land.

Industrial sources of emissions that require a permit from BAAQMD are not included in the community inventory. However, due to the 15/15 Rule, natural gas and electricity use data for industrial land uses may also be aggregated with the nonresidential land uses in the data provided by PG&E. Life-cycle emissions are not included in this analysis because not enough information is available, and therefore they would be speculative. Black carbon emissions are not included in the GHG analysis because CARB does not include this short-lived climate pollutant in the State's GHG emissions inventory, treating it separately.

GHG Emissions Factors

Table 5.8-5, *Existing GHG Emission Factors*, shows the emissions factors for the baseline year. Some sectors, including agriculture and off-road emissions, are calculated using formulae or models and do not have specific emission factors.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Table 5.8-5 Existing GHG Emission Factors

Sector	MTCO ₂ e / Unit	Baseline Year Rate	Source
PG&E electricity	kWh	0.000108	PG&E
Direct access electricity	kWh	0.000187	California Energy Commission
MCE	kWh	0.000045	MCE
Natural gas	therm	0.005311	US Community Protocol
Propane	gallons	0.005844	US Community Protocol
Kerosene	gallon	0.010569	US Community Protocol
Wood	MMBTU	0.095624	US Community Protocol
On-road vehicles	VMT	0.000408	CARB EMFAC2021
BART	passenger mile	0.000013	BART
Solid waste (municipal solid waste)	ton	0.261659	CalRecycle
Solid waste (alternative daily cover)	ton	0.245693	CalRecycle

Source: Draft EIR Appendix 5.8-1, proposed CAP.

GHG Emissions Forecast

The forecast assumes that each person in the EIR Study Area will continue to contribute the same amount of GHG emissions to the community total as they did in the baseline year, so the amount of GHG emissions changes proportionally to the projected change in community demographics.

Impact 5.8-1: Implementation of the proposed project is not projected to result in emissions that would exceed the unincorporated county's GHG reduction target established under SB 32 and progress toward the State's carbon neutrality goal. [Threshold GHG-1]

Proposed General Plan

Future potential development under the proposed General Plan would contribute to global climate change through direct and indirect emissions of GHGs from land uses within the unincorporated county. However, a general plan is a long-range policy document that does not directly result in development without additional approvals. Before any development can occur in the unincorporated county, it must be analyzed for consistency with the General Plan, zoning requirements, and other applicable local and State requirements; comply with the requirements of CEQA; and obtain all necessary clearances and permits from regulatory agencies.

Horizon Year 2045 Emissions Compared to Existing Conditions

The projected development under the proposed General Plan is not linked to a specific development time frame but is assumed over a 20-year project horizon through 2045. Implementation of the proposed General Plan by the horizon year of 2045 would result in a net increase in service population of 74,969 in the EIR Study Area. Table 5.8-6, *Contra Costa County GHG Emissions Business-as-Usual Forecast*, provides a comparison of the change in GHG emissions in the EIR Study Area between the CEQA baseline (2019) and the proposed General Plan horizon year (2045) conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

As shown in Table 5.8-6, the increase in residential units and population associated with the proposed General Plan results in an increase in on-road transportation, residential and nonresidential building energy use, solid waste, off-road equipment, water and wastewater, and BART.

Table 5.8-6 Contra Costa County GHG Emissions Business-as-Usual Forecast

Category	Contra Costa County GHG Emissions (MTCO ₂ e/Year)		
	Existing	Year 2030	Year 2045
On-road transportation	464,040	542,020	605,080
Residential energy	191,780	217,710	259,380
Nonresidential energy	159,520	167,720	180,200
Solid waste	220,760	229,450	260,490
Agriculture	36,130	34,770	33,410
Off-road equipment	54,010	69,520	76,100
Water and wastewater	4,870	5,530	6,590
BART	190	220	260
Land use and sequestration	-70,860	-67,580	-58,890
Total Community Emissions (BAU)	1,060,440	1,199,360	1,362,620
Reductions from State Actions	NA	-185,520	-483,340
Total Community Emissions with State Actions	NA	1,013,840	879,280
SB 32 (2030) and AB 1279 (2045) Targets	NA	658,700	164,680
Achieves Target?	NA	No	No

Source: Draft EIR Appendix 5.8-1, 2024 CAP Update.

Notes: The 2045 forecast includes State actions to reduce GHG emissions. Emissions may not total to 100 percent due to rounding. Based on GWPs in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). BAU = business as usual.

Table 5.8-6 accounts for reductions from State measures that have been adopted to reduce GHG emissions, including:

- The RPS requires increases in renewable electricity supplies.
- The Clean Car Standards require increased fuel efficiency of on-road vehicles and decreased carbon intensity of vehicle fuels.
- The updated Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards require new buildings to achieve increased energy efficiency targets.
- The LCFS mandates reduced carbon intensity of fuels used in off-road equipment.
- The short-lived climate pollutants law (SB 1383) proposes a comprehensive strategy to reduce methane and other emissions of short-lived GHGs through regulations on dairy operations and urban landfills, including higher diversion rates of food waste from landfills.

As shown in Table 5.8-6, after accounting for reductions from State actions, projected development in 2045 that would be accommodated under the proposed General Plan would result in a net decrease of 181,160 MTCO₂e GHG emissions from existing conditions. The primary reason for the decrease in overall community-wide GHG emissions, despite an increase in service population, is a result of regulations adopted to reduce GHG emissions and turnover of California's on-road vehicle fleets. Consequently, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not result in a substantial increase in GHG emissions because there would be a

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

decrease in emissions from existing conditions (CEQA baseline). However, without additional local GHG reduction strategies, Contra Costa County would not achieve consistency with the GHG reduction goals of AB 1279 (i.e., 85 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2045).

Local GHG Reduction Measures

The proposed General Plan directs implementation of the proposed CAP. The proposed CAP draws on strategies from the 2015 CAP, with new strategies to address current State regulations and local issues of concern. Contra Costa County has implemented the following GHG reduction measures identified in the 2015 CAP to reduce GHG emissions in the EIR Study Area:

- To increase the number of carbon neutral buildings, the Board of Supervisors adopted the All-Electric Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2022-02) to require new construction of residential, detached accessory dwelling units (ADU), hotel, office, and retail building types to be all-electric. As of June 2022, 67 single-family or duplex projects and 40 ADU projects received permits in alignment with the all-electric ordinance. Current new construction and major renovations of County facilities include LED lighting and heat pump technology, and the County enrolled in MCE's Strategic Energy Management Program to increase energy efficiency in County facilities. Additionally, 42 projects within the unincorporated area utilized the Bay Area Regional Energy Network program, which provides rebates to single-family homeowners for energy efficiency improvements.
- To replace fossil fuel electricity with renewable electricity, the majority of residential accounts in the unincorporated area are enrolled in MCE for an estimated 43,690 metric tons of CO_{2e} reduced. Around 70 percent of the County's electricity usage is associated with MCE's Deep Green account, which provides electricity from 100 percent renewable energy.
- The County has developed a carbon sequestration feasibility study through a grant from the California Department of Conservation. The study, *Healthy Lands, Healthy People*, will identify strategies to store carbon in various land uses across the county, such as agriculture, parks and open space, conservation lands, and towns and cities (Contra Costa 2022a).
- The County has also enhanced the accessibility and connectivity of active transportation options with the adoption of the Active Transportation Plan and 2022 Capital Road Improvement & Preservation Program (CRIPP) (Contra Costa 2022b). The CRIPP lays out funded transportation projects in the county that provide safe, efficient, and reliable transportation. Currently, there are 33 actively funded projects.
- The County is working to implement projects at over 25 sites to facilitate the transition to an all-electric County fleet. MCE has also established numerous EV charging ports over the years, including 33 EV charging port installations in year 2022.

The proposed CAP identifies GHG emissions reductions targets for the EIR Study Area that would ensure consistency with the State GHG reduction goals of AB 1279 and substantial progress toward the State's carbon neutrality goals. In addition, the proposed CAP includes additional GHG reduction measures to achieve the State's carbon neutrality goals identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan. Table 5.8-7, *Proposed CAP Local GHG Reduction Strategies*, shows the local GHG reduction measures and reductions associated with the local measures in the proposed CAP in 2045 that would help achieve those reductions.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Table 5.8-7 Proposed CAP Local GHG Reduction Strategies

Local GHG Reduction Strategies	2045 GHG Reductions (MTCO ₂ e)
BE-1 Construct new low-carbon or carbon neutral buildings.	10,710
BE-2 Convert existing buildings to carbon-neutral and low-carbon buildings.	177,830
NW-1 Compost Organic Waste.	4,000
NW-2 Reduce County operations waste.	1,620
NW-3 Recycling and waste minimization.	2,530
NW-4 Reduce landfill gas emissions.	61,410
DR-1 Reduce indoor and outdoor water use.	1,440
TR-1 Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-carbon commuting, and public transit.	40,370
TR-2 Increase use of ZEVs.	332,850
NI-4 Sequester carbon.	88,910
Total GHG Reductions from Proposed CAP Strategies	721,670

Source: Draft EIR Appendix 5.8-1, proposed CAP.

Notes: Emissions may not total to 100 percent due to rounding. Based on GWPs in the IPCC's AR5.

Table 5.8-8, *Contra Costa County 2045 GHG Emissions Reduction Target Analysis with the Proposed CAP*, shows that with the additional local measures identified in the proposed CAP, the unincorporated county would achieve the AB 1279 GHG reduction targets for year 2045. With implementation of the proposed CAP, Contra Costa County would achieve an 85-percent decrease in GHG emissions in the unincorporated areas of the county by 2045 from 1990 levels, and would make substantial progress toward the State's carbon neutrality goals. Therefore, the proposed General Plan, which includes implementation of the proposed CAP, would not result in a substantial increase in the magnitude of GHG emissions and would be consistent with the GHG reduction goals identified under AB 1279.

Table 5.8-8 Contra Costa County 2045 GHG Emissions Reduction Target Analysis with the Proposed CAP

Scenario	2045 GHG Emissions (MTCO ₂ e/Year)
Total Community Emissions (BAU)	1,362,620
GHG Reductions from State Actions	-483,340
GHG Reductions from Proposed CAP GHG Reduction Strategies	-721,670
Total Community Emissions with State Actions & Local CAP GHG Reduction Strategies	157,610
AB 1279 Target	164,680
Achieves Target	Yes

Source: Draft EIR Appendix 5.8-1, proposed CAP.

Notes: Emissions may not total to 100 percent due to rounding. Based on GWPs in the IPCC's AR5.

Additionally, implementation of the following proposed General Plan policies and actions would also minimize energy and mobile-source emissions in the unincorporated areas.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
- **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.
- **Policy TR-P1.3:** Ensure emerging transportation technologies and travel options, such as autonomous and ZEVs and transportation network companies, support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.4:** Reduce single-occupant vehicle usage, at a minimum using strategies defined in the TDM Ordinance.
- **Policy TR-P1.11:** Support transitioning all on-road vehicles, including personal vehicles and business, government, and public transit fleets, to electric power from renewable sources or other zero-emission fuels.
- **Policy TR-P1.12:** Continue to improve ZEV (including electric bicycle) charging/fueling infrastructure within new development and public rights-of-way, incorporating new technologies whenever possible.
- **Policy TR-P1.13:** Require designs for new parking facilities to incorporate ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure and maximize opportunities for adaptive reuse.
- **Action TR-A1.4:** Implement programs to encourage transit use, bicycling, walking, telecommuting, and use of alternative vehicle fuels by County employees.
- **Action TR-A1.11:** Coordinate with CCTA and other local and regional agencies to implement the Contra Costa Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint and related policies and apply best practices in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure requirements.
- **Action TR-A1.12:** Update the County Ordinance Code as necessary to support advances in ZEV charging/fueling infrastructure, including for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.
- **Policy COS-P14.1:** Implement Climate Action Plan strategies to improve energy efficiency and conservation, promote carbon-free energy sources, and reduce energy-related GHG emissions.

Individual development projects facilitated by the proposed General Plan would experience emission reductions from implementation of State measures and strategies to reduce statewide GHG emissions, such as the LCFS mandate or RPS requirements. The above proposed General Plan policies and actions would serve to further support potential GHG reductions for individual development projects facilitated by the proposed General Plan. Furthermore, individual projects would be required to demonstrate consistency with the proposed CAP by preparing a CAP Consistency Checklist, identify specific GHG emissions reduction strategies from the proposed CAP that are applicable to the project, and demonstrate how the project will implement these strategies to ensure that the project's emissions are consistent with the community-wide emissions forecast contained herein.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In summary, implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in a net decrease in emissions from existing conditions. Additionally, with implementation of the proposed CAP, emissions from existing and planned development in the EIR Study Area would achieve the GHG reduction goals identified under AB 1279 for year 2045, which is consistent with the thresholds identified by BAAQMD in their CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, growth within the county associated with the proposed General Plan would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on GHG emissions and this impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions; it does not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity. Because there is no specific land use component associated with the proposed CAP, its implementation would not directly result in the generation of GHG emissions.

In addition, the proposed General Plan directs implementation of the proposed CAP, recognizing that the County's climate action planning efforts must be updated more regularly to be responsive to the changing regulations, guidance, technology, best practices, and science. For instance, the proposed CAP transportation strategies that reduce VMT (e.g., Strategy TR-1) would result in a reduction in GHG emissions from the transportation sector. Likewise, the proposed CAP also promotes building energy-efficiency improvements (e.g., Strategies BE-1 and BE-2), increasing water efficiency (e.g., Strategy DR-1 and DR-2) and reducing energy demand through renewable energy sources (e.g., Strategy BE-3) to minimize energy sector emissions. Furthermore, the proposed CAP supports the East Bay Energy Watch, which is a partnership between PG&E and local governments in the East Bay region to conduct energy efficiency outreach to residents and businesses, retrofit existing government facilities to improve energy efficiency, and provide training to agency staff. Thus, implementation of the proposed CAP would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.8-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

With implementation of the proposed CAP, no mitigation measures would be required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.8-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.8-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. [Threshold GHG-2])

Applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions include CARB's Scoping Plan and ABAG's/MTC's *Plan Bay Area 2050*. A consistency analysis with these plans is presented below.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Proposed General Plan

CARB Scoping Plan

The CARB Scoping Plan is applicable to State agencies but is not directly applicable to cities, counties, and individual projects (i.e., the Scoping Plan does not require local jurisdictions to adopt its policies, programs, or regulations to reduce GHG emissions). However, new regulations adopted by the State agencies from the Scoping Plan result in GHG emissions reductions at the local level. So local jurisdictions benefit from reductions in transportation emissions rates, increases in water efficiency in the building and landscape codes, and other statewide actions that affect a local jurisdiction's emissions inventory from the top down. Statewide strategies to reduce GHG emissions include the LCFS and changes in the CAFE standards. Additionally, local jurisdictions are encouraged to prepare local GHG reduction plans to align local GHG reductions with the State GHG reduction targets identified in the Scoping Plan.

Development projects under the proposed General Plan would be required to adhere to the programs and regulations identified by the Scoping Plan and implemented by State, regional, and local agencies to achieve the statewide GHG reduction goals of AB 32, SB 32, and AB 1279. Future development projects would be required to comply with these State GHG emissions reduction measures because they are statewide strategies. For example, new buildings under the proposed General Plan would be required to meet the CALGreen and Building Energy Efficiency Standards in effect at the time when applying for building permits. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan includes policies that minimize GHG emissions and therefore help achieve GHG reduction goals.

Moreover, the proposed General Plan directs implementation of the proposed CAP. As described under Impact 5.8-2, the proposed CAP aligns the GHG reduction goals for the unincorporated areas for existing and new development with AB 1279 and the carbon neutrality goals identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would result in a net benefit because implementation of the proposed CAP would align future development in the county with the policies and objectives identified by CARB. Implementation of the proposed General Plan would not obstruct implementation of the CARB Scoping Plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

ABAG/MTC's Plan Bay Area

Plan Bay Area 2050 is the Bay Area's regional transportation plan to achieve the passenger vehicle emissions reductions identified under SB 375. Plan Bay Area 2050 is the current SCS for the Bay Area, adopted October 21, 2021 (ABAG/MTC 2021). In addition to significant transit and roadway performance investments to encourage focused growth, Plan Bay Area 2050 directs funding to neighborhood active transportation and complete streets projects, climate initiatives, lifeline transportation and access initiatives, safety programs, and PDA planning (ABAG/MTC 2021). In Contra Costa County, a number of PDAs and Transit Priority Areas have been designated in the EIR Study Area, as shown on Figure 5.16-1, *Priority Development Areas and Transit Priority Areas*, in Section 5.16 of this Draft EIR (MTC 2023a, MTC 2023b).

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

While Plan Bay Area 2050 does not override local land use control, it provides guidance to the local jurisdictions such as Contra Costa County on how future development can be consistent with the State's GHG and VMT reduction goals. This includes constructing more infill development in downtowns and centers in close proximity to jobs and services.

As further discussed in Section 5.14, *Population and Housing*, the proposed General Plan would exceed current regional projections for housing and population. However, it is important to note that regional projections used were from Play Bay Area 2040, which does not differentiate between Contra Costa County as a whole and the unincorporated portion of the county. In addition, the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would limit development in certain areas and control the growth within the EIR Study Area. All potential future development would be required to comply with any required site-specific infrastructure improvements and to pay any project-specific impact fees.

The proposed Land Use Element includes policies to encourage high-density, mixed-use development to create shorter commutes and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles (see Land Use and Planning Impact 5.11-2). The proposed Growth Management Element also establishes goals, policies, and actions intended to manage and mitigate impacts of future growth within the unincorporated county. Furthermore, future development projects that could result in significant VMT impacts are required to include Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and physical measures to reduce VMT (see Section 5.16, *Transportation*).

Overall, the proposed General Plan would be consistent with the goals of Plan Bay Area 2050 in concentrating new development in locations where there is existing infrastructure and transit. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would not conflict with the land use concept plan in Plan Bay Area 2050 and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions; it does not involve any land use changes that would result in indirect growth or change in building density or intensity. Furthermore, as discussed under Impact Discussion 5.8-1, implementation of the proposed CAP would result in beneficial GHG emissions impacts by contributing to reducing VMT, increasing energy and water use efficiency, and increasing renewable energy use. Therefore, the proposed CAP would be complementary to statewide and regional plans to reduce GHG and would not interfere with or obstruct the implementation of the CARB Scoping Plan or Plan Bay Area 2050. Implementation of the proposed CAP would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.8-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.8-2 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

5.8.5 Cumulative Impacts

Project-related GHG emissions are not confined to a particular air basin but are dispersed worldwide. Therefore, impacts identified under Impact 5.8-1 and Impact 5.8-2 are not project-specific impacts to global warming, but the proposed project's contribution to this cumulative impact. As discussed above, the EIR Study Area would experience a reduction in GHG emissions from existing conditions despite the anticipated population and employment growth. Additionally, with implementation of the proposed CAP, Contra Costa County would achieve the local GHG reduction targets that align with SB 32 and AB 1279 and substantial progress with the State's carbon neutrality targets. Consequently, the proposed project's cumulative contribution to global climate change impacts are less than cumulatively considerable.

5.8.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.8.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.8.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

5.8.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. 2021, October. Plan Bay Area 2050. https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-11/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf.
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2017, April 19. Final 2018 Clean Air Plan. Spare the Air Cool the Climate, A Blueprint for Clean Air And Climate Protection in the Bay Area. http://www.baaqmd.gov/research-and-https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/plans/2017-clean-air-plan/attachment-a_-proposed-final-cap-vol-1-pdf.pdf.
- . 2022, April. Justification Report: CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts from Land Use Projects and Plans. <https://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/ceqa/ceqa-thresholds-2022/justification-report-pdf.pdf?la=en>.
- California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA). 2022, April. CalEEMod, California Emissions Estimator Model User Guide, Version 2022.1.1.13 <https://www.caleemod.com/user-guide>.
- California Air Resources Board. 2008, October. Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.
- . 2017a, March. Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy. <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/shortlived/shortlived.htm>.
- . 2017b, November. California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan: The Strategy for Achieving California's 2030 Greenhouse Gas Target. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/2030sp_pp_final.pdf.
- . 2018, February. Proposed Update to the SB 375 Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Targets. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/SB375_Updated_Final_Target_Staff_Report_2018.pdf.
- . 2019, July. California and Major Automakers Reach Groundbreaking Framework Agreement on Clean Emission Standards. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/news/california-and-major-automakers-reach-groundbreaking-framework-agreement-clean-emission>, accessed June 5, 2023.
- . 2022a, October 26. California Greenhouse Gas 2000-2020 Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators Report. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/inventory/2000-2020_ghg_inventory_trends.pdf.
- . 2022b, November. Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/2022-sp.pdf>.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- California Climate Action Team (CAT). 2006, March. Climate Action Team Report to Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature.
- California Climate Change Center (CCCC). 2012, July. Our Changing Climate 2012: Vulnerability and Adaptation to the Increasing Risks from Climate Change in California.
- California Council on Science and Technology. 2012. California's Energy Future: Portraits of Energy Systems for Meeting Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets. <https://ccst.us/wp-content/uploads/2012ghg.pdf>.
- California Energy Commission (CEC). 2006. Our Changing Climate: Assessing the Risks to California. 2006 Biennial Report. CEC-500-2006-077. California Climate Change Center.
- . 2009, May. The Future Is Now: An Update on Climate Change Science, Impacts, and Response Options for California. CEC-500-2008-0077.
- . 2021, May 19. Amendments to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (2022 Energy Code) Draft Environmental Report. CEC-400-2021-077-D.
- California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). 2014, July. Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk: An Update to the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- . 2018, August. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. Statewide Summary Report. https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/Statewide_Reports-SUM-CCCA4-2018-013_Statewide_Summary_Report_ADA.pdf
- California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). 2020, June. California Adaptation Planning Guide. <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/HazardMitigationSite/Documents/CA-Adaptation-Planning-Guide-FINAL-June-2020-Accessible.pdf>
- Contra Costa, Conservation & Development. 2022a. Healthy Lands, Healthy People – A Carbon Sequestration Feasibility Study. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/8465/Healthy-Lands-Healthy-People---A-Carbon->.
- . 2022b, April. Contra Costa County. Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/76572/Active-Transportation-Plan-Final-Report-reduced-file-size>
- . 2023, June 6 (accessed). Climate Action Plan. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/8678/Climate-Action-Plan>.
- Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). 2021. Update of the Contra Costa Congestion Management Program. https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CMP21_MainDoc_Draft_Final_.pdf.
- Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2008, June. CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change through CEQA Review. Technical Advisory. <https://opr.ca.gov/docs/june08-ceqa.pdf>.

5. Environmental Analysis GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2001. Third Assessment Report: Climate Change 2001. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2007. Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2013. Fifth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2013. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2022, February 2022. Sixth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2022. Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, Summary for Policymakers. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf.
- Marin Clean Energy. 2023, June 5 (accessed). Marin Clean Energy Community Benefits. <https://www.mcccleanenergy.org/member-communities/>.
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2021, October. Final Plan Bay Area 2050. https://www.planbayarea.org/sites/default/files/documents/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf.
- . 2023a, March 22. Priority Development Areas (PDAs). <https://opendata-mtc.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/4df9cb38d77346a289252ced4ffa0ca0/explore?location=37.892240%2C-122.289021%2C9.00>.
- . 2023b, March 22. Transit Priority Areas. <https://opendata.mtc.ca.gov/datasets/MTC::transit-priority-areas-2021-1/explore?location=37.602685%2C-122.306627%2C11.00>.
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). 2022, April 1. USDOT Announces New Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards for Model year 2024-2026. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/usdot-announces-new-vehicle-fuel-economy-standards-model-year-2024-2026>, accessed on June 3, 2023.
- Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment (OEHHA). 2018, May. Indicators of Climate Change in California. <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/climate-change/report/2018caindicatorsreportmay2018.pdf>.
- US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2009, December. EPA: Greenhouse Gases Threaten Public Health and the Environment: Science Overwhelmingly Shows Greenhouse Gas Concentrations at Unprecedented Levels due to Human Activity. https://archive.epa.gov/epapages/newsroom_archive/newsreleases/08d11a451131bca585257685005bf252.html.
- . 2023, April. USEPA: Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. <https://www.epa.gov/climate-change/endangerment-and-cause-or-contribute-findings-greenhouse-gases-under-section-202a>.

5. Environmental Analysis

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential hazards and hazardous material impacts from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project. The relevant Appendix G threshold concerning wildfire (H-7) is discussed in Section 5.18, *Wildfire*.

5.9.1 Environmental Setting

5.9.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, was enacted in October 1986. This law requires any infrastructure at the state and local levels to plan for chemical emergencies. Reported information is then made publicly available so that interested parties may become informed about potentially dangerous chemicals in their communities. EPCRA Sections 301 through 312 are administered by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Office of Emergency Management. The USEPA's Office of Information Analysis and Access implements the EPCRA Section 313 program. In California, Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act Title III is implemented through the California Accidental Release Prevention program. The State of California has delegated local oversight authority of the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) program to the Contra Costa County.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) was developed to protect the water, air, and land resources from the risks created by past chemical disposal practices. Under CERCLA, USEPA maintains a list, known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS), of all contaminated sites in the nation that have in the past or are currently undergoing cleanup activities. CERCLIS contains information on current hazardous waste sites, potential hazardous waste sites, and remedial activities. This includes sites that are on the National Priorities List (NPL) or being considered for the NPL ("Superfund").

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) establishes a framework for national programs to achieve environmentally sound management of both hazardous and nonhazardous wastes. RCRA was designed to protect human health and the environment, reduce or eliminate the generation of hazardous waste, and

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

conserve energy and natural resources. RCRA also promotes resource recovery techniques. A waste can legally be considered hazardous if it is classified as ignitable, corrosive, reactive, or toxic. Under RCRA, the USEPA regulates hazardous waste from the time that the waste is generated until its final disposal (“cradle to grave”). The Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (HSWA) both expanded the scope of RCRA and increased the level of detail in many of its provisions. The Hazardous Waste Management subchapter of RCRA deals with a variety of issues regarding the management of hazardous materials, including the export of hazardous waste, state programs, inspections of hazardous waste disposal facilities, enforcement, and the identification and listing of hazardous waste.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The transportation of hazardous materials is regulated by the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA), which is administered by the Research and Special Programs Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). HMTA provides DOT with a broad mandate to regulate the transport of hazardous materials, with the purpose of adequately protecting the nation against risk to life and property that is inherent in the commercial transportation of hazardous materials. HMTA governs the safe transportation of hazardous materials by all modes, excluding bulk transportation by water. DOT regulations that govern the transportation of hazardous materials are applicable to any person who transports, ships, causes to be transported or shipped, or is involved in any way with the manufacture or testing of hazardous materials packaging or containers. DOT regulations pertaining to the actual movement of hazardous materials govern every aspect of the movement, including packaging, handling, labeling, marking, placarding, operational standards, and highway routing.

Occupational Safety and Health Act

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 authorizes each state (including California) to establish their own safety and health programs with the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) approval. The California Department of Industrial Relations regulates implementation of worker health and safety in California.

OSHA Regulation 29 CFR 1926.62 regulates the demolition, renovation, or construction of buildings involving lead materials. Federal, state, and local requirements also govern the removal of asbestos or suspected asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), including the demolition of structures where asbestos is present. All friable (crushable by hand) ACMs, or non-friable ACMs subject to damage, must be abated prior to demolition following all applicable regulations.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires state and local governments to prepare mitigation plans that identify hazards, potential losses, mitigation needs, goals, and strategies. It is intended to facilitate cooperation between state and local governments.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976 was enacted by Congress to give the USEPA the ability to track the 75,000 industrial chemicals currently produced by or imported into the United States. The USEPA repeatedly screens these chemicals and can require reporting or testing of any that may pose an environmental or human health hazard. It can ban the manufacture and import of chemicals that pose an unreasonable risk. Also, the USEPA has mechanisms in place to track the thousands of new chemicals that industry develops each year with either unknown or dangerous characteristics. It then can control these chemicals as necessary to protect human health and the environment. The Act supplements other federal statutes, including the Clean Air Act and the Toxics Release Inventory under EPCRA.

Federal Response Plan

The Federal Response Plan of 1999 is a signed agreement among 27 federal departments and agencies and other resource providers, including the American Red Cross, that: (1) provides the mechanism for coordinating delivery of federal assistance and resources to augment efforts of state and local governments overwhelmed by a major disaster or emergency; (2) supports implementation of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act, as well as individual agency statutory authorities; and (3) supplements other federal emergency operations plans developed to address specific hazards. The Federal Response Plan is implemented in anticipation of a significant event likely to result in a need for federal assistance or in response to an actual event requiring federal assistance under a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or emergency. The Federal Response Plan is part of the National Response Framework, which was most recently updated in October 2019.

National Response Framework

The 2019 National Response Framework, published by the Department of Homeland Security, is a guide to how the nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. The Framework describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from serious local to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters. In addition, the Framework describes the principles, roles, and responsibilities, and coordinating structures for responding to an incident, and further describes how response efforts integrate with those of the other mission areas.

Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968

The Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 authorizes the DOT to regulate pipeline transportation of flammable, toxic, or corrosive natural gas and other gases as well as the transportation and storage of liquefied natural gas. The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) within the DOT develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.6-million-mile pipeline transportation system. DOT's and PHMSA's regulations governing natural gas transmission pipelines, facility operations, employee activities, and safety are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49, *Transportation*, Parts 190 through 192, Part 195, and Part 199.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act mandates that the DOT, Department of Energy, and National Institute of Standards and Technology in the Department of Commerce carry out a program of research, development, demonstration, and standardization to ensure the integrity of pipeline facilities (USDOT 2002). The purpose of the Research and Design Program is to identify safety and integrity issues and develop methodologies and technologies to characterize, detect, and manage risks associated with natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines.

Pipeline Inspection, Enforcement, and Protection Act of 2006

The Pipeline Inspection, Enforcement, and Protection Act confirms the commitment to the Integrity Management Program and other programs enacted in the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002. The 2006 legislation includes provisions on:

- Preventing excavation damage to pipelines through the enhanced use and improved enforcement of State “One-Call” laws that preclude excavators from digging until they contact the State One-Call system to locate the underground pipelines.
- Minimum standards for Integrity Management Programs for distribution pipelines (including installation of excess flow valves on single-family residential service lines based on feasibility and risk).
- Standards for managing gas and hazardous liquid pipelines to reduce risks associated with human factors (e.g., fatigue).
- Authority for the Secretary to waive safety standards in emergencies.
- Authority for the Secretary to assist in restoration of disrupted pipeline operations.
- Review and update incident reporting requirements.
- Requirements for senior executive officers to certify operator integrity management performance reports.
- Clarification of jurisdiction between states and PHMSA for short laterals that feed industrial and electric generator consumers from interstate natural gas pipelines (INGAA 2022).

State

California Hazardous Waste Control Act

Under the California Hazardous Waste Control Act, California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 2, Section 25100, et seq., the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) regulates the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste in California. The hazardous waste regulations establish criteria for identifying, packaging, and labeling hazardous wastes; dictate the management of hazardous waste; establish permit requirements for hazardous waste treatment, storage, disposal, and transportation; and identify hazardous wastes that cannot be disposed of in landfills. DTSC is also the administering agency for the California Hazardous Substance Account Act. California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.8, Sections 25300 et seq., also known as the State Superfund law, provides for the investigation and remediation of hazardous substances pursuant to State law.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In Contra Costa County, remediation of contaminated sites is performed under the oversight of Contra Costa Health Services with the cooperation of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). At sites where contamination is suspected or known to occur, the project sponsor is required to perform a site investigation and draw up a remediation plan, if necessary. For typical development projects, actual site remediation is done either before or during the construction phase of the project. Site remediation or development may be subject to regulation by other agencies. For example, if dewatering of a hazardous waste site were required during construction, subsequent discharge to the sewer collection system could require a permit from Contra Costa Water District, while discharge to a storm drain could require a permit from both Contra Costa Health Services and the San Francisco RWQCB.

California Health and Safety Code and Code of Regulations

California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 and California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 19, Section 2729 describe the minimum requirements for business emergency plans and chemical inventory reporting. These regulations require businesses to provide emergency response plans and procedures, training program information, and a hazardous material inventory disclosing hazardous materials stored, used, or handled on-site. A business that uses hazardous materials, or mixtures containing them, in certain quantities must establish and implement a business plan.

CCR Title 8 provides standards for workers dealing with hazardous materials (including hazardous wastes). The DTSC and the State Department of Occupational Health and Safety Administration (Cal OSHA) are the agencies that are responsible for overseeing that appropriate measures are taken to protect workers from exposure to potential groundwater contaminants. At sites known or suspected to have soil or groundwater contamination, a site health and safety plan must be prepared. The health and safety plan establishes policies and procedures to protect workers and the public from exposure to potential hazards at the contaminated site.

Tanner Act (Assembly Bill 2948)

Although numerous State policies deal with hazardous waste, the most comprehensive is the Tanner Act (California Civil Code Section 1793.22), which was adopted in 1986. The Tanner Act governs the preparation of hazardous waste management plans and the siting of hazardous waste facilities in California. To comply with the Tanner Act, local or regional hazardous waste management plans need to include provisions that define: (1) the planning process for waste management, (2) the permit process for new and expanded facilities, and (3) the appeals process to the State available for certain local decisions.

California Building Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design through the California Building Code (CBC), which is in Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. The CBC is based on the 2022 International Building Code but has been modified for California conditions. The CBC is updated every three years, and the current (2022) CBC became effective on January 1, 2023. Contra Costa County has adopted the CBC and incorporated it as Division 72, *Building Code*, of the County Ordinance Code, as discussed below. Commercial and residential buildings are plan-checked by County building officials for compliance with the typical fire safety requirements of the CBC.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Underground Storage Tank Program

Releases of petroleum and other products from underground storage tanks (UST) are the leading source of groundwater contamination in the United States. RCRA Subtitle I establishes regulations governing the storage of petroleum products and hazardous substances in USTs and the prevention and cleanup of leaks. In USEPA Region 9, which covers California, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, Pacific Islands, and over 140 tribal nations, the UST program operates primarily through state agency programs with USEPA oversight. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), under the umbrella of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), assists local agencies enforcing UST requirements. The purpose of the UST program is to protect public health and safety and the environment from releases of petroleum and other hazardous substances. The program consists of four elements: leak prevention, cleanup, enforcement, and tank tester licensing. In September 2004, the SWRCB adopted regulations that require electronic submittal of information for groundwater cleanup programs, including groundwater analytical data, the surveyed locations of monitoring wells, and other data. The SWRCB's GeoTracker system currently has information submitted by responsible parties for over 10,000 leaking UST (LUST) sites statewide and has been extended to include all SWRCB groundwater cleanup programs, including the LUST, non-LUST (i.e., Spill, Leaks, Investigation, and Cleanup), Department of Defense, and landfill programs.

Hazardous Materials Disclosure Programs

Both the federal government (CFR, USEPA, SARA, and Title III) and the State (Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Section 2500-25520; 19 CCR, Chapter 2, Subchapter 3, Article 4, Section 2729-2734) require all businesses that handle more than specified amount of hazardous materials or extremely hazardous materials, termed a "reporting quantity," to submit a hazardous materials emergency/contingency plan (also known as a "hazardous materials business plan") to their local Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). The responsible CUPA in Contra Costa County is Contra Costa Health Services, which is responsible for conducting compliance inspections of regulated facilities in the county.

The hazardous materials business plan includes the business owner/operator identification page, hazardous materials inventory chemical description page, and an emergency response plan and training plan. Business plans must include an inventory of the hazardous materials at the facility. The entire hazardous materials business plan needs to be reviewed and recertified every three years. Business plans are required to include emergency response plans and procedures to be used in the event of a significant or threatened significant release of a hazardous material. These plans need to identify the procedures to follow for immediate notification to all appropriate agencies and personnel of a release, identification of local emergency medical assistance appropriate for potential accident scenarios, contact information for all emergency coordinators of the business, a listing and location of emergency equipment at the business, an evacuation plan, and a training program for business personnel. All facilities must keep a copy of their plan onsite.

Hazardous materials business plans are designed to be used for responding agencies, such as the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, during a release or spill to allow for a quick and accurate evaluation of each situation for appropriate response. Businesses that handle hazardous materials are required by law to provide an immediate verbal report of any release or threatened release of hazardous materials if there is a reasonable

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

belief that the release or threatened release poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety, property, or the environment. If a release involves a hazardous substance listed in Title 40 of the CFR in an amount equal to or exceeding the reportable quantity for that material, a notice must be filed with the California Office of Emergency Services within 15 days of the incident.

California Department of Transportation and California Highway Patrol

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) are the two State agencies that have primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies. Caltrans manages more than 50,000 miles of California's highways and freeways, provides intercity rail services, permits more than 400 public-use airports and special-use hospital heliports, and works with local agencies. Caltrans is also the first responder for hazardous material spills and releases that occur on highways, freeways, and intercity rail lines.

CHP enforces hazardous materials and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations designed to prevent leakage and spills of materials in transit and to provide detailed information to cleanup crews in the event of an accident. Vehicle and equipment inspection, shipment preparation, container identification, and shipping documentation are all part of the responsibility of CHP, which conducts regular inspections of licensed transporters to assure regulatory compliance. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating or passing through the state.

Common carriers are licensed by CHP, pursuant to Section 32000 of the California Vehicle Code. This section requires licensing every motor (common) carrier who transports, for a fee, in excess of 500 pounds of hazardous materials at one time and every carrier, if not for hire, who carries more than 1,000 pounds of hazardous material of the type requiring placards. Common carriers conduct a large portion of the business in the delivery of hazardous materials.

Senate Bill 673 - Hazardous Waste

Senate Bill (SB) 673 made updates to the California Health and Safety Code Section 25200.21 to improve DTSC's permitting process for hazardous waste facilities and increase community protection through stronger permit criteria. Specifically, this Bill directed DTSC to update its criteria to consider "the vulnerability of, and existing health risks to, nearby populations" when deciding whether to issue new or modified permits or permit renewals of hazardous waste facilities. SB 673 also authorizes the DTSC to consider the use of "minimum setback distances from sensitive receptors" in making a permitting decision (DTSC 2021). As part of its implementation framework, DTSC identified seven key elements for addressing community vulnerability and impacts during the permitting process for hazardous waste uses, which are described in the SB 673 Cumulative Impacts and Community Vulnerability Regulatory Framework (DTSC 2021).

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Regional

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act established the SWRCB and divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a RWQCB. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB, Region 2, and the Central Valley RWQCB, Region 5, regulate water quality in the EIR Study Area. The San Francisco Bay and Central Valley RWQCBs have the authority to require groundwater investigations and/or remedial action if the quality of groundwater or surface waters of the State are threatened.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has primary responsibility for control of air pollution from sources other than motor vehicles and consumer products. The latter are typically the responsibility of CalEPA and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). BAAQMD is responsible for preparation of attainment plans for non-attainment criteria pollutants, control of stationary air pollutant sources, and issuance of permits for activities, including demolition and renovation activities affecting asbestos-containing materials (District Regulation 11, Rule 2) and lead (District Regulation 11, Rule 1).

Association of Bay Area Governments Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Association of Bay Area Governments' (ABAG) multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area was updated in 2021 in partnership with the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's (BCDC) Adapting to Rising Tides Program (ART). This detailed five-year plan identifies potential natural and human-made hazards, assesses their potential risks, and includes mitigation methods to reduce risks. The potential hazards identified in the Plan include earthquakes and liquefaction, wildfires, floods, drought, solar storms, dam or levee failure, disease outbreak, freezes, wind, heat, thunder and lightning storms, siltation, tornadoes, hazardous materials, slope failure and mudflows, and other hazards. Similarly, mitigation measures include hazard event planning, emergency preparedness coordination, education, facility upgrades, and monitoring actions.

Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Mass Transportation/Evacuation Plan

The Bay Area Urban Area Security Initiative Approval Authority prepared a mass transportation and evacuation plan on behalf of the counties and cities within the 12-county Bay Area region. The Plan describes the general strategy for emergency response to an incident with regional impact. The Plan evaluated two earthquake disaster scenarios that could occur in the Bay Area, including a 7.9 magnitude (M) earthquake on the northern segment of the San Andreas Fault and a 7.05 M earthquake on the entire Hayward Fault. It additionally coordinates the provision of transit services during these disaster events.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Local

Contra Costa Health Services Hazardous Materials Programs

The Contra Costa Health Services – Hazardous Materials Program (CCHSHMP) is the CUPA for all of Contra Costa County. As the CUPA, CCHSHMP administers the State’s hazardous materials regulatory programs through routine inspections at sites that handle hazardous materials, as well as the County’s Industrial Safety Ordinance, Unannounced Inspection, Green Business, and Pollution Prevention programs.

Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Interagency Task Force

The Hazardous Materials Interagency Task Force is a coalition of agencies with responsibility for public and environmental health and safety, which have joined in a cooperative and voluntary effort to enhance their level of service individually and collectively, with a focus on Contra Costa County (Contra Costa Health 2023). Contra Costa County contains heavy industrial development that may be associated with hazardous waste transport across the county (Contra Costa 2005a). Hundreds of miles of pipelines for the transportation of natural gas, crude oil, and refined petroleum products traverse Contra Costa County, including residential and commercial areas. Some of these pipelines may cross unstable slopes and areas underlain by soft mud and peat. The hazard of petroleum fires is considered more dangerous than natural gas fires as they are more likely to spread to nearby property. The Task Force provides members with a continuing forum to coordinate and improve efforts in accident prevention; emergency response; communication, outreach, and public participation; and efficiency, including the identification of gaps and overlaps in policies and programs to protect the public’s health and safety (Contra Costa Health 2023).

Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Area Plan

The County Hazardous Materials Area Plan provides the planning framework for the County’s hazardous materials emergency planning and community right-to-know programs. The Plan describes the overall hazardous materials emergency response organization within the county; establishes the lines of authority and coordination for hazardous materials incidents; identifies the roles and responsibilities of local, State and federal government agencies necessary to minimize the impacts of a hazardous materials incident; and provides support for hazardous materials management in the county, including the coordination of data management, business plans, and facility inspections (Contra Costa Health 2021).

Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The County’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) serves to reduce injury, loss of life, property damage, and loss of services from natural disasters. The LHMP provides a comprehensive analysis of the natural and human-caused hazards that threaten the county, with a focus on mitigation, allowing the County to remain eligible to receive additional federal and State funding to assist with emergency response and recovery, as permitted by the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and California Government Code Sections 8685.9 and 65302.6; it also complements the efforts undertaken by the existing General Plan Safety Element. The LHMP complies with all requirements set forth under the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and was adopted and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2018.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Contra Costa County Emergency Operations Plan

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) provides the basis for a coordinated response before, during, and after an emergency affecting Contra Costa County. It facilitates multi-jurisdictional and interagency coordination in emergency operations, particularly between local government, private sector, operational area (geographic county boundary), State response levels, and appropriate federal agencies. It also establishes the organizational framework of the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) within Contra Costa County.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 42-2 – Disaster Council and Emergency Services

The Contra Costa County Emergency Services Policy Board consists of occupants of County or other public positions and offices. The Operational Area Council is created as an advisory council to the Emergency Services Policy Board. The Operational Area Council consists of emergency managers from incorporated cities, special districts, key utilities and businesses, and staff of the Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Services. The County Administrator oversees the County's emergency organization.

Chapter 450-2 – Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories

Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 requires, among other things, that any business which handles a specified quantity of a hazardous material establish a business plan for emergency response to a release or threatened release of a hazardous material, which includes an inventory of hazardous materials handled by the business, and report to the administering agency and the State Office of Emergency Services occurrences of specified releases or threatened releases of hazardous materials. This Ordinance implements Division 20 Chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code.

Chapter 450-6 – Underground Storage of Hazardous Substances

Section 450-6.402 – Additional Permits. According to this section, no person may repair or make any modifications to an underground storage tank without a permit from Contra Costa Health Services. The permits required by this section are in addition to the permit required by the California Health and Safety Code Section 25284.

Section 450-6.404 – Delivery. This section states that no person may deliver any product to an underground storage tank unless Contra Costa Health Services has issued a permit for its operation to the owner and the permit has not expired or been revoked. Upon request by any person, the owner or operator of an underground storage tank must allow inspection of the permit.

Section 450-6.406 – Fencing. This section states that no person may leave unattached any excavation over three feet in depth, associated in any way with an underground storage tank, without erecting a fence adequate to prevent persons or animals from falling into the excavation.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Chapter 450-8 – Risk Management

Chapter 450-8 requires that a facility classified as a stationary source submit a safety plan to the County Health Services Director within three years of the date a facility becomes a stationary source. The safety plan must comply with the provisions of this section and include the safety elements listed in full in Section 450-8.016, *Stationary Source Safety Requirements*.

Chapter 84-63 – Land Use Permits for Development Projects Involving Hazardous Material

Known as the “Industrial Safety Ordinance,” this Chapter mitigates health and safety impacts of industrial facilities by requiring additional safety measures that go beyond State requirements to protect public health and safety. The Chapter applies to new permanent buildings, structures, or facilities that will manage hazardous materials or hazardous waste in any non-agricultural zoning district. It requires that such projects be scored based on various risk factors, and projects scoring above a certain threshold are required to obtain a land use permit.

Article 84-63.12, *Land Use and Variance Permits*, further states that land use permits, variances, or other land use entitlements granted for the operation or expansion of an offsite hazardous waste facility must be consistent with the portions of the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan that identify siting criteria, siting principles, or other policies applicable to hazardous waste facilities. Before approving the application, the County must find that the application complies with the applicable siting criteria, siting principles, and other policies identified in the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, and that the proposed offsite hazardous waste facility is consistent with the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan and the land uses which surround them.

Section 1004-2.806 – Hazardous Materials

Prior to the issuance of any encroachment permit for the construction or installation of any pipelines for the transmission of flammable liquids or gases, this section requires that approval be obtained from the Road Commissioner and, as applicable, from each fire protection district or the State Fire Marshal in which any pipelines will be located. All approvals should be based on the determination that no undue fire hazard will be created to life or property in the areas through which the proposed pipeline will be located.

Chapter 86-4- Airport Zoning

Section 86-4.004 – Purpose. This Chapter of the County Ordinance Code is intended to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of Contra Costa County residents by preventing the creation or establishment of airport hazards, thereby protecting the lives and property of the users of the Buchanan Field Airport and of the occupants of the land in its vicinity, and preventing destruction or impairment of the utility of the airport and the public investment in it, in accordance with and as a part of the comprehensive master plan of airports of the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Section 86-4.014 – Height Limits. This section prohibits structures or trees from being erected, altered, allowed to grow, or maintained in any airport approach zone, airport turning zone, or airport transition zone to a height greater than the height limit established in this section for that zone. This regulation establishes the following height limits for each zone:

- (1) Approach Zones 1, 2, 3, and 4 have a maximum height limit of 20 feet at a distance of 1,000 feet from the end of the runway. The maximum allowable height must be increased in step-ups of five feet each for every 200-foot segment added to the 1,000-foot distance from the end of the runway, to a maximum height of 150 feet.
- (2) Approach Zones 5 and 6 have a maximum height limit of 20 feet at a distance of 600 feet from the end of the runway. The maximum allowable height must be increased in step-ups of five feet each for every 100-foot segment added to the 600-foot distance from the end of the runway, to a maximum height of 150 feet.
- (3) All turning zones have a maximum height limit of 150 feet, except that portion of the turning zone marked on the Airport Zoning Plan for Buchanan Field as “not included in turning zone.”
- (4) All transition zone areas have the maximum height limit indicated on the Airport Zoning Plan for Buchanan Field.

Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Combability Plan

The Airport Land Use Combability Plan (ALUCP) is a planning document that is used to promote compatibility between the airports in Contra Costa County and the land uses that surround them. As adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, it serves as a tool for use by the Commission in fulfilling its duty to review airport and adjacent land use development proposals. Additionally, the Plan sets compatibility criteria applicable to local agencies in their preparation or amendment of land use plans and ordinances and to landowners in their design of new development.

Byron Airport Master Plan

The Master Plan for Byron Airport was last updated in 2005 and involves a 20-year planning period, with 2003 as the base year. In addition to an assessment of the airport’s existing facilities, the Plan provides forecasts of aviation activity and includes individual airport improvement recommendations for 5-, 10-, and 20-year planning horizons. The intent of the Byron Airport Master Plan is to provide Contra Costa County with guidance concerning how the airport should develop over the 20-year planning period (Contra Costa County 2005b).

Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan

The Master Plan for Buchanan Field Airport was last updated in 2008 and addresses a variety of concerns with the formulation of a long-range physical development plan for the airport. The primary goal of the Plan is the continued improvement of the airport in a manner that is financially realistic and that is appropriate in consideration of its surroundings. Like the Byron Airport Master Plan, the Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

assesses and directs improvements that will likely be necessary to accommodate future aviation needs (Contra Costa 2008).

5.9.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Schools

As described in Section 5.3, *Air Quality*, of this Draft EIR, some land uses are considered more sensitive to airborne hazardous materials than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. Because sensitive population groups include children, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires an evaluation of hazardous emissions or handling hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school, private or public.

Contra Costa County contains 18 public school districts and 285 total schools, including public and private schools (CCCOE 2022). There are currently no known proposals for new public schools in the EIR Study Area.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous Materials Sites

California Government Code Section 65962.5 directs CalEPA to compile, maintain, and update specified lists of hazardous material release sites. CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21092.6) requires the lead agency to consult the lists compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 to determine whether the project and any alternatives are identified on any of the following lists:

- **USEPA NPL.** The USEPA's NPL includes all sites under the USEPA's Superfund program, which was established to fund cleanup of contaminated sites that pose risks to human health and the environment.
- **USEPA CERCLIS and Archived Sites.** The USEPA's CERCLIS includes a list of 15,000 sites nationally identified as hazardous sites. This would also involve a review for archived sites that have been removed from CERCLIS due to No Further Remedial Action Planned status.
- **USEPA RCRIS (RCRA Info).** The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Information System (RCRIS or RCRA Info) is a national inventory system about hazardous waste handlers. Generators, transporters, handlers, and disposers of hazardous waste are required to provide information for this database.
- **DTSC Cortese List.** DTSC maintains the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) list as a planning document for use by the State and local agencies to comply with CEQA requirements by providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. This list includes the Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program Database.
- **DTSC HazNet.** DTSC uses this database to track hazardous waste shipments.
- **SWRCB LUSTIS.** Through the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Information System (LUSTIS), SWRCB maintains an inventory of USTs and LUSTs, which tracks unauthorized releases.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The required lists of hazardous material release sites are commonly referred to as the “Cortese List,” named after the legislator who authored the legislation. Because the statute was enacted more than 20 years ago, some of the provisions refer to agency activities that were conducted many years ago and are no longer being implemented and, in some cases, the information required in the Cortese List does not exist. Those requesting a copy of the Cortese Lists are now referred directly to the appropriate information resources contained on websites hosted by the boards or departments referenced in the statute, including DTSC’s online EnviroStor database and the SWRCB’s online GeoTracker database. These two databases include hazardous material release sites, along with other categories of sites or facilities specific to each agency’s jurisdiction.

A search of the online EnviroStor and GeoTracker databases on April 18, 2023, identified 679 hazardous materials sites within the EIR Study Area (SWRCB 2023; DTSC 2023). Of the 679 sites, 209 are designated as “active”, “open”, or “require further review”, and the remaining 468 sites are designated as “closed”, “completed – case closed”, “no action required”, or “no further action.” The 209 active hazardous materials sites in the EIR Study Area are shown in Table 5.9-1, *Active Hazardous Material Sites in the EIR Study Area*, and on Figure 5.9-1, *Active Hazardous Material Sites*. The majority of the listed sites are classified as cleanup program sites, where recent or historical unauthorized releases of pollutants to the environment, including soil, groundwater, surface water, and sediment, have occurred.

Hazardous Materials Releases

Numerous types of hazardous materials and chemicals are transported and used throughout homes and businesses within the county. Contra Costa County contains extensive heavy industrial development along its western and northern shorelines, some of which is associated with hazardous materials uses. Military Ocean Terminal Concord, adjacent to the communities of Bay Point and Clyde, is an active installation that ships munitions throughout the Pacific region. Richmond hosts the largest oil refinery in California. This refinery, in addition to numerous other facilities across the County’s northern waterfront, released a combined total of 3.61 million pounds of toxic material in 2021, according to USEPA’s Toxics Release Inventory (EPA 2023). As shown in Figure HS-15, Toxic Release Rankings Relative to the State, Figure HS-16, Hazardous Waste Generators and Facilities Rankings Relative to the State, and Figure HS-17, Clean-Up Sites Rankings Relative to the State, in the proposed Health and Safety Element, there are higher concentrations of toxic releases, hazardous waste generators and facilities, and cleanup sites in and around these Impacted Communities¹ on the western and northern shorelines than many other parts of the county.

These heavy industrial uses present potential risks to public safety due to the explosiveness and flammability of petroleum and chemical materials, especially during transport. A majority of the transportation routes used to transport these materials are major roadways, freeways, rail lines, and waterways. These include several major state and interstate routes that traverse the county in addition to several railroads. Including the Union Pacific Railroad as shown in Figure 5.9-2, *Goods Movement Facilities*.

¹ “Impacted Communities” refers to census tracts in the unincorporated county that are disproportionately burdened by pollution. As discussed further in Section 5.3, *Air Quality*, these designations have been applied to census tracts that score at or above the 72nd percentile for various pollution and population indicators in the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment’s CalEnviroScreen program.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In addition, storage tanks and pipelines are throughout the county and could present public safety risks due to geologic conditions. DOT's National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) Public Viewer shows the routes of hundreds of miles of gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines in the county (USDOT 2023).

At-Risk Facilities

As part of the process to prepare the proposed General Plan, a vulnerability assessment was prepared, which determined the number of industrial buildings and hazardous waste material facilities vulnerable to climate change-related hazards. The assessment notes that 61 industrial buildings in the EIR Study Area are within coastal flood areas; 68 industrial buildings, including five hazardous use facilities, are within the 500-year floodplain; 34 industrial structures are within landslide-prone areas; 44 industrial buildings are within sea-level rise inundation areas; and 24 industrial buildings are within fire hazard zones.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 5.9-1 Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area

Site Name	Address/Location	Site Type	Cleanup Status
EnviroStor Sites			
Selby Slag	Shoreline & Marsh Adj. To Carquinez Strait, Selby	State Response	Active
Acme Fill Corporation	950 Waterbird Way, Martinez	Corrective Action	Active
Military Ocean Terminal Concord	Port Chicago Highway, Concord	Federal Superfund	Active
General Chemical Corp/Bay Point Works	501 Nichols Rd, Bay Point	Corrective Action	Active
West County Landfill Inc	Parr Blvd & Garden Tract Rd, Richmond	Corrective Action	Active
Maltby Pump Station	900 Central Avenue, Martinez	Voluntary Cleanup	Active
GBF / Pittsburg Dumps	Somerville Rd & James Donlon Blvd, Antioch	Federal Superfund	Active
Allied Signal Bay Point	501 Nichols Road, Bay Point	Voluntary Cleanup	Active
Brookside Drive	506-580 Brookside Drive, Richmond	Voluntary Cleanup	Active
Classic Cleaners	679 Parker Avenue, Rodeo	Voluntary Cleanup	Active
Fred's Cleaners	3164 Danville Boulevard, Alamo	Voluntary Cleanup	Active
Central Contra Costa Sanitary District	5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez	Voluntary Cleanup	Certified / Operation & Maintenance
Fass Metals	818 W. Gertrude Avenue, Richmond	State Response	Certified / Operation & Maintenance
Vine Hill Complex	896 Waterbird Way, Martinez	Corrective Action	Certified / Operation & Maintenance
Chemical And Pigment Company	600 Nichols Road, Bay Point	State Response	Certified / Operation & Maintenance
Reichelt Site	521 West Gertrude Avenue, Richmond	State Response	Certified O&M – Land Use Restrictions Only
Apogee Chemical Inc	525 De Carlo Avenue, Richmond	Voluntary Cleanup	Certified O&M – Land Use Restrictions Only
Clyde Pedestrian Path	East Of Port Chicago Highway from Sussex St to Warwick St, Clyde	Voluntary Cleanup	Certified O&M – Land Use Restrictions Only
Antioch Bomb Target	Latitude: N 38° 01.596' Longitude: W 121° 36.727', Antioch	State Response	Inactive – Action Required
Thompson Property	1499/1621 Delta Road, Knightsen	School Cleanup	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Port Chicago Highway Site	805 Port Chicago Highway, West Pittsburg	Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
NAD Concord	Concord	Military Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
I T Transportation Corp/No Calif	4501 Pacheco Blvd, Martinez	Corrective Action	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Caltrans-Carquinez Bridge	Toll Bridge, Crocket	Voluntary Cleanup	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Karnes Property	11 Parr Boulevard, Richmond	Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Neon Associates	2800 Radiant Avenue, Richmond	Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 5.9-1 Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area

Site Name	Address/Location	Site Type	Cleanup Status
Hegarty Site	560 W. Gertrude Ave, Richmond	Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Xcel Etch Tek	2455 Bates Avenue, Concord	Tiered Permit	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Selby Smelter Offsite Area	Shoreline And Marsh Street, Selby	Evaluation	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Contra Costa County Fair	1201 West 10 th Street, Antioch	Voluntary Cleanup	Refer: Local Agency
Myers Drum Co.	900 Brookside Dr., San Pablo	Historical	Refer: Other Agency
Denning Mills, Inc	385 Pittsburg Avenue, Richmond	Historical	Refer: Other Agency
Mannon Estate	650 Parker Avenue, Rodeo	Historical	Refer: Other Agency
Tosco, San Francisco Area Refinery	1380 San Pablo Avenue, Rodeo	Tiered Permit	Refer: Other Agency
Tosco Refining Co., Avon Refinery	Solano Way, Martinez	Tiered Permit	Refer: Other Agency
West Contra Costa Sanitary Landfill, Inc.	Foot of Parr Boulevard, Richmond	Tiered Permit	Refer: Other Agency
Tosco Corporation Avon Refinery	Solano Way / Waterfront Road, Martinez	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Acme Landfill	End of Arthur Road, Martinez	Evaluation	Refer: RCRA
General Conveyer Of Northern Californ	4575 Pacheco Blvd., Martinez	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Union Oil Of Calif., S.F. Refinery	San Francisco Refinery, Rodeo	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Shell Oil Co. #3	1800 Marina Vista Avenue, Martinez	Historical	Refer: RCRA
General Chemical	501 Nichols Road, Pittsburg	Evaluation	Refer: RCRA
Allied Corp Bay Point Works	501 Nichols Road, Pittsburg	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Oscar Erickson Inc	255 Parr Blvd, Richmond	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Richmond Sanitary Service	Parr Boulevard and Garden Tract Road, Richmond	Historical	Refer: RCRA
Shell Chemical Company	2840 Willow Pass Road, Pittsburg	Evaluation	Refer: RCRA
Pure/Chemical Corporation	508 De Carlo Avenue, Richmond	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Mt Diablo Quicksilver Co Ltd	West Of Morgan Territory Road, Clayton	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Tidewater Oil Co.	Avon Refinery, Martinez	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Rodeo Refinery	On San Pablo Bay, 9 Miles W Of Martinez, Martinez	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Martinez City Dump	301 Waterfront Rd (1 Mile E Of Martinez), Martinez	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Pacific Resins & Chemicals Inc.	2502 Goodrich Avenue, Richmond	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Bay Standard	24485 Marsh Creek Road, Brentwood	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Antioch A B F	James Donlon Blvd, East of Somesville, Antioch	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Chevron Old Valley Pipeline Right-Of-Way	Bruns And Byron Roads, Byron	Voluntary Cleanup	Refer: RWQCB

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 5.9-1 Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area

Site Name	Address/Location	Site Type	Cleanup Status
Dla – Ozol Terminal	700 Carquinez Scenic Drive, Martinez	State Response	Refer: RWQCB
Union Oil Company Of California	1380 San Pablo Ave., Rodeo	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
2701 Goodrick Ave	2701 Goodrick Ave, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Byron Sanitary District	3288 Camino Diablo Road, Byron	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Shell Oil Products/Us Martinez Refinery	Marina Vista Ave, Martinez	Corrective Action	Refer: RWQCB
Golden Eagle Refinery	150 Solano Way, Martinez	Corrective Action	Refer: RWQCB
Agra Foundations Inc.	155 B Parr Boulevard, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Mckosker Site	716 W. Gertrude Ave, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Conoco Phillips	1380 San Pablo Ave, Rodeo	Corrective Action	Refer: RWQCB
Rose	2701 Goodrick Avenue, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Mt. Diablo Mine	Marsh Creek Road, Brentwood	Historical	Refer: RWQCB
Zieminski Site	816 W. Gertrude Ave, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Simpson Filtration	81 Parr Blvd, Richmond	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Acme Packaging	761 Port Chicago Highway, Bay Point	Corrective Action	Refer: RWQCB
San Francisco Nike Battery 08-09 (J09ca0936)	Berkeley	Military Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Union Collier	Nichols Rd. & Port Chicago Hwy, Pittsburg	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
GeoTracker Sites			
Acme Fill Corp	950 Waterbird Way, North Parcel, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Verification Monitoring
Alliance Minimart	2747 Willow Pass Road, Bay Point	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
Buchanan Field	550 Sally Ride Dr., Concord	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
Central Assembly-Former 7 Oaks Shopping Center Dry Cleaner	5098 Sobrante Avenue, El Sobrante	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment
Central Contra Costa Sanitary District	5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Inactive
Chevron Historical Pipeline – PIM Site 23	Near Waterbird Way, East of Interstate 680 and just North of Santa Fe Railroad, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment
EBMUD Watershed Headquarter	500 San Pablo Dam Road, Orinda	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Inactive
Fass Metal/Bonner	818 W Gertrude Avenue, Richmond	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Inactive
Joseph's Marina and Lone Tree Point	13 Pacific Ave, Rodeo	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Inactive
Kinder Morgan Concord Station	1550 Solano Way, Concord	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Kinder Morgan – Rodeo/Crockett Terminal – Selby Pond Release	North of San Pablo Ave, Rodeo	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Verification Monitoring

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 5.9-1 Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area

Site Name	Address/Location	Site Type	Cleanup Status
LP Catalyst Holding	2840/2850 Willow Pass Rd, Bay Point	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
Martinez Refining Company	1801 Marina Vista, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
MONSANTO Chemical Facility	1778 Monsanto Way, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Verification Monitoring
Phillips 66 San Francisco Refinery, Rodeo	1380 San Pablo Ave, Rodeo	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Point Ozol, Fuel Terminal DFSP – Administration Area	700 Carquinez Scenic Drive, Martinez	Military UST Site	Open – Remediation
Point Ozol, Fuel Terminal DFSP – Concord Pump Station	Imhoff Drive, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
Point Ozol, Fuel Terminal DFSP – Parent Facility – Point Ozol, Fuel Terminal DFSP	Martinez, CA	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
Point Ozol, Fuel Terminal DFSP – Upper Tank Area	700 Carquinez Scenic Strait, Martinez	Military UST Site	Open – Remediation
Private Residence	Private Residence, Kensington	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Eligible for Closure
RKR Associates LLC	2455 Bates Ave, Concord	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District – Station #32	1101 Stone Valley Road, Alamo	LUST Cleanup Site	Open – Eligible for Closure
Shell Oil Co – Martinez Refinery	North End Marina Vista Blvd, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Verification Monitoring
Shore Terminals LLC Selby Terminal	90 San Pablo Avenue, Crockett	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment
Southern Pacific Pipelines	2 nd Street, Rodeo	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Inactive
Tesoro / Tdpi / Cop Committee Site	150 Solano Way, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Tesoro Avon Refinery	150 Solano Way, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery	150 Solano Way, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Tosco Avon Refinery	1 Solano Way, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Remediation
Tosco Pipeline – Wickland	2801 Waterfront Road, Martinez	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Eligible for Closure
US Army MOTCO - MRS 10 – Suisun Bay Impact Area	Suisun Bay, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Site Assessment
US Army MOTCO - MRS 7 – Tidal Explosive Ordnance Disposal	Port Chicago Hwy, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - MRS 8 – Port Chicago Terrestrial Explosion Area	Tidal Area, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 1 – Tidal Area Landfill	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 11	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 1A – Tidal Area Landfill Groundwater	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
US Army MOTCO - Site 2	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 25, 26, and 28	Nichols Rd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 5.9-1 Active Hazardous Materials Sites in the EIR Study Area

Site Name	Address/Location	Site Type	Cleanup Status
US Army MOTCO - Site 3	Nichols Rd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 30 – Taylor Boulevard Bridge Disposal Area	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Eligible for Closure
US Army MOTCO - Site 31	400 Port Chicago Highway, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
US Army MOTCO - Site 31A	101 Port Chicago Highway, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Site Assessment
US Army MOTCO - Site 32	Port Chicago Hwy, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
US Army MOTCO - Site 33	Port Chicago Hwy, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
US Army MOTCO - Site 38 – Port of Chicago Main Street Dump	Main Street, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action
US Army MOTCO - Site 39 – E-103 Dry Cleaning Facility	Building E-103, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Eligible for Closure
US Army MOTCO - Site 4 and 5	Port Chicago Hwy, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 40 – Former Copper Smelting Plant	Kinney Blvd, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Remediation
US Army MOTCO - Site 6	Port Chicago Hwy, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management
US Army MOTCO - Site 9	Froid and Taylor Road, Concord	Military Cleanup Site	Open – Long Term Management

Source: SWRCB 2022.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

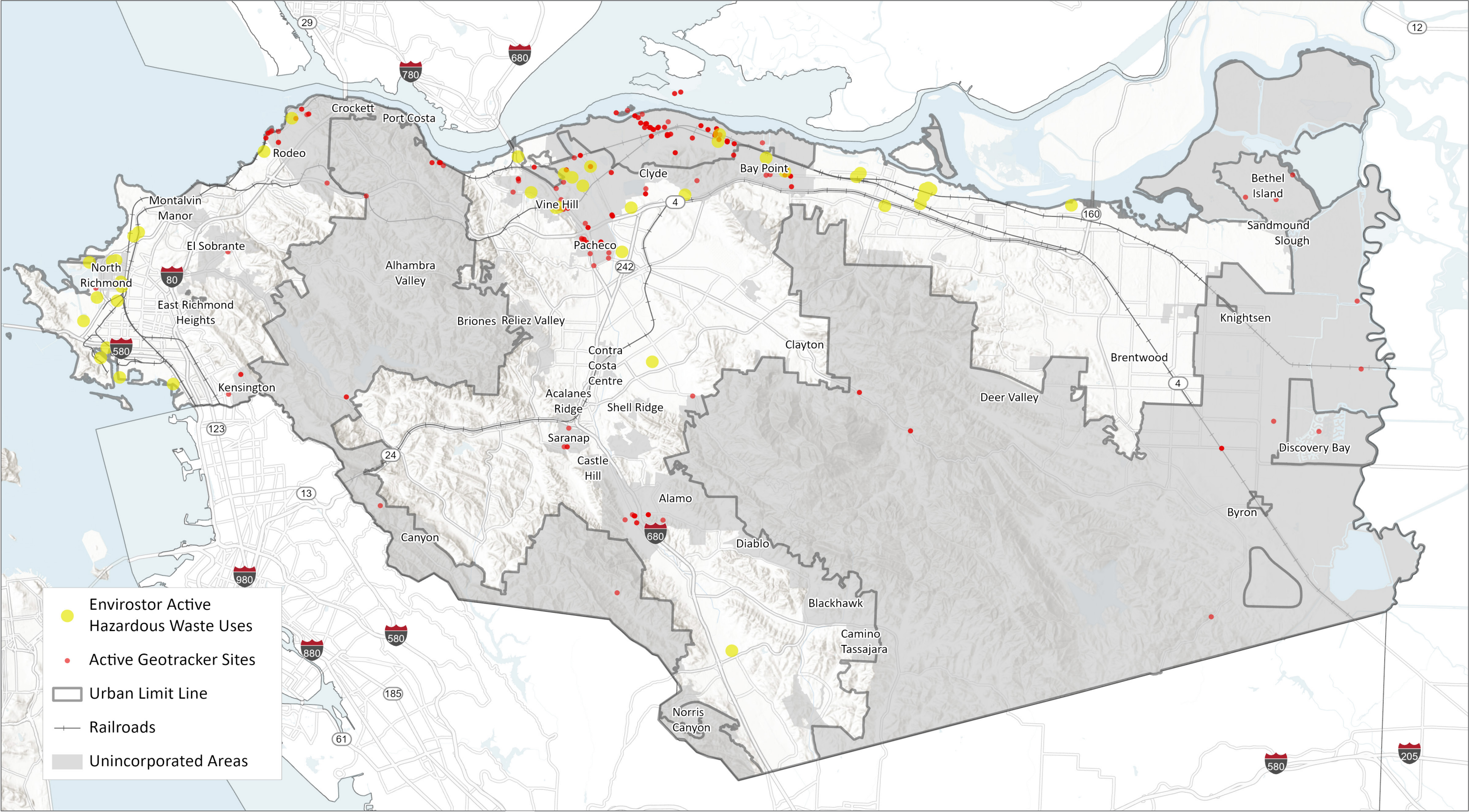


Figure 5.9-1
Active Hazardous Material Sites

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

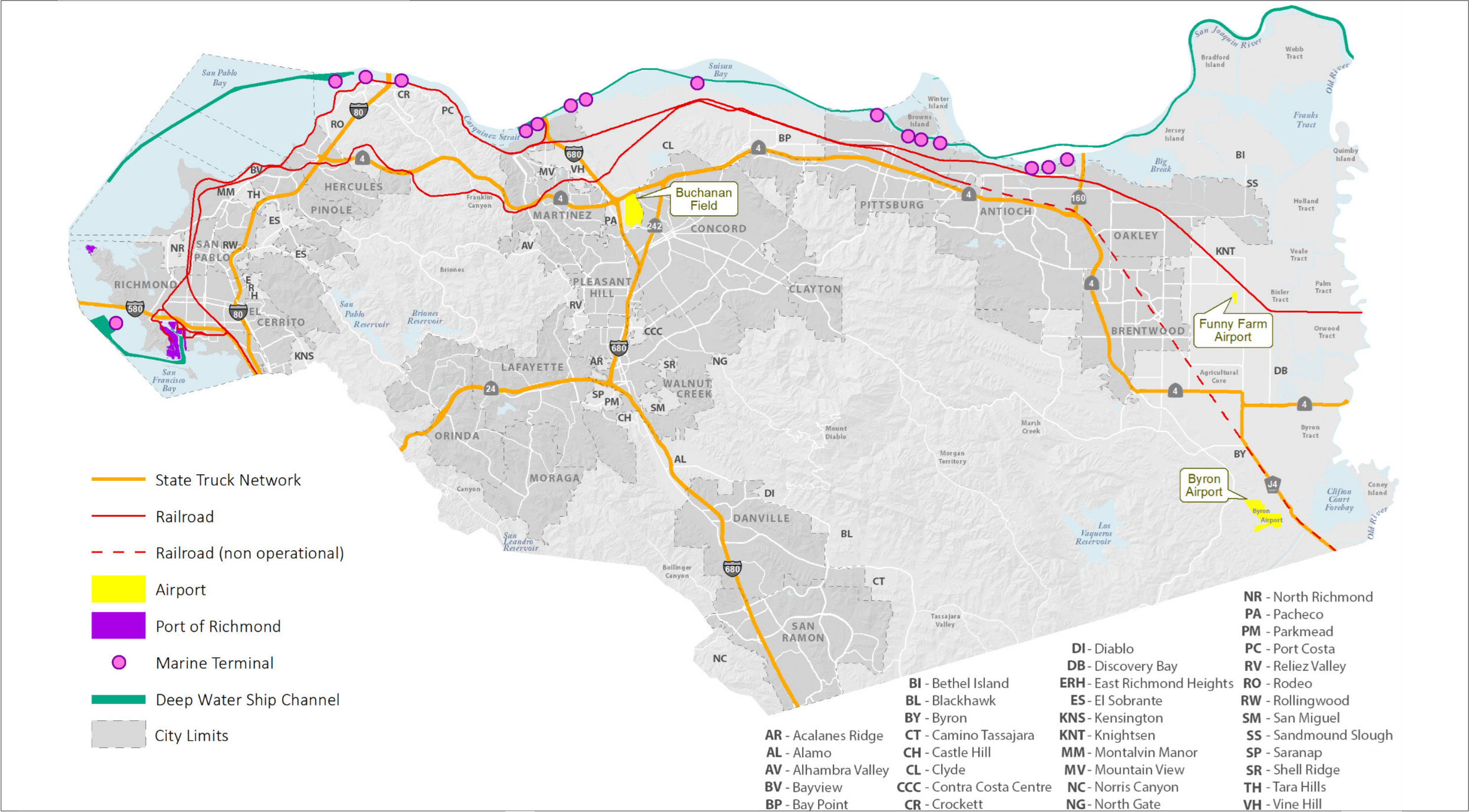


Figure 5.9-2
Goods Movement Facilities

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Airports

There are two public general aviation airports in Contra Costa County, Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport. There are also two private airstrips in eastern Contra Costa County. Both airports are public reliever airports that serve the residents of Contra Costa County. Buchanan Field Airport is west of Concord and covers 495 acres (FAA 2022). Byron Airport is south of Byron and covers 1,427 acres (Contra Costa County 2022).

The Contra Costa County ALUCP was adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission in 2000. Recently, to promote economic development, the County amended its ALUCP with regard to Byron Airport to substantially broaden the range of uses allowed by right on the airport property. The Byron Airport Development Program was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on June 7, 2022. This included adoption of a County-initiated General Plan amendment and approval of a development plan modification that established development standards, such as maximum building heights, maximum floor area, and landscaping requirements. Additionally, the ALUCP was updated with new policies and maps specific to Byron Airport that reflect the 2017 Airport Layout Plan for Byron Airport, the 2005 Byron Airport Master Plan, and guidance set forth in the most recent version of the Caltrans California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook.

Areas within the unincorporated county and several cities are within Buchanan Field and Byron Airports' Safety Compatibility Zones, as shown in Figure 5.9-3, *Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Safety Zones*. These zones restrict certain land uses and heights of structures pursuant to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 77 Regulations protecting airspace near the airport (ALUC 2000a, ALUC 2000b).

Emergency Response and Evacuation Planning Areas

As described in Section 5.9.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, the EIR Study Area is within the planning areas of the Contra Costa County Operational Area EOP and the Contra Costa County LHMP. The Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services is responsible for coordinating emergency services in the county. The County Administrator is the designated Administrator of Emergency Services as provided by County Ordinance Code, Chapter 42-2, *Disaster Council and Emergency Services*. The Administrator of Emergency Services is supported by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services and has overall responsibility for developing response and recovery plans for the Operational Area and the unincorporated areas of the county; operating the Emergency Operations Center; operating communications and warning systems; maintaining information on the status of resources, services, and operations; identifying and analyzing potential hazards and recommending appropriate counter-measures; and collecting, evaluating, and disseminating damage assessment and other essential information.

As shown in Figure 5.9-4, *Evacuation Routes*, potential evacuation routes in the county include interstate freeways, state routes, and major surface streets, like Interstate (I-) 680 through the central part of the county, I-580 and I-80 in the western county, and State Route (SR-) 4 in the eastern county. Preferred evacuation routes in any individual evacuation order will depend on the emergency. Contra Costa County has identified evacuation zones to support efficient communication with community members regarding evacuation warnings and orders, which can be viewed and monitored via the County Sheriff's Office's Community Warning System website.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Evacuation access in the county also varies dependent on location. Some areas may only have one viable evacuation route, which presents a greater risk for safe evacuation during emergency evacuation events. Per State law, the proposed Health and Safety includes an analysis to identify evacuation constraints in hazard-prone residential areas. These residential parcels with evacuation constraints are shown in Figure 5.9-5, *Single-Access Road Residential Parcels*. All areas identified are more than a half-mile from a major roadway and may have access to only one emergency evacuation route.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

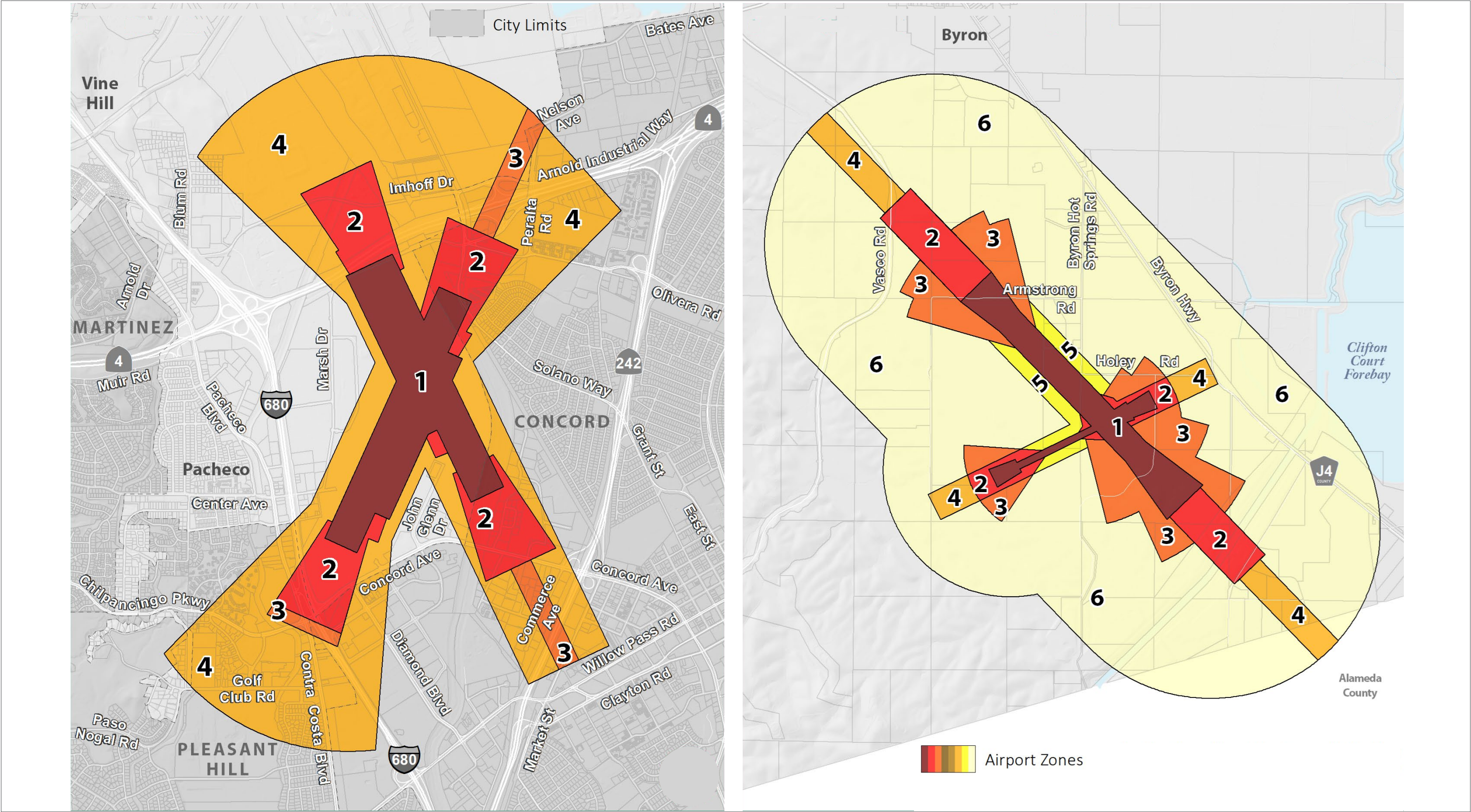


Figure 5.9-3
Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Safety Zones

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

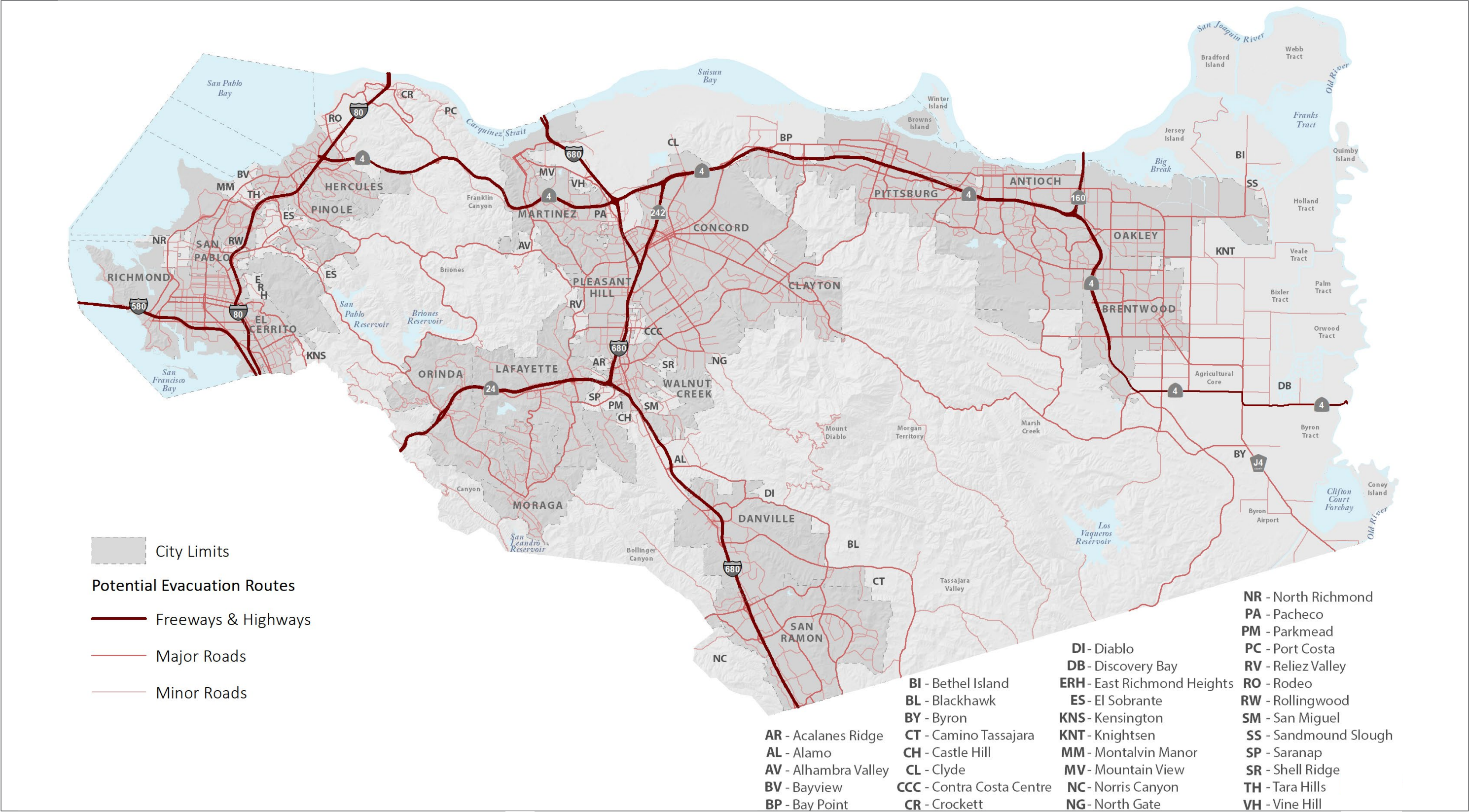


Figure 5.9-4
Evacuation Routes

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

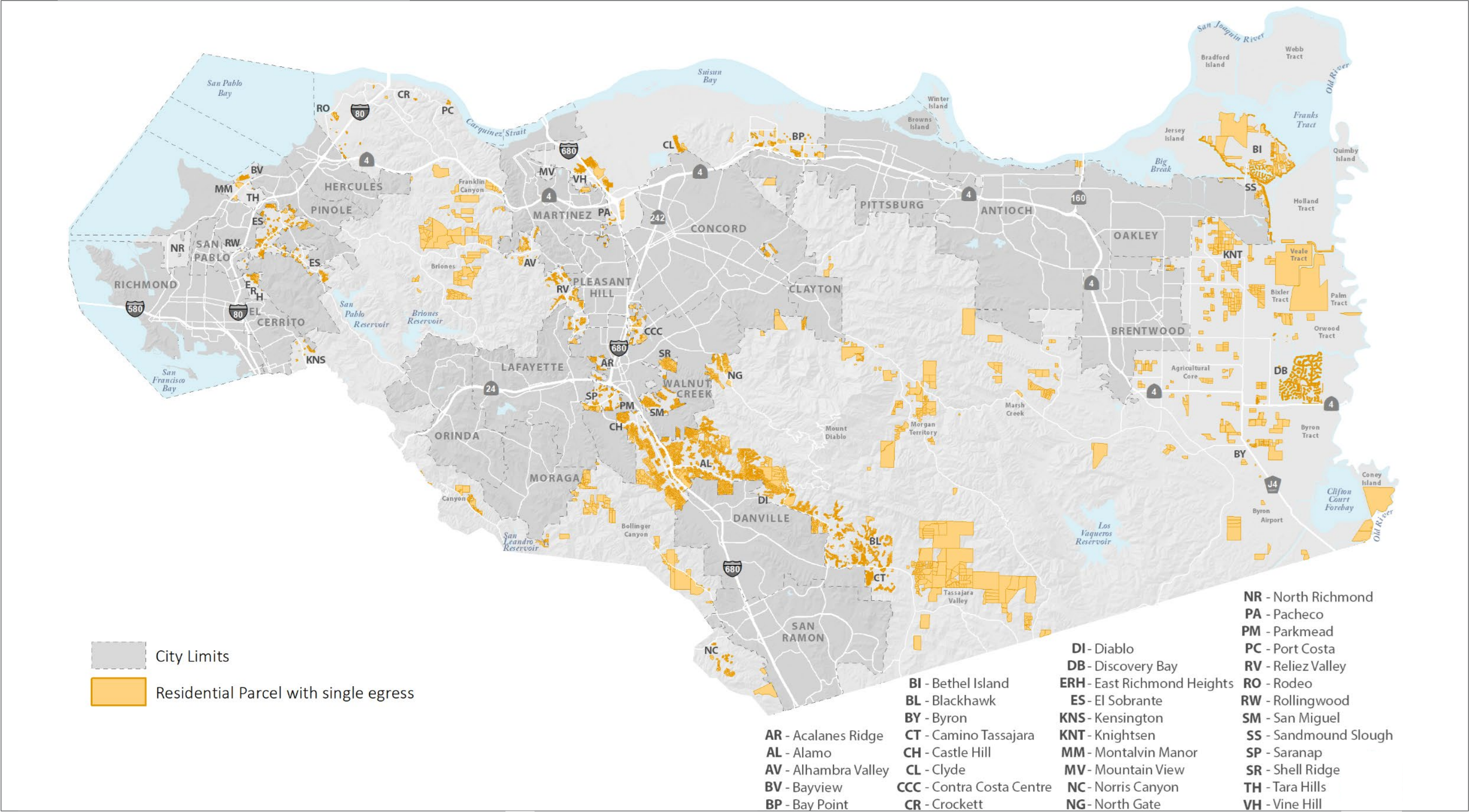


Figure 5.7-5
Single-Access Road Residential Parcels

5. Environmental Analysis
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

5.9.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- H-1 Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- H-2 Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- H-3 Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substance, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- H-4 Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- H-5 For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.
- H-6 Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

5.9.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.9.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to hazards and hazardous materials. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Stronger Communities Element

- **Policy SC-P1.6:** For projects negatively affecting an Impacted Community, support community benefits agreements (CBAs) negotiated with the project applicant to address the community's expressed needs. The primary objective of these CBAs is to mitigate project impacts to the greatest extent possible, which could include mitigations exceeding the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Secondarily, to compensate for impacts that cannot be fully mitigated, these CBAs should secure community benefits that exceed inherent project benefits and support the community's objectives, especially as identified in the Community Profile. Neighborhood-serving retail uses that fill critical needs are exempt from this policy.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- **Action SC-A1.2:** *Amend County Ordinance Code Chapter 84-63, Land Use Permits for Development Projects Involving Hazardous Waste or Hazardous Materials, to:*
 - a) *Increase the hazard scores for projects with potential to adversely affect Impacted Communities to ensure more projects are subject to discretionary review.*
 - b) *Address ambiguities and antiquated terminology that complicate administration of the ordinance.*
 - c) *Require preparation of a plan to prevent and remediate any contaminant releases, along with bonds or other financial assurances that guarantee remediation plans are implemented, for projects in areas subject to sea-level rise or tsunami inundation.*

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P7.4:** Require new residential development to be planned, designed, and constructed in a way that promotes health, minimizes hazard exposure for future residents, and mitigates potential adverse effects on natural resources and the environment.

Transportation Element

- **Action TR-A2.3:** Coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission and railroads to design and implement projects that address safety concerns and conflicts from at-grade rail crossings.
- **Goal TR-7:** Safe and viable general and commercial aviation activities in Contra Costa County.
 - **Policy TR-P7.2:** Work with the Federal Aviation Administration and aviation operators to minimize conflicts with residential areas and other sensitive receptors.
 - **Policy TR-P7.3:** Regulate the location of private airfields and heliports to protect public safety and minimize impacts on nearby residents and sensitive receptors.
 - **Policy TR-P7.4:** *Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.*
 - **Policy TR-P7.5:** Partner with the Cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill in making land use decisions that support Buchanan Field Airport's ongoing viability while protecting public safety, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
 - **Policy TR-P7.6:** Enhance Byron Airport's viability by protecting it from incompatible urban encroachment, such as large-scale residential development, and providing infrastructure that supports existing and planned airport activities, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P8.5:** Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large-scale commercial and industrial facilities using wells and prohibit discharge of hazardous materials through injection wells.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Policy PFS-P7.9:** *Prohibit new landfills in ecologically sensitive areas, and require that new landfills be located, designed, and operated to avoid adverse impacts to surrounding land uses, including by limiting the area of landfill activities; limiting hours of operation; providing safe and appropriate transportation routes; maintaining site security; identifying associated off-site feeder transfer stations; to blend the landfill disturbance area with surrounding topography; covering refuse daily; and mitigating noise, odor, litter, and visual impacts.*

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P7.3:** *Require new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA (as shown on Figure HS-10) or in the WUI (as shown on Figure HS-11), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints (as shown on Figure HS-21), to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and approve the traffic control plan prior to issuance of building permits.*
- **Policy HS-P7.4:** *Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA and projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA, as shown in Figure HS-10, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. The fire protection plan shall include measures for fire-resistant construction materials and modifying fuel loading, as well as a plan to maintain that protection over time. The fire protection plan shall include:*
 - a) *A risk analysis*
 - b) *Fire response capabilities*
 - c) *Defensible space requirements*
 - d) *Fire safety requirements for infrastructure*
 - e) *Building ignition resistance*
 - f) *Mitigation measures and design for non-conforming fuel modification*
 - g) *Wildfire education*
 - h) *Maintenance and limitations*
 - i) *A plan for emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation*
- **Policy HS-P7.10:** *Work with energy service providers to ensure an adequate power supply to vulnerable populations during planned power shutoffs.*
- **Action HS-A7.1:** *Collaborate with local fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to update and implement the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Contra Costa County.*
- **Action HS-A7.2:** *Support local fire protection agencies with efforts to seek funding for development and implementation of a continuous vegetation management program in fire hazard severity zones and WUI areas.*

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- **Action HS-A7.5:** Collaborate with local and regional fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to develop a fire safe education program to provide information about State fuel modification, defensible space, access, water, signage, and other fire safe regulations.
- **Goal HS-9:** Communities that are protected from hazards associated with use, manufacture, transport, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous waste, including from fossil fuels, chemical refining, and power plants, as well as pipelines, rail lines, and truck transportation.
 - **Policy HS-P9.1:** Provide equitable inspection and enforcement of hazardous material and hazardous waste regulations throughout the county.
 - **Policy HS-P9.2:** Ensure CCHSMP staff have an opportunity to review and comment on development applications for projects involving use of hazardous materials or hazardous waste.
 - **Policy HS-P9.3:** *Require new industrial development to reduce generation and disposal of hazardous materials to the maximum extent feasible by (listed in order of importance):*
 - a) *Implementing operational source reduction strategies and replacing hazardous materials with less hazardous materials.*
 - b) *Reducing generation of those wastes not amenable to source reduction or recycling.*
 - c) *Recovering and recycling the remaining waste for reuse.*
 - d) *Properly disposing of hazardous wastes and residuals generated from treatment of hazardous waste.*
 - **Policy HS-P9.4:** Support development of alternative hazardous waste management technologies and methodologies that reduce the relative risk to human health and the environment.
 - **Policy HS-P9.5:** *Require facilities that manage hazardous materials or hazardous waste in stationary or fixed storage tanks and that are in areas at risk of inundation from sea-level rise and flooding to conduct sea-level rise studies to address the risk of hazardous materials release from rising water levels, including rising groundwater. Require these facilities to incorporate best management practices to reduce the risk of release.*
 - **Policy HS-P9.6:** Require transport of hazardous materials via the safest available method for each material, avoiding Impacted Communities, populated areas, and areas subject to natural hazards whenever possible.
 - **Policy HS-P9.7:** Prioritize implementation of safety projects along hazardous material transportation corridors in Impacted Communities to address high-risk scenarios.
 - **Policy HS-P9.8:** Require applicants for projects in Impacted Communities that involve hazardous materials or hazardous waste to provide clear information in plain language about potential hazards their projects pose to nearby residents. Review and verify this information, make it available to residents, and encourage project applicants to host at least one community meeting to discuss potential hazards.
 - **Policy HS-P9.9:** Discourage construction of new large-scale facilities that treat, store, or dispose of hazardous waste from off-site sources and negatively impact Impacted Communities.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- **Policy HS-P9.10:** *Prohibit new hazardous waste facilities in the following areas:*
 - a) *Watersheds of an existing or planned drinking water reservoir.*
 - b) *Ecologically significant resource areas.*
 - c) *Within 200 feet of an active or potentially active fault.*
 - d) *Within a 100-year floodplain.*
 - e) *Within a setback distance determined in accordance with DTSC guidance under SB 673, once final.*
- **Policy HS-P9.11:** *Require design and operation of new or expanded hazardous waste facilities to adhere to the following criteria, as well as the permitting criteria established by the DTSC for vulnerable communities and cumulative impacts pursuant to SB 673, once final:*
 - a) *Minimize risk to the surrounding area in the case of a hazardous waste accident or spill.*
 - b) *Ensure spills of waste will not reach the Bay, Delta, streams, creeks, reservoirs, or other bodies of water or environmentally sensitive resources by incorporating buffers as appropriate and/or using engineered structural design features (e.g., spill containment and monitoring devices).*
 - c) *Avoid known or suspected groundwater recharge areas or areas where residential uses rely on wells. If located in such areas, facilities must provide properly engineered spill containment features, inspection measures, and other environmental protection controls.*
 - d) *In areas with unstable soils, such as steep slopes and areas subject to liquefaction or subsidence, ensure structural stability through engineered design features.*
 - e) *Use access roads leading to major transportation routes that:*
 - *Do not traverse residential neighborhoods.*
 - *Minimize, buffer, or employ physical barriers to residential frontages.*
 - *Demonstrate road network safety through road design, construction, accident rates, and traffic flow.*
 - *Minimize noise impacts on the surrounding area.*
- **Policy HS-P9.12:** *Require hazardous waste facilities to prepare a cumulative risk assessment that analyzes, characterizes, and quantifies the combined risks to human health and the environment from the facility, in combination with other off-site hazardous materials risks. The assessment must consider risks in the absence of actions to control or mitigate a potential release and determine whether buffers or other mitigation is necessary to protect residential uses, immobile populations (e.g., schools, hospitals, behavioral health facilities, convalescent homes, and prisons), other places where people gather, environmentally sensitive resources, and other sensitive areas from adverse emissions or contamination. The assessment must also be guided by DTSC guidance for vulnerable communities and cumulative impacts pursuant to SB 673, when final. Require that project applicants fund the needed technical review for the assessment.*
- **Policy HS-P9.13:** *Include a condition in entitlements for new and expanded hazardous waste facilities that requires periodic (i.e., every one to three years) permit review to ensure ongoing compliance with conditions of approval.*
- **Policy HS-P9.14:** *Encourage and facilitate establishment of adequate sites for collection of household hazardous waste (HHW), unused pharmaceuticals, and universal wastes, along with provisions for residents who are physically unable to deliver materials to a collection site.*

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- **Action HS-A9.1:** Provide technical assistance to hazardous waste generators to encourage them to reduce their hazardous waste to the maximum extent feasible.
- **Action HS-A9.2:** Update the Oil Spill Contingency Plan to protect the Bay and shoreline areas in the event of an oil or other hazardous materials spill.
- **Action HS-A9.3:** Provide information to county residents about less toxic alternatives to household products containing universal wastes and the safe handling, storage, and disposal of such products, including pharmaceuticals.
- **Goal HS-10:** Communities that are protected from the impacts of historical hazardous waste releases.
 - **Policy HS-P10.1:** Coordinate with other agencies in efforts to remediate or treat contaminated surface water, groundwater, and soils in or affecting Impacted Communities.
 - **Policy HS-P10.2:** *Require development of contaminated sites to comply with all clean-up plans, land use covenants, and deed restrictions imposed by the DTSC or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).*
 - **Policy HS-P10.3:** *Require new or expanded industrial uses involving hazardous materials or wastes to provide sufficient funds, in the form of a cash deposit, surety bond, or other financial instrument acceptable to the County, to guarantee site remediation, including removal of facilities, equipment, and structures, and ensure community safety and site reusability.*
 - **Action HS-A10.1:** Support public access to the inventory of contaminated sites published by the DTSC and California State Water Resources Control Board by posting links to this information on the County's website.
- **Goal HS-12:** Communities and local economies that continue to function during all hazards and have coordinated and effective response and recovery procedures.
 - **Policy HS-P12.1:** Continue implementing the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors and certified by FEMA and is incorporated into this Health and Safety Element.
 - **Policy HS-P12.2:** Locate facilities and uses on the County's designated critical facilities list outside of identified hazard areas whenever possible, accounting for how climate change may increase frequency and intensity of hazards. If critical facilities must be in hazard areas, ensure these facilities and their access routes are protected from the hazard risks inherent to each location.
 - **Policy HS-P12.3:** Coordinate with cities, school districts, recreation and park districts, and community-based organizations to ensure adequate emergency shelters, community resilience centers, and alternate care sites are available when natural disasters and other highly hazardous conditions, such as industrial accidents, occur.
 - **Action HS-A12.1:** Update the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan* as necessary to remain compliant with State and federal laws and reflect changing climate conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- **Action HS-A12.2:** Incorporate the assessments and projections for future emergency service needs from the most recent Municipal Services Reviews into updates of the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
- **Action HS-A12.4:** At least every eight years, evaluate the effectiveness of and update public safety, preparedness, and hazard mitigation policies, including in this Health and Safety Element, considering changing climate conditions.
- **Action HS-A12.5:** Ensure the designs for new and significantly renovated community-oriented County facilities allow for flexible uses and support multiple community purposes, including being used as community resilience centers.
- **Action HS-A12.8:** *Install backup power and water resources at critical County facilities, emergency shelters, community resilience centers, and cooling centers.*
- **Action HS-A12.13:** Continue providing CERT training programs and encourage the Contra Costa CERT Coalition to provide updated training on hazards and related risks identified in the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment or the best-available climate science data.
- **Policy HS-P13.1:** *Except for infill sites, require new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the WUI, and 100-year or 200-year floodplain to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes, and encourage the same for existing development.*
- **Policy HS-P13.2:** Coordinate with transit agencies and community service and faith-based organizations to assist with evacuation efforts and ensure that evacuation services are made available to vulnerable people, including those with limited English proficiency or limited access to transportation, communication, and other lifeline resources and services.
- **Action HS-A13.1:** Partner with cities and public protection agencies to delineate evacuation routes, identifying their capacity, safety, and viability under different hazard scenarios, as well as emergency vehicle routes for disaster response, and where possible, alternate routes where congestion or road failure might reasonably be expected to occur. Update as new information and technologies become available.
- **Action HS-A13.2:** *At least once every five years, update maps identifying neighborhoods with only one emergency evacuation route.*
- **Action HS-A13.3:** *Coordinate with local fire districts to develop and maintain minimum roadway, ingress, and egress standards for evacuation of residential areas in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.*
- **Action HS-A13.4:** Develop an evacuation education program to help inform community members about the Contra Costa County Community Warning System and recommended approaches to evacuation.

5.9.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to hazards and hazardous materials.

Strategy NI-2: Protect against and adapt to increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfire events.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Strategy NI-2 Actions:

- Prohibit new residential subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and discourage residential subdivisions in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. (HS-P7.1)
- Require any construction of buildings or infrastructure within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, or in the Wildland-Urban Interface, to incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the applicable State Fire Safe Regulations and Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply. (HS-P7.2)
- Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, or projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Collaborate with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. (HS-P7.3)
- Work with property owners in mapped High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or in the Wildland-Urban Interface to establish and maintain fire breaks and defensible space, vegetation clearance, and firefighting infrastructure. (HS-P7.4)
- Support undergrounding of utility lines, especially in the Wildland-Urban Interface and Fire Hazard Severity Zones. (HS-P7.8)
- Review indoor air filtration standards and consider whether filtration requirements can and should be strengthened for projects permitted by the County.
- Work with community organizations to help Impacted Communities have access to financing and other resources to reduce the fire risk on their property, prepare for wildfire events, and allow for a safe and speedy recovery.

Strategy NI-3: Establish and maintain community resilience hubs.

Strategy NI-3 Actions:

- Pursue funding to develop a resilience hub master plan that identifies existing community facilities that can serve as resilience hubs and support affected populations during hazard events. This process should start with an assessment of community needs. Such facilities should be distributed equitably throughout the county, with an emphasis on easy access for Impacted Communities. Where appropriate facilities do not exist, develop plans to create new resilience hubs.
- Pursue funding to implement the resilience hub master plan, including retrofitting selected facilities to function as resilience hubs. These retrofits should involve adding solar panels, battery backup systems, water resources, supplies to meet basic community and emergency medical needs, and other needs as identified by the resilience hub master plan.
- Create a virtual resilience hub that connects County resources to communities through virtual community networks to provide detailed, up-to-date information about preparing for natural disasters, public safety notifications and alerts, space for virtual gathering and information-sharing, and other appropriate uses. Materials shall be accessible in multiple languages.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Coordinate resilience hub activities with planning efforts around public safety power shutoffs and wildfire smoke resiliency.

Strategy NI-6: Protect the community against additional hazards created or exacerbated by climate change.

Strategy NI-6 Actions:

- Discourage new below-market-rate housing in High and Very High Wildfire Hazard Severity zones, the Wildland-Urban Interface, and Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. If below-market-rate housing must be constructed within these zones, require it to be hardened or make use of nature-based solutions to remain habitable to the greatest extent possible. (HS-P3.4)
- Treat susceptibility to hazards and threats to human health and life as primary considerations when reviewing all development proposals and changes to land uses.
- Partner with community-based organizations to provide information to community members about how to prepare for projected climate change hazards.
- Promote, and develop as necessary, available funding sources to create incentives for residents and businesses to prepare for natural disasters, particularly members of Impacted Communities.
- Consider projected impacts of climate change when siting, designing, and identifying the construction and maintenance costs of capital projects.
- Actively promote and expand participation in local and regional community emergency preparedness and response programs.
- Support and fund efforts to enhance ongoing community and cross-sector engagement in community-level resilience and cohesion. Support non-government organizations to actively engage in developing a network of community-level actions that enhance resiliency.

5.9.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.9-1: Implementation of the proposed project, including construction and operation activities, could involve the transport, use, and/or disposal of hazardous materials; however, compliance with existing local, State, and federal regulations would ensure impacts are minimized. [Thresholds H-1, H-2, and H-3]

Proposed General Plan

Construction and operation of projects built under the proposed General Plan would involve the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, development facilitated under the proposed General Plan could result in 23,200 new residential units and nearly 6.2 million square feet of new nonresidential building space, including both new commercial/office and industrial uses.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Pipelines

As noted in Section 5.9.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, several hundred miles of pipelines transporting natural gas, petroleum, or other hazardous liquids run through the EIR Study Area. The pipelines are monitored by pipeline operators who are responsible for the upkeep of pipelines and the authorization of excavations around pipeline locations. Development under the proposed General Plan would increase the exposure of people and the environment to potential hazards related to pipeline or electrical line rupture. As with all development in California, development in Contra Costa County would be required to follow the procedural requirements of the Underground Service Alert of Northern California, or USA North 811.

Construction

Construction of future projects would involve the use of substances such as paints, sealants, solvents, greases, adhesives, cleaners, lubricants, and fuels. However, the materials used would not be in such quantities or stored in such a manner as to pose a significant safety hazard to the public or the environment. These activities would also be short term or one time in nature. Project construction workers would be trained in safe handling and hazardous materials use, as required under OSHA Regulation 29 CFR 1926.62 and CCR Title 8. Project construction contractors would maintain equipment and supplies on construction sites for containing and cleaning up spills. If a hazardous materials release could not be safely contained and cleaned up by on-site personnel, the affected project applicant would notify the applicable fire department immediately.

Additionally, to prevent hazardous conditions, existing local, State, and federal laws and regulations—such as those listed under Section 5.9.1.1, *Regulatory Background*—are required to be enforced at construction sites. For known or potential contaminated sites, prior to issuing a grading or building permit, the County would require an assessment of potential hazards. If the development project could pose a human health or environmental risk, the CCHSHMP would require that such hazards be managed appropriately. This could include, but would not be limited to, actions such as removal of the contaminants (i.e., remediation), site controls to reduce exposure (e.g., capping soils or installation of soil vapor barriers), or administrative mechanisms (e.g., deed restrictions).

Compliance with existing laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur.

Demolition

Future development projects under the proposed General Plan may involve demolition of existing buildings and structures associated with a specific development site. Some building materials used in the mid and late 1900s are considered hazardous to the environment and harmful to people. Asbestos, for example, was generally not used in building materials by 1980, but was still occasionally used until the late 1980s. Lead-based paint was banned for residential use in 1978 and phased out for commercial structures in 1993.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Due to the age of the buildings and structures in the EIR Study Area (many over 50 years old), it is likely that some contain ACMs and lead-based paint (LBP), as well as other building materials containing lead (e.g., ceramic tile and insulation). Demolition could cause encapsulated ACM (if present) to become friable; once airborne, they are considered a carcinogen.^{2,3} Demolition could also cause the release of lead into the air. The USEPA has classified lead and inorganic lead compounds as “probable human carcinogens,” and such releases could pose significant risks to persons living and working in and around a proposed development site (USEPA 2004).

Abatement of all ACM and LBP encountered during any future building demolition activities would be required in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including those of the USEPA (which regulates disposal), OSHA, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA, which regulates employee exposure), and BAAQMD.

To further prevent impacts from the potential release of ACM or LBP, an ACM and LBP survey of existing buildings and structures prior to the commencement of any demolition or renovation is required under BAAQMD Regulation 11, Rule 2, *Asbestos Demolition, Renovation, and Manufacturing*. Lead emissions are similarly controlled under Regulation 11, Rule 1, *Lead*. With compliance of existing laws and regulations, hazardous impacts related to the release of ACMs and LBP are not anticipated to occur. Compliance with these laws, regulations, and mitigation measure would be ensured through the County’s development review and building plan check process.

Operation

Industrial uses and some commercial uses utilize greater amounts of hazardous materials than do other uses such as residential uses and schools. The proposed General Plan could facilitate the development of up to 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space and 5 million square feet of new industrial space in the EIR Study Area. Uses of hazardous materials in operations of land uses permitted under the proposed General Plan would be subject to regulations enforced by the same agencies as for uses of hazardous materials in construction.

However, per Chapter 83-63, *Land Use Permits for Development Projects Involving Hazardous Material*, of the County Ordinance Code, the operation or expansion of hazardous waste facilities is required to comply with the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, which identifies siting criteria, siting principles, and other policies applicable to hazardous waste facilities. Businesses that generate any amount of hazardous waste or handle hazardous materials equal to, or greater than, program threshold quantities are also required to obtain a Hazardous Materials (CUPA) Permit per Chapter 450-2, *Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories*. Under these regulations, businesses would be required to provide workers with training on safe use, handling, and storage of hazardous materials. Businesses would maintain equipment and supplies for containing and cleaning up spills of hazardous materials that could be safely contained and cleaned by onsite workers; and would immediately notify emergency response agencies in the event of a hazardous materials release that could not be safely contained and cleaned up by on-site personnel.

² When dry, an ACM is considered friable if it can be crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure. If it cannot, it is considered non-friable ACM. It is possible for non-friable ACM to become friable when subjected to unusual conditions, such as demolishing a building or removing an ACM that has been glued into place.

³ A carcinogen is a substance that causes cancer or helps cancer grow.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Furthermore, the proposed Health and Safety Element contains goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts that contribute to the risk of loss, injury, or death as a result of hazardous materials releases. The proposed policies and actions under Goal HS-9 that are italicized in Section 5.9.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, would serve to minimize potential adverse impacts from hazardous materials, including by proposing more stringent regulation on certain hazardous material uses. For example, Policy HS-P9.5 would require that facilities that manage and store hazardous waste in areas at risk of sea-level rise and flooding conduct sea-level rise studies to address the risk of hazardous materials release from rising water levels, including rising groundwater. Policy HS-P9.10 specifically prohibits new hazardous waste facilities in ecologically sensitive areas or areas at-risk of flood and geologic hazards. Policies HS-P9.10, HS-P9.11, and HS-P9.12 would also help to ensure that hazardous waste facilities are assessed and sited in compliance with SB 673 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25200.21(b) and (c)).

Implementation of the above goals, policies, and actions, as well as compliance with State, regional, and local regulations, would regulate the handling of hazardous substances to reduce potential releases, exposure, and risks of transporting, storing, treating, and disposing of hazardous materials and wastes, and would ensure that future development under the proposed General Plan would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and help the County to adapt to changing climate conditions and is therefore not expected to result in any specific impacts with regard to the use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. Strategies and actions included in the proposed CAP could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county that is designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP. However, future construction of these physical infrastructure improvements and other related development would be unlikely to involve the transport or disposal of hazardous materials. Additionally, all future construction would be subject to the applicable federal, State, and local regulations outlined above.

Furthermore, in addition to including strategies that aim to reduce GHG emissions, the proposed CAP includes a suite of climate adaptation strategies aimed at responding to the key vulnerabilities identified in the County's vulnerability assessment. As noted in Section 5.9.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, this assessment identified several existing industrial and hazardous waste facilities in areas at risk of climate hazards, including flooding, landslides, and wildfire. Strategies that address these hazards include Strategy NI-1 and its accompanying actions that aim to protect the community against permanent and temporary inundation from rising sea levels and shoreline flooding through green infrastructure, effective building siting and retrofits, and informed land use decisions; Strategy NI-2 and its actions that aim to increase community resilience to the direct and indirect effects of wildfires; and Strategy NI-6 and its actions that include a broader suite of actions aimed at protecting existing and future development from hazards including by considering projected impacts of climate change when siting, designing, and identifying the construction and maintenance costs of capital investment projects. These strategies and actions would help to reduce impacts from climate-related hazards to existing and future development in the county, including facilities and uses that involve the handling of hazardous materials.

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Therefore, adoption of the proposed CAP would primarily result in beneficial impacts with regard to hazardous material use, transport, and disposal, and would therefore have less than significant impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.9-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.9-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.9-2: Implementation of the proposed project could facilitate development of a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 but would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. [Threshold H-4]

Proposed General Plan

As indicated in Table 5.9-1 and in Figure 5.9-1, there are multiple sites identified in the EIR Study Area that are considered active, open, or in need of further review for hazardous material cleanup. Redevelopment of these sites for development under the proposed General Plan could potentially expose future residents and workers to hazards from known hazardous materials releases on and near the sites.

However, development would be conducted in accordance with the proposed General Plan and the regulations and policies of the agency assigned to the site (i.e., DTSC, Water Quality Control Board, CUPA, or USEPA). Environmental site assessments by a qualified professional would also be required as applicable to ensure that the relevant projects would not disturb hazardous materials on any of the hazardous materials sites or plumes of hazardous materials diffusing from one of the hazardous materials sites, and that any proposed development, redevelopment, or reuse would not create a substantial hazard to the public or the environment. Phase I Environmental Site Assessments are also required for land purchasers to qualify for the Innocent Landowner Defense under CERCLA and to minimize environmental liability under other laws such as RCRA. Properties contaminated by hazardous substances are also regulated at the local, State, and federal level and are subject to compliance with stringent laws and regulations for investigation and remediation. For example, compliance with the CERCLA, RCRA, California Code of Regulations Title 22, and related requirements would remedy all potential impacts caused by hazardous substance contamination.

Furthermore, requirements for hazardous materials sites are bolstered by various goals, policies, and actions of the proposed General Plan, including those discussed in Impact 5.9-1. Additional relevant General Plan policies and actions included under Goal HS-10 specifically address efforts to ensure that future and existing development would not be impacted by historic hazardous material releases. These include Policy HS-P10.2, which requires development of contaminated sites to comply with all cleanup plans, land use covenants, and deed restrictions imposed by the DTSC or RWQCB, and Action HS-A10.2, which directs the County to establish a mechanism to ensure that new or expanded industrial uses involving hazardous materials will fund any needed cleanup of resulting contamination.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Compliance with existing regulations and adherence to proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would ensure that impacts from the proposed project would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As indicated in the discussion of the proposed CAP in Impact 5.9-1, this policy document is not expected to result in any specific impacts with regard to hazardous materials, including development on a hazardous material release or cleanup site. The proposed CAP does not include strategies or actions specific to hazardous materials and contaminated sites; however, as noted above, several CAP strategies and actions would help to increase the County's ability to adapt to climate change-related hazards and increase resiliency against these hazards. As such, the proposed CAP would have no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.9-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.9-2 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.9-3: Development under the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working within two miles of an airport. [Threshold H-5]

Proposed General Plan

Airport-related hazards are generally associated with aircraft accidents, particularly during take-off and landing. Airport operation hazards include incompatible land uses, power transmission lines and tall structures that penetrate airspace operational areas, visual distractions, and wildlife hazards (e.g., bird strikes). In accordance with State law, the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission adopted an ALUCP. The ALUCP sets land use compatibility and design criteria applicable to all development, including residential, that is within a certain distance from one of the County's two public airports. The ALUCP was updated in 2022 to implement the Byron Development Program. This effort included updates with new policies and maps specific to Byron Airport that reflect the 2017 Airport Layout Plan for Byron Airport, the 2005 Byron Airport Master Plan, and guidance set forth in the most recent version of the Caltrans California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook.

The proposed General Plan would allow for the development of sites that are within the Safety Zones of the Buchanan Field Airport or Byron Airport, as shown in Figure 5.9-2, *Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Safety Zones*. However, all potential development within each airports' Safety Zones would be required to comply with the provisions for development within the ALUCP, which restricts the heights of structures pursuant to FAA Part 77 regulations. The height regulations are also adopted within the County Ordinance Code under Chapter 86.4, Airport Zoning, for the Buchanan Field Airport. Additionally, pursuant to Section 21096 of the Public Resources Code, the County must consider during future environmental review whether the project will result in a safety hazard or noise problem for persons using the airport or for persons residing or working in the project area. In addition to the provisions of the ALUCP, the FAA and Caltrans Division of Aeronautics provide guidance for land use safety near airports. With adherence to these guidelines, high concentrations of

5. Environmental Analysis HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

people will not be exposed to potential airplane accidents along runways or near airports while airplanes are departing and arriving. There are also guidelines on the placement of housing, schools, and other sensitive land uses near airports because of the noise pollution caused by airplanes (see also Section 5.13, *Noise*, of this Draft EIR).

The proposed General Plan also includes several policies under Goal TR-7 of the Transportation Element that would help to ensure that development is compliant with the airport land use requirements. These include Policy TR-P7.4, which directs the County to protect its airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County ALUCP. Additionally, Policies TR-P7.5 and TR-P7.6 further reinforce the County's commitment to land use compatibility by directing the County to support existing and planned airport activities consistent with each airport's respective Airport Master Plan and the ALUCP.

With adherence to applicable procedures and requirements described above, future development projects under the proposed project would not contribute to airport-related hazards and the impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As indicated in the discussion of the proposed CAP in Impact 5.9-1 and Impact 5.9-2, the CAP is a policy document and is not expected to result in any specific impacts with regard to hazards, including safety and noise hazards associated with development in proximity to an airport. The proposed CAP does not include any strategies or actions specific to airports or airport-related hazards. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.9-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.9-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.9-4: Development under the proposed project would not affect the implementation of an emergency responder or evacuation plan. [Threshold H-6]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Figure 5.9-4, major evacuation routes for the county include a large network of interstate freeways, state routes, arterial streets, and minor roads that feed into the higher capacity evacuation routes. However, as shown in Figure 5.9-5, many residential areas in the EIR Study Area have access to only one viable evacuation route, which presents a significant risk to safe evacuation for existing and future residents of these areas. As discussed in greater detail within Section 5.7, *Geology and Soils*, Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, and Section 5.18, *Wildfire*, many areas of the county are vulnerable to hazards including earthquakes, liquefaction,

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

landslides, flooding, and wildfire. Any disasters involving these hazards can cause damage to transportation infrastructure, preventing or impeding access by emergency responders and evacuation by residents. In addition, future development under the proposed General Plan would result in construction activities that could temporarily affect roadways as a result of lane closures or narrowing for roadway and/or utility improvements. This could affect emergency response times or evacuation routes. By increasing the residential and daytime population in the EIR Study Area, traffic congestion may increase in some areas as well. Therefore, in the event of an accident or natural disaster, evacuation plans and routes could be adversely affected by the increased traffic.

To address such impacts, the County has adopted and continually updates an LHMP. The LHMP reduces injury, loss of life, property damage, and loss of services from natural disasters and provides a comprehensive analysis of the natural and human-caused hazards that threaten the county, with a focus on mitigation. This allows the County to remain eligible to receive additional federal and State funding to assist with emergency response and recovery, as permitted by the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and California Government Code Sections 8685.9 and 65302.6. In addition to the LHMP, the County implements the EOP and a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to address emergency response and wildfire mitigation planning. Contra Costa County also participates in implementing regional plans, including the Bay Area Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, to provide the framework for responding to major emergencies or disasters.

Additionally, several proposed General Plan Health and Safety Element policies and actions support the update and implementation of the County's LHMP and other emergency planning efforts. Policy HS-P7.3 requires new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) or State Responsibility Area (SRA) or in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints, to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with an evacuation plan during the construction period. Additionally, Policy HS-P12.1 and Action HS-A12.1 direct the County to continue updating and implementing its LHMP, Action HS-A12.2 directs the County to incorporate the assessments and projections for future emergency service needs from the most recent Municipal Services Reviews into updates of the LHMP, and Action HS-A12.4 further directs the County to evaluate the effectiveness of and update public safety, preparedness, and hazard mitigation policies, including in the proposed Health and Safety Element, considering changing climate conditions. Several policies and actions included under Goal HS-13 also target the improvement of the county's evacuation capacity, including by requiring new development (except for infill sites) in High and Very High FHSZs, the WUI (see Section 5.18), and 100-year or 200-year floodplain to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes, and encouraging the same for existing development, per Policy HS-P13.1. Action HS-A13.2 directs the County to update maps identifying neighborhoods with only one emergency evacuation route every five years, and Action HS-A13.3 directs coordination with local fire districts to develop and maintain minimum roadway, ingress, and egress standards for evacuation of residential areas in Very High FHSZs.

Implementation of these proposed General Plan policies would ensure that development under the proposed General Plan would not affect the implementation of an emergency responder or evacuation plan, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Proposed CAP

As indicated in the impact discussions above, the proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies to reduce GHG emissions and improve climate resiliency and adaptation. As such, all strategies and actions within the proposed CAP inherently support the implementation of emergency responder and evacuation plans, while some directly address County efforts for emergency planning. For example, Strategy NI-3 and its accompanying actions direct the County to establish and maintain community resilience hubs with microgrids, education, training opportunities, and other community-focused resources, in line with the policies and actions included under proposed Health and Safety Element Goal HS-12. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no impact on emergency response and evacuation plans.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.9-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.9-4 would be less than significant.

5.9.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of analysis for cumulative hazards and hazardous materials impacts encompasses the entirety of Contra Costa County, including both the EIR Study Area and incorporated areas. While some impacts relative to hazardous materials are generally site-specific and depend on the nature and extent of the hazardous materials release, other impacts, including the transport of hazardous materials across regional transportation systems, have the potential to impact areas outside of the EIR Study Area.

Hazardous Materials

During the construction phase, construction equipment and materials would include fuels, oils and lubricants, solvents and cleaners, cements and adhesives, paints and thinners, degreasers, cement and concrete, and asphalt mixtures, which are all commonly used in construction. The routine use or an accidental spill of hazardous materials could result in inadvertent releases, which could adversely affect construction workers, the public, and the environment. Construction activities for all projects in the county, including within incorporated jurisdictions, would be subject to the same regulatory requirements discussed for the project for compliance with existing hazardous materials regulations, including the management of hazardous materials and spill response within the respective jurisdictions. Cumulative projects that transport, use, store, or dispose of hazardous materials would be required to comply with the same regulations as the proposed project. Entities that use hazardous materials would be required to prepare and implement Hazardous Materials Business Plans that would describe procedures for the safe and legal transportation, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. As discussed further in Section 5.10, any project that disturbs more than one acre of ground would be required to implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to control run on and runoff from their respective sites.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

All projects in the county that have had previous spills of hazardous materials would be required to remediate their respective sites to the same established regulatory standards as the potential projects developed as a result of the proposed General Plan. This would be the case regardless of the number, frequency, or size of the release(s). The responsible party associated with each spill would be required to remediate site conditions to the same established regulatory standards. The residual less-than-significant effects that would remain after remediation would not combine with the potential residual effects of other projects to cause a potential significant cumulative impact because residual impacts would be highly site-specific and would be below regulatory standards.

Emergency Response and Evacuation

With respect to emergency response and evacuation, once constructed, projects under the proposed General Plan, as well in other jurisdictions, would not restrict or interfere with the flow of emergency vehicles or evacuation and would therefore not create a cumulatively considerable effect. While additional traffic volumes are expected under the planning horizon of the proposed General Plan, the County would be required to periodically update its emergency response and evacuation plan(s) as required under AB 747. This periodic reevaluation would address these changed conditions and would adjust the evacuation plans accordingly. Based on these considerations, the cumulative effect of the proposed project's implementation would be less than significant.

5.9.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.9.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.9.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

All impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

5.9.9 References

- Contra Costa, County of. 2005a. “Chapter 10: Safety Element” in *Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30920/Ch10-Safety-Element?bidId=>
- _____. 2005b. *Byron Airport Master Plan*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3958/Byron-Airport-Master-Plan>
- _____. 2008. *Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4016/Buchanan-Field-Master-Plan-RevOct-2008>
- _____. 2018, January. *Contra Costa Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*. http://64.166.146.245/docs/2018/CCCYPD/20180612_1115/33997_Attachment%20-%20Contra%20Costa%20County%20Draft%20LHMP%20Final_Vol1.pdf
- _____. 2022. Byron Airport (C83). <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3802/Byron-Airport-C83>
- Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). 2000a, December 13. *Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan- Chapter 3: Buchanan Field Airport Policies*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/856/Buchanan-Field-Airport-Policies>
- _____. 2000b, December 13. *Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan- Chapter 4: Byron Airport Policies*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/857/Byron-Airport-Policies?bidId=>
- Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE). 2022. *CCCOE Annual Report 2021-2022*. https://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/about_c_c_c_o_e/about/c_c_c_o_e_annual_report
- Contra Costa Health Services. 2021, March. *Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Area Plan*. <https://cchealth.org/hazmat/pdf/Area-Plan-2021March.pdf>
- _____. 2023, June 9 (Accessed). Hazardous Materials Interagency Task Force (HIT Team). <https://cchealth.org/hazmat/interagency-task-force.php>
- Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). 2022, April 21. Buchanan Field Airport Master Record. <https://www.airportiq5010.com/5010ReportRouter/CCR.pdf>
- Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2021, May. SB 673 Cumulative Impacts and Community Vulnerability Draft Regulatory Framework. https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2021/07/2021MAY-DRAFT-CI-Regulatory-Framework_Accessible.pdf
- _____. 2022, May 11 (Accessed). EnviroStor. <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>.
- Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2004, July 8. Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) on Lead and Compounds (Inorganic). National Center for Environmental Assessment, Office of Research and Development, Washington, DC. https://iris.epa.gov/static/pdfs/0277_summary.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- _____. 2023, April 18 (Accessed). TRI Toxics Tracker (Reporting Year: 2021, State/County: Contra Costa County).
<https://edap.epa.gov/public/extensions/TRIToxicsTracker/TRIToxicsTracker.html#continue>
- Interstate Natural Gas Association of America (INGAA). 2022. The Pipeline Inspection, Protection, Enforcement, and Safety Act of 2006. <https://www.ingaa.org/Pipelines101/143/861/851.aspx>.
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2022, May 11 (Accessed). GeoTracker.
<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>
- United States Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (USDOT). 2017, October. Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002.
<https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/pipeline/congressional-mandates/pipeline-safety-improvement-act-2002>.
- _____. 2023, April 18 (Accessed). National Pipeline Mapping System Public Viewer- Contra Costa County.
<https://pvnpm.phmsa.dot.gov/PublicViewer/>

5. Environmental Analysis

5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential hydrology and water quality impacts from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.10.1 Environmental Setting

5.10.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

Clean Water Act

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is the lead federal agency responsible for water quality management. The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law that governs water quality control activities by the USEPA and the states. The CWA regulates direct and indirect discharge of pollutants; sets water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters; and makes it unlawful for any person to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters unless a permit is obtained under its provisions. The CWA mandates permits for wastewater and stormwater discharges; requires states to establish site-specific water quality standards for navigable bodies of water; and regulates other activities that affect water quality and nonpoint sources of pollution.

Permits to dredge or fill waters of the United States are administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the CWA. “Waters of the United States” are defined as territorial seas and traditional navigable waters, perennial and intermittent tributaries to those waters, lakes and ponds and impoundments of jurisdictional waters, and wetlands that have a surface connection with and are adjacent to jurisdictional waters. The regulatory branch of the USACE is responsible for implementing and enforcing Section 404 of the CWA and issuing permits. Any activity that discharges fill material and/or requires excavation in waters of the United States must obtain a Section 404 permit. Before issuing the permit, the USACE requires that an analysis be conducted to demonstrate that the proposed project is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. Also, the USACE is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act before it may issue an individual Section 404 permit.

Under Section 401 of the CWA, every applicant for a Section 404 permit that may result in a discharge to a water body must first obtain State Water Quality Certification that the proposed activity will comply with State water quality standards. Certifications are issued in conjunction with USACE Section 404 permits for dredge and fill discharges. In addition, an application for Individual Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements must be submitted for any activity that would result in the placement of dredged or fill material in waters of the State that are not jurisdictional to the USACE, such as isolated wetlands, to ensure that the proposed activity complies with State water quality standards. In California, the authority to either grant

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

water quality certification or waive the requirement is delegated by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB).

Under federal law, the USEPA has published water quality regulations under Volume 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Section 303 of the CWA requires states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters of the United States. As defined by the CWA, water quality standards consist of two elements: (1) designated beneficial uses of the water body in question and (2) criteria that protect the designated uses. Section 304(a) requires the USEPA to publish advisory water quality criteria that accurately reflect the latest scientific knowledge on the kind and extent of all effects on health and welfare that may be expected from the presence of pollutants in water. Where multiple uses exist, water quality standards must protect the most sensitive use. In California, the USEPA has delegated authority to the SWRCB and its RWQCBs to identify beneficial uses and adopt applicable water quality objectives.

When water quality does not meet CWA standards and compromises designated beneficial uses of a receiving water body, Section 303(d) of the CWA requires that water body be identified and listed as “impaired”. Once a water body has been designated as impaired, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) must be developed for the impairing pollutant(s). A TMDL is an estimate of the total load of pollutants from point, nonpoint, and natural sources that a water body may receive without exceeding applicable water quality standards, with a factor of safety included. Once established, the TMDL allocates the loads among current and future pollutant sources to the water body.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program was established by the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the United States, including discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4). Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for broad categories of discharges, including point-source municipal waste discharges and nonpoint-source stormwater runoff. NPDES permits generally identify effluent and receiving water limits on allowable concentrations and/or mass emissions of pollutants in the discharge; prohibitions on discharges not specifically allowed under the permit; and provisions that describe required actions by the discharger, including industrial pretreatment, pollution prevention, self-monitoring, and other activities.

Under the NPDES program, all facilities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States are required to obtain a NPDES permit. Requirements for stormwater discharges are also regulated under this program. In California, the NPDES permit program is administered by the SWRCB through the nine RWQCBs. The western half of Contra Costa County is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and is subject to the waste discharge requirements of the recently revised MS4 Permit (Order No. F2-2022-0018) which became effective on July 1, 2022 (San Francisco Bay RWQCB 2022). Although the eastern half of Contra Costa County is within the boundaries of the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5), an agreement between Region 2 and Region 5 was enacted for consistency in permit compliance and the eastern half of Contra Costa County is also under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB MS4 Permit (Central Valley RWQCB, 2023).

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Federal Emergency Management Agency

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to provide subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations limiting development in floodplains. FEMA also issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify which land areas are subject to flooding. These maps provide flood information and identify flood hazard zones in the community. The design standard for flood protection is established by FEMA. FEMA's minimum level of flood protection for new development is the 100-year flood event, also described as a flood that has a 1-in-100 chance of occurring in any given year.

As required by the FEMA regulations, all development constructed within the 100-year floodplain or a Special Flood Hazard Area (as delineated on the FIRM) must be elevated so that the lowest floor is at or above the base flood elevation level. The term "development" is defined by FEMA as any human-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, and storage of equipment or materials. Per these regulations, if development in these areas occurs, a hydrologic and hydraulic analysis must be performed prior to the start of development and must demonstrate that the development does not cause any rise in base flood elevation levels, because no rise is permitted within regulatory floodways. After completion of any development that changes existing Special Flood Hazard Area boundaries, the NFIP directs all participating communities to submit the appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic data to FEMA for a FIRM revision, as soon as practicable, but not later than six months after such data become available.

Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899

Under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, the USACE requires permits for activities involving the obstruction of the navigable capacity of any waters of the United States or the construction of any structures in or over navigable waters of the United States, including ports, canals, navigable rivers, or other waters. "Navigable waters" under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act are defined as "those waters of the United States that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide shoreward to the mean high water mark and/or are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible to use to transport interstate or foreign commerce." Pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, the USACE administers this regulatory program separate from the Section 404 program. A Section 10 permit may be required for structures or work outside the limits of navigable waters if the structure or work affects the course, location, condition, or capacity of the water body.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act provides the basic authority for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to evaluate impacts to fish and wildlife from proposed water resource development projects. This Act requires that all federal agencies consult with the USFWS, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and State wildlife agencies (i.e., the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or CDFW) for activities that affect, control, or modify waters of any stream or bodies of water. Under this Act, the USFWS has responsibility for reviewing and commenting on all water resources projects. For example, it would provide consultation to the USACE prior to issuance of a Section 404 permit.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

An incidental take permit is required if a project may result in the “incidental take” of a listed species. An incidental take permit allows a developer to proceed with an activity that is legal in all other respects but that results in the “incidental taking” of a listed species. A habitat conservation plan must also accompany an application for an incidental take permit. The purpose of a habitat conservation plan is to ensure that the effects of the permitted action on listed species are adequately minimized and mitigated.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code Sections 13000 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law for California. This Act established the SWRCB and divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a RWQCB. The SWRCB is the primary State agency responsible for the protection of California’s water quality and groundwater supplies. The RWQCBs carry out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a water quality control plan, or basin plan, that recognizes and reflects the regional differences in existing water quality, the beneficial uses of the region’s ground and surface water, and local water-quality conditions and problems. As stated previously, Contra Costa County is within the jurisdiction of both the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5).

The Porter-Cologne Act also authorizes the SWRCB and RWQCBs to issue and enforce waste discharge requirements, NPDES permits, Section 401 water quality certifications, or other approvals. Other State agencies with jurisdiction over water quality regulation in California include the California Department of Health Services for drinking water regulations, the CDFW, and the Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment.

State Water Resources Control Board

In California, the SWRCB has broad authority over water quality control issues for the State. The SWRCB is responsible for developing statewide water quality policy and exercises the powers delegated to the State by the federal government under the CWA. It also regulates public drinking water systems, NPDES wastewater discharges, water quality monitoring, water recycling programs, landfill disposal, water rights, and drought restrictions. As stated previously, western Contra Costa County is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and eastern Contra Costa County is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5). Each RWQCB regulates surface water and groundwater quality in the watersheds within their jurisdiction.

State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Permit

Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land that could impact hydrologic resources must comply with the requirements of the newly reissued SWRCB Construction General Permit (Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ). Under the terms of the permit, applicants must file Permit Registration Documents (PRD) with the SWRCB prior to the start of construction. The PRDs include a Notice of Intent, risk assessment, site map, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement. The PRDs

5. Environmental Analysis HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

are submitted electronically to the SWRCB via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) website.

Applicants must also demonstrate conformance with applicable best management practices (BMPs) and prepare a SWPPP containing a site map that shows the construction site perimeter, existing and proposed buildings, lots, roadways, stormwater collection and discharge points, general topography both before and after construction, and drainage patterns across the project site. The SWPPP must list BMPs that would be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources. Additionally, the SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program, a sampling program to ensure compliance with water quality standards, and on-site collection of samples and inspection of BMPs during a qualifying precipitation event.

State Water Resources Control Board General Industrial Permit

The Statewide General permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities, Order No. 2014-0057-DWQ and amended by 2015-0122-DWQ (2018), implements the federally required storm water regulations in California for storm water associated with industrial activities that discharge to waters of the United States. This regulation covers facilities that are required by federal regulations or by the RWQCBs to obtain an NPDES permit. Dischargers are required to eliminate non-storm water discharges, develop SWPPPs that include BMPs, conduct monitoring of stormwater runoff, and submit all compliance documents via the SWRCB's SMARTS program.

State Water Resources Control Board Trash Amendments

On April 7, 2015, the SWRCB adopted an amendment to the *Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California* to control trash and Part 1, Trash Provisions, of the *Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California*. They are collectively referred to as "the Trash Amendments". The Trash Amendments apply to all surface waters of California and include a land use-based compliance approach to focus trash controls on areas with high trash-generation rates. Areas such as high density residential, industrial, commercial, mixed urban, and public transportation stations are considered priority land uses. There are two compliance tracks for Phase I and Phase II MS4 permittees:

- Track 1: Permittees must install, operate, and maintain a network of certified full capture systems in storm drains that capture runoff from priority land uses.
- Track 2: Permittees must implement a plan with a combination of full capture systems, multi-benefit projects, institutional controls, and/or other treatment methods that have the same effectiveness as Track 1 methods.

The Trash Amendments provide a framework for permittees to implement their provisions, which is provided in Section C.10, Trash Load Reduction, of the San Francisco RWQCB MS4 permit. Section C.10 of the San Francisco RWQCB MS4 permit provides more specific trash load requirements than the Trash Amendments. The Contra Costa County Watershed Program (CWP) is working to meet trash load reduction goals by installing full trash capture devices or control measures for full trash capture equivalency throughout unincorporated Contra Costa County (CWP 2022a).

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

California Water Code Section 13751: Water Wells

Section 13751 of the Water Code requires a Well Completion Report (WCR) to be completed by each person who digs, bores, or drills a water well, cathodic protection well, groundwater monitoring well, or geothermal heat exchange well or abandons or modifies an existing well. The WCR should be filed with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) within 60 days of the date that construction, alteration, abandonment, or destruction of a well is completed (DWR 2023a). Completed WCRs are sent to and maintained at the DWR regional office that serves the area where the well is located.

California Coastal Act of 1976

The California Coastal Act of 1976 established three designated coastal management agencies to plan and regulate the use of land and water in the coastal zone: the California Coastal Commission, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and the California Coastal Conservancy. Under California's federally approved Coastal Management Program, the California Coastal Commission manages development along the California coast except for San Francisco Bay, which is overseen by the BCDC. The mission of the California Coastal Conservancy is to purchase, protect, restore, and enhance coastal resources and provide shoreline access. Additional information on the BCDC is discussed under Regional Regulations, below.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

CDFW protects streams, water bodies, and riparian corridors through the streambed alteration agreement process under Sections 1601 to 1606 of the California Fish and Game Code. The Fish and Game Code stipulates that it is "unlawful to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake" without notifying the CDFW, incorporating necessary mitigation, and obtaining a streambed alteration agreement. CDFW's jurisdiction extends to the top of banks and often includes the outer edge of riparian vegetation.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

On September 16, 2014, a three-bill legislative package was signed into law, composed of Assembly Bill (AB) 1739, Senate Bill (SB) 1168, and SB 1319, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The Governor's signing message states "a central feature of these bills is the recognition that groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally." Under the roadmap laid out by the legislation, local and regional authorities in medium and high priority groundwater basins must form groundwater sustainability agencies that oversee the preparation and implementation of groundwater sustainability plans.

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act includes the State of California's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo), which requires cities and counties to adopt landscape water conservation ordinances. The MWELo was revised in July 2015 via Executive Order B-29-15 to address the ongoing drought and build resiliency for future droughts. State law requires all land use agencies, which includes cities and counties, to adopt a WELO that is at least as efficient as the MWELo prepared by DWR. The 2015 revisions to the

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

MWELo improve water conservation in the landscaping sector by promoting efficient landscapes in new developments and retrofitted landscapes. The revisions increase water efficiency by requiring more efficient irrigation systems, incentives for grey water usage, improvements in on-site stormwater capture, and limiting the portion of landscapes that can be covered in high-water-use plants and turf. New development projects that include landscape areas of 500 square feet or more are subject to the MWELo. This applies to residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional projects that require a permit, plan check, or design review. The previous landscape size threshold for new development projects ranged from 2,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet. The size threshold for rehabilitated landscapes has not changed and remains at 2,500 square feet. Contra Costa County has adopted the MWELo, as codified in Chapter 82-26, *Water Efficient Landscapes*, of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code.

Regional

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

Portions of Contra Costa County that drain to the San Francisco Bay are within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2). The San Francisco Bay RWQCB addresses regionwide water quality issues through the creation and triennial update of the *San Francisco Bay Basin Water Quality Control Plan* (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan was adopted in 1995 and most recently amended in March 2023. This Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of the State waters within Region 2, describes the water quality that must be maintained to support such uses, and provides programs, projects, and other actions necessary to achieve the standards established in the Basin Plan. The *Water Quality Control Policy for the Enclosed Bays and Estuaries of California*, as adopted by the SWRCB in 1995 and last amended in 2023, also provides water quality principles and guidelines to prevent water quality degradation and protect the beneficial uses of waters of enclosed bays and estuaries. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB also administers the MS4 permit for all cities, towns, and unincorporated areas within Contra Costa County. The cities and towns, as well as Contra Costa County and the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (CCCFCWCD), have joined together to form the Contra Costa Clean Water Program (CCCWP) to ensure consistency in implementing the requirements in the MS4 permit.

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

The California Coastal Act carries out its mandate locally through the BCDC. BCDC's jurisdiction for San Francisco Bay includes all sloughs, marshlands between mean high tide and five feet above mean sea level, tidelands, submerged lands, and land within 100 feet of the shoreline. This includes the San Francisco Bay shorelines within the EIR Study Area.

The current BCDC policy allows for the protection of existing and planned development from flooding by the placement of fill, encourages innovative means of dealing with flood danger, and states that local governments will determine how best to deal with development projects beyond BCDC's jurisdiction, which extends 100 feet inland from the shoreline. The provisions of BCDC's *San Francisco Bay Plan* do not apply outside BCDC's jurisdiction for purposes of implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (BCDC 2020).

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The new BCDC policies require sea-level rise risk assessments to be conducted when planning shoreline areas or designing large shoreline projects within BCDC's jurisdiction. Risk assessments are not required for repairs of existing facilities, interim projects, small projects that do not increase risks to public safety, and infill projects within existing urbanized areas. Projects within 100 feet of the shoreline need only address risks to public access.

As a permitting authority along the San Francisco Bay shoreline, BCDC is responsible for granting or denying permits for any proposed fill, extraction of materials, or change in the use of any water, land, or structure within BCDC's jurisdiction. Permits may be granted or denied only after public hearings and after the process for review and comment has been completed by the county or city. BCDC will approve the permit if it is determined that the project is in accordance with defined standards for use of the shoreline, provisions for public access, and advisory review of appearance.

Projects within BCDC jurisdiction that involve bay fill must be consistent with the policies of the BCDC's *San Francisco Bay Plan* on the safety of fills and shoreline protection. Land elevation changes caused by tectonic activity or consolidation/compaction of soft soils, such as bay muds, is variable around the San Francisco Bay. Consequently, some parts of the San Francisco Bay may experience a greater relative rise in sea level than other areas. According to BCDC policies, new projects built on fill or near the shoreline should be set back from the edge of the shore so that the project will not be subject to dynamic wave energy; be built so the bottom floor of structures will be above a 100-year flood elevation that takes future sea-level rise into account for the expected life of the project; be specifically designed to tolerate periodic flooding; or employ other effective means of addressing the impacts of future sea-level rise and storm activity.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

Prior to 2019, the Central Valley RWQCB administered the MS4 Permit for East Contra Costa County, including unincorporated areas east of Pittsburg and the municipalities of Antioch, Oakley, and Brentwood. However, as of 2019, the San Francisco RWQCB and the Central Valley RWQCB have agreed to regulate all stormwater discharges from Contra Costa County under one MS4 permit issued by the San Francisco RWQCB (Order No. R2-2022-0018; NPDES Permit No. CAS612008). However, the Central Valley RWQCB has jurisdiction and issues waste discharge requirements for other activities in eastern Contra Costa County, excluding stormwater. The Central Valley RWQCB issues NPDES permits for wastewater treatment plants and water recycling facilities industrial waste discharges, and also issues cleanup abatement orders for areas of the county under its jurisdiction. The Central Valley RWQCB also prepared the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins* which establishes beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and a program of implementation for water bodies within its jurisdiction. The latest amendments to the Basin Plan were approved in February 2019.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Local

Contra Costa Clean Water Program

The CCCWP is a consortium of member agencies, including Contra Costa County, the CCCFCWCD, and 19 cities and towns within Contra Costa County. Members of the program are permittees under the San Francisco Bay MS4 permit. The CCCWP offices are in the County's Public Works Division and the CCCWP assists permittees by conducting some MS4-mandated activities on a countywide level, participating in funding for regional and statewide stormwater-related programs, and assisting in the preparation of annual reports to the RWQCB. The CCCWP also publishes the Stormwater C.3 Guidebook, which was revised in December 2022 for consistency with the latest MS4 permit. The Stormwater C.3 Guidebook provides the requirements for new development and redevelopment projects that create or replace more than 2,500 square feet of impervious surface to implement site design measures, source control measures, and stormwater treatment measures, depending on the size and regulatory status of the project. The CCCWP website also provides an updated Stormwater Control Plan (SCP) template that is consistent with the Stormwater C.3 Guidebook, 8th Edition (CCCWP, 2023).

Contra Costa County Watershed Program

The Contra Costa County Watershed Program (CWP) is responsible for ensuring that the County complies with the MS4 permit (CWP 2022b). The County complies with these requirements by implementing various stormwater pollution prevention activities in the unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County by:

- Ensuring that pollutants stay out of the storm drain system, creeks, the Delta and the Bay so that only “Rain (Goes) Down the Drain”
- Managing and enforcing the stormwater compliance program and Enforcement Response Plan to minimize stormwater impacts
- Requiring new development projects to mitigate impacts to stormwater quality and flow rates
- Promoting pollution prevention awareness and providing public outreach
- Supporting local non-profit creek groups
- Inspecting businesses to ensure responsible stormwater practices are implemented
- Investigating and responding to illicit discharges
- Sweeping streets to remove pollutants before they enter the storm drain

Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District

The mission of the CCCFCWCD is to reduce flood risk, promote stormwater quality, and restore and enhance natural resources for communities throughout the county (CCCFCWCD, 2023a). The CCCFCWCD carries out its responsibility by planning and constructing the major storm drainage facilities in Flood Control Zones (entire watershed areas) and in Drainage Areas (sub-watershed areas). The CCCFCWCD uses Drainage Areas as the primary method of planning and implementing flood control facilities. Funding of Drainage Area projects is primarily through development fees. Most of the major storm drain facilities within the county are owned by the CCCFCWCD. The CCCFCWCD website provides documents and guidance for determining

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

facility design for storm events, stormwater runoff amounts and volumes, and storm drain capacity evaluation for new development and development projects (CCCFCWCD, 2023b).

The Hydrology Section of the CCCFCWCD collects, analyzes, and reports on rainfall and storm runoff data from a system of rain gauges and several stream flow meters. The Current Development Section reviews environmental reports and comments on the impacts of proposed projects to regional drainage and CCCFCWCD facilities.

Contra Costa Watersheds Stormwater Resources Plan

The Contra Costa Watersheds Stormwater Resources Plan (SWRP) identifies stormwater management projects and programs eligible for grant funds within Contra Costa County. The CCCWP led the development of the SWRP on behalf of CCCFCWCD, incorporated cities and towns in the county, unincorporated Contra Costa County, and other stakeholders (CCCWP 2019). The SWRP benefits of stormwater management projects include improved water quality, reduced local flooding, increased water supplies for beneficial uses, and other community and environmental enhancements (CCCWP 2019). The role of the SWRP is to characterize the county watersheds water quality and identify multiple goal benefit projects for subsequent Green Infrastructure Plans and reasonable assurance analyses, prepared by the County MS4 Permittees.

Contra Costa County Dewatering Permits

For new development in areas with shallow groundwater, construction dewatering may be required. Temporary dewatering wells are regulated under Section 414-4.801 of the Contra Costa County Well Ordinance. All dewatering wells must be constructed and abandoned by a licensed C-57 water well contractor. Prior to construction of a dewatering well, a permit must be obtained from Contra Costa County Environmental Health in accordance with the Contra Costa County Well Ordinance. The application, along with a fee submittal, must contain a dewatering well schematic, plot map showing setback distances from sources of contamination, the discharge location for the collected groundwater, and how long the wells will be active. Uncontaminated groundwater may be discharged to the sanitary sewer system, subject to water quality testing, sewer capacity calculations, and requirements of the municipalities within the county.

Contra Costa County Design Standards

The construction of storm drain systems within the county must conform to the County's General Drainage Design Standards for storm drain details and inlet design; the General Drainage – Flood Control Channels for rock slope protection and concrete “V” ditches; and the General Landscaping – Flood Control Channels for landscaping design and limits on creek and channel embankments (Contra Costa County Public Works, 2023).

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 74-6, Permits, Drainage and Streets

Chapter 74-6 of the County Ordinance Code provides drainage facility requirements and requires a drainage plan to be prepared for any building, structure, or improvement that requires a building permit and results in an impervious surface of 1,000 feet or more; involves grading or removal of vegetation of more than 10,000

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

square feet; is subject to local ponding; is in a special flood hazard area; or involves land disturbance or structure placement within 100 feet of the top bank of any watercourse.

Chapter 82-28, Floodplain Management

Chapter 82-28 of the County Ordinance Code provides the floodplain management regulations. The purpose of this ordinance is to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the public, and minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in specific areas by implementing flood protection provisions. Specifically, Article 82-28.1002 provides the standards for construction in floodplains or special flood hazard areas. Article 82-28.14, *Flood Hazard Zones*, applies to all land in that portion of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley that is within the jurisdiction of Contra Costa County and states that projects within this area must comply with the federal floodplain regulations.

Chapter 414, Water Supply

Chapter 414-4 of the County Ordinance Code provides for the protection of the county's groundwater sources from construction activities. The purpose of this ordinance is to establish approval of water supply systems for any person proposing to subdivide or develop any property needing water for domestic purposes. (Ord. 81-56 Section 1).

Division 716, Grading

Article 716-8.6, *Drainage*, under Title 7, *Building Regulations*, describes the general requirements for storm drain structures, systems, and facilities. All drainage facilities must be designed to carry surface water to the nearest street, storm drain, or natural watercourse, as approved by the County building official. The article also contains criteria for site drainage, terrace drainage, overflow protection, and maintenance of the drainage facilities.

Division 914, Drainage

Division 914, *Drainage*, under Title 9, *Subdivisions*, provides the requirements for drainage facilities that are in subdivisions. Section 914-2.010 establishes the required design capacities for major drainage facilities (Four square miles or greater), secondary drainage facilities (between one and four square miles), and minor drainage facilities (less than one square mile). Chapter 914.4 pertains to natural watercourses, Chapter 914-6 provides design criteria for open channels and ditches, and Chapter 914-8 describes design criteria for closed conduits, piping, and storm drain inlets.

Division 1014, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control

Division 1014, *Stormwater Management and Discharge Control*, provides the conditions and requirements for compliance with the County's MS4 permit issued by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB. The goal of this ordinance is to eliminate illicit discharges to the stormwater system, minimize increase in non-point source pollution, reduce stormwater runoff rates and volumes through stormwater management controls for new development, and promote no adverse impact policies as developed by FEMA.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Contra Costa County Drainage Area Fee Ordinance

This ordinance is not codified in the County Ordinance Code but is enacted by the County Board of Supervisors as the governing body of the CCCFCWCD. It requires payment of Drainage Area fees before filing the final map for new subdivisions or prior to the issuance of a building permit on an existing lot. Fees are paid directly to the CCCFCWCD or via cities per fee collection agreements. Fees are based on the cost of the proposed Drainage Area improvements and the expected increase in impervious surfaces created by project. The purpose of the Drainage Area fees is to generate funds for the construction of storm drain infrastructure in a manner equitable to the land use's impact and to address current and future needs of the residents and businesses in the county. Developers can construct portions of the planned infrastructure as credit to their fee obligation as per the Drainage Area Credit and Reimbursement Policy.

Groundwater Sustainability Plans

There are eight groundwater basins within the county. However, five of the basins are designated as very low priority because they have very low groundwater usage, mainly from private groundwater wells. Three of the groundwater basins are designated as medium priority basins and require the preparation and submittal of groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) to DWR. A groundwater sustainable agency (GSA) can submit an alternative plan instead of a GSP if the basin has operated within its sustainable yield for at least ten years. The Zone 7 Water Agency submitted an alternative plan for the Livermore Valley Groundwater Basin, which was approved by DWR. East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and the City of Hayward submitted a GSP to DWR for the Santa Clara Valley – East Bay Plain groundwater basin. The San Joaquin Valley – East Contra Costa groundwater basin has seven GSAs, which are Bryon-Bethany Irrigation District, City of Antioch, Diablo Water District, East Contra Costa Irrigation District, Contra Costa County, Discovery Bay, and the City of Brentwood. They collectively submitted a GSP for this basin to DWR, which is currently under review.

Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), adopted in January 2018, is a guide to hazard mitigation within the county and serves as a tool to help more than three dozen local agencies and special purpose districts reduce their risks from a wide range of potential events, such as earthquakes, flooding, wildfires, or extreme heat (Contra Costa County 2018). The HMP evaluates historic events in terms of frequency, severity, and warning time; exposure to the population and critical facilities and infrastructure; and mitigation strategies to reduce exposure and vulnerability to the hazard. The potential events discussed in the HMP that pertain to hydrology and water quality include:

- Dam and Levee Failure
- Drought
- Flooding
- Severe Weather
- Tsunamis
- Climate Change

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

East Contra Costa Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy developed the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP), which provides regional conservation and development guidelines to protect natural resources, including wetlands, while improving and streamlining the permit process for take of State and federally listed species. The 30-year Plan was approved at the local level in 2006 and 2007, and permits were issued by CDFW and USFWS in 2007. The HCP/NCCP provides comprehensive species, wetlands, and ecosystem conservation and contributes to the recovery of endangered species in northern California. The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP allows projects that qualify as “covered activities” to obtain federal and State incidental take authorization for listed species. As part of receiving take authorization, East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP participants can expedite their mitigation and compensation requirements through the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, which would be consistent with federal and State recommendations and requirements. The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP implements a conservation strategy designed to achieve a comprehensive set of biological goals and objectives. Furthermore, as a Natural Community Conservation Plan, the Plan provides for broad-based planning to preserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale (East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy 2018).

East Contra Costa County Integrated Regional Water Management Program

The East Contra Costa Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning effort is a collaborative process to support all aspects of regional water management in East Contra Costa County. This includes integrated planning for water supply, water quality, watershed and habitat protection, and flood and stormwater management. Members include the Cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Pittsburg; several water purveyors that serve the area; and Contra Costa County. In 2019, the members of the East Contra Costa Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) prepared an update to the 2013 IRWM plan to include a discussion of the regional impacts of climate change to water supply and demand. Many of the water suppliers in the region are dependent on surface water supplies from the Delta. There is concern that climate change related to sea-level rise and extreme weather can impact access and the quality of surface water supplies from the Delta. Also, changes in seasonal runoff patterns can further reduce water supply reliability (East County Water Management Association 2019).

5.10.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Topography

Contra Costa County’s geography and topography is dominated by the alluvial plains along San Francisco and San Pablo Bay, the Oakland-Berkeley Hills, several inland valleys, and Mount Diablo, an isolated 3,849-foot peak at the north end of the Diablo Range. Elevations range from sea level to 3,849 feet in the Diablo Range near the center of the county. Much of the land is rural and there is abundant open space. The San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta provides boating, fishing, and other water recreation activities. The East Bay Regional Park District is one of the largest regional park districts in the United States, with over 96,000 acres in 65 area parks.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Climate and Precipitation

Contra Costa County has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and hot dry summers. The cool waters of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay also influence the summer and winter temperatures, which moderate temperatures in the western portion of Contra Costa County. The county's topography also plays a role in regulating the climate. The hills east of Richmond and around Mount Diablo are above the cool, coastal fog in the summer and block cold air in the winter (Contra Costa County 2003). The average annual rainfall is approximately 18.4 inches but can vary greatly depending on elevation and drought conditions. The lowest annual recorded rainfall was 4.6 inches in 2013 and the highest was 38.4 inches in 1983 (USA Facts 2022). The average July high temperature is 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average December low temperature is 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Regional Hydrology

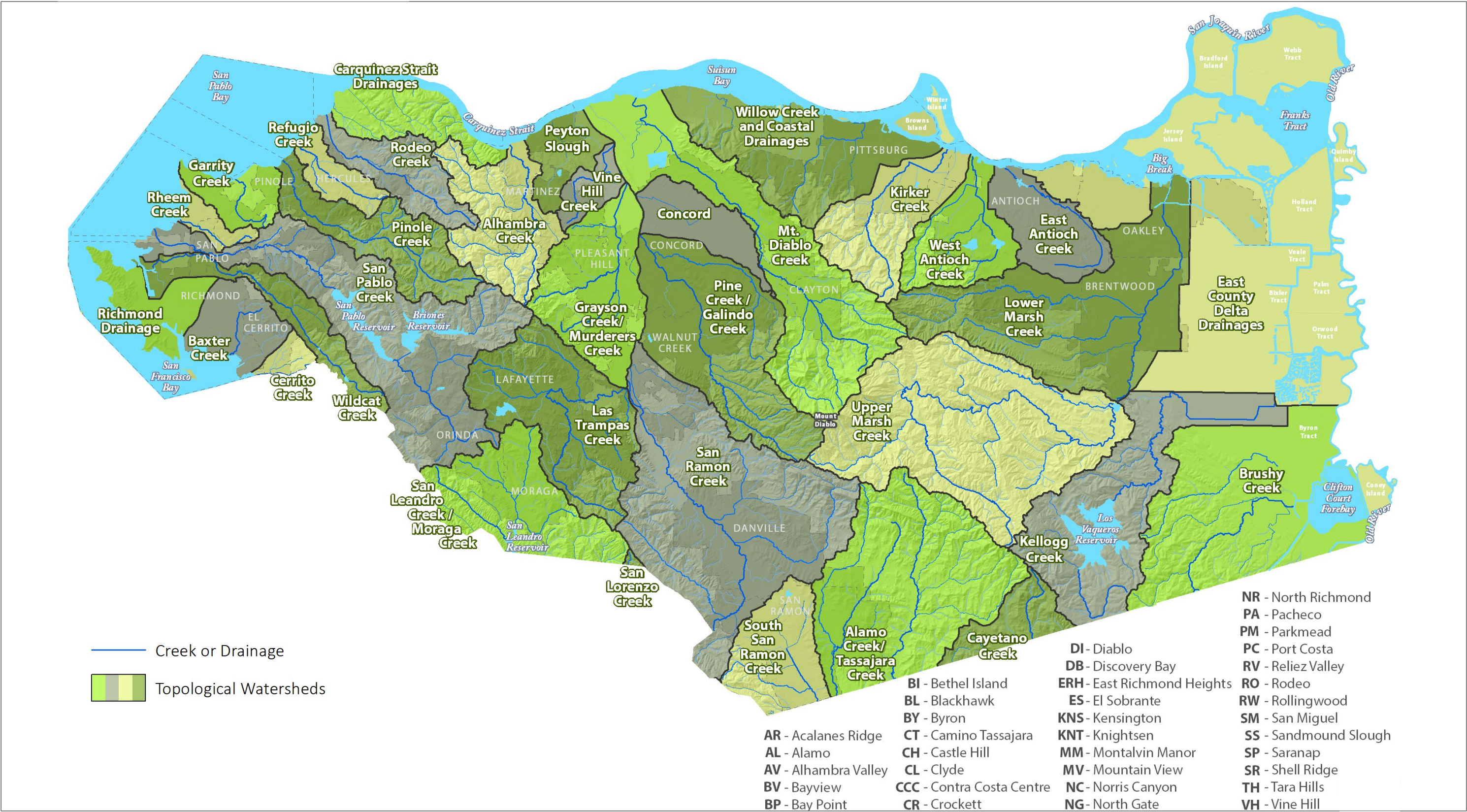
Contra Costa County is bounded by San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay to the west, by Suisun Bay and the San Joaquin River to the north, the Old River to the east and Alameda County to the south. Water from the urbanized western portion of the county drains directly to San Francisco Bay or San Pablo Bay, while the northern and eastern portions of the county drain into Suisun Bay and the Delta river channels, eventually flowing into San Francisco Bay or San Pablo Bay. The south-central portion of the county is within the Alameda Creek drainage basin; this area's water drains south to Alameda Creek, then west to San Francisco Bay.

Because of the Mediterranean climate and its characteristic lack of rainfall during the summer months, ephemeral and intermittent streams are the dominant hydrologic features within the county watersheds. The range of precipitation reflects variations in elevation and proximity to the coast. Surface flow in ephemeral streams is generally supplied by rainfall; these streams flow only during and immediately following rain events. Surface flow in intermittent or seasonal streams is supplied by a combination of rainfall runoff and groundwater; accordingly, these streams generally flow throughout the rainy season and into the late spring or early summer. Perennial streams in the county are also supported by rainfall runoff and groundwater, but unlike seasonal streams, they run year-round, with major dry-season inputs from both natural and artificial sources (e.g., upwelling springs and surface or subsurface flows from local irrigation, respectively).

The natural hydrology of many of the major creeks and streams in the urban areas has been altered to control flooding or convey irrigation water. Channels were made wider and deeper and lined with concrete or riprap. Creeks and streams were relocated and realigned to accommodate increased flows, then placed in conduits and culverts. Most creeks and streams have been disconnected from their historic floodplains by levees and channelization. Many of these streams are maintained as flood control channels, which support little or no riparian vegetation. Outside the urbanized areas, most drainages remain relatively natural and occupy at least a portion of their historic floodplains. Most of these features are ephemeral or intermittent, however, and generally support narrow floodplains with limited riparian habitat (ICF 2019).

There are 16 major watersheds and 31 sub-watersheds within Contra Costa County (CCCWP 2019). Additionally, Contra Costa County includes the headwaters of creeks that drain through other counties before reaching the Bay. Figure 5.10-1, *Watersheds of Contra Costa County*, shows the 31 sub-watersheds within Contra Costa County.

HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022



Figure 5.10-1
Watersheds of Contra Costa County

5. Environmental Analysis
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Local Hydrology

Major storm drain infrastructure and flood control facilities within the county are managed by the CCCFCWCD. The CCCFCWCD covers all of Contra Costa County, including its cities, and manages approximately 79 miles of channels, creeks, and other drainage and 30 detention basins and dams. Many municipalities within Contra Costa County also maintain their own storm drain systems and have developed storm drain master plans and green infrastructure plans.

The CCCFCWCD was formed in 1951 and offers regional flood protection, primarily funded through property taxes and developer fees. There are several divisions within the CCCFCWCD that are involved in various aspects of stormwater and floodplain management (CCCFCWCD, 2023a):

- Watershed Planning & Engineering
 - Identify and plan for long range flood protection solutions.
 - Design and build regional drainage systems that encompass the county and cities.
 - Establish and update developer fees for regional drainage systems.
 - Collaborate with federal, State, and local partners on large flood control projects.
- Watershed Program (unincorporated county)
 - Design and manage programs to reduce stormwater pollution from sources such as sediment, trash, pesticides, and hydrocarbons.
 - Promote pollution prevention awareness.
 - Support local non-profit creek groups.
 - Promote community pride in creeks.
- Current Development
 - Review development applications and coordinate regional drainage systems in the county and cities.
 - Manage developer-financed drainage systems.
 - Issue drainage permits for work on Flood Control District property and County drainage systems.
 - Respond to drainage complaints in the unincorporated county.
- Maintenance
 - Maintain and repair Flood Control District channels, creeks, and detention basins.
- Hydrology
 - Collect and analyze rainfall and stream flow data,
 - Predict flood flows using computerized programs,
 - Review flood flow studies.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- Floodplain Management (unincorporated county; CCCFCWCD provides technical support to the County Floodplain Manager)
 - Ensure new development in flood-prone areas meets FEMA standards.
 - Participate in federal programs to reduce flood insurance premiums.
 - Promote the creation and preservation of natural floodways.

The county is divided into Flood Control Zones and smaller Drainage Areas. There are approximately 13 Flood Control Zones. The Flood Control Zones involve large, regional drainage infrastructure, which is typically built in partnership with federal or State agencies that provide partial funding, such as USACE. Every resident within a Flood Control Zone pays a small portion of their annual property tax for the CCCFCWCD to construct new projects and maintain existing infrastructure.

Water Quality

Water quality in Contra Costa County is monitored by the San Francisco RWQCB and the Central Valley RWQCB through implementation of their respective Basin Plans. The Basin Plans designate beneficial uses for surface water bodies and groundwater within Contra Costa County, water quality objectives, and strategies for achieving these objectives. Table 5.10-1, *Beneficial Uses for Surface Waters in Contra Costa County*, provides the designated beneficial uses for surface water in the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Table 5.10-1 Beneficial Uses for Surface Waters in Contra Costa County

Water Body		Beneficial Uses ¹														
		MUN	FRSH	IND	COM	COLD	EST	MAR	MIGR	RARE	SPWN	WARM	WILD	REC-1	REC-2	NAV
San Francisco Bay Region																
Central Basin	Cerrito Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Baxter Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Richmond Inner Harbor				X		X						X	X	X	X
San Pablo Basin	Rodeo Creek					X					X	X	X	X	X	
	Refugio Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Pinole Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Garrity Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Rheem Creek											X	X	X	X	
	San Pablo Creek		X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X*	X	
	San Pablo Reservoir	X			X	X					X	X	X	X*	X	
	Lauterwasser Creek		X									X	X	X	X	
	Briones Reservoir	X				X					X	X	X	X*	P	
	Bear Creek (Contra Costa)		X							X		X	X	X	X	
	Wildcat Creek		X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

¹ Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) – Uses of water for community, military, or individual water supply systems including, but not limited to, drinking water supply.

Freshwater Replenishment (FRSH) – Uses of water for natural or artificial maintenance of surface water quantity or quality.

Industrial Service Supply (IND) – Uses of water for industrial activities that do not depend primarily on water quality including, but not limited to, mining, cooling water supply, hydraulic conveyance, gravel washing, fire protection, or oil well re-pressurization.

Commercial and Sport Fishing (COM) – Includes uses of water for commercial or recreational collection of fish, shellfish, or other organisms, including, but not limited to, uses involving organisms intended for human consumption or bait purposes.

Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD) – Includes uses of water that support cold water ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation or enhancement of aquatic habitats, vegetation, fish, or wildlife, including invertebrates.

Estuarine Habitat (EST) – Includes uses of water that support estuarine ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation or enhancement of estuarine habitats, vegetation, fish, shellfish, or wildlife (e.g., estuarine mammals, waterfowl, shorebirds).

Marine Habitat (MAR) – Includes uses of water that support marine ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation or enhancement of marine habitats, vegetation such as kelp, fish, shellfish, or wildlife (e.g., marine mammals, shorebirds).

Migration of Aquatic Organisms (MIGR) – Includes uses of water that support habitats necessary for migration, acclimatization between fresh and salt water, or other temporary activities by aquatic organisms, such as anadromous fish.

Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species (RARE) – Waters that support the habitats necessary for the survival and successful maintenance of plant or animal species designated under State or federal law as rare, threatened, or endangered.

Fish Spawning (SPWN) – Includes uses of water that support high quality aquatic habitats suitable for reproduction and early development of fish.

Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM) – Uses of water that support warm water ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation or enhancement of aquatic habitats, vegetation, fish, or wildlife, including invertebrates.

Wildlife Habitat (WILD) – Uses of water that support terrestrial ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation and enhancement of terrestrial habitats, vegetation, wildlife (e.g., mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates), or wildlife water and food sources.

Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) – Uses of water for recreational activities involving body contact with water, where ingestion of water is reasonably possible. These uses include, but are not limited to, swimming, wading, water-skiing, skin and scuba diving, surfing, whitewater activities, fishing, or use of natural hot springs.

Non-Contact Water Recreation (REC-2) – Uses of water for recreational activities involving proximity to water, but not normally involving body contact with water, where ingestion of water is reasonably possible. These uses include, but are not limited to, picnicking, sunbathing, hiking, beachcombing, camping, boating, tidepool and marine life study, hunting, sightseeing, or aesthetic enjoyment in conjunction with the above activities.

Navigation (NAV) – Uses of water for shipping, travel, or other transportation by private, military, or commercial vessels.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Table 5.10-1 Beneficial Uses for Surface Waters in Contra Costa County

Water Body		Beneficial Uses ¹														
		MUN	FRSH	IND	COM	COLD	EST	MAR	MIGR	RARE	SPWN	WARM	WILD	REC-1	REC-2	NAV
Suisun Basin	Jewel Lake					X						X	X	X	X	
	Lake Anza		X		X	X						X	X	X	X	
	Alhambra Creek					X			X	X		X	X	X	X	
	Franklin Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Arroyo del Hambre					X						X	X	X	X	
	Peyton Slough			X	X		X	X		X			X	X	X	
	Pacheco Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Walnut Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Grayson Creek					X			X	X		X	X	X	X	
	Pine Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Galindo Creek					X						X	X	X	X	
	San Ramon Creek											X	X	X	X	
	Bollinger Canyon Creek					X					X	X	X	X	X	
	Las Trampas Creek					X				X		X	X	X	X	
	Tice Creek									X		X	X	X	X	
	Lafayette Creek					X						X	X	X	X	
	Lafayette Reservoir	X			X	X					X	X	X	X	X	
	Hastings Slough						X			X			X	X	X	
	Mt. Diablo Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Mitchell Creek					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Donner Creek					X					X	X	X	X	X	
Mallard Slough				X		X		X	X			X	X	X		
Kicker Creek									X		X	X	X	X		
New York Slough				X		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	
Central Valley Basin Plan																
	Marsh Creek				X					X		X	X	P	P	
	Marsh Creek Reservoir									X		X	X	P	P	

Source: San Francisco Bay RWQCB 2022, Central Valley RWQCB 2019.
X designates an existing beneficial use for a given hydrologic area.
P designates a potential beneficial use for a given hydrological area.

5. Environmental Analysis HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Section 303(d) of the CWA requires states to identify the water bodies that do not meet established water quality standards under traditional point source controls. These water bodies are listed as impaired under Section 303(d) of the CWA. Once a water body has been placed on the 303(d) list, states are required to develop a TMDL threshold to address each pollutant causing impairment. A TMDL defines how much of a pollutant a water body can tolerate and still meet water quality standards. There are 23 waterbodies within Contra Costa County listed as impaired water bodies, as shown in Table 5.10-2, *Impaired Water Bodies in Contra Costa County*. The table also provides the TMDL status for each pollutant.

Table 5.10-2 Impaired Water Bodies in Contra Costa County

	Waterbody	303 (d) List Impairments	TMDL Status/Project
San Francisco Bay Region	Baxter Creek	Trash	2029 Attainment Date
	Briones Reservoir	Mercury	2029 Expected Completion
	Castro Cove, Richmond	Mercury, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), Selenium, Dieldrin	2010 Attainment Date
	Cerrito Creek	Trash	2029 Attainment Date
	Kirker Creek	Toxicity	2021 Expected Completion
		Pyrethroids	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
		Trash	2029 Attainment Date
	Lafayette Reservoir	Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)	2019 Expected Completion
		Mercury	2013 Expected Date Completion
	Mt. Diablo Creek	Pesticides, Toxicity	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
		Toxicity	2021 Expected Completion
	Pine Creek sub watershed	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
	Pinole Creek	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
	Rodeo Creek	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
	San Pablo Creek	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
		Trash	2029 Attainment Date
	San Pablo Reservoir	Mercury, Pesticides, PCBs	2013 Expected Completion
		Pesticides	2019 Expected Completion
		PCBs	2020 Expected Completion
	Stege Marsh	Zinc, Pesticides, Copper, Mercury, PCBs	2019 Expected Attainment
	Walnut Creek	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
Central Valley Region	Discovery Bay	Mercury	2029 Expected Completion
	Dune Creek	Mercury	2015 Expected Completion
		Metals	2027 Expected Completion
	Kellogg Creek	Salinity, Dissolved Oxygen, Indicator Bacteria	2021 Expected Completion
		Toxicity	2027 Expected Completion
	Grayson Creek	Trash	2029 Attainment Date
	Los Vaqueros Reservoir	Mercury	2027 Expected Completion
	Marsh Creek (Dune Creek to Marsh Creek Reservoir)	Metals	2020 Expected Completion
		Mercury	2015 Expected Completion
	Marsh Creek (Marsh Creek Reservoir to San Joaquin River; partly in Delta Waterways, western portion)	Pathogens	2023 Expected Completion
		Toxicity	2027 Expected Completion
		Mercury	Delta Methylmercury TMDL Project
	Marsh Creek Reservoir	Mercury	2025 Expected Completion

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

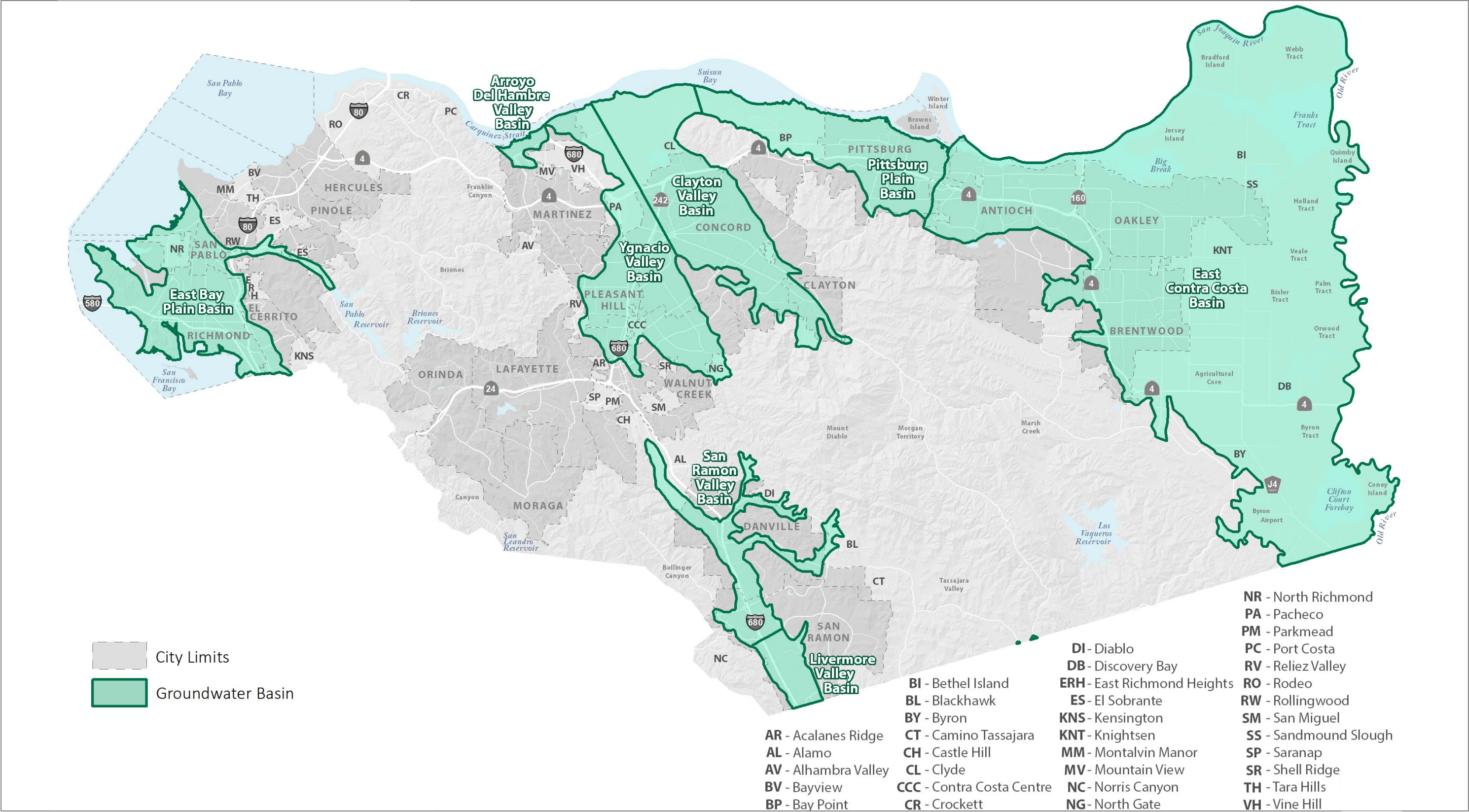
	Waterbody	303 (d) List Impairments	TMDL Status/Project
	Sand Creek	Diazinon	San Francisco Bay Urban Creeks Diazinon
		Salinity	2021 Expected Completion
		Chlorpyrifos	2026 Attainment Date
		Toxicity	2021 Expected Completion
		Pathogens	2021 Expected Completion
		Diazinon	2026 Attainment Date
		Pesticides	2021 Expected Completion

Source: SWRCB 2018.

Groundwater

Eight groundwater basins are in Contra Costa County, as shown on Figure 5.10-2, *Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County*. The western end of Contra Costa County contains the northernmost end of the Santa Clara Valley East Bay Plain Subbasin. Proceeding east across the northern edge of the county are the Arroyo del Hambre Valley, Ygnacio Valley, Clayton Valley, Pittsburg Plain, and the San Joaquin Valley-East Contra Costa Subbasins. The San Ramon Valley Subbasin and a small portion of the Livermore Valley Subbasin are along Interstate 680 in the south-central portion of the county. Table 5.10-3, *Existing and Potential Beneficial Uses in Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County*, lists the groundwater basins provided in the San Francisco Bay and Central Valley RWQCB Basin Plan and the existing and potential beneficial uses. All groundwater in the Central Valley Region is considered as suitable or potentially suitable, at a minimum, for municipal and domestic water supply, agricultural supply, industrial service supply, and industrial process supply (Central Valley RWQCB 2019).

HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118 Groundwater Basins (2018)



Figure 5.10-2
Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County

5. Environmental Analysis
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Table 5.10-3 Existing and Potential Beneficial Uses in Groundwater Basins in Contra Costa County

Groundwater Basin Name	Beneficial Uses ¹			
	MUN	PRO	IND	AGR
Santa Clara Valley- East Bay Plain	X	X	X	X
Livermore Valley	X	X	X	X
Pittsburg Plain	P	P	P	P
Clayton Valley	X	P	P	P
Ygnacio Valley	P	P	P	P
San Ramon Valley	X	P	P	X
Arroyo del Hambre Valley	P	P	P	P
San Joaquin-East Contra Costa	X	X	X	X

Source: San Francisco Bay RWQB 2022, Central Valley RWQCB 2019.

Note: X = existing beneficial use; P = potential beneficial use.

¹ Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) – Uses of water for community, military, or individual water supply systems including, but not limited to, drinking water supply.

Industrial Process Supply (PRO) – Uses of water for industrial activities that depend primarily on water quality.

Industrial Service Supply (IND) – Uses of water for industrial activities that do not depend primarily on water quality, including, but not limited to, mining, cooling water supply, hydraulic conveyance, gravel washing, fire protection, and oil well repressurization.

Agricultural Supply (AGR) – Uses of water for farming, horticulture, or ranching, including, but not limited to, irrigation, stock watering, or support of vegetation for range grazing.

According to DWR's Basin Prioritization dashboard (DWR 2023b), groundwater is not extracted for municipal use in the Arroyo Del Hambre Valley, Ignacio Valley, Clayton Valley, and San Ramon Valley groundwater subbasins, which are characterized by DWR as very low priority. Groundwater use is limited by the effect of saltwater intrusion and pollutant contamination in the three subbasins that border the Carquinez Strait and Suisun Bay: Arroyo Del Hambre Valley, Ygnacio Valley, and Clayton Valley. Although there are a limited number of domestic wells in the San Ramon Valley Subbasin, there are no municipal supply wells that extract groundwater. Because of the very low priority designation from DWR, GSPs are not required for these four subbasins.

The Pittsburg Plain Subbasin is also characterized as a very low priority basin by DWR and thus a GSP is not required. The City of Pittsburg extracts groundwater from this subbasin using two wells. According to the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the City pumped 1,480 acre-feet of water from this subbasin in 2020 (City of Pittsburg 2021). However, approximately 85 to 95 percent of the City's water supply is purchased from Contra Costa Water District (CCWD), which provides surface water from the Central Valley Project (CVP). The City prepared the Pittsburg Plain Groundwater Management Plan in 2012 to manage and protect groundwater resources within and underlying the city.

The northern tip of the Santa Clara Valley – East Bay Plain groundwater subbasin is within Contra Costa County. However, this portion of the subbasin is limited in terms of water supply because of saltwater intrusion and contamination in the shallow aquifer. The East Bay Plain Subbasin is characterized by DWR as medium priority and a GSP has been prepared by EBMUD and the City of Hayward as the GSAs. However, EBMUD and the City of Hayward are not currently pumping groundwater from this subbasin as a water supply source. They have implemented the Bayside Groundwater Project which injects drinking water into the deep aquifer in the southern portion of the groundwater subbasin with the possibility of extracting and treating the groundwater as a supplemental water supply source during times of drought. However, to date, no groundwater pumping from this facility has occurred (EBMUD 2022).

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The San Joaquin Valley – East Contra Costa groundwater subbasin is in the eastern portion of Contra Costa County and is characterized as a medium priority basin by DWR. Eight local agencies that overlay the basin have collaborated to develop a GSP. The agencies are the Cities of Antioch and Brentwood, Bryon Bethany Irrigation District, Contra Costa County, CCWD, Diablo Water District, the Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District, and East Contra Costa Irrigation District. The East Contra Costa Subbasin GSP was submitted to DWR in October 2021 and provides sustainability goals and management principles to protect all beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the subbasin (ECC GSA 2021). The groundwater basin does not show any signs of over-pumping; however, its ranking as a medium priority basin is based on the importance of groundwater as a source of supply for domestic and agricultural uses. In addition, there are many disadvantaged communities that rely on groundwater as the sole source of supply.

The Livermore Valley Subbasin in the south-central portion of Contra Costa County is designated as a medium priority basin. Groundwater in this basin has been actively managed since 1974 by the Zone 7 Water Agency. This Agency submitted an Alternative GSP that was accepted by DWR. The groundwater basin is not in critical overdraft conditions, and the 2021 Alternative GSP demonstrates that the basin has continued to operate within its sustainable yield over a period of at least 10 years (Zone 7 Water Agency 2021).

Flood Zones

FEMA designates floodplain zones on FIRMs to assist cities and counties in mitigating flooding hazards through land use planning. FEMA also outlines specific regulations for any construction within a 100-year floodplain. The 100-year floodplain is defined as an area that has a 1 percent chance of being inundated during a 12-month period. FEMA also prepares maps for 500-year floods, which means that in any given year, the risk of flooding in the designated area is 0.2 percent.

In some locations, FEMA also provides measurements of base flood elevations for the 100-year flood, which is the minimum height of the flood waters during a 100-year event. Base flood elevation (BFE) is reported in feet above sea level. Depth of flooding is determined by subtracting the land's height above sea level from the base flood elevation. Areas within the 100-year flood hazard area that are financed by federally backed mortgages are subject to mandatory federal insurance requirements and building standards to reduce flood damage. This typically requires elevating the finished floor of the structure one to two feet above the BFE.

There are four primary types of flooding that occur in Contra Costa County (Contra Costa County 2018):

- **Stormwater Runoff Flooding.** This typically occurs during the rainy winter season, when runoff exceeds the capacity of the storm drain system. It is likely to occur when groundwater levels are high and there are high tides. It causes shallow street flooding and structure inundation and generally occurs in flat areas that are urbanized. However, severe weather storms can also cause landslides and mudflows in the mountainous areas.
- **Riverine Flooding.** This is defined as the overbank flooding of rivers and streams because of large-scale weather systems that generate prolonged rainfall. This causes not only the inundation of floodwater and debris but also the river and stream channels can be eroded by flowing water, resulting in a shift in channel location.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Flash Floods.** These are defined as a rapid and extremely high flow of water into a normally dry area or a rapid water level rise in a stream or creek. It typically occurs with little or no warning. The risk is increased in urban areas when vegetation and ground cover has been removed and replaced with roads and impervious surfaces.
- **Tidal Floods.** These floods are characterized as the inundation of normally dry land by bay waters, often caused by extreme tide events called “king tides.” These events normally occur once or twice a year and are the leading cause of flooding for locations that border the Bay. Tidal flooding is exacerbated by sea-level rise due to climate change.

Figure 5.10-3, *FEMA 100-Year and 500-Year Flood Zones*, shows the locations within Contra Costa County that are within the 100-year or 500-year floodplains. Some of the coastal areas of the county that border San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Carquinez Strait, and Suisun Bay to the west and north are designated as within Zone VE, which is defined as coastal high hazard areas. Zone VE extends offshore to the inland limit that is subject to high-velocity wave action. The boundary of Zone VE is generally based on wave heights (3 feet or greater) or wave run-up depths (3 feet or greater).

Figure 5.10-3 also shows areas DWR identifies as 100-year flood plains. DWR is in the process of developing “best available maps” (BAM) that display 100-year, 200-year, and 500-year floodplains for all counties in the state. Different than the FEMA maps, which are used to support the NFIP, the BAMs are provided for informational purposes, and the 100-year floodplains are a composite of multiple mapping sources from FEMA, USACE, and DWR. This provides the community and residents with an additional tool for understanding potential flood hazards that are not currently mapped as a regulated floodplain. The BAMs for the EIR Study Area are still in the process of development, and only the 100-year floodplains are currently mapped (DWR 2023c).

Levees constantly hold back water and protect many areas that are at or below sea level from water inundation, and protect critical infrastructure, including EBMUD’s water aqueducts, highways, railroads, gas wells, gas storage facilities, and electric lines, and more. Levee stability and effectiveness is increasingly threatened by sea-level rise, increased storm frequencies and intensities, and higher flows from greater rainfall and less snow due to climate change. Levees also protect land that may be settling due to subsidence, rendering the levees less stable. Many of the levees and drainage facilities in the Delta region of the county are privately owned and operated. There are over 1,100 miles of earthen levees and revetments managed by the CCCFCWCD and 13 reclamation districts in the county. There are also levees on many smaller rivers, streams, and creeks that protect small areas of land.

Although the eastern Delta portion of Contra Costa County is protected by levees, this area has often been subject to flooding due to the overtopping or failure of the levees. Figure 5.10-4, *Levees of Contra Costa County*, shows the levee centerline locations within Contra Costa County. High tides combined with large river inflow and rain-soaked levees have caused significant damage to agricultural land and private dwellings. Other areas within Contra Costa County that are within the 100-year floodplain are adjacent to various streams and rivers.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Sea-Level Rise

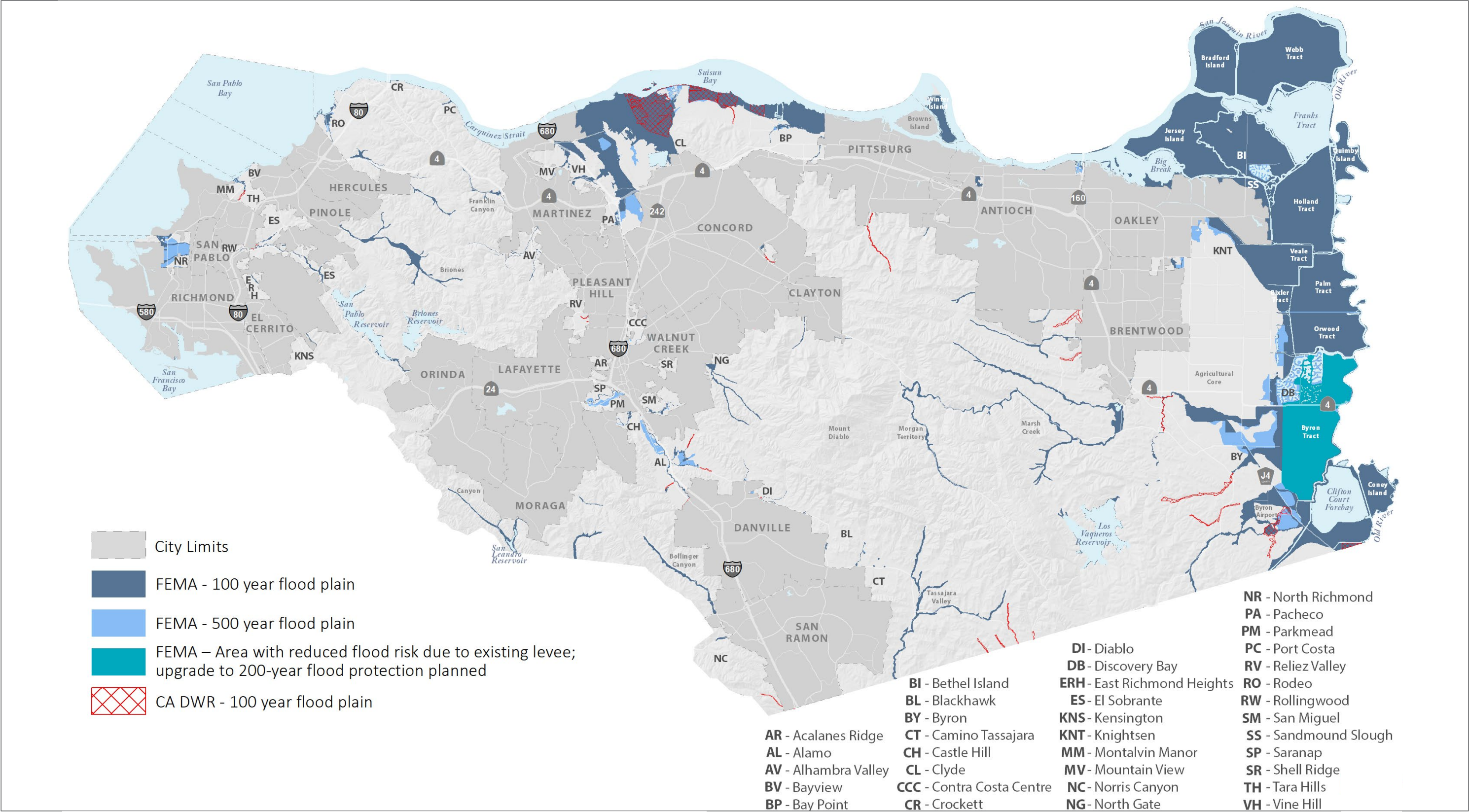
Rising sea levels can also cause the shoreline to flood more frequently and severely during storms or king tide events. King tides are abnormally high, predictable astronomical tides that occur about twice per year, with the highest tides occurring when the earth, moon, and sun are aligned. Because sea-level rise will cause ocean levels to be higher during normal conditions, shoreline floods can reach further onto land. For example, a storm that has a one in five chance of occurring in a given year (known as a five-year storm) can create a temporary increase in sea levels of approximately 24 inches. The goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan call for planning for a medium- to high-risk aversion scenario in 2100. This scenario uses a 1 in 200 chance for sea-level rise projections, providing a precautionary projection that can be used for less adaptive (i.e., less able to make changes that reduce harm in response to hazards), more vulnerable developments or populations that will experience moderate to high consequences if actions are not taken to address sea-level rise in these areas.

Along the Contra Costa County shoreline, sea levels are projected to rise by up to about 24 inches by 2050 and 84 inches by 2100. However, it is possible that sea levels could rise faster than these projections. Figures 5.10-5, *Sea Level Rise 2050*, and Figure 5.10-6, *Sea Level Rise 2100*, display the expected sea-level rise in Contra Costa County in 2050 and 2100 featuring both East Contra Costa and Bay models from the Adapting to Rising Tides data. Figures 5.10-7, *Sea Level Rise 2050 with Bayside/Extreme Tide Flooding*, and Figure 5.10-8, *Sea Level Rise 2100 with Bayside/Extreme Tide Flooding*, display the sea-level rise projections in 2050 and 2100 with shoreline flooding.

Rising seas increase the risk of flooding, storm surge inundation, erosion and shoreline retreat, and wetland loss. Rising sea levels also threaten a significant portion of prime agricultural land in the county, as low-lying agricultural lands could be subject to more frequent shoreline flooding and saltwater intrusion into groundwater basins could disrupt agricultural water supplies. Meanwhile, rising tides may increase groundwater levels, inundating contaminated soil. Given that some contaminated sites in Contra Costa County sit near the shoreline, rising groundwater may cause contaminated soils to leach into adjacent areas.

Natural ecosystems in the Bay and Delta regions will be disrupted by the higher tide levels and intrusion of saltwater into freshwater systems. Historically, marshes have adapted to changes in sea level by building up sediment, increasing the height of the marsh to keep pace with the tide levels of the San Francisco Bay, and by moving inland. However, sea-level rise is expected to outpace the rate of marsh-level rise and development near wetlands will likely prevent marsh migration inland. Without substantial intervention, most tidal marshes in Contra Costa County are expected to convert to another habitat type, a process called “downshifting,” which will lead to the establishment of different plant and animal species. Some wetlands may be altered or lost. The use of nature-based solutions, which combine natural buffers like wetlands or bluffs with traditional infrastructure to mitigate flooding risks, could be an opportunity to preserve existing ecological communities and protect natural habitats.

HYDROLOGY

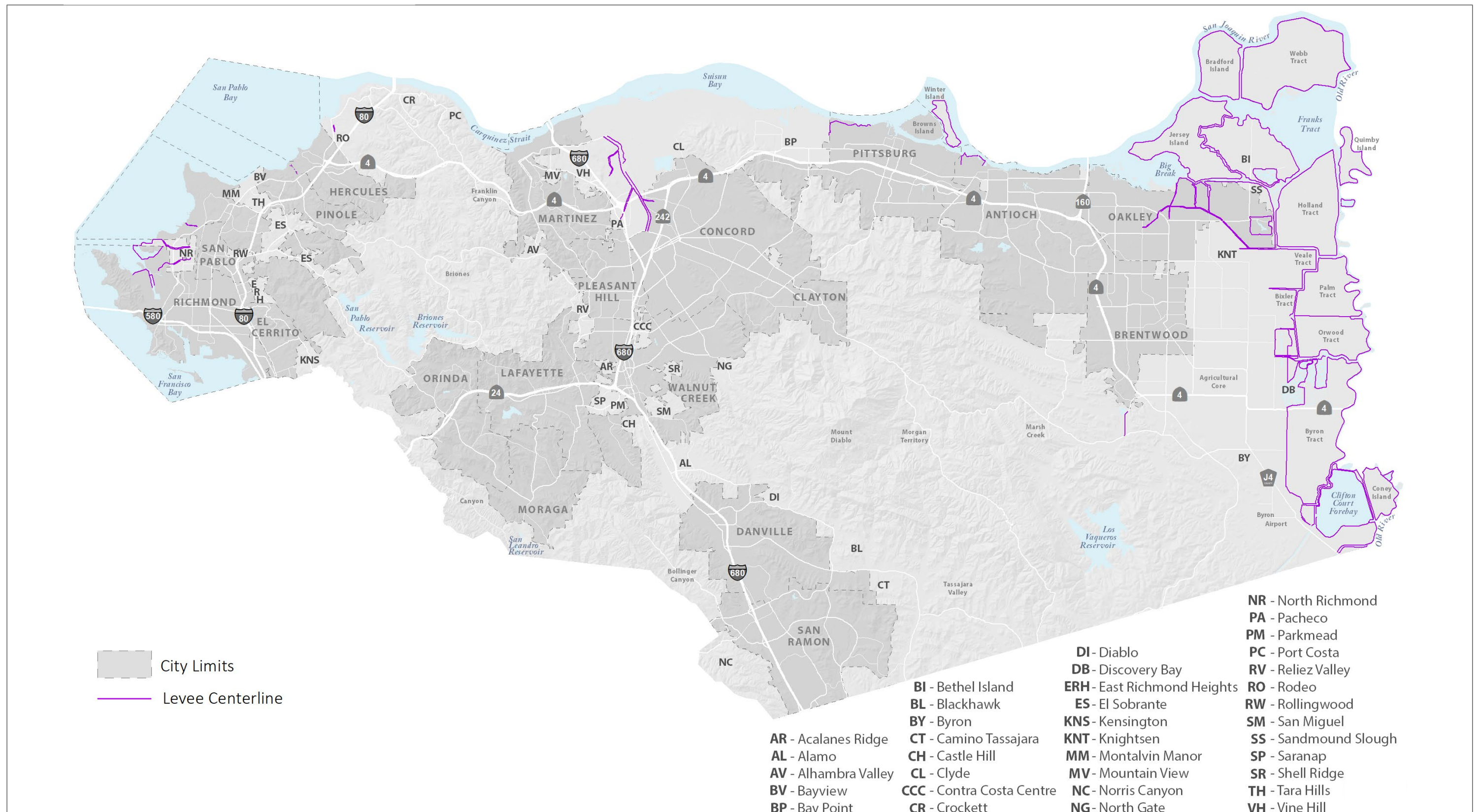


Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) 'Awareness' 100 year flood plains



Figure 5.10-3
FEMA 100-Year and 500-Year Flood Zones

HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022



Figure 5.10-4
Levees of Contra Costa County

HYDROLOGY

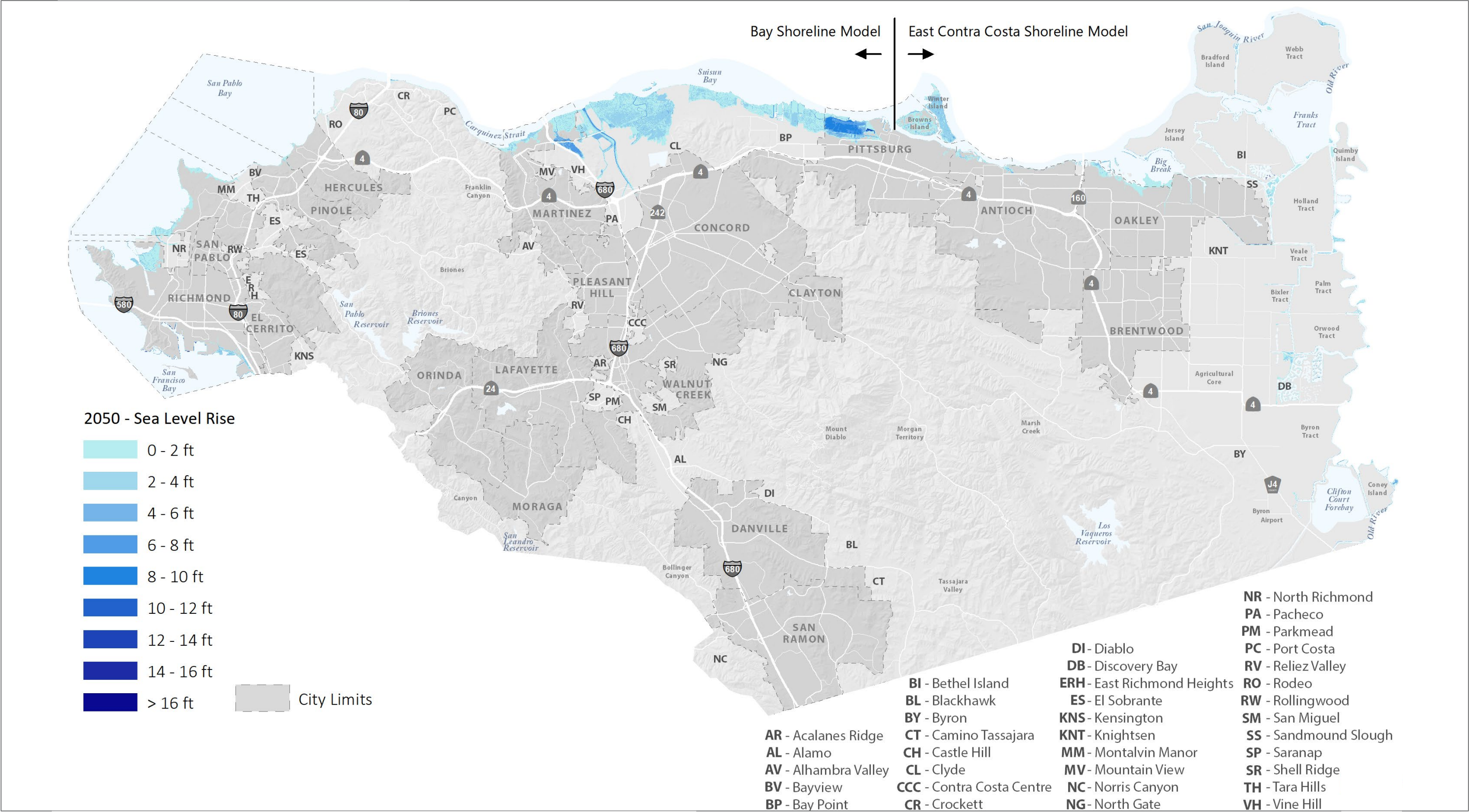
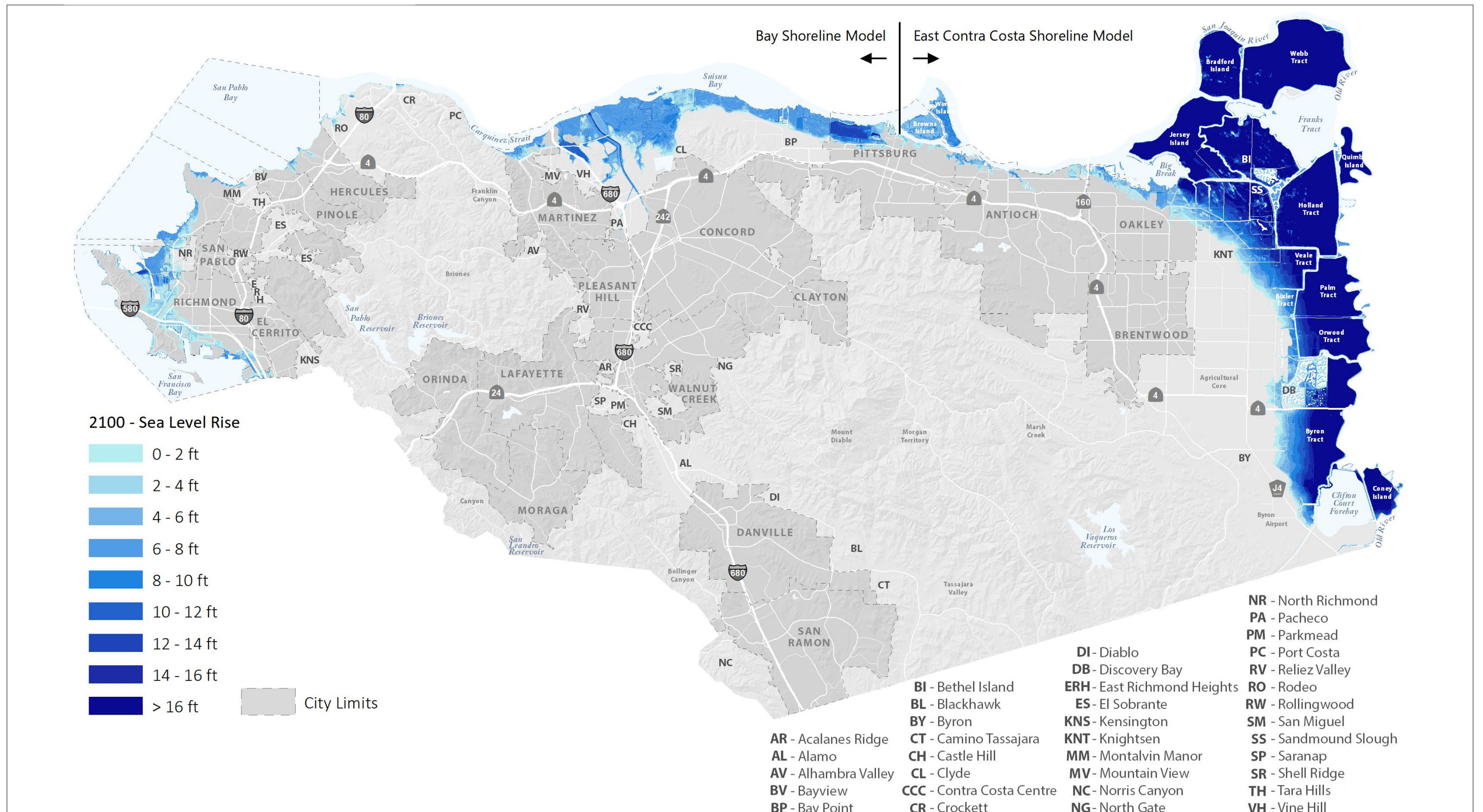


Figure 5.10-5
Sea-Level Rise 2050

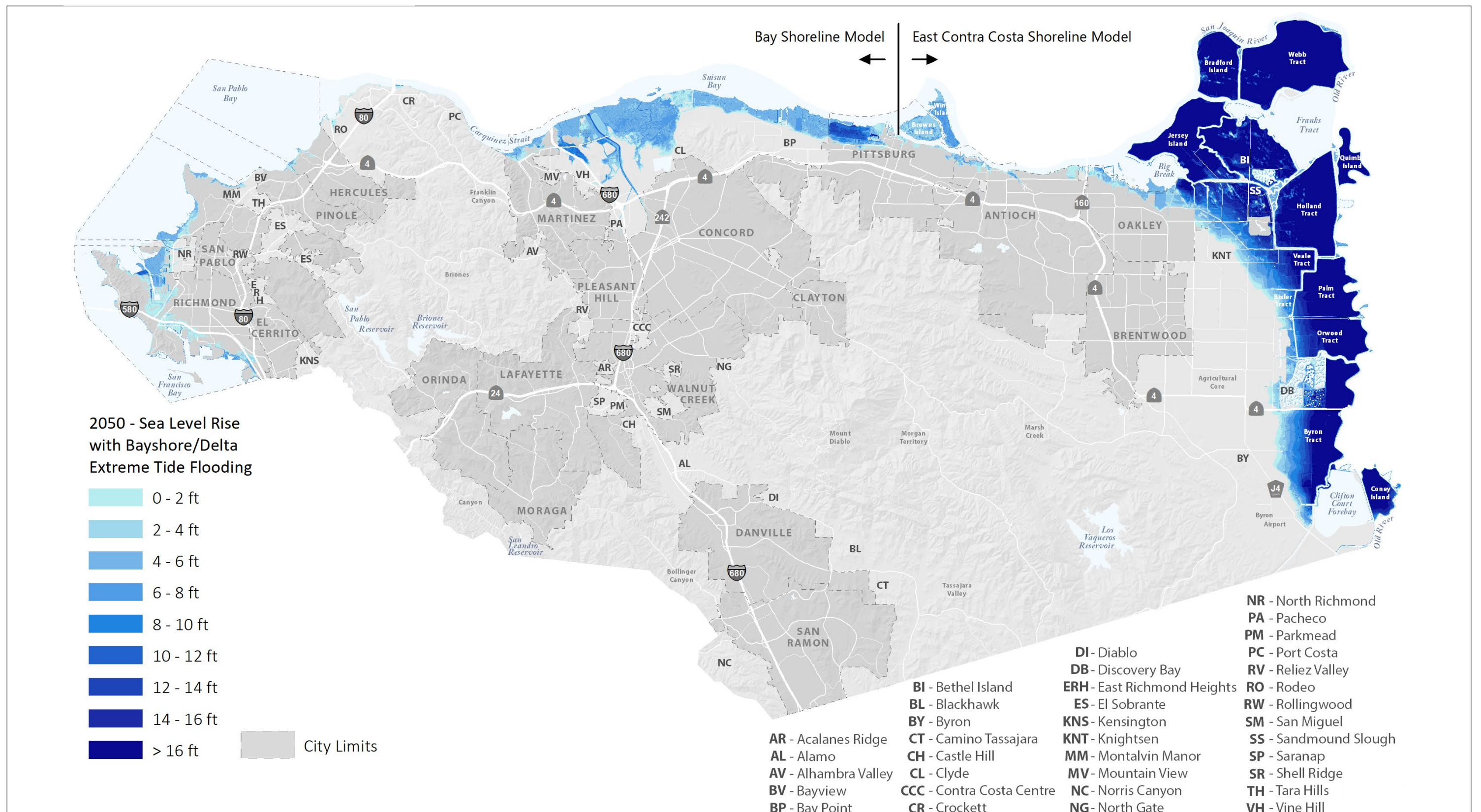
HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) Program, Delta Stewardship Council



Figure 5.10-6
Sea-Level Rise 2100

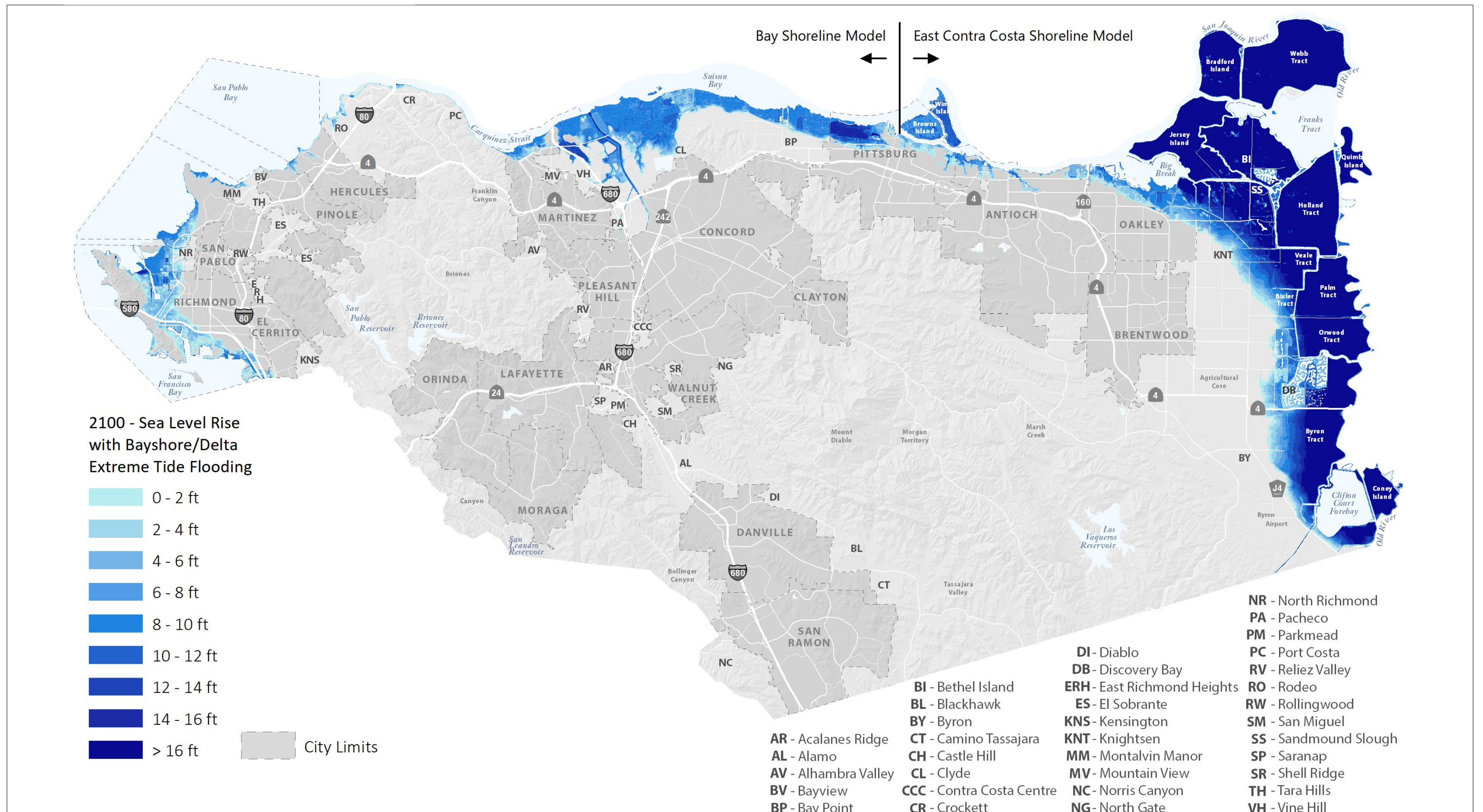


Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) Program, Delta Stewardship Council



Figure 5.10-7
Sea-Level Rise 2050 with Bayshore/Delta Extreme Tide Flooding

HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) Program, Delta Stewardship Council



5. Environmental Analysis HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Dam Inundation Zones

Partial or complete dam failures can occur from one or more of the following causes (Contra Costa County 2018):

- Overtopping, which accounts for 34 percent of all dam failures, due to inadequate spillway capacity, settlement of the dam crest, blockage of spillways, and other factors.
- Foundation defects, which account for 30 percent of all dam failures, due to differential settlement, slides, slope instability, uplift pressures, and foundation seepage.
- Failure due to piping and seepage, accounting for 20 percent of all failures, caused by internal erosion, erosion along hydraulic structures such as spillways, erosion due to animal burrows, and cracks in the dam structure.
- Failure due to problems with conduits and valves, accounting for 10 percent of all failures, typically caused by piping of embankment material into conduits through joints or cracks.

The remaining six percent of U.S. dam failures are due to miscellaneous causes and are often the secondary result of other hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, extreme storms, massive snowmelt, equipment malfunctions, structural damage, foundation failures, and sabotage. The most likely disaster-related causes of dam failure in Contra Costa County are earthquakes, excessive rainfall, and landslides (Contra Costa County 2018).

The California Water Code requires owners of all dams under California Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) jurisdiction (except dams classified as low downstream hazard) to prepare dam inundation maps. These maps must be updated every 10 years or when there are changes to downstream development or terrain. The dam inundation maps are submitted to DSOD for review and approval. Once the maps are approved, the dam owner must submit the map with the Emergency Action Plan to the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for review and approval.

For federally owned and maintained dams, USACE and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation each have Dam Safety Programs that recognize the catastrophic nature of potential dam failure and operate a comprehensive dam safety program, which include:

- Periodic special engineering studies
- Surveillance and monitoring programs
- Routine inspections and maintenance activities
- Maintaining an emergency response and preparedness plan

There are 27 dams in Contra Costa County and five dams outside the county that have inundation areas that extend into the county. The dam inundation areas for most of these dams are shown on Figure 5.10-9, *Dam Inundation Zones* (some dam inundation data is not publicly available). All of the dams that are under DSOD jurisdiction within Contra Costa County are designated as either high hazard or extremely high hazard dams and are labeled as ‘dams of significant concern’ on Figure 5.10-9. The hazard classifications are based on potential downstream impacts to life and property should the dam fail when operating at full capacity. This hazard is not related to the condition of the dam. High hazard indicates that the dam failure could result in the loss of at least one human life and extremely high hazard indicates that the dam failure is expected to cause

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

considerable loss of human life or would result in an inundation area with a population of 1,000 or more (DSOD, 2023).

There has never been a reported dam failure in Contra Costa County (Contra Costa County 2018). There are no State or local restrictions for development in dam inundation zones; however, each dam owner is required to prepare an emergency action plan (EAP) and coordinate its response to a dam incident with local authorities. The Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services maintains copies of the most recent EAPs and inundation maps and uses this information to notify downstream areas in the event of a dam failure.

Tsunamis and Seiches

A tsunami is a series of traveling ocean waves generated by a rare, catastrophic event, including earthquakes, submarine landslides, and submarine or shoreline volcanic eruptions. Tsunamis can travel over the ocean surface at speeds of 400 to 500 miles per hour or more, and wave heights at the shore can range from inches to 50 feet. Factors influencing the size and speed of a tsunami include the source and magnitude of the triggering event, as well as off-shore and on-shore topography. As tsunamis reach the shoreline, they may manifest as a fast-rising tide, a cresting wave, or a bore (i.e., a large turbulent wall-like wave).

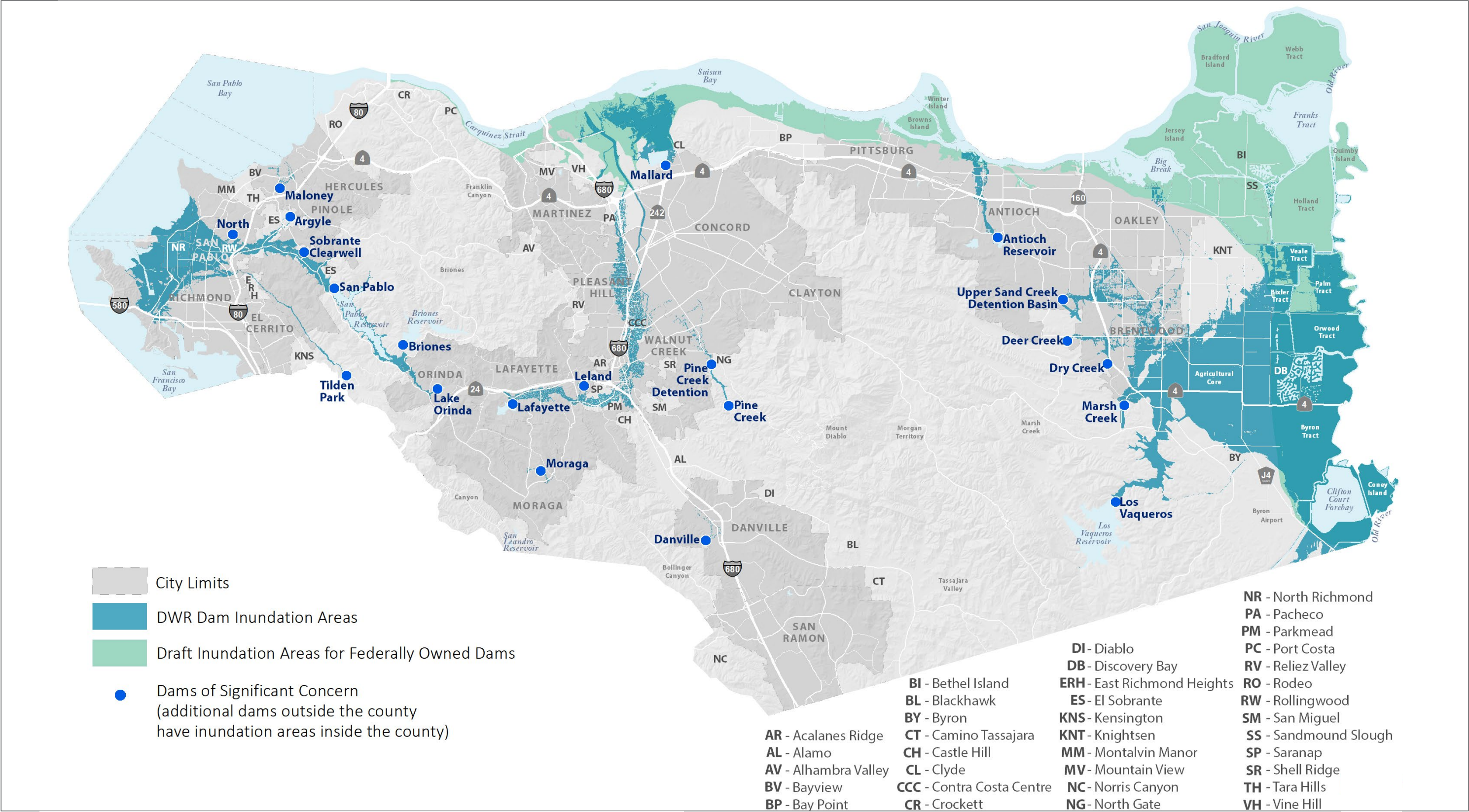
Contra Costa County has never been impacted by a tsunami. The closest tsunami to the area was in 2011 when an earthquake in Japan traveled across the Pacific Ocean and created wave surges that damaged coastal areas in nearby Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties.

Figure 5.10-10, *Tsunami Inundation Zones*, shows the coastal locations within Contra Costa County that are within tsunami inundation zones. The map was updated in 2021 and includes portions of the Cities of Richmond, El Cerrito, San Pablo, and Martinez. The map is based on inundation limits corresponding to a 975-year average return period and represents areas that could be exposed to tsunami hazards during an event (State of California 2021). Tsunami impacts would most likely be along San Pablo Bay and would result from a rise in floodwater from a San Francisco Bay tsunami caused by a local earthquake (Contra Costa County 2018). There also is a small area along the Carquinez Strait in the City of Martinez that is in a tsunami hazard zone.

A seiche is an oscillation wave generated in a closed or partially closed body of water, which can be compared to the back-and-forth sloshing in a bathtub. Seiches can be caused by winds, changes in atmospheric pressure, underwater earthquakes, tsunamis, or landslides into the water body. Bodies of water such as bays, harbors, reservoirs, ponds, and swimming pools can experience seiche waves up to several feet in height during a strong earthquake. However, for a seiche to occur in San Pablo or San Francisco Bay, the wave frequency of a tsunami would have to match the resonance frequency of the Bay. The typical frequency of a tsunami is ten minutes to an hour, and the resonance frequency of San Pablo and San Francisco Bay is somewhere between one to ten hours. Therefore, tsunamis have frequencies too short to resonate within San Pablo Bay and San Francisco Bay and a seiche is unlikely.

Seiches associated with large bodies of water, such as dams and reservoirs, typically create waves that are one foot high or less. Dams are designed to have a freeboard height below the top of the dam that accounts for wave action on the surface of the reservoir. Therefore, it is unlikely that a seiche would occur and cause overtopping of a dam, resulting in downstream flooding.

HYDROLOGY

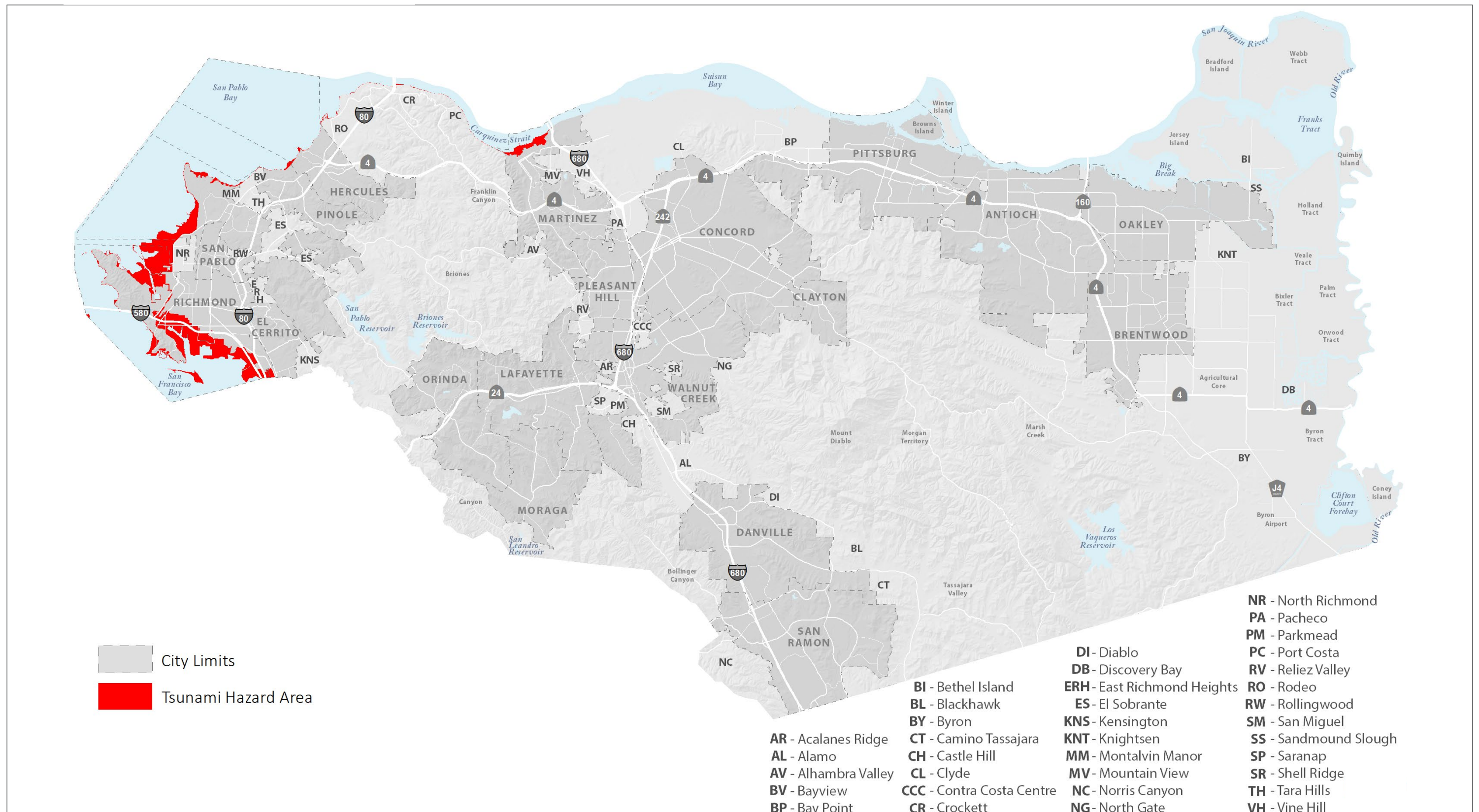


Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) Dam Safety Planning Division



Figure 5.10-9
Dam Inundation Zones

HYDROLOGY



Source: Contra Costa County, 2022; California Department of Conservation - California Geological Survey (CGS) and California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) Earthquake, Tsunami, and Volcano Program



Figure 5.10-10
Tsunami Inundation Zones

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

5.10.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- HYD-1 Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality.
- HYD-2 Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.
- HYD-3 Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
 - i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
 - ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite.
 - iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
 - iv) Impede or redirect flood flows.
- HYD-4 In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.
- HYD-5 Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

5.10.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.10.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to hydrology and water quality. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Action LU-A2.1:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to require the following prior to approval of a tentative map for subdivision in areas designated Agricultural Lands or Agricultural Core:
 - a) Evidence of adequate groundwater supply to support intended uses, considering the cumulative, long-term demand.
 - b) Demonstration that each parcel is suitable for an on-site wastewater treatment system.
 - c) Satisfactory road and street access, particularly for emergency vehicles.
 - d) Adequate regional drainage capacity, including downstream natural watercourses.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- e) Detailed site plans for each lot indicating building locations, driveways, well and leach field locations, energy-efficient and -conserving features, location of hazards such as landslides and floodplains, necessary flood and stormwater management improvements, and fencing.
- f) Other information that may be required to confirm the safe use of each lot for its intended purpose.
- **Policy LU-P8.9:** Plan land uses and activities in the vicinity of harbors to optimize their use for commerce and recreation while accounting for forecasted sea-level rise by 2100 under a medium-high risk aversion scenario, subsidence, and groundwater threats.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Land Element

- **Goal COS-5:** Protected and restored natural watercourses, riparian corridors, and wetland areas that improve habitat, water quality, wildlife diversity, stormwater flows, and scenic values.
 - **Policy COS-P5.1:** Support protection, restoration, and enhancement of creeks, wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and tidelands, and emphasize the role of these features in climate change resilience, air and water quality, and wildlife habitat.
 - **Policy COS-P5.2:** *Require new public infrastructure and private development projects to preserve, and whenever possible enhance, natural watercourses, floodplains, and riparian habitat.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.3:** Require avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation for development that would impact a wetland, wetland species, or adjacent upland habitat areas. Where feasible, compensation shall be in-kind (i.e., the same type of habitat), provided on-site, and based on a ratio that provides a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success and accounting for the relative functions and values of the lost and created wetlands.
 - **Policy COS-P5.4:** *Require new buildings and structures on private property be set back at least 75 feet from the edge of any wetland area, unless a peer-reviewed, site-specific evaluation indicates that a different setback is appropriate for protecting the wetland and adjacent upland habitat areas. Allow encroachment into a required wetland setback area only when a parcel would otherwise be rendered unbuildable or impacts have been adequately mitigated.*
 - **Policy COS-P5.8:** *Prohibit direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into marsh, creek, and wetland areas from outfalls serving urban development.*
 - **Action COS-A5.2:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to include the wetland setback requirement described in Policy COS-P5.4.
 - **Action COS-A5.3:** Amend the County Ordinance Code to apply the creek setback requirements in Title 9 - Subdivisions to all projects, including those that are not part of a subdivision.
- **Goal COS-7:** Sustainable surface and groundwater resource management.
 - **Policy COS-P7.1:** Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.
 - **Policy COS-P7.2:** Partner with water and wastewater service providers, GSAs, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Policy COS-P7.3:** *Consult applicable GSPs and local GSAs before making land use decisions that could impact groundwater resources.*
- **Policy COS-P7.4:** *For projects in areas without a water service provider, require proof of adequate on-site groundwater during the development review process. In addition to requiring compliance with the County's well regulations related to water quality and flow rate, require documentation that the proposed project will not have a significant cumulative impact on the aquifer or negatively affect development that already relies on the same groundwater supply.*
- **Policy COS-P7.5:** *Prohibit new development that would create or significantly aggravate groundwater overdraft conditions, land subsidence, or other "undesirable results," as defined in Section 354.26 of the California Water Code.*
- **Policy COS-P7.6:** Support multipurpose water storage options that incorporate water supply, flood control, surface and groundwater storage, groundwater management, and ecosystem components.
- **Policy COS-P7.7:** *Require landscaping for new development to be drought-tolerant, filter and retain runoff, and support flood management and groundwater recharge.*
- **Action COS-A7.1:** *Update County Ordinance Code Chapter 414-4, Water Supply, to be consistent with adopted GSPs.*
- **Action COS-A7.2:** For areas that are not covered by an adopted GSP, amend the County Ordinance Code to include sustainability indicators, defined by the SGMA, as a guide for development to maintain and protect the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies within the county.
- **Action COS-A7.3:** Evaluate the feasibility and necessity of amending the County Ordinance Code to promote rainwater harvesting, installation of dual plumbing, and water reuse.
- **Goal COS-8:** Protected quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
 - **Policy COS-P8.1:** *Protect public water supplies by denying applications for projects that would introduce significant new pollution sources in groundwater basins and watersheds feeding major reservoirs, and support efforts to acquire and permanently protect reservoir watersheds.*
 - **Policy COS-P8.2:** *Coordinate with other agencies to control point and non-point sources of water pollution and maintain water quality standards.*
 - **Policy COS-P8.3:** Support development and implementation of a long-term, area-wide integrated vegetation management program to control invasive weeds in a way that reduces pesticide use and preserves water quality.
 - **Policy COS-P8.4:** *Require new development to retain natural vegetation and topography whenever feasible and require projects involving erosion-inducing activities to use best management practices to minimize erosion.*
 - **Policy COS-P8.5:** Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large-scale commercial and industrial facilities that use wells and prohibit discharge of hazardous materials through injection wells.
- **Goal COS-9:** Protected, preserved, and enhanced scenic quality, recreational value, and natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline.
 - **Policy COS-P9.1:** Advocate for increased freshwater flow into, through, and from the Delta into San Francisco Bay, and support other efforts to protect and improve Delta water quality.
 - **Policy COS-P9.2:** Support continued maintenance and improvement of Delta levees to protect water quality, ecosystems, agricultural land, and at-risk communities.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Policy COS-P9.3:** Oppose all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance (e.g., peripheral canal, tunnel) or any other water diversion system that reduces Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system.
- **Policy COS-P9.4:** Plan for land uses along shorelines that do not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats.
- **Policy COS-P9.6:** Prohibit development on tule islands, sand dunes, and levee remnants.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Goal PFS-5:** Natural systems and flood-risk management infrastructure that can handle stormwater year-round and adapt to new and changing conditions.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.1:** Support public and private efforts to improve protection against flooding, subsidence, and inundation, especially projects that achieve 200-year flood protection or better, factoring in sea-level rise, in areas of the county covered by the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.2:** *Partner with responsible parties, public and private, to ensure ongoing funding exists for maintenance and rehabilitation of flood management facilities and structures (e.g., levees, pump stations, canals, channels, and dams), particularly those that do not meet adopted State or federal flood-protection standards.*
 - **Policy PFS-P5.3:** Allow for future height increases to private levees protecting inland areas from tidal flooding and sea-level rise by requiring rights-of-way and setbacks to be sufficiently wide on the levee's upland side and prohibiting new structures from being constructed on top of or immediately adjacent to the levee.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.4:** Support material stockpiling and equipment staging for emergency levee repair, especially in the western Delta.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.5:** Encourage new development to participate in programs that ensure ongoing maintenance of natural watercourses to maintain their flood-carrying capacity and habitat values.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.6:** *When developing new or revised regional drainage and flood management plans, including plans to protect against sea-level rise, incorporate adequate setbacks and alternative drainage system improvements that provide aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits. Improvements should avoid structural modifications to watercourses and preserve riparian habitat and floodplains, and convert engineered drainage systems to more natural systems, when and where possible. In areas at risk of temporary or permanent inundation from sea-level rise, ensure that improvements can continue to provide adequate protection for the projected level of inundation by 2100 or the expected operational life of the project, whichever is later.*
 - **Policy PFS-P5.7:** *Incorporate green infrastructure into new and retrofitted flood-control and streetscaping projects, including replacing existing asphalt and other hardscapes with green infrastructure, as feasible.*
 - **Policy PFS-P5.8:** Encourage developers of properties along transit corridors and in commercial areas to combine their private stormwater treatment facilities with green infrastructure on the adjoining street frontage.
 - **Policy PFS-P5.9:** Encourage public participation in the design of major flood-control and sea-level resiliency projects to ensure that these facilities are context-sensitive and provide multiple public benefits whenever possible.

5. Environmental Analysis HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Action PFS-A5.1:** *Identify existing developed areas where drainage maintenance issues exist and coordinate with each affected community to consider creating a benefit assessment district or similar local funding mechanism to pay for improvement and maintenance needs.*
- **Action PFS-A5.2:** Coordinate with responsible parties, public and private, to develop a flood risk management plan for the levee systems protecting the unincorporated county that:
 - a) Identifies the entities responsible for operation and maintenance of the levees.
 - b) Determines the anticipated flood levels in the adjacent waterways and the level of protection offered by the existing levees along the waterways.
 - c) Establishes a long-term plan to upgrade the system as necessary to provide at least a 100-year level of flood protection, and 200-year level of flood protection where required.
 - d) Considers the worst-case situations of high tides coupled with sea-level rise and storm-driven waves.
 - e) Protects beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay and the Delta and their water.
 - f) Prioritizes designs that foster riparian habitat while containing floodwaters, such as by using more natural materials, landforms, and vegetation, rather than concrete channels and other conventional flood-control infrastructure.
 - g) Encourages multipurpose flood-management projects that, where feasible, incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat, and scenic values of waterways.
 - h) Takes a holistic approach to flood-risk management so that new infrastructure does not simply transfer flooding impacts from one property or location to another.
 - i) Considers flood and tidal impacts to existing brownfields, especially adjacent to shorelines.
 - j) Includes provisions for updates to reflect future State- or federally mandated levels of flood protection.
- **Action PFS-A5.3:** *Develop watershed management plans incorporating best management practices that slow, spread, and sink water runoff to flatten the hydrograph (i.e., water flow over time) where erosion is a concern, while also enhancing wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities where feasible.*
- **Action PFS-A5.4:** *Establish programs for development projects alongside natural watercourses that ensure regular maintenance of the waterway, including debris removal, erosion control, and conservation and restoration of native species.*

Health and Safety Element

- **Goal HS-5:** Minimized risk of loss of life, injury, damage to property, and economic or social dislocations resulting from flood hazards.
 - **Policy HS-P5.1:** *Prohibit urban development in areas designated 100- or 200-year (or 500-year when used as a proxy for the 200-year) floodplain, as shown on Figure HS-2, or in areas subject to increased flood hazards due to subsidence or other changes, unless appropriate mitigations to reduce flood risk to the standard of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 or above are implemented.*
 - **Policy HS-P5.2:** *Require flood-proofing of new and expanded buildings and structures in any area subject to flooding. Flood-proofing methods will be determined on a project-by-project basis by the Floodplain Manager, and may include, but not be limited to:*
 - a) *Anchoring to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement.*
 - b) *Using flood-resistant construction materials.*

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- c) Elevating building pads and habitable building floors above the base flood elevation plus required freeboard.*
- d) Providing adequate venting to allow for equalization of hydrostatic forces.*
- e) Employing any other construction methods and practices appropriate to minimize flood damage.*
- **Policy HS-P5.3:** *For any development project in a FEMA- or DWR-designated floodplain, require review by the Floodplain Manager to consider potential downstream flood damage that may result from the project.*
- **Policy HS-P5.4:** Evaluate development within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley for consistency with DWR's Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria. Prohibit new single-family residences, density increases, subdivision maps, or development agreements for any property within a 200-year floodplain in an urban or urbanizing area, unless an adequate finding can be made pursuant to California Water Code Sections 9600 to 9603.
- **Policy HS-P5.5:** Prohibit permanent buildings and structures in designated floodways where such impediments could increase risks to human life or restrict the floodway's carrying capacity.
- **Policy HS-P5.6:** Prohibit construction of critical infrastructure in areas subject to flooding or sea-level rise unless no feasible alternative exists.
- **Policy HS-P5.7:** Require new subdivisions within the inundation area of a levee or dam, as shown in Figure HS-4, to include a deed notification explaining to future owners that the property may be subject to flooding if the levee or dam were to fail or be overwhelmed.
- **Policy HS-P5.8:** Require new development in designated tsunami hazard zones to be designed to withstand anticipated tsunami forces, based on County-prepared studies conducted pursuant to Action HS-A5.4.
- **Action HS-A5.2:** Establish countywide protection priorities for vulnerable communities and their populations identified to be at high risk of displacement from future flooding and sea-level rise in the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment or the best-available climate science data and use regional funding mechanisms to plan and implement protection measures in these locations or for these populations.
- **Action HS-A5.3:** Amend the Floodplain Management Ordinance to address hazardous material storage.
- **Action HS-A5.4:** *Conduct a study of existing development within designated tsunami hazard zones to determine evacuation and emergency response needs prior to and during a tsunami event.*
- **Goal HS-6:** Resilient and thriving Bayshore and Delta communities that are safeguarded and adaptively managed for rising sea levels.
 - **Policy HS-P6.1:** *Require new development to locate habitable areas of buildings above the highest water level expected, based on Figures HS-6 through HS-9, accounting for sea-level rise and other changes in flood conditions, or construct natural and nature-based features, or a levee if necessary, adequately designed to protect the project for its expected life.*
 - **Policy HS-P6.3:** Require new industrial development in areas subject to sea-level rise, emergent groundwater flooding, or tsunami inundation to provide plans for prevention and remediation of any contaminant releases induced by these hazards, along with bonds that guarantee remediation plans are implemented. Remediation should meet standards that protect people and the environment in the event of future permanent inundation.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Policy HS-P6.5:** *Work with property owners in areas prone to emergent groundwater flooding to pre-emptively harden properties using methods that minimize erosion, subsidence, and structural damage from rising waters.*
 - **Action HS-A6.1:** *Amend the Floodplain Management Ordinance to apply to areas subject to sea-level rise under at least a medium-high risk aversion scenario by 2100, in accordance with State and regional guidance.*
 - **Action HS-A6.2:** Adopt a Sea-Level Rise Overlay Zone with associated land use regulations for site planning and minimum construction elevations that reflects sea-level rise data under at least a medium-high risk aversion scenario by 2100. Refer to BCDC policy guidance when developing this overlay zone.
 - **Action HS-A6.3:** Coordinate with BCDC, cities, and other agencies, organizations, and stakeholders to prepare and adopt a community-driven countywide sea-level rise adaptation plan addressing increased flooding and sea-level rise that provides unique adaptation options for the entire county shoreline and identifies funding mechanisms for implementation. Use Figures HS-6 through HS-9 or the best-available climate science data to identify where sea-level rise hazards are likely to occur and lead efforts to:
 - a) Maximize awareness and disclosure to property owners and the public.
 - b) Assess and address impacts to future development, including promoting the Adaptation Pathways model to respond to uncertainty and evolving conditions.
 - c) Plan for resiliency projects and adaptation measures to protect existing development and infrastructure, emphasizing nature-based solutions.
 - d) Partner with the Adapting to Rising Tides Program, Delta Stewardship Council, property owners, and community-based organizations to conduct a study of opportunities and costs for shifting development away from areas at risk from inundation.
 - e) Inform funding and financing decisions about short-term and long-term resiliency and adaptation projects.
 - f) Ensure that the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations and Impacted Communities are addressed.
 - **Action HS-A6.4:** Coordinate with the BCDC, Delta Stewardship Council, cities, and other involved agencies and stakeholders to create a joint-powers authority or a public-private partnership to develop, fund, and implement relevant, regionally coordinated sea-level rise adaptation measures that leverage the results of Adapting to Rising Tides, Bay Adapt, Delta Adapts, and other studies and programs.
 - **Action HS-A6.5:** Partner with cities and CCTA to develop and fund a countywide plan to increase the resiliency of roads that will be impacted by sea-level rise and tsunamis to ensure emergency responders can get to those in need and that community members, including those that rely on public transit, can continue to reach services.
 - **Action HS-A6.6:** Work with State and regional agencies to conduct improved modeling of the areas at risk from emergent groundwater flooding to better understand the threat this hazard poses to Contra Costa County.
- **Goal HS-9:** Communities that are protected from hazards associated with use, manufacture, transport, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous waste, including from fossil fuels, chemical refining, and power plants, as well as pipelines, rail lines, and truck transportation.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- **Policy HS-P9.5:** *Require facilities that manage hazardous materials or hazardous waste in stationary or fixed storage tanks and that are in areas at risk of inundation from sea-level rise and flooding to conduct sea-level rise studies to address the risk of hazardous materials release from rising water levels, including rising groundwater. Require these facilities to incorporate best management practices to reduce the risk of release.*
- **Policy HS-P9.10:** *Prohibit new hazardous waste facilities in the following areas:*
 - a) *Watersheds of an existing or planned drinking water reservoir.*
 - b) *Ecologically significant resource areas.*
 - c) *Within 200 feet of an active or potentially active fault.*
 - d) *Within a 100-year floodplain.*
 - e) *Within a setback distance determined in accordance with DTSC guidance under SB 673, once final.*
- **Action HS-A9.2:** Update the Oil Spill Contingency Plan to protect the Bay and Delta shoreline areas in the event of an oil or other hazardous materials spill.

5.10.3.2 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions from the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to hydrology and water quality:

Strategy DR-2: Ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies.

Strategy DR-2 Actions:

- Encourage Contra Costa Health to work with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies to ensure that new well permit applications are in accordance with County ordinances and State construction standards and require a hydrogeological evaluation in areas with known water shortages to ensure that the sustainable yield goals can be met.
- Require new development to demonstrate the availability of a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound water delivery and wastewater treatment systems with adequate capacity. (PFS-P4.5, PFS-P4.6)
- Discourage new development that may reasonably lead to groundwater overdraft, subsidence, or other negative impacts, or which may reasonably depend on the import of unsustainable quantities of water from outside the county.
- Require the use of permeable surfaces for new or reconstructed hardscaped areas.
- In coordination with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, expand opportunities for groundwater recharge.
- Work with water suppliers to expand recycled water systems as feasible, including considering additional treatment to allow for additional recycled water uses.

Strategy NI-1: Protect against and adapt to changes in sea levels and other shoreline flooding conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Strategy NI-1 Actions:

- Require new development to locate habitable areas of buildings above the highest water level expected accounting for sea level rise and other changes in flood conditions, or construct natural and nature-based features, or a levee, if necessary, adequately designed to protect the project for its expected life. (HS-P6.1)
- Support the use of natural infrastructure, including ecosystem restoration and green infrastructure, to protect against sea level rise and associated shoreline flooding.
- Coordinate with State and regional agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, property owners, utilities, and others to prepare a sea level rise adaptation plan.
- Seek funding and pursue implementation of wetland restoration and other adaptation efforts for sea level rise.
- Convene a working group that includes local jurisdictions, local shoreline communities, community-based organizations, property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders to collaborate on shoreline flooding adaptation strategies.
- Identify opportunities for employing natural areas as buffers against rising sea levels.

5.10.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.10-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. [Threshold HYD-1]

Proposed General Plan

New development that could occur under the proposed General Plan would involve soil disturbance during the construction phases and changes in land uses during the operational phases that could generate pollutants and affect water quality. Stormwater runoff would discharge into storm drains which ultimately flow into creeks, rivers, and San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Suisun Bay, and the Delta.

Construction Impacts

Clearing, grading, excavation, and other construction activities have the potential to impact water quality due to soil erosion and increases in the amount of silt and debris carried in runoff. Additionally, the use of construction materials such as fuels, solvents, and paints may present a risk to surface water quality. The refueling and parking of construction vehicles and other equipment on-site during construction may result in oil, grease, or related pollutant leaks and spills that could discharge into the storm drain system.

To minimize these potential impacts, future development that disturbs one acre or more of land would require compliance with the Construction General Permit (CGP) Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, which includes the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP. A SWPPP requires the incorporation of BMPs to control sediment, erosion, and hazardous materials contamination of runoff during construction and prevent contaminants from reaching receiving water bodies. The CGP also requires that prior to the start of construction activities, the project applicant must file PRDs with the SWRCB, which includes a Notice of

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Intent, risk assessment, site map, annual fee, signed certification statement, and SWPPP. The construction contractor is required to maintain a copy of the SWPPP at the site and implement all construction BMPs identified in the SWPPP during construction activities. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the project applicant is required to provide proof of filing of the PRDs with the SWRCB and Contra Costa County.

Submittal of the PRDs and implementation of the SWPPP throughout the construction phase of the future development through implementation of the proposed General Plan would address anticipated and expected pollutants of concern from construction activities. As a result, water quality impacts associated with construction activities would be less than significant.

Operational Impacts

Future development has the potential to generate pollutants, such as nutrients, pesticides, sediment, trash and debris, oxygen demanding substances, oil and grease, and pathogens. These pollutants could eventually end up in stormwater discharged from the site and impact downstream watercourses. However, development under the proposed General Plan would be subject to the MS4 permit issued by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB, which was recently updated and reissued in December 2022. Project applicants would also need to comply with the requirements outlined in the CCCWP's *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*. The Guidebook is updated periodically to reflect the latest MS4 permit requirements; therefore, future development under the proposed General Plan would need to comply with the latest thresholds listed for the area and the reissuance of the MS4 permit.

All projects that create or replace between 2,500 and 5,000 square feet of impervious surface must submit a Stormwater Control Plan for a Small Land Development Project, as described in CCCWP's *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*. The project applicant also must incorporate at least one of the control measures listed in the guidebook:

- Disperse runoff from the roof or paved area to a vegetated area.
- Incorporate some amount of permeable pavement.
- Include a cistern or rain barrel, if allowed by the municipality.
- Incorporate a bioretention facility or planter box.

The 2022 revised MS4 permit has new stricter criteria for what constitutes a Regulated Project. Prior to July 1, 2023, approved projects that created or replaced more than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface were considered Regulated Projects. Effective July 1, 2023, approved projects that meet the following thresholds are considered Regulated Projects:

- A single-family home that is not part of a larger development that creates and/or replaces 10,000 square feet or more.
- All other projects that create and/or replace between 5,000 square feet and one acre of impervious surface. This now includes road and sidewalk repair projects that are greater than 5,000 contiguous square feet and road reconstruction and pavement widening that is greater than one contiguous acre.

These Regulated Projects are required to prepare a SCP that incorporates low impact design (LID) features. The SCP must include site design features that protect natural resources, source control measures that reduce pollutants in stormwater, and stormwater treatment measures that temporarily retain and treat stormwater on-

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

site prior to discharge to the storm drain system. The project applicant must also prepare an Operation and Maintenance Plan that details how the stormwater treatment measures will be inspected and maintained and provide a maintenance agreement that “runs with the land” for perpetuity.

The SCP would demonstrate that runoff from impervious areas is either dispersed to landscape or routed to a properly designed LID treatment facility. LID is an approach to land development (or redevelopment) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features and minimizing impervious surfaces. There are many options for LID features, including bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, and permeable pavements. By implementing LID principles and practices, water can be managed in a way that reduces the impact of built areas and directs runoff to natural landscape features. Applied on a broad scale, LID can maintain or restore a watershed's hydrologic and ecological function.

In addition, projects that create and/or replace one acre or more of impervious surfaces currently must comply with the hydromodification requirements of the MS4 permit, unless exempted. This requires the design and construction of stormwater treatment measures so that post-project runoff rates and durations match the pre-project runoff rates and durations for ten percent of the 2-year peak flow up to the pre-project 10-year peak flow. Since the proposed General Plan does not include specific or detailed development plans, SCPs are not required at this time. New development and redevelopment projects within the EIR Study Area will be required to prepare SCPs consistent with the guidance in the CCCWP Stormwater C.3 Guidebook and the MS4 permit at the time of project application.

As part of the statewide mandate to reduce trash within receiving waters, the County is required to adhere to the requirements of the California Trash Amendments and is also required to adhere to Provision C.10 of the San Francisco Bay MS4 permit. This includes the installation and maintenance of trash screening devices at all public curb inlets, grate inlets, and catch basin inlets or control measures for full trash capture equivalency. The trash screening devices must be approved by the SWRCB. Additionally, all development that discharges storm water associated with industrial activity must also comply with the requirements of the General Industrial Permit (Order No. 2014-0057-DWQ, last amended in 2018).

As described above in Section 5.10.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands and Public Services and Facilities Elements of the proposed General Plan contain goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts to water quality. Compliance with and implementation of these proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, in conjunction with the CCCWP and MS4 permit requirements, would ensure that development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements for both construction and operational phases, and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on reducing GHG emissions and helping the County adapt to changing climate conditions. As part of the proposed CAP's strategies to reduce water use and increase drought resilience (DR), provisions which ensure sustainable and diverse water supply are encouraged. For example, Strategy DR-2 includes actions that encourage the County Environmental Health Division to work with GSAs to ensure

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

sustainable yield goals are met through hydrogeological evaluations in areas with known water shortages and that discourage new development that may lead to negative groundwater quality impacts. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would likely be beneficial and would result in a less than significant effect on water quality.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.10-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.10-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.10-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. [Threshold HYD-2]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed project would result in a significant environmental impact if it would substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. New development under the proposed General Plan could result in an increase in impervious surfaces, thus reducing groundwater recharge. Also, new projects that involve construction dewatering could have a temporary impact on the shallow groundwater aquifer.

Groundwater Use

Five of the eight groundwater basins within Contra Costa County are categorized as very low priority basins and there is no groundwater withdrawal from these basins for municipal water supply. EBMUD and CCWD are the main water purveyors in Contra Costa County. EBMUD's service area is generally in the western portion of the county and CCWD's service area includes most of central and northeastern Contra Costa County.

Although EBMUD does pump groundwater from the Santa Clara Valley – East Bay Plain groundwater basin, most of its water supply (i.e., over 90 percent) is from surface water sources (EBMUD 2021). Because of saltwater intrusion issues, there are no municipal groundwater wells in the northern portion of this groundwater basin that is within the county. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not have a significant impact on groundwater supply in this basin. CCWD's water supply is surface water from the CVP and CCWD does not use groundwater to meet its demands.

The Diablo Water District obtains approximately 20 percent of its total water supply from groundwater wells that are in the San Joaquin Valley-East Contra Costa groundwater basin (Diablo Water District 2021). This has been designated as a medium priority basin by DWR and is not in overdraft. The Diablo Water District is one of the GSAs for the East Contra Costa Subbasin GSP. The GSP states that there are no signs of over pumping in this groundwater sub-basin and groundwater conditions reflect stability over the past 30 years (ECC GSA 2021). In addition, the Diablo Water District passed Regulation No. 10, Groundwater Sustainability and

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Protection, in 2021, which requires new residential developments and non-residential groundwater wells to install groundwater monitoring wells, connect to a recycled water system (if developed), provide access to groundwater elevation data, and perform regular water quality testing (Diablo Water District 2021). Although Diablo Water District plans to install additional groundwater wells to supplement its surface water supply with future growth, compliance with the provisions of the GSP and Regulation No. 10 will ensure that there are no substantial decreases in groundwater supplies or interferences with sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

Bay Point, Discovery Bay, and Byron in eastern Contra Costa County have small community systems that rely on groundwater provided by Golden State Water Company and the Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District. These water agencies pump a total of 2,000 and 3,224 acre-feet per year of groundwater (Golden State Water Company 2021; Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District 2021). Golden State Water Company pumps groundwater from the Pittsburg Plain Basin, which is a very low priority basin because of minimal groundwater use and the availability of surface water supplies. Therefore, a GSP is not required for this basin. The Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District relies solely on groundwater, but it is a GSA with the East Contra Costa Subbasin GSP. As stated previously, the GSP indicates that the East Contra Costa Subbasin is being operated within its sustainable yield and projected future growth in this area is modest. Therefore, additional development in these areas would not substantially impact groundwater supplies. In addition, the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code 81-56 Section 1 states that any property needing water for domestic purposes must demonstrate an approved water supply and obtain written approval from the health officer for such development.

Additionally, future development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would be required to implement the water-efficient requirements specified in the CALGreen and California Plumbing Codes and the MWELC requirements for water efficient landscaping. Future projects that meet the criteria under California Water Code Section 10912 would be required to prepare a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) that demonstrates that project water demands would not exceed water supplies. In addition, residential, commercial, and industrial water usage can be expected to decrease in the future as a result of the implementation of water conservation practices.

Groundwater Recharge

Although new projects pursuant to the proposed General Plan would increase the number of impervious surfaces and could potentially impact groundwater recharge, these projects would be required to implement BMPs and LID measures, which include on-site infiltration, where feasible. The MS4 permit and the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook* require site design measures, source control measures, stormwater treatment measures, and hydromodification measures to be included in a SCP that must be submitted and approved by the County. These measures minimize the impact of impervious surfaces by including permeable pavement, drainage to landscape areas and bioretention areas, and the collection of rooftop runoff in rain barrels or cisterns. These measures would increase the potential for groundwater recharge and have a less than significant impact on groundwater levels.

If construction dewatering is required with future development within the EIR Study Area, a permit would need to be obtained from the County's Environmental Health Division for the construction of dewatering wells. An application and permit fee are required and the water discharge location, whether it is the sewer system or storm drain, must be approved by the local Building Department. The applicant must also evaluate the

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

impact of the dewatering system on neighboring wells or the potential of spreading contamination if near a cleanup site. Construction dewatering could have a temporary effect on the shallow groundwater aquifer, but this effect would be limited in terms of the quantity of water withdrawn and the duration of the withdrawal. Therefore, construction dewatering would not result in a significant impact in terms of groundwater recharge.

As described above in Section 5.10.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Land Use, and Public Services and Facilities Elements of the proposed General Plan contain goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts to water quality and groundwater supply. Compliance with and implementation of these proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would serve to minimize potential adverse impacts on groundwater.

Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly interfere with groundwater recharge and would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on strategies to reduce GHG emissions and foster a sustainable community. As part of the CAP's strategies to reduce water use and increase drought resilience (DR), provisions which ensure sustainable and diverse water supply are encouraged. For example, Strategy DR-2 includes actions that encourage the County Environmental Health Division to work with GSAs to ensure sustainable yield goals are met through hydrogeological evaluations in areas with known water shortages and coordination with GSAs to expand opportunities for groundwater recharge. The CAP also provides reduction strategies to minimize this increase in GHG emissions through water conservation, water efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Implementation of the proposed CAP would further reduce water demand as compared to the analysis provided above (and provided in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*). Therefore, impacts to groundwater supply and recharge are less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.10-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.10-2 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Impact 5.10-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or iv) impede or redirect flood flows. [Threshold HYD-3]

Proposed General Plan

Erosion and Siltation

New development or redevelopment within the EIR Study Area and changes in land use would likely result in an increase in impervious surfaces. This, in turn, could result in an increase in stormwater runoff, higher peak discharges to storm drainage channels, and the potential to exacerbate creek bank erosion or cause destabilizing channel incision.

All potential new development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would be required to implement construction-phase BMPs as well as post-construction site design, source control measures, and treatment controls in accordance with the requirements of the CGP, the MS4 Permit, and the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*. Typical construction BMPs include silt fences, fiber rolls, catch basin inlet protection, water trucks, street sweeping, and stabilization of truck entrances and exits. Each new development or redevelopment project that disturbs one or more acre of land would also be required to prepare and submit a SWPPP to the SWRCB that describes the measures to control discharges from construction sites. The SWPPP must list BMPs that would be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources.

Once potential future development projects have been constructed, there are C.3 requirements in the MS4 permit for new development or redevelopment projects that must be implemented and include site design measures, source control measures, LID, and stormwater treatment measures that address stormwater runoff and would reduce the potential for erosion and siltation. Site design measures include minimizing impervious surfaces, conserving the natural areas of the site as much as possible, and protecting slopes and channels from erosion. LID measures include the use of permeable pavements, directing runoff to pervious areas, and the construction of bioretention areas. The SCP must also include operation and maintenance procedures and an agreement to maintain any stormwater treatment facilities for perpetuity. Adherence to the streambed alteration agreement process under Sections 1601 to 1606 of the California Fish and Game Code would further reduce erosion and siltation impacts that may occur due to streambed alterations. Projects that create or replace one acre or more of impervious surface and are subject to hydromodification may not increase the erosion potential of the receiving stream over pre-project conditions. Compliance with these regional and local regulatory requirements will ensure that erosion and siltation impacts from implementation of the proposed General Plan would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Flooding On- or Off-Site

New development and/or redevelopment and changes in land uses could result in increases in impervious surfaces, which in turn could result in an increase in stormwater runoff, higher peak discharges to drainage channels, and the potential to cause nuisance flooding in areas without adequate drainage facilities. However, all potential future development must comply with the requirements of the MS4 Permit and the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*. Regulated projects must implement BMPs, including LID BMPs and site design BMPs, which effectively minimize imperviousness, temporarily detain stormwater on-site, decrease surface water flows, and slow runoff rates. Projects that create and/or replace one acre or more of impervious surface must also adhere to the hydromodification requirements of the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook* to ensure that post project runoff does not exceed pre-project runoff for 10 percent of the pre-project 2-year peak flow rate up to the pre-project 10-year peak flow rate. Adherence to these regulatory requirements would minimize the amount of stormwater runoff from new development and redevelopment within the EIR Study Area. Therefore, the projects pursuant to the proposed General Plan would not result in flooding on- or off-site and impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage System Capacity

As stated in the impact discussions above, an increase in impervious surfaces with new development or redevelopment could result in increases in stormwater runoff, which in turn could exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. However, municipalities within the county have storm drain master plans, green infrastructure plans, and capital improvement programs that account for future development and expansion of the storm drain system, as needed. Also, the CCCFCWCD has detailed Flood Control Zone and Drainage Area maps that are used to evaluate future development plans within each zone or area and determine if the existing storm drainage infrastructure is adequate to accommodate the proposed projects.

All potential future development and redevelopment projects would be required to comply with the MS4 permit requirements and follow the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook* when designing on-site stormwater treatment facilities. Hydrology studies and SCPs are subject to County review for projects in the unincorporated areas to verify that the on-site storm drain systems and treatment facilities can accommodate stormwater runoff from the site and would not exceed the capacity of downstream drainage systems at the point of connection. Also, implementation of the C.3 provisions for new development, which include LID design and bioretention areas, would minimize increases in peak flow rates and runoff volumes, thus reducing stormwater runoff to the storm drain system. In addition, the County requires the payment of drainage area fees before filing the final map for new subdivisions or prior to the issuance of a building permit. These fees are paid directly to the CCCFCWCD or via cities per fee collection agreements and the funds are used to construct new storm drain infrastructure and/or maintain or repair existing storm drain infrastructure, as needed. With implementation of these regulatory requirements, there would not be a significant increase in stormwater runoff to the existing storm drain systems.

Also, new development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would not create substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. During the construction phase, projects would be required to prepare SWPPPs, thus limiting the discharge of pollutants from the site. During operation, projects must implement BMPs and LID measures that minimize the amount of stormwater runoff and associated pollutants.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

With implementation of these control measures and regulatory provisions to limit runoff from new development sites, the proposed General Plan would not result in significant increases in runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm drain facilities, and the impact is less than significant.

Redirecting Flood Flows

The discussion above regarding on- and off-site flooding is also applicable to the analysis of impeding or redirecting flood flows. Since new development projects are required to comply with MS4 permit requirements, implement the procedures in the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*, and retain stormwater on-site via the use of LID design and bioretention facilities, any flood flows would also be retained for a period of time on-site, which would minimize the potential for flooding impacts. Impact Discussion 5.10-4 discusses the potential for impeding or redirecting flood flows with development in areas within the 100-year floodplain. Based on these discussions, impacts related to impeding or redirecting flood flows would be less than significant.

As described above in Section 5.10.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands, Health and Safety, Land Use, and Public Services and Facilities Elements of the proposed General Plan contain goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts of future development and redevelopment on erosion and siltation, surface drainage, and flooding. Compliance with and implementation of these proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, in conjunction with State and local requirements, would not result in substantial erosion or siltation and would not substantially increase the rate of surface runoff that would result in flooding, impede or redirect flood flows, or exceed the capacity of the drainage system. Impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on the reduction of GHG emissions and includes strategies and actions for reducing these emissions in the water and wastewater sectors. As part of the proposed CAP's strategies related to resilient communities and natural infrastructure (NI), provisions protect against and adapt to changes in sea levels and other shoreline flooding conditions. For example, Strategy NI-1 includes actions that establish requirements for new development to locate habitable areas above the highest expected water level for the lifetime of the project, support natural infrastructure that protects against sea-level rise and shoreline flooding, coordinate with State and regional agencies to prepare for sea-level rise adaptation, and identify opportunities for employing natural area buffers against sea levels. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would have a less than significant effect on erosion or siltation, storm drain capacity, flooding on- or off-site, or impeding or redirecting flood flows.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.10-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.10-13 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Impact 5.10-4: Implementation of the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation if in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones. [Threshold HYD-4]

Proposed General Plan

Flood Hazard Zones

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could involve development of some projects in FEMA 100-year flood zones. As shown in Figure 5.10-3, *FEMA 100-Year and 500-Year Flood Zones*, large areas around the north and the eastern portion of Contra Costa County are within the 100-year floodplain, as well as inland areas adjacent to creeks and streams.

Future development in these areas would be subject to Contra Costa County's Floodplain Management Ordinance. Prior to the start of construction or development within a Flood Hazard Area (i.e., 100-year floodplain or coastal high hazard area), the County requires project applicants to apply for a Floodplain Permit from the Public Works Department and construct new development in accordance with the standards of construction in Article 82-28.1002. The standards of construction vary depending on where the proposed structure is located, but typically the finished floor must be elevated at least one to two feet above the base flood elevation. Prior to occupancy of any building, proof that a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) and an elevation certificate have been submitted to FEMA must be provided to the County. Compliance with FEMA's NFIP requirements and the County's floodplain requirements would reduce potential flood hazards and ensure that pollutants are not released during flood inundation.

Sea-Level Rise

Similar to flood hazard zones, implementation of the proposed General Plan could involve development of some projects in areas that will be inundated by sea-level rise and associated coastal flooding. As shown on Figures 5.10-5 through Figure 5.10-8, many areas along the western, northern, and eastern portions of the county will be impacted by sea-level rise by 2050 and 2100.

Future development under the proposed project within 100 feet of the San Francisco, San Pablo, or Suisan Bay shoreline would be subject to review and approval by BCDC. Future large shoreline projects, including shoreline protection projects, would be required to conduct a sea-level rise risk assessment and be designed to be resilient to a midcentury sea-level rise projection. BCDC requires that, if it is likely that the project will remain in place longer than midcentury, an adaptive management plan be developed to address the long-term impacts that will arise, based on the risk assessment.

Sea-level rise is also expected to raise groundwater levels, inundating areas with contaminated soils. Given that some contaminated sites in the county are near the shoreline, rising groundwater associated with sea-level rise may cause the release of pollutants. Sea-level rise and associated groundwater rise are considered to be an effect of the environment on the project.

As explained in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR, the California Supreme Court has determined that the evaluation of the significance of project impacts under CEQA should focus on the potential impacts of the proposed project on the environment, including whether the proposed project may exacerbate any existing environmental hazards. Sea-level rise is an existing environmental hazard in Contra

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Costa County. The discussion in this section explains the potential of the proposed project to exacerbate impacts from sea-level rise. However, the effects of sea-level rise on the proposed project are not subject to CEQA review following the *California Building Industry Association vs. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (CBIA vs. BAAQMD) case.² Therefore, this EIR does not make a finding regarding level of impact from sea-level rise.

Dam Inundation

There are several portions of the county that are impacted by dam inundation zones, as shown in Figure 5.10-9, *Dam Inundation Zones*. The probability of dam failure is low and there has never been a reported dam failure in Contra Costa County (Contra Costa County 2018). In addition, dam owners are required to maintain EAPs that include procedures for damage assessment and emergency warnings. An EAP identifies potential emergency conditions at a dam and specifies preplanned actions to help minimize property damage and loss of life should those conditions occur. The Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services maintains copies of the most recent dam EAPs and inundation maps and uses this information to notify downstream areas in the event of a dam failure. The likelihood of catastrophic dam failure is very low.

Tsunami and Seiches

Given that Contra Costa County has never been impacted by a tsunami, the risk of flooding and the release of pollutants due to a tsunami event is unlikely. The probability that tsunamis would impact San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay is much smaller than areas along the Pacific Coast because the bays are enclosed bodies of water. Due to the infrequent nature of tsunamis and relatively low predicted tsunami wave heights in the area, the county is reasonably safe from tsunami hazards. Also, the County's Floodplain Ordinance includes requirements for development within coastal high-hazard areas, which include tsunami zones. In addition, there are various precautions and warning systems that would be implemented by the County in the event of a tsunami. As discussed previously, seiches are unlikely to occur because tsunamis have frequencies too short to resonate within San Pablo and San Francisco Bay.

Summary

As described above in Section 5.10.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands, Health and Safety, Land Use, and Public Services and Facilities Elements of the proposed General Plan contain goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to address the potential for flooding, dam inundation, and tsunamis. Compliance with and implementation of these proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, in conjunction with FEMA and County regulatory requirements regarding construction in 100-year floodplains, the potential impact that there would be a release of pollutants from flooding, dam inundation, tsunamis, or seiches would be less than significant.

² *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on the reduction of GHG emissions and includes strategies and actions for reducing these emissions in the water and wastewater sectors. As part of the CAP's strategies related to resilient communities and natural infrastructure (NI), provisions protect against and adapt to changes in sea levels and other shoreline flooding conditions. For example, Strategy NI-1 includes actions that establish requirements for new development to locate habitable areas above the highest expected water level for the lifetime of the project, support natural infrastructure that protects against sea-level rise and shoreline flooding, coordinate with State and regional agencies to prepare for sea-level rise adaptation, and identify opportunities for employing natural area buffers against sea levels. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not result in any issues related to flooding and would have a less than significant impact on flood hazards.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.10-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.10-13 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.10-5: The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. [Threshold HYD-5]

Proposed General Plan

Adherence to the Construction General Permit, the MS4 permit, and the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook* would ensure that surface and groundwater quality are not adversely impacted during construction and operation of future development pursuant to the proposed General Plan. As a result, site development would not obstruct or conflict with implementation of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB's and the Central Valley RWQCB's Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans).

There are three groundwater basins within Contra Costa County that have GSPs. No water agencies are using groundwater from the Santa Clara Valley – East Bay Plain Subbasin as a municipal water supply source. The Livermore Valley Subbasin is managed by the Zone 7 Water Agency, which submitted an Alternative GSP. The groundwater basin is not in critical overdraft condition and the 2021 Alternative GSP demonstrates that the basin has continued to operate within its sustainable yield over a period of at least 10 years. The San Joaquin Valley – East Contra Costa Subbasin is not in critical overdraft and does not show any signs of over-pumping. In addition, the water purveyors within the Contra Costa County service area rely primarily on surface water, which accounts for more than 85 percent of their water supply.

As described above in Section 5.10.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, the proposed Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands, Land Use, and Public Services and Facilities Elements of the proposed General Plan contain goals, policies, and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts to groundwater supply and groundwater management. Therefore, future development and redevelopment as a result of the proposed project would not obstruct or conflict with any groundwater management plans, and the impact would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on strategies to reduce GHG emissions and foster a sustainable community. It provides reduction strategies to minimize increases in GHG emissions through water conservation, water efficient retrofits, water efficient landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Proposed CAP Strategy DR-2 includes actions that encourage the County Environmental Health Division to work with GSAs to ensure sustainable yield goals are met through hydrogeological evaluations in areas with known water shortages and coordination with GSAs to expand opportunities for groundwater recharge. The CAP also provides reduction strategies to minimize this increase in GHG emissions through water conservation, water efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not conflict or obstruct implementation of the Basin Plan or GSP, and impacts are considered less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.10-5 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.10-4 would be less than significant.

5.10.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context used for the cumulative assessment to hydrology and water quality encompasses the watersheds within Contra Costa County (see Figure 5.10-1, *Watersheds of Contra Costa County*). New development in these watersheds could increase impervious areas, thus increasing runoff and flows into the storm drainage systems. All future development would be required to comply with the MS4 Permit and the CCCWP *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook* and implement BMPs that direct drainage to landscaped areas and incorporate bioretention facilities that reduce stormwater runoff into the site design. Implementation of these BMPs on a regional basis would reduce cumulative impacts to hydrology and drainage to a less than significant level.

All projects would be required to comply with various County ordinances and policies as well as numerous water quality regulations that control construction-related and operational discharge of pollutants into stormwater. The water quality regulations implemented by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB and the Central Valley RWQCB take a basin-wide approach and consider water quality impairment in a regional context. For example, the NPDES Construction General Permit ties receiving water limitations and Basin Plan objectives to terms and conditions of the permit, and the MS4 Permit requires all permittees to manage stormwater systems and be collectively protective of water quality. Projects in these watersheds would implement structural and nonstructural source-control BMPs that reduce the potential for pollutants to enter runoff and treatment control BMPs that remove pollutants from stormwater. Therefore, cumulative water quality impacts would be less than significant after compliance with these permit requirements, and impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Projects in the watersheds may be constructed within 100-year flood zones, areas of sea-level rise, dam inundation zones, or tsunami inundation zones. Such projects would be mandated to comply with NFIP requirements. In addition, other jurisdictions within these watersheds regulate development within flood zones

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

in a similar manner as the County Ordinance Code and in compliance with FEMA standards to limit cumulative flood hazard impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts to hydrology, drainage, and flooding would be less than significant, and impacts of the proposed project would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.10.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.10.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.10.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

5.10.9 References

- California Department of Water Resources (DWR). 2023a. Well Completion Reports. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Wells/Well-Completion-Reports>.
- . 2023b. DWR SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard. <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/>.
- . 2023c. DWR Best Available Maps (BAM), Flood Hazards. Accessed July 28, 2023. <https://gis.bam.water.ca.gov/bam/>.
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley RWQCB). 2023. Email correspondence with Elizabeth Lee, Unit Chief, Sacramento Office – Municipal Storm Water Permitting Unit with Dr. Cathleen Fitzgerald, Senior Engineer, PlaceWorks on June 6, 2023.
- . 2019. *The Central Valley Region (Region 5) Water Quality Control Plan*. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr_201902.pdf
- Contra Costa County. 2018. *Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6842/Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan>
- . 2003, November. Contra Costa County Watershed Atlas. <https://www.cccleanwater.org/userfiles/kcfinder/files/Watershed%20Atlas.pdf>
- Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (CCCFCWCD). 2023a. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/5743/Flood-Control-District>
- . 2023b. Frequently Asked Questions for Developers and Engineers. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1870/Developers-and-Engineers-FAQs-PDF?bidId=>
- . 2023c. Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District Brochure. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/756/CCCFlood-brochure-8front-PDF?bidId=>
- Contra Costa County Public Works Department, 2023. County Standard Plans, <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/342/County-Standard-Plans>
- Contra Costa Clean Water Program (CCCWP). 2023. *Stormwater C.3 Guidebook*, <https://www.cccleanwater.org/development-infrastructure/development/stormwater-c-3-guidebook>.
- . 2019. *Contra Costa Watersheds Stormwater Resource Plan*.
- Contra Costa County Watershed Program (CWP). 2022. Section C.10 Trash Load Reduction. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/2554/Trash-Reduction>.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- _____. 2022b. Contra Costa County Watershed Program. Accessed June 27, 2023.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/344/Contra-Costa-County-Watershed-Program>.
- Diablo Water District, 2021. *2020 Urban Water Management Plan*. Accessed June 20, 2023.
https://diablowater.org/doc/final_uwmp/.
- Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD). 2023. Downstream Hazard. Accessed June 23, 2023.
<https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/All-Programs/Division-of-Safety-of-Dams/Files/Publications/Division-of-Safety-of-Dams-Definitions-for-Downstream-Hazard-and-Condition-Assessment.pdf>.
- East Bay Municipal Utility District GSA (EBMUD). 2022. *East Bay Plain Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan*.
- _____. 2021. Urban Water Management Plan 2020, East Bay Municipal Utility District.
<https://www.ebmud.com/water/about-your-water/water-supply/urban-water-management-plan>.
- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan Association. 2006. *The Final East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan*. October. Accessed April 29, 2023.
<https://www.cocohcp.org/DocumentCenter/View/93/Habitat-Conservation-Plan--Natural-Community-Conservation-Plan-Overview-Booklet-PDF>.
- East Contra Costa Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ECC GSA). 2021. *East Contra Costa Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan*. <https://www.eccc-irwm.org/sgma-documents-reports>
- East County Water Management Association. 2019. *East Contra Costa County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan*.
- Golden State Water Company. 2021. Bay Point Service Area 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.
https://wuedata.water.ca.gov/getfile?filename=/public%2Fuwmp_attachments%2F5852628409%2FGSWC-Bay%20Point%202020%20UWMP%20Final.pdf.
- ICF. 2019, January. *Contra Costa County General Plan Update: Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report*. Appendix 5.4-1 to this Draft EIR.
- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). 2020. *San Francisco Bay Plan*, updated in May 2020.
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Francisco Bay RWQCB). 2022. Revised Tentative Order No. R2-2022-XXXX NPDES Permit No. CAS612008. Dated May 11, 2022.
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/mrp5-22/MRP_3_Revised_Tentative_Order.pdf
- _____. 2019. San Francisco Bay Basin (Region 2) Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan).
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/planningtmdls/basinplan/web/docs/ADA_compliant/BP_all_chapters.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

State of California, 2021. Tsunami Hazard Area Map, Contra Costa County. Produced by the California Geological Survey, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and AECOM.
<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/tsunami/maps/contra-costa>

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) 2018. California Integrated Report Waterbody Fact Sheets. Accessed June 14, 2023.
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2018_integrated_report.html.

Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District. 2021. *2020 Urban Water Management Plan*.
https://wuedata.water.ca.gov/getfile?filename=/public%2Fuwmp_attachments%2F6654081046%2FFINAL%20Disco%20Bay%202020%20UWMP%20w%20Appendices%2010622.pdf.

USA Facts, 2022. Climate in Contra Costa County, California.
<https://usafacts.org/issues/climate/state/california/county/contra-costa-county#precipitation>

Zone 7 Water Agency. 2021. *Alternative Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Livermore Valley Groundwater Basin*.

5. Environmental Analysis

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential land use and planning impacts from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

5.11.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Regional

Plan Bay Area 2050

Plan Bay Area 2050 is the regional transportation plan/sustainable community strategy, as mandated by the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 375). Plan Bay Area lays out a development scenario for the nine-county Bay Area region that works to align transportation and land use planning in order to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through modified land use patterns. The current Plan Bay Area projects growth and development patterns through 2050 and was recently adopted in October 2021 (ABAG/MTC 2021). Plan Bay Area is prepared and regularly updated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in partnership with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Bay Area Air Quality District (BAAQMD), and Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). Each of the agencies has a different role in regional governance. ABAG primarily does regional land use planning, housing, environmental quality, and economic development; MTC is tasked with regional transportation planning, coordinating, and financing; BAAQMD is responsible for regional air pollution regulation; and BCDC's focus is to preserve, enhance, and ensure responsible use of the San Francisco Bay.

Delta Plan

The Delta Plan, adopted by the Delta Stewardship Council on May 16, 2013, is a comprehensive long-term management plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. The Delta Plan includes rules and recommendations that support the State's goals for the Delta to: (1) improve water supply; (2) protect and restore a vibrant and healthy Delta ecosystem; and (3) preserve, protect, and enhance the unique agricultural, cultural, and recreational characteristic of the Delta. The 14 regulatory policies in the Delta Plan are enforceable through regulatory authority included in the Delta Reform Act, enacted as part of SB X7. These policies include a requirement for Delta Plan consistency findings for "covered actions," which include the proposed General Plan. The Delta Plan covers the Legal Delta, which is shown in Figure 5.11-1, *Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta*, of this EIR and encompasses the northeastern part of the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta

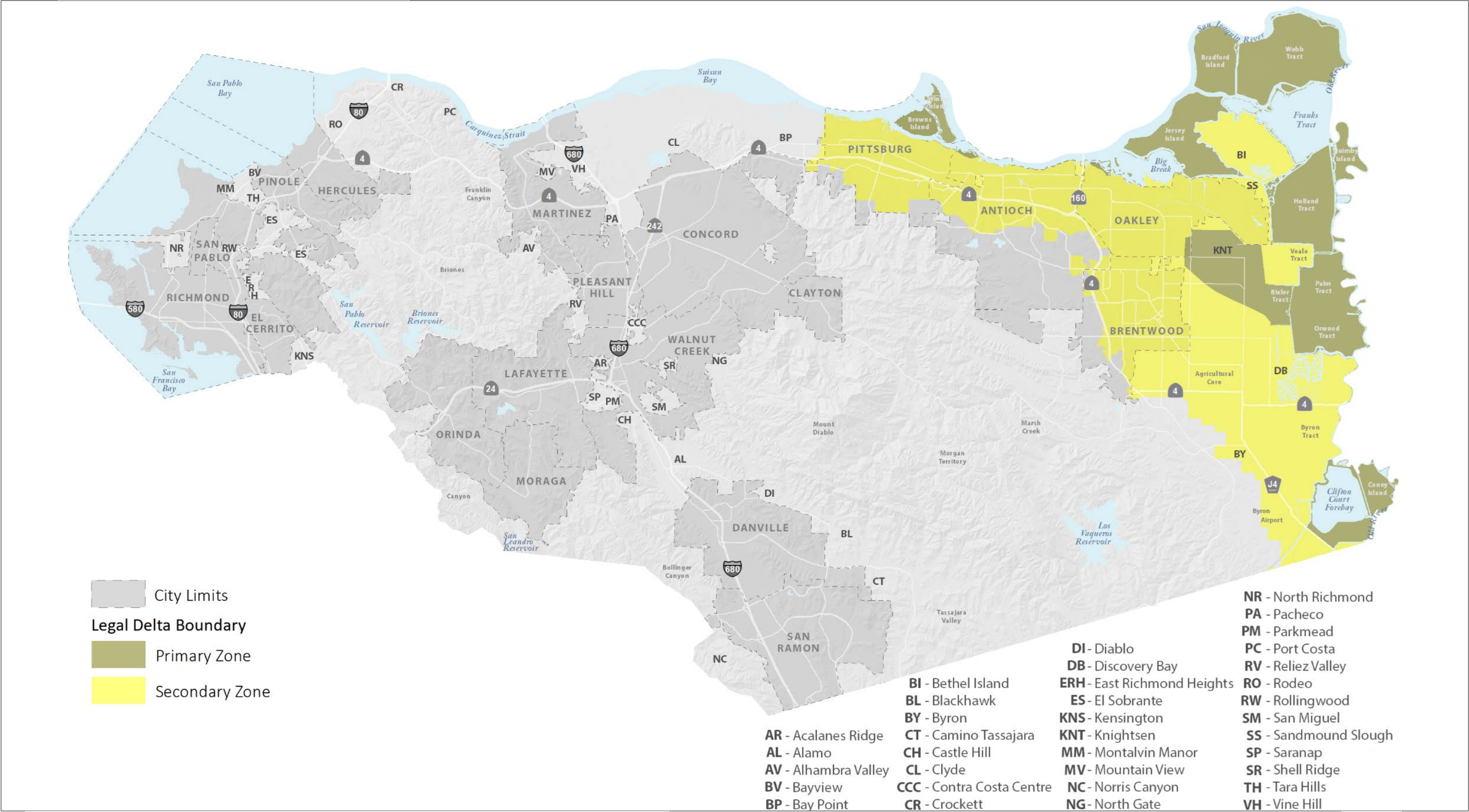
The Delta Protection Act of 1992 established the Delta Protection Commission to manage the conservation and enhancement of the Delta's natural resources, sustain agriculture, and meet recreational demands. The Act defines a Primary Zone as the principal jurisdiction, while the Secondary Zone is outside the Primary Zone and within the Legal Delta (see Figure 5.11-1). The Primary Zone of the Delta includes approximately 500,000 acres of waterways, levees, and farmed lands extending over portions of five counties: Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa.

The Commission must prepare and adopt a Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone, meeting specific goals. The Land Use and Resource Management Plan guides local land use decisions related to agriculture, flood protection, Delta communities, natural resources, recreation, and utilities and infrastructure. General plans and projects in the five Delta counties listed above must be consistent with the Land Use and Resource Management Plan and are subject to review by the Commission (DPC 2010).

The San Francisco Bay Plan

The San Francisco Bay Plan, prepared over three years by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, involved extensive consultations and support from various agencies, university faculties, and business organizations. The Plan resulted in 23 technical reports and was completed in 1968. It was transmitted to the California Legislature and Governor in 1969, fulfilling the original mandate of the McAteer-Petris Act of 1965. The Plan consists of two essential parts: policies for future Bay and shoreline use and maps that apply these policies to the present Bay and shoreline. The San Francisco Bay Plan defines the San Francisco Bay as all the open water and slough areas from the Golden Gate and the southern end of the Bay to the eastern end of Suisun Bay and Montezuma Slough, including submerged lands, tidelands, and marshlands (SFBCDC 2024).

LAND USE AND PLANNING



Source: California Delta Protection Commission - Delta Protection Act of 1992.



Figure 5.11-1
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

5. Environmental Analysis
LAND USE AND PLANNING

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis LAND USE AND PLANNING

Local

Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) is a planning document that is used to promote compatibility between the airports in Contra Costa County and the land uses that surround them. As adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission, it serves as a tool for use by the Commission in fulfilling its duty to review airport and adjacent land use development proposals. Additionally, the Plan sets compatibility criteria applicable to local agencies in their preparation or amendment of land use plans and ordinances and to landowners in their design of new development.

The Contra Costa County ALUCP was adopted by the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission in 2000. Recently, to promote economic development, the County amended its ALUCP with regard to Byron Airport to substantially broaden the range of uses allowed by-right on the airport property. The Byron Airport Development Program was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on June 7, 2022. This included adoption of a County-initiated General Plan amendment and approval of a development plan modification that established development standards, such as maximum building heights, maximum floor area, and landscaping requirements. Additionally, the ALUCP was updated with new policies and maps specific to Byron Airport that reflect the 2017 Airport Layout Plan for Byron Airport, the 2005 Byron Airport Master Plan, and guidance set forth in the most recent version of the Caltrans California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook.

Byron Airport Master Plan

The Master Plan for Byron Airport was last updated in 2005 and involves a 20-year planning period, with 2003 as the base year. In addition to an assessment of the airport's existing facilities, the Plan provides forecasts of aviation activity and includes individual airport improvement recommendations for 5-, 10-, and 20-year planning horizons. The intent of the Byron Airport Master Plan is to provide Contra Costa County with guidance concerning how the airport should develop over the planning period (Contra Costa County 2005b).

Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan

The Master Plan for Buchanan Field Airport was last updated in 2008 and addresses a variety of concerns with the formulation of a long-range physical development plan for the airport. The primary goal of the Plan is the continued improvement of the airport in a manner that is financially realistic and that is appropriate in consideration of its surroundings. Like the Byron Airport Master Plan, the Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan assesses and directs improvements that will likely be necessary to accommodate future aviation needs (Contra Costa 2008).

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy developed the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP, which provides regional conservation and development guidelines to protect natural resources, including wetlands, while improving and streamlining the permit process for take of State and federally listed species. The 30-year Plan was approved at the local level in 2006 and 2007, and permits were issued by CDFW and USFWS in 2007. The Plan allows Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Conservation District, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), and the Cities of Brentwood, Clayton, Oakley, and Pittsburg—a group collectively referred to as the Permittees—to authorize endangered species permitting for activities and projects in the region, performed or approved by the Permittees, while providing comprehensive species, wetlands, and ecosystem conservation and contributing to the recovery of endangered species in Northern California.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 82-1, 65/35 Land Preservation Plan

This chapter states that urban development in the county shall be limited to no more than 35 percent of the land in the county. At least 65 percent of all land in the county shall be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other nonurban use. The County's Urban Limit Line (ULL) was established in 1990 to facilitate enforcement of the 65/35 Plan.

5.11.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Ranging from urban to rural, land in Contra Costa County is used for many purposes. In the West and Central County, primary uses in suburban cities and towns are residential, commercial, and industrial. In the East County, land is still primarily used for agriculture and general open space. To a large extent the county is made up of “bedroom communities” populated by a commuter workforce. Over the years, development pressure has steadily moved eastward from the flat Baylands, to the valleys near Mount Diablo, and now to the communities in East County. The elongated corridors of cities and towns are connected by a network of major transportation routes linking the county directly to employment centers in San Francisco and Alameda Counties. As a whole, the county remains relatively undeveloped.

Land use designations represent the intended future use of each parcel of land and are intended to provide a vision of the future organization of uses, while maintaining a flexible structure to allow for changes in economic conditions, community visions, and environmental conditions. As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed project would amend the land use designations in the existing General Plan to consolidate the designations into a range that encompasses the land use vision for the county's future. The proposed General Plan would also change the land use map to better reflect existing uses on the ground today and to increase the allowed density and intensity of development in community cores. Section 3.6.1.5, *Major Changes from the Existing General Plan*, in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR describes the proposed changes to the land use designations from the existing General Plan.

5.11.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- LU-1 Physically divide an established community.
- LU-2 Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

5. Environmental Analysis LAND USE AND PLANNING

5.11.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.11.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to land use and planning. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Goal LU-1:** Coordinated and effective planning over the life of this General Plan.
 - **Policy LU-P1.1:** The General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR) assumes the following maximum development projections for the year 2045:
 - a) 23,200 new dwelling units
 - b) 1.2 million square feet of new commercial and office space
 - c) 5 million square feet of new industrial space

If new development approved within the unincorporated county reaches the maximum number of residential units and commercial/office and industrial square feet projected in the General Plan EIR, require that environmental review conducted for any subsequent development project address growth impacts that would occur from development exceeding the General Plan EIR's projections.
 - **Action LU-A1.1:** Track growth to ensure it does not exceed the development projections analyzed in the General Plan EIR and described in Policy LU-P1.1 without subsequent environmental review.
 - **Action LU-A1.3:** Biennially review and update the General Plan Land Use Map to ensure major land use changes, such public land acquisitions, are accurately reflected.
- **Goal LU-2:** Growth and conservation that are balanced to preserve and enhance the quality of life, protect the environment and public safety, and benefit all those who live or work in Contra Costa County.
 - **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
 - **Policy LU-P2.2:** Enhance the ULL's effectiveness by supporting efforts to acquire and permanently protect land along the ULL boundary.
 - **Policy LU-P2.3:** *Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.*
 - **Policy LU-P2.4:** *Prohibit major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive minor subdivisions of lots outside the ULL that were created through previous subdivisions.*
 - **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.
 - **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-P2.7:** In areas with a Residential land use designation, relate single-family residential density to the availability of utility services as follows:
 - a) Require a 5-acre minimum lot size where no public water or sanitary sewer service is available.
 - b) Require a 1-acre minimum lot size where either public water or sanitary sewer service is available, but not both.

Where public water and sanitary sewer services are available, allowable density will be based on the General Plan Land Use Map designation, as well as drainage, health, safety, and other applicable standards.

- **Policy LU-P2.8:** Discourage extension of water and sanitary sewer lines into areas outside the ULL, except to serve public and semi-public uses that are not growth inducing, or when such extension is necessary to address a declared public health emergency. When lines are extended outside the ULL, they should be designated to service the intended use only, and not allow for additional future service connections.
 - **Policy LU-P2.9:** Consistently advise the Contra Costa County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to support the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and County ULL when considering requests for annexation to water and wastewater districts and extension of services.
- **Goal LU-3:** A range and distribution of compatible and sustainable land uses that meet the county's social and economic needs and allow for balanced housing and job growth.
- **Policy LU-P3.1:** Support regional efforts to achieve a jobs-housing balance within the county and within subregions of the county by maintaining an adequate supply of developable land designated for job-generating uses. For any General Plan amendment proposing to convert commercial, industrial, or office land uses to residential or non-urban land uses, evaluate the project's effect on the local and countywide jobs-housing balance.
 - **Policy LU-P3.2:** Encourage residential development in or near existing employment centers, and development of job-generating uses near areas that are primarily residential. Where large-scale residential or commercial development is planned, encourage a mix of housing and employment opportunities unless doing so would exacerbate a severe jobs-housing imbalance in the area.
 - **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
 - **Policy LU-P3.6:** Encourage incorporation of childcare, adult daycare, and similar beneficial uses into new development. To maximize accessibility, encourage childcare facilities in residential neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, public libraries, hospitals, religious facilities, and parks, as well as near transit stops.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.
- **Goal LU-4:** Sustainable and high-quality design.
 - **Policy LU-4.2:** *Continuously improve community appearance by requiring high-quality designs and materials that complement their surroundings, with emphasis on enhancing public spaces and historic and cultural resources.*
 - **Policy LU-4.3:** Encourage smooth transitions between new and existing development.
 - **Policy LU-4.4:** Require site and building reconfigurations, setback increases, landscaping enhancements, screening, or other design solutions wherever necessary to minimize potential conflicts between uses.
 - **Policy LU-4.6:** Require commercial and mixed-use projects to create inviting, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes wherever possible.
 - **Policy LU-4.7:** Encourage residential and mixed-use buildings over four stories tall to incorporate setbacks or other massing changes on upper floors to create more human-scale and comfortable pedestrian environments.
- **Goal LU-5:** Coordinated land use, transportation, and infrastructure decisions so that growth occurs in locations where capacity and services are available or committed.
 - **Policy LU-P5.1:** Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.
 - **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, major roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
 - **Action LU-A5.1:** In 2025 and at least once every five years thereafter, evaluate the County's off-street parking standards to ensure their continued applicability in light of changing conditions, trends, and technology. Each evaluation should assess the appropriateness of reducing or eliminating parking minimums, taking off-site impacts into account, and recommend strategies for reducing parking demand.
 - **Action LU-A5.2:** Work with LAFCO and utility service providers to:
 - a) Annex lands planned for urban development by this General Plan into their service areas.
 - b) Detach private lands, especially agricultural or rural lands, from district boundaries if they are not planned for urban development and are not currently served.
- **Goal LU-6:** Effective coordination with other agencies to ensure orderly planning and consistent service delivery.
 - **Policy LU-P6.1:** Ensure that County projects and decisions on private development and land use activities within the Legal Delta are consistent with:

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- a) The Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta adopted by the Delta Protection Commission
- b) The Delta Plan adopted by the Delta Stewardship Council
- **Policy LU-P6.2:** Work collaboratively with cities and special districts (e.g., East Bay Regional Park District and utility service providers) to address regional issues of mutual concern and coordinate on decisions and actions that affect residents of nearby unincorporated areas.
- **Policy LU-P6.3:** When a project is within the sphere of influence of a city within Contra Costa County, or adjacent to a city located in a neighboring county, refer the project to the city for review and comment.
- **Policy LU-P6.4:** Coordinate with LAFCO to ensure that city annexations and related land use decisions do not:
 - a) Interfere with attainment of the County's land use goals as expressed in this General Plan. Include Housing Element inventory sites unless provisions have been made to transfer the site's assigned units to the receiving city's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).
 - b) Create new unincorporated "islands" (i.e., isolated areas substantially surrounded by incorporated cities).
- **Goal LU-7:** A variety of residential neighborhood types that provide housing opportunities and desirable living environments for all residents.
 - **Policy LU-P7.1:** Plan for a variety of housing types. Encourage innovative, nontraditional designs and layouts in response to evolving housing trends and needs.
 - **Policy LU-P7.2:** Provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the population, ensuring that affordable housing is distributed throughout the county and is not concentrated in traditionally lower-income areas. Promote development of affordable housing near public transit and essential services whenever possible.
 - **Policy LU-P7.5:** Require new residential projects to provide convenient access/connections to public transit, local destinations, and multi-use trails whenever possible.
- **Goal LU-8:** A variety of well-located commercial and mixed-use areas that provide jobs and services, create civic gathering places and community focal points, accommodate higher-density housing, and contribute to the tax base of the County.
 - **Policy LU-P8.1:** Plan for a sufficient quantity, variety, and distribution of commercial uses to meet the basic daily needs of residents in communities throughout the county.
 - **Policy LU-P8.2:** Support development of neighborhood-serving commercial services in and adjacent to residential areas where they can be accessed easily using multiple modes of transportation.
 - **Policy LU-P8.3:** Encourage adaptive reuse of aging commercial buildings and sites.
 - **Policy LU-P8.4:** Support rehabilitation of commercial centers, encouraging improvements that enhance appearance, sustainability, and non-motorized (pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) access and safety.

5. Environmental Analysis LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-P8.6:** Discourage new strip commercial development, allowing it only when alternative layouts are infeasible at the proposed site.
- **Policy LU-P8.8:** Accommodate a variety of land uses at Buchanan Field and Byron Airports, consistent with the master plan for each facility. A range of commercial aviation functions, including fixed-base operators, aviation businesses, and passenger facilities and services, should be allowed, as well as ancillary uses that support the economic viability of each airport.
- **Goal LU-9:** Industrial areas that support advanced manufacturing, research and development, production, and distribution, repair, and other sectors that anchor the county's economy.
 - **Policy LU-P9.1:** Welcome industries that create living-wage jobs and career advancement opportunities for county residents while minimizing environmental degradation.
 - **Policy LU-P9.2:** Welcome new business that improve supply chains for core local industries, including agriculture and food.
 - **Policy LU-P9.3:** Designate industrial land adjacent to major transportation infrastructure (i.e., freeways, rail lines, ports) and in other locations where impacts of industrial traffic on neighborhoods and commercial areas can be minimized.
 - **Policy LU-P9.4:** Prioritize industrial land along the Bay and Delta shoreline for uses requiring deep-water access or large quantities of raw water for their processes (e.g., cooling), and discourage siting of other industrial uses that could be accommodated elsewhere. Continue partnering with regional agencies to ensure reliable deep-water access to industrial sites.
- **Goal LU-10:** Rural, agricultural, and open space areas that provide scenic value, support Delta ecosystem health, and meet the needs of the agricultural industry.
 - **Policy LU-P10.2:** Ensure all former Williamson Act parcels are rezoned from Agricultural Preserve District to an agricultural zoning district appropriate for the area.
 - **Policy LU-P10.3:** Preserve the rural character of the following areas, which are displayed in Figure LU-5:
 - a) Alhambra Valley/Briones;
 - b) Tassajara Valley;
 - c) Agricultural Core between Brentwood and Discovery Bay
 - d) Crockett Hills between Crockett and State Route 4
 - e) Franklin Canyon/State Route 4 corridor between Hercules and Martinez
 - f) Bollinger Canyon Road corridor between Las Trampas Regional Wilderness and Crow Canyon Road
 - g) Norris Canyon Road corridor between San Ramon and the Alameda County line
 - h) Marsh Creek Road corridor between Clayton and Byron Highway
 - i) Kirker Pass Road corridor
 - j) Morgan Territory Road corridor
 - k) Deer Valley Road corridor

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Pay special attention to potential aesthetic impacts in these areas and ensure such impacts are adequately mitigated.

- **Policy LU-P10.4:** Maintain agricultural preserves in the Briones Hills and Tassajara Valley areas through agreements with adjacent cities to retain these areas for agricultural, open space, and other non-urban uses.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Goal COS-1.** Preserved open space for environmental protection, resource management and production, recreation, scenic value, and climate resilience and adaptation.
 - **Policy COS-P1.1:** Support efforts by public agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire and permanently protect open space areas containing important ecological or scenic resources and areas that connect protected lands to form a cohesive system of open space. Plan infrastructure to avoid interfering with such acquisitions whenever possible.
 - **Policy COS-P1.2:** Pursue opportunities for permanent open space dedication for habitat, scenic, or passive recreation benefits as part of future development approvals and major capital improvement projects.
 - **Policy COS-P1.3:** *Discourage conversion of land designated Resource Conservation or Parks and Recreation to urban uses. If such conversion occurs, require mitigation through permanent protection of other open space or park lands for habitat, scenic, or recreation benefits at a ratio to be determined based on the biological, scenic, or recreational value of the land, but not less than 3:1.*
 - **Action COS-A1.1:** Convene an annual staff-level meeting with involved agencies (e.g., East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, EBRPD), land trusts, and conservation groups to review current and planned efforts to protect and maintain open space.
- **Goal COS-4.** Preserved and enhanced ecological resources and wildlife habitat.
 - **Policy COS-P4.1:** *Maintain ecologically significant resource areas in their natural state to the greatest extent possible. Limit development in and near these areas to compatible low-intensity uses with adequate provisions to protect sensitive resources, including setbacks around resource areas. Prohibit projects that would lead to fragmentation of ecologically significant resource areas.*
 - **Policy COS-P4.2:** Support land conservation and restoration consistent with the HCP/NCCP and discourage development in areas where such conservation is planned, as shown on Figure COS-3. Support actions to preserve land and resources within PCAs mapped by ABAG, as shown on Figure COS-4.
- **Goal COS-7:** Sustainable surface and groundwater resource management.
 - **Policy COS-P7.1:** *Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.*

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy COS-P7.4:** *For projects in areas without a water service provider, require proof of adequate on-site groundwater during the development review process. In addition to requiring compliance with the County's well regulations related to water quality and flow rate, require documentation that the proposed project will not have a significant cumulative impact on the aquifer or negatively affect development that already relies on the same groundwater supply.*
- **Policy COS-P7.5:** *Prohibit new development that would create or significantly aggravate groundwater overdraft conditions, land subsidence, or other "undesirable results," as defined in Section 354.26 of the California Water Code.*
- **Policy COS-P7.6:** Support the multipurpose water storage options that incorporate water supply, flood control, surface and groundwater storage, groundwater management, and ecosystem components.
- **Goal COS-8:** Protected quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
 - **Policy COS-P8.1:** Protect public water supplies by denying applications for projects that would introduce significant new pollution sources in groundwater basins and watersheds feeding major reservoirs, and support efforts to acquire and permanently protect reservoir watersheds.
 - **Policy COS-P8.5:** *Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large-scale commercial and industrial facilities that use wells and prohibit discharge of hazardous materials through injection wells.*
- **Goal COS-9:** Protected, preserved, and enhanced scenic quality, recreational value, and natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline.
 - **Policy COS-P9.1:** Advocate for increased freshwater flow into, through, and from the Delta into San Francisco Bay, and support other efforts to protect and improve Delta water quality.
 - **Policy COS-9.2:** Support continued maintenance and improvement of Delta levees to protect water quality, ecosystems, agricultural land, and at-risk communities.
 - **Policy COS-P9.3:** Oppose all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance (e.g., peripheral canal, tunnel) or any other water diversion system that reduces Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system.
 - **Policy COS-P9.4:** *Plan for land uses near shorelines that do not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats.*

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P7.4:** Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County ALUCP.
- **Policy TR-P7.5:** Partner with the cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill in making land use decisions that support Buchanan Field Airport's ongoing viability while protecting public safety, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.
- **Policy TR-P7.6:** Enhance Byron Airport's viability by protecting it from incompatible urban encroachment, such as large-scale residential development, and providing infrastructure that supports existing and planned airport activities, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

5.11.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) update that are applicable to land use and planning thresholds of significance.

5.11.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.11-1: Project implementation would not divide an established community. [Threshold LU-1]

Proposed General Plan

Division of an established community commonly occurs as a result of development and construction of physical features that constitute a barrier to frequent travel between two or more parts of a community. For example, a large freeway structure with few crossings could effectively split a community. Likewise, geographic features could similarly affect the community, such as the development of a large residential project on the opposite side of a river from the existing community.

The project does not propose project-specific development. The design direction for the proposed General Plan is to improve access and mobility for existing and future residents by providing vehicular connections and non-motorized transportation options. The land use pattern proposed in the General Plan would increase development density and intensity in established community cores. The county provides access through these community cores and throughout the county via major roadways and transit and pedestrian pathways. Overall, the land uses in the proposed General Plan are largely consistent with existing development patterns.

No aspect of the proposed General Plan would divide existing communities in the county. In addition, the proposed General Plan includes provisions that directly address land use connectivity, compatibility, and encroachment of new development on existing neighborhoods and land uses. Specifically, the proposed General Plan includes the following policies aimed at improving connectivity and ensuring compatibility between land uses:

- **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
- **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-4.2:** Continuously improve community appearance by requiring high-quality designs and materials that complement their surroundings, with emphasis on enhancing public spaces and historic and cultural resource.
- **Policy LU-4.3:** Encourage smooth transitions between new and existing development.
- **Policy LU-4.4:** Require site and building reconfigurations, setback increases, landscaping enhancements, screening, or other design solutions wherever necessary to minimize potential conflicts between uses.
- **Policy LU-P5.1:** Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.
- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Policy LU-P8.8:** Accommodate a variety of land uses at Buchanan Field and Byron airports, consistent with the master plan for each facility. A range of commercial aviation functions, including fixed-base operators, aviation businesses, and passenger facilities and services, should be allowed, as well as ancillary uses that support the economic viability of each airport.
- **Policy LU-P9.3:** Designate industrial land adjacent to major transportation infrastructure (i.e., freeways, rail lines, ports) and in other locations where impacts of industrial traffic on neighborhoods and commercial areas can be minimized.

Because implementation of the proposed General Plan would not divide established communities and it includes policies and a land use plan that improve connectivity, the impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions and improve resiliency to future climate conditions. The proposed CAP does not involve any land use changes. As this is a policy document with no land use changes, the proposed CAP would not have any significant physical environmental effects related to land use and planning. No impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.11-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.11-1 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Impact 5.11-2: Project implementation would not conflict with applicable plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. [Threshold LU-2]

Proposed General Plan

While the proposed General Plan is the primary planning document for Contra Costa County and the proposed update is in part intended to ensure consistency between the General Plan and updated State laws, implementation of the proposed project has the potential to conflict with land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. For the purposes of this EIR a land use plan is a policy or regulation that addresses how land is used. The following discusses the proposed General Plan and its relationship to the land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, as listed in Section 5.11.1.1, *Regulatory Background*.

Plan Bay Area 2050

Plan Bay Area 2050 is a 30-year plan that charts a course for a Bay Area that is affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant for all residents through 2050 and beyond (ABAG/MTC 2021). While Plan Bay Area 2050 does not override local land use control, it provides guidance to local jurisdictions, including Contra Costa County, on how future development can be consistent with the State's GHG and VMT reduction goals. This includes constructing more infill development in downtowns and centers in close proximity to jobs and services.

The Land Use Element of the proposed General Plan sets the foundation for future growth, change, and preservation in the EIR Study Area. In addition to the policies identified in Impact Discussion 5.11-1, the following proposed General Plan goals and policies would serve to support the concepts in Plan Bay Area by encouraging infill and limiting the extent of development (Goal LU-2 and associated policies), supporting a sustainable development pattern that places a mix of jobs and housing in close proximity to each other and to transit (Goal LU-3 and associated policies), directing development to where there is already infrastructure and services (Goal LU-5 and associated policies, plus Policy LU-P7.5), and promoting mixed-use development (Goal LU-8 and associated policies):

- **Goal LU-2:** Growth and conservation that are balanced to preserve and enhance the quality of life, protect the environment and public safety, and benefit all those who live or work in Contra Costa County.
 - **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
 - **Policy LU-P2.3:** Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.
 - **Policy LU-P2.4:** Prohibit major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive minor subdivisions of lots outside the ULL that were created through previous subdivisions.
 - **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P2.8:** Discourage extension of water and sanitary sewer lines into areas outside the ULL, except to serve public and semi-public uses that are not growth inducing, or when such extension is necessary to address a declared public health emergency. When lines are extended outside the ULL, they should be designed to service the intended use only, and not allow for additional future service connections.
- **Goal LU-3:** A range and distribution of compatible and sustainable land uses that meet the county's social and economic needs and allow for balanced housing and job growth.
 - **Policy LU-P3.2:** Encourage residential development in or near existing employment centers, and development of job-generating uses near areas that are primarily residential. Where large-scale residential or commercial development is planned, encourage a mix of housing and employment opportunities unless doing so would exacerbate a severe jobs-housing imbalance in the area.
 - **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
 - **Policy LU-P3.6:** Encourage incorporation of childcare, adult daycare, and similar beneficial uses into new development. To maximize accessibility, encourage childcare facilities in residential neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, public libraries, hospitals, religious facilities, and parks, as well as near transit stops.
 - **Policy LU-P3.7:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.
- **Goal LU-5:** Coordinated land use, transportation, and infrastructure decisions so that growth occurs in locations where capacity and services are available or committed.
 - **Policy LU-P5.1:** Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.
 - **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, major roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
 - **Policy LU-P7.5:** Require new residential projects to provide convenient access/connections to public transit, local destinations, and multi-use trails whenever possible.
- **Goal LU-8:** A variety of well-located commercial and mixed-use areas that provide jobs and services, create civic gathering places and community focal points, accommodate higher-density housing, and contribute to the tax base of the County.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

- **Policy LU-P8.2:** Support development of neighborhood-serving commercial services in and adjacent to residential areas where they can be accessed easily using multiple modes of transportation.
- **Policy LU-P8.3:** Encourage adaptive reuse of aging commercial buildings and sites.
- **Policy LU-P8.4:** Support rehabilitation of commercial centers, encouraging improvements that enhance appearance, sustainability, and non-motorized (pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) access and safety.

The proposed General Plan goals and policies listed would support the goals of Plan Bay Area. Accordingly, the proposed project would not conflict with or be inconsistent with Plan Bay Area 2050, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

Areas within the unincorporated county and several cities are in Buchanan Field and Byron Airports' Safety Compatibility Zones, as shown in Figure 5.9-3, *Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport Safety Zones*, in Section 5.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, in this Draft EIR. These zones restrict certain land uses and heights of structures pursuant to Federal Aviation Administration Part 77 Regulations protecting airspace near the airport. All potential development within each airport's Safety Zones would be required to comply with the provisions for development in the ALUCP and FAA Part 77 regulations.

In addition, the following proposed General Plan policies would serve to minimize impacts from development in close proximity to the airports:

- **Policy TR-P7.4:** Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County ALUCP.
- **Policy TR-P7.5:** Partner with the cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill in making land use decisions that support Buchanan Field Airport's ongoing viability while protecting public safety, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.
- **Policy TR-P7.6:** Enhance Byron Airport's viability by protecting it from incompatible urban encroachment, such as large-scale residential development, and providing infrastructure that supports existing and planned airport activities, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.

Accordingly, the County will coordinate with agencies and jurisdictions regarding development in close proximity to the airports and ensure that future development is consistent with the ALUCP. Future development within airport influence areas would also be subject to review by the ALUC for a determination of consistency with the ALUCP. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or be inconsistent with the ALUCP, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Delta Plan

As described previously, the Delta Plan is a comprehensive long-term management plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. The Delta Plan includes rules and recommendations that support the State's goals for the Delta to: (1) improve water supply; (2) protect and restore a vibrant and healthy Delta ecosystem; and (3)

5. Environmental Analysis LAND USE AND PLANNING

preserve, protect, and enhance the unique agricultural, cultural, and recreational characteristic of the Delta. As listed below, the proposed General Plan includes goals and policies that support these goals of the Delta Plan.

- **Goal COS-7:** Sustainable surface and groundwater resource management.
 - **Policy COS-P7.1:** Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.
 - **Policy COS-P7.4:** For projects in areas without a water service provider, require proof of adequate on-site groundwater during the development review process. In addition to requiring compliance with the County’s well regulations related to water quality and flow rate, require documentation that the proposed project will not have a significant cumulative impact on the aquifer or negatively affect development that already relies on the same groundwater supply.
 - **Policy COS-P7.5:** Prohibit new development that would create or significantly aggravate groundwater overdraft conditions, land subsidence, or other “undesirable results,” as defined in Section 354.26 of the California Water Code.
 - **Policy COS-P7.6:** Support multipurpose water storage options that incorporate water supply, flood control, surface and groundwater storage, groundwater management, and ecosystem components.
- **Goal COS-8:** Protected quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
 - **Policy COS-P8.1:** Protect public water supplies by denying applications for projects that would introduce significant new pollution sources in groundwater basins and watersheds feeding major reservoirs, and support efforts to acquire and permanently protect reservoir watersheds.
 - **Policy COS-P8.5:** Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large-scale commercial and industrial facilities using wells and prohibit discharge of hazardous materials through injection wells.
- **Goal COS-9:** Protected, preserved, and enhanced scenic quality, recreational value, and natural resources of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary system and shoreline.
 - **Policy COS-P9.1:** Advocate for increased freshwater flow into, through, and from the Delta into San Francisco Bay, and support other efforts to protect and improve Delta water quality.
 - **Policy COS-9.2:** Support continued maintenance and improvement of Delta levees to protect water quality, ecosystems, agricultural land, and at-risk communities.
 - **Policy COS-P9.3:** Oppose all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance (e.g., peripheral canal, tunnel) or any other water diversion system that reduces Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system.
 - **Policy COS-P9.4:** Plan for land uses along shorelines that do not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

In addition, Delta Plan Policy DP P1 requires that any new residential, commercial, or industrial development must be limited to areas within the ULL, and also specifies that no new residential, commercial, or industrial development may occur on Bethel Island, even though it is inside the ULL unless it is consistent with the existing General Plan. Although the proposed General Plan would redistribute some of the existing General Plan development capacity on Bethel Island by expanding commercial uses and reducing residential uses, the proposed General Plan does not allow a net increase in allowed development on the island. Therefore, the proposed General Plan is consistent with this key Delta Plan policy.

Furthermore, proposed Policy LU-P6.1 directs the County to ensure that County projects and decisions on private development and land use activities in the Legal Delta are consistent with the Delta Plan. Overall, the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and land use map support the goals of the Delta Plan, and the impact is less than significant.

Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta

As mentioned in Section 5.11.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, the Land Use and Resource Management Plan guides local decisions related to agriculture, flood protection, Delta communities, natural resources, recreation, and utilities and infrastructure within the Primary Zone of the Delta. General plans and projects within the Primary Zone must align with the Plan and are subject to review by the Commission. As shown in Figure 5.11-1, the Primary Zone extends into the eastern portion of the county, including the unincorporated areas of Winter Island, Jersey Island, Bradford Island, Web Tract, Quimby Island, Holland Tract, a portion of Knightsen, Veale Tract, Palm Tract, Orwood Tract, and Coney Island. The proposed General Plan would designate these areas as Public/Semi-Public, Parks and Recreation, Resource Conservation, Agriculture Core, and Agriculture Lands. These designations would maintain the primarily agricultural, natural resource, recreation, and public service uses in these areas, which are consistent with the Land Use and Resource Management Plan. In addition, proposed Policy LU-P6.1 directs the County to ensure that County projects and decisions on private development and land use activities in the Legal Delta are consistent with the Land Use and Resource Management Plan. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

San Francisco Bay Plan

The San Francisco Bay Plan provides a formula for developing the Bay and shoreline to their highest potential while protecting the Bay as an irreplaceable natural resource. General plans and projects within the Bay Area must align with the San Francisco Bay Plan. The portions of the EIR Study Area that are covered by the San Francisco Bay Plan include the west and northwest portions of the unincorporated county along Suisun Bay and San Francisco Bay. The proposed General Plan includes policies aimed at protecting these areas and Bayshore resources. In particular, Policy COS-P9.3 directs the County to oppose all efforts to construct an isolated conveyance or any other water diversion system that reduces Delta water flows unless and until it can be conclusively demonstrated that such a system would protect, preserve, and enhance water quality and fisheries of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary system. In addition, Policy COS-P9.4 directs the County to plan for land uses along shorelines that do not pose a threat to Bay or Delta resources, including water quality and shoreline and marshland habitats. Furthermore, Policy LU-P9.4 directs the County to prioritize industrial land along the Bay and Delta for uses requiring deep-water access or large quantities of raw water and

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

discourages the siting of other industrial uses at these locations. This would help to ensure the area along the Bay in the EIR Study Area is developed to its highest potential, as called for in the Bay Plan. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would be consistent with the Bay Plan and the impact would be less than significant.

East Contra Costa HCP/NCCP

As discussed in Section 5.4, Biological Resources, the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP is intended to provide regional conservation and development guidelines to protect natural resources while improving and streamlining the permit process for take of State and federally listed species. The HCP/NCCP was developed by a team of scientists and planners with input from independent panels of reviewers and stakeholders. The proposed General Plan discourages conversion of land designated Resource Conservation or Parks and Recreation to urban uses and requires mitigation through the replacement of land with equal biologic, scenic, or recreational value if conversion occurs, per Policy COS-P1.3. Additionally, Policy COS-P4.2 encourages consistency with the HCP/NCCP by directing the County to support land conservation and restoration consistent with the HCP/NCCP and discourage development in areas where conservation is planned. Policies COS-P1.1 and COS-P1.2 also support the goals of the HCP/NCCP to protect open space and ecologically sensitive areas. As such, the proposed General Plan is consistent with the adopted HCP/NCCP in terms of land uses and habitat protection. Implementation of the General Plan would not conflict with the provisions of the East Contra Costa HCP/NCCP.

Summary

In summary, the proposed General Plan is the primary planning document for Contra Costa County. The proposed General Plan is intended in part to ensure consistency between the General Plan and updated State laws. As described above, it would support applicable land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. The proposed General Plan is the overriding planning document for the county, and it would replace the current General Plan. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions and improve resiliency to future climate conditions. The proposed CAP does not involve any land use changes. As this is a policy document with no land use changes, the proposed CAP would not have any significant physical environmental effects related to conflicts with land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. No impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.11-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.11-2 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

5.11.5 Cumulative Impacts

As discussed in Impact Discussions LU-1 and LU-2, the proposed project would not divide an established community or conflict with established plans, policies, and regulations. The proposed project would not conflict with any State, regional, or local land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Future development that would be allowed under the proposed project would not create substantial land use impacts. Development would largely be taking place in already urbanized areas and would not require development or demolition that would create land use conflicts or divide established communities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative impacts related to land use changes, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

5.11.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.11.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5.11.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis LAND USE AND PLANNING

5.11.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (ABAG/MTC). 2021, October. *Plan Bay Area 2050*.
https://www.planbayarea.org/sites/default/files/documents/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf.
- Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Commission (CCALUC). 2000, December 13. *Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/851/Cover-Introduction-and-County-wide-Policies?bidId=>.
- Delta Protection Commission (DPC). 2010. *Land Use and Resources Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta*. https://delta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Land-Use-and-Resource-Management-Plan-2.25.10_-m508.pdf.
- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (SFBCDC). 2024, January 11 (accessed). *San Francisco Bay Plan*. https://www.bcdc.ca.gov/plans/sfbay_plan.html#2

5. Environmental Analysis

LAND USE AND PLANNING

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential impacts to mineral resources from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.12.1 Environmental Setting

5.12.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) was enacted in 1975 and updated in January 2007 to limit new development in areas with significant mineral deposits. Through SMARA, the California Geological Survey identifies geologic deposits of valuable minerals used in manufacturing processes and the production of construction materials. Requirements for SMARA are codified under Public Resources Code Section 2710 et seq. Under State law, all mining operations are required to obtain permits prior to commencing operations and abide by local and State operating requirements. Mining operations are also required to have appropriate reclamation plans in place, provide financial assurances, and abide by State and local environmental laws. SMARA classifies lands into mineral resource zones (MRZs) according to the known or inferred mineral potential. The criteria for establishing the zones are based on four general categories, discussed below:

- MRZ 1: Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ 2: Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ 3: Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated.
- MRZ 4: Areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ zone.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 88-11, *Surface Mining and Reclamation*, of the County Ordinance Code regulates the extraction of mineral resources in the county. It is intended to implement the requirements of SMARA and the policies within the General Plan. It also discusses the protection of these resources, stating that mine development is encouraged in compatible areas before encroachment of conflicting uses. Mineral resources areas that have been classified by the State Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology or designated by the State Mining and Geology Board, as well as existing surface mining operations, are required to be protected from intrusion

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

by incompatible land uses that may impede or preclude mineral extraction or processing, to the extent possible, for consistency with the County's General Plan.

Chapter 88-14, *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production*, of the County Ordinance Code is intended to ensure that oil and gas drilling and production activity in the county is developed to be compatible with existing and planned surface uses. Under this provision of the Code, oil and gas drilling and production activity is allowed within the General Agricultural (A-2), Heavy Agricultural (A-3), Agricultural Preserve (A-4) and Exclusive Agricultural (A-20, A-40, and A-80) zoning districts. It is restricted within 1,000 feet of a city boundary, within an urban General Plan land use designation, or within 1,000 feet of an urban land use designation.

5.12.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Mineral resources in Contra Costa County include aggregate and stone for commercial, industrial, and construction uses. The most important mineral resources mined in the county include a regionally significant deposit of diabase near Mount Zion and Clayton. Diabase is an intrusive igneous rock that is used extensively for road base and as rip-rap to prevent streambank erosion. Both Lone Star and Kaiser quarries utilize this resource. A geological deposit of domengine sandstone is on the north side of Mount Diablo, just south of Camino Diablo and east of Vasco Road. This is the sole deposit of this material in the State of California. Domengine sandstone is used by Pacific Gas & Electric Company as trench backfill and is a primary ingredient in the manufacture of heat resistant glass used in the national space program. An additional area in the county with a long history of mineral resource production is near Port Costa. Mining in this area began at the turn of the century to support a brick manufacturing operation, which is unique in the county, and one of only a few in the entire state. Mining and brick production have been continuous from 1905 to the present, under several different ownerships. In 1966, a lightweight shale aggregate facility was constructed. Furthermore, sand and sandstone deposits are mined from several locations in the county, focused mainly in the Byron area. Figure 5.12-1, *County-Designated Mineral Resource Areas*, shows the county's deposits of diabase in Central County and domengine sandstone in East County.

Based on the Mineral Land Classification prepared by the Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR) in the California Department of Conservation (DOC), the county contains several additional regionally significant mineral resources deposits, including exposures of basalt and andesite near Moraga, the northern end of the Berkeley Hills, and a small ridge southwest of Orinda. Sandstone and shale deposits consisting of three parcels are also on the west side of Richmond (DMR 1996). There are several other mapped areas classified as MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 in the county as well, as shown on Figure 5.12-2, *Mineral Resource Zones and Resource Sectors*. Contra Costa County contains two present or potential sources of Portland cement concrete aggregate: the diabase deposit near Clayton and the sandstone deposit in Richmond (DMR 1987).

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) identifies a total of 231 mineral resource sites in the county, including operating or closed mines, mineral prospects, and processing plants (USGS 2022). USGS reports that there are 39 currently operating mines in the county and 127 sites that contain mineral resources but have not yet been mined (USGS 2022). Per the DMR, four of these mines are within the unincorporated county and include two rock quarries near Clayton and two sand-gravel pits near Byron, as shown in Figure 5.12-3, *Operating Mines in the Unincorporated County* (DMR 2020).

MINERAL RESOURCES

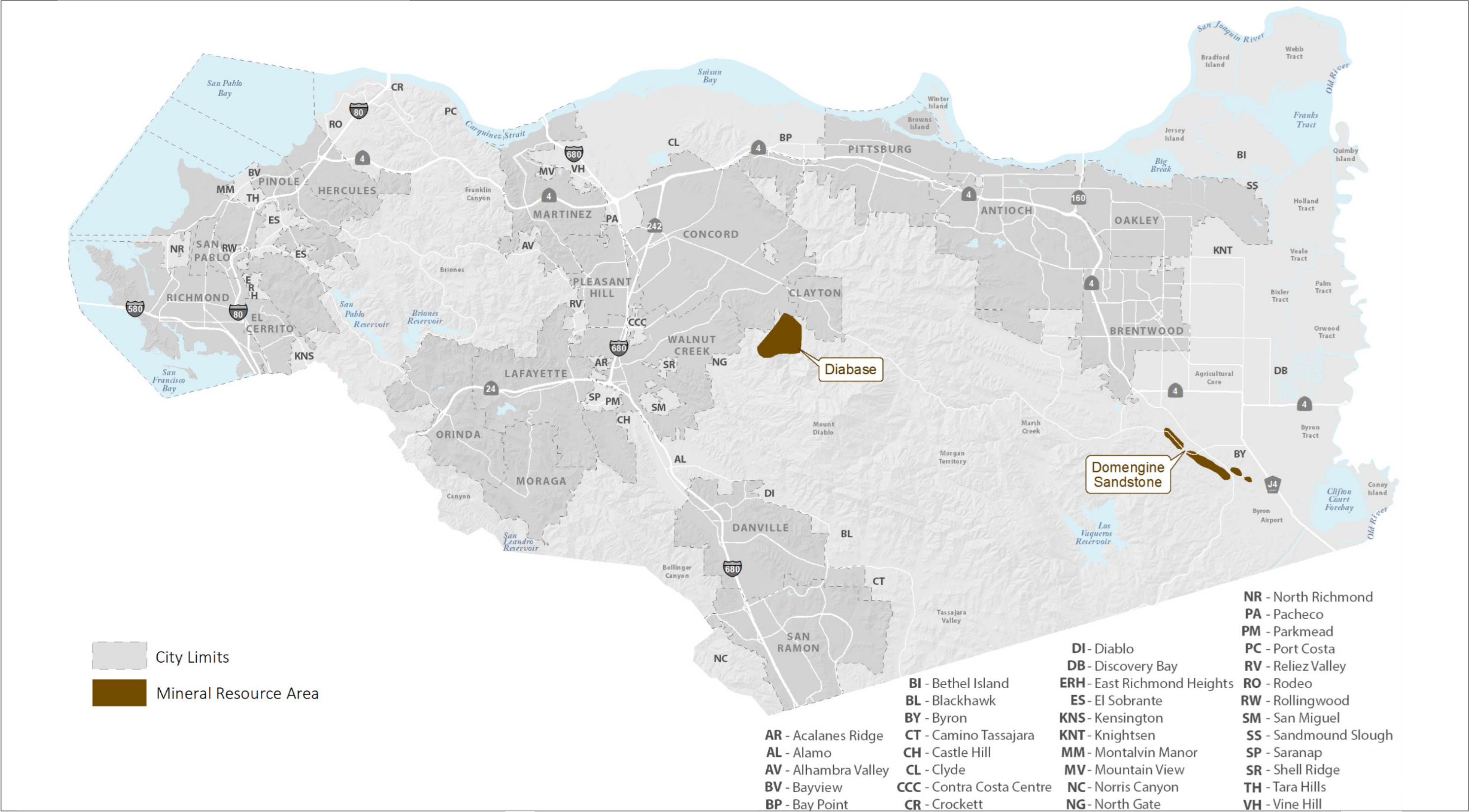


Figure 5.12-1
County-Designated Mineral Resource Areas

MINERAL RESOURCES

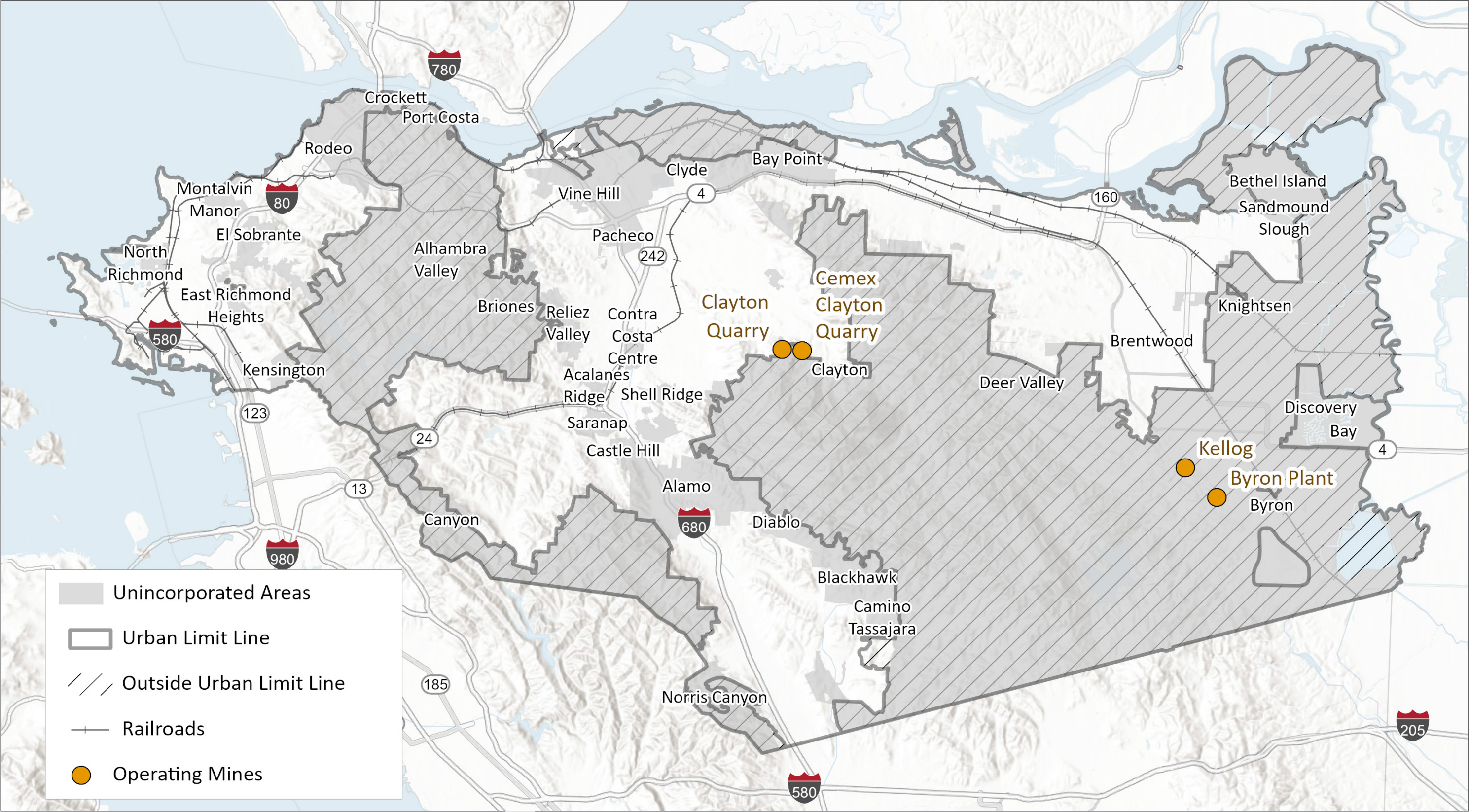


Source: US Geological Survey, J.C. Stinson, M.W. Manson, and J.J. Plappert, 1983.



Figure 5.12-2
Mineral Resource Zones and Resource Areas

MINERAL RESOURCES



Source: Department of Conservation, Division of Mine Reclamation, 2023



Figure 5.12-3
Operating Mines in the Unincorporated County

5. Environmental Analysis
MINERAL RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

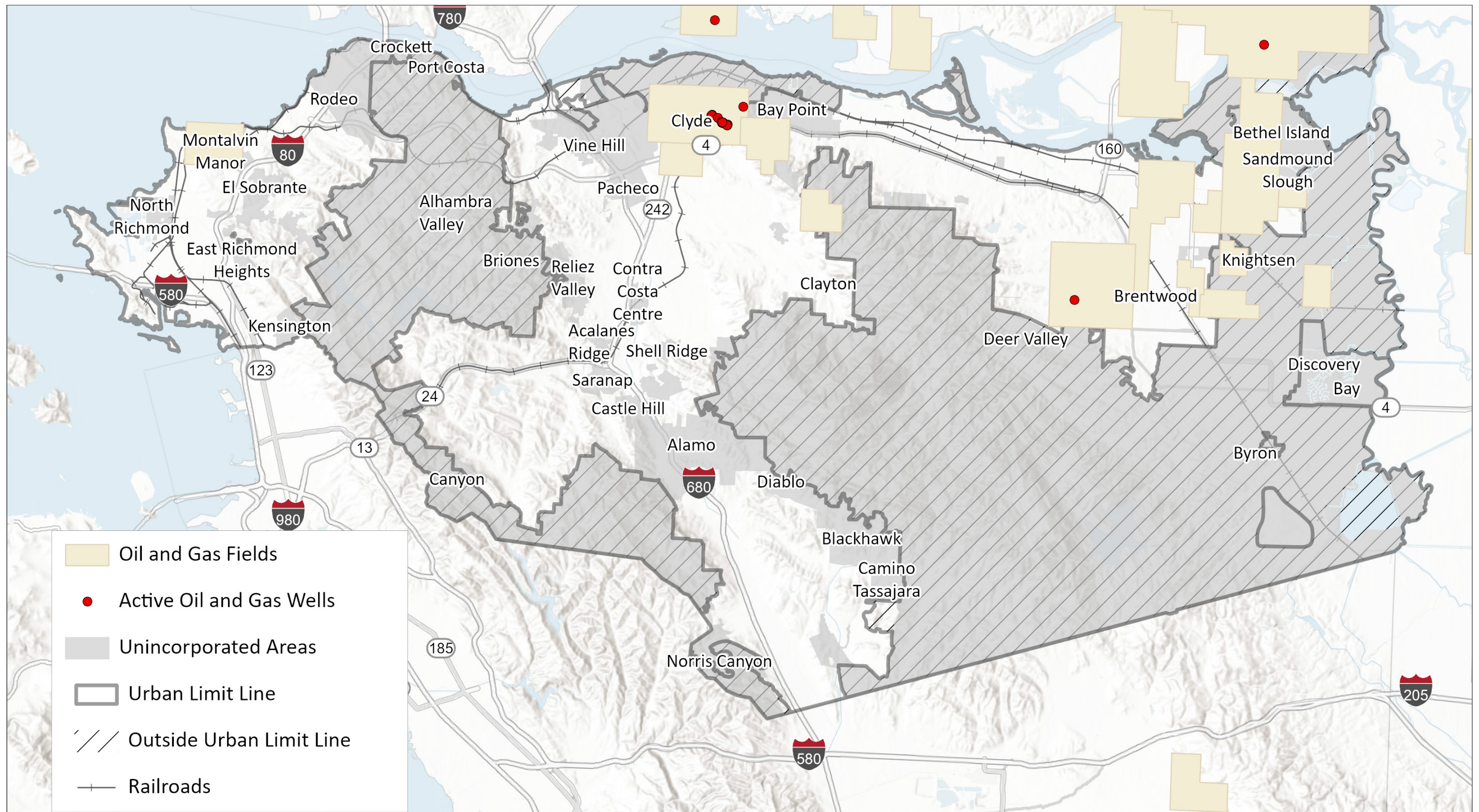
The county also contains numerous deposits of oil and natural gas resources. According to maps from the Geologic Energy Management Division (GEMD) of the DOC, there are 22 active oil, gas, and water wells in the county that produced 92,235 barrels of oil condensate and 138,286 thousand cubic feet of total gross natural gas in 2019 (GEMD 2020a). The Brentwood oil and gas field is California's northernmost commercial oil-producing area and as of 2018, the field had produced 9,300,000 barrels of oil and 51,100,000 million cubic feet of natural gas (GEMD 2020b). Figure 5.12-4, *Oil and Gas Resources*, shows the boundaries of existing oil and gas fields in the county in addition to the locations of active oil and gas wells.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

MINERAL RESOURCES



Source: Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division, 2023



Figure 5.12-4
Oil and Gas Resources

5. Environmental Analysis
MINERAL RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis MINERAL RESOURCES

5.12.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- M-1 Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.
- M-2 Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

5.12.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.12.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to mineral resources. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Goal COS-13:** Continued economic viability of mineral extraction operations while minimizing land use conflicts and environmental impacts.
 - **Policy COS-P13.1:** Protect valuable mineral resources by prohibiting incompatible projects and land uses (i.e., those that would directly or indirectly interfere with extraction, processing, or transportation of mineral resources) within the MRAs identified in Figure COS-11.
 - **Policy COS-P13.2:** Encourage compact design and layout for mineral resource processing areas, preserving as much land as possible for buffering between these areas and adjacent land uses.
 - ***Policy COS-P13.3:*** *For residential subdivisions within one mile of the MRAs depicted in Figure COS-11, require deed disclosures indicating the presence of the mineral resource and explaining potential disturbances (e.g., noise, dust, heavy truck traffic) associated with mineral extraction activities.*
 - ***Policy COS-P13.4:*** *Require applications for new or expanded quarrying operations adjacent to Mount Diablo State Park to include an analysis of potential impacts to the park's natural features, including viewsheds, and operations.*
 - **Policy COS-P13.5:** Ensure that quarry reclamation plans, including bonding requirements, are maintained in compliance with SMARA.
 - **Action COS-A13.1:** Update County Ordinance Code Chapter 88-11, Surface Mining and Reclamation, as necessary to maintain consistency with SMARA.
 - **Action COS-A14.1:** Amend County Ordinance Code Chapter 88-14 – Oil and Gas Drilling and Production to:
 - (a) Prohibit new and expanded oil and gas production wells in the following:
 - i. Sensitive ecological areas, such as wetlands and habitat for rare, threatened, endangered, or special-status species.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

- ii. Areas subject to 100-year flood hazards or sea-level rise, as shown in Figures HS-2 and HS-6 through HS-9.
 - iii. Areas within 3,200 feet of sensitive receptors or urban land use designations unless project-specific exceptions are granted by the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division.
- (b) Restrict oil and gas drilling operations to agricultural zoning districts only.
 - (c) Require a land use permit for all new and expanded oil and gas wells.
 - (d) Require a reclamation plan for oil and gas well sites that includes bonding for site clean-up.
 - (e) Include performance standards related to water quality, air quality, odors, noise, and aesthetics.

In parallel, study the feasibility of amending the County Ordinance Code to prohibit development of new oil and gas wells and phase out existing oil and gas well operations.

5.12.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) that are applicable to mineral resources.

5.12.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.12-1: Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. [Thresholds M-1 and M-2]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Figure 5.12-1, the county's critical mineral resources are near Mount Zion and Clayton for diabase and Mount Diablo and Byron for domengine sandstone. As shown in Figure 5.12-3, there are no other active mining operations in the EIR Study Area outside of these two mineral resource areas. However, per the latest available data from the DOC, several additional areas in the EIR Study Area overlie significant or potentially significant mineral resource areas designated by SMARA, as shown in Figure 5.12-2. Under the proposed General Plan, development of non-mineral extraction uses would be allowed on land that overlies mapped MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 areas, including those in the communities of Rodeo, Vine Hill, and Bay Point. MRZ-2 designated areas are areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence. MRZ-3 designated areas are assumed to contain mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated.

Development projects under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with Chapter 88-11 of the County Ordinance Code, which implements SMARA. This chapter aims to protect significant mineral resources from the intrusion of incompatible land uses. However, because the General Plan would allow incompatible development in designated MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 areas, impacts would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

As shown in Figure 5.12-4, the county also contains gas and oil deposits that underlie portions of the EIR Study Area. Chapter 8-14 of the County Ordinance Code allows oil and gas drilling in specific agricultural zones and places restrictions on drilling within proximity to urban development. Proposed General Plan Action COS-A14.1 would further restrict oil and gas drilling operations from being established in sensitive ecological areas, areas subject to flooding and sea-level rise, and areas within 3,200 feet of sensitive receptors or urban land use designations. This action would also limit oil and gas drilling operations to agricultural zones and require a land use permit, reclamation plan, and performance standards related to water quality, air quality, odors, noise, and aesthetics. Since the proposed land use plan would allow incompatible development in areas that overlie these resources and the proposed General Plan intends to limit new extraction uses, impacts would be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to loss of aggregate mineral resources. In addition, while the intent of the CAP is to provide a pathway for the county to achieve reductions in GHG emissions, which includes prioritizing the use of renewable energy sources, the CAP does not include strategies and actions that prohibit the continuation of oil and gas extraction in the county, and the impact is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.12-1 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

There are no feasible mitigation measures. The provisions of SMARA would reduce impacts to aggregate mineral resources to the extent possible by requiring site-specific evaluations to discover the presence of mineral resources. Subsequent review under CEQA for applicable projects would require the incorporation of measures that would reduce impacts as feasible.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.12-1 would be significant and unavoidable.

5.12.5 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative projects could cause significant cumulative impacts if they cause a loss of availability of a known mineral resource valuable to the region and the state or cause a loss of availability of an important mining site delineated in a local general plan or other land use plan. Development in or near some areas of the county would have the potential to result in land uses that are incompatible with mining and resource recovery and would result in a cumulatively considerable loss of available resources.

5.12.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Without mitigation, the following impact would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.12-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

5.12.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.12-1

There are no feasible mitigation measures.

5.12.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.12-1

Mineral and resource extraction could face reduced output due to development of incompatible uses on or near mineral resource areas. Aggregate mineral resource areas are in established communities, including Rodeo, Vine Hill, and Bay Point, all of which are Impacted Communities where the County finds it appropriate to promote community investment and development in support of environmental justice. Extraction of oil and gas deposits can pose health risks to nearby sensitive receptors and hazards to nearby sensitive ecological areas, so the General Plan includes an action directing the County to further regulate drilling operations near sensitive receptors and ecological areas that will have the effect of potentially reducing the ability to extract mineral resources. These are important policy objectives of the proposed project, and impacts are significant unavoidable.

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

5.12.9 References

- Contra Costa, County of. 2005. *Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020* - Chapter 8: Conservation Element, Chapter 3: Land Use Element. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4732/General-Plan>
- Division of Mine Reclamation, California Department of Conservation (DMR). 2020. Mines Online- Richmond (Chevron) Quarry 91-07-0006, Clayton Quarry 91-07-0003, Cemex Clayton Quarry 91-07-0004, Kellog 91-07-0012, Byron Plant 91-07-0001. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html>
- . 1996. Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the South San Francisco Bay Production-Consumption Region.
- . 1987. Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area- Special Report 146 Part II.
- Geologic Energy Management Division, California Department of Conservation (GEMD). 2020a, October. *2019 Annual Report of the State Oil and Gas Supervisor*.
- . 2020b, June 11. CalGEM comment letter on the Negative Declaration for the Powerdrive Oil & Gas Company Wells Project. https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/261123-2/attachment/swbEmOhLiptU2ZE6cx7ixmDyKNTGjzrmk1diAhy-x_etkJpz8jGa11IfRen72ZH2ixp8j3HSpnK2f6a0
- United States Geological Survey. 2022, May 16. (Accessed) Mineral Resources Data System- Contra Costa County. <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/mrds/map-graded.html>

5. Environmental Analysis

MINERAL RESOURCES

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.13 NOISE

This section evaluates the potential for implementation of the proposed project to result in noise impacts in the county. This section discusses the fundamentals of sound; examines federal, State, and local noise guidelines, policies, and standards; evaluates potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposed project; and provides mitigation to reduce noise and vibration impacts at sensitive locations. Noise monitoring and modeling data are in Appendix 5.13-1 to this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

5.13.1 Environmental Setting

5.13.1.1 NOISE AND VIBRATION FUNDAMENTALS

Noise is defined as unwanted sound and, when overexposed, is known to have several adverse effects on people, including hearing loss, speech and sleep interference, physiological responses, and annoyance. Although sound can be easily measured, the perception of noise and the physical response to sound complicate the analysis of its impact on people. People judge the relative magnitude of sound sensation in subjective terms such as “noisiness” or “loudness.” Following are brief definitions of terminology used in this section.

Glossary

- **Sound.** A disturbance created by a vibrating object, which when transmitted by pressure waves through a medium such as air, is capable of being detected by the human ear or a microphone.
- **Noise.** Sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or otherwise undesirable.
- **Decibel (dB).** A unitless measure of sound on a logarithmic scale.
- **A-Weighted Decibel (dBA).** An overall frequency-weighted sound level in decibels that approximates the frequency response of the human ear.
- **Equivalent Continuous Noise Level (L_{eq}).** The mean of the noise level, energy averaged over the measurement period.
- **L_{max} .** The maximum root-mean-square noise level during a measurement period.
- **Statistical Sound Level (L_n).** The sound level that is exceeded “n” percent of time during a given sample period. For example, the L_{50} level is the statistical indicator of the time-varying noise signal that is exceeded 50 percent of the time (during each sampling period), meaning that half of the sampling time, the changing noise levels are above this value and half of the time they are below it. This is called the “median sound level.” The L_{10} level, likewise, is the value that is exceeded 10 percent of the time (i.e., near the maximum) and this is often known as the “intrusive sound level.” The L_{90} is the sound level exceeded 90 percent of the time and is often considered the “effective background level” or “residual noise level.”
- **Day-Night Sound Level (L_{dn} or DNL).** The energy-average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 10 dB added to the sound levels occurring during the period from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

- **Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL).** The energy-average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 5 dB added to the levels occurring during the period from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm, and 10 dB added to the sound levels occurring during the period from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. Note: For general community/environmental noise, CNEL and L_{dn} values rarely differ by more than 1 dB. As a matter of practice, L_{dn} and CNEL values are considered to be equivalent/interchangeable and are treated as such in this assessment.
- **Peak Particle Velocity (PPV).** The peak rate of speed at which soil particles move (e.g., inches per second) due to ground vibration.
- **Sensitive Receptor.** Noise- and vibration-sensitive receptors include land uses where quiet environments are necessary for enjoyment and public health and safety. Residences, schools, motels and hotels, libraries, religious institutions, hospitals, and nursing homes are examples.
- **Vibration Decibel (VdB).** A unitless measure of vibration, expressed on a logarithmic scale and with respect to a defined reference vibration velocity. In the U.S., the standard reference velocity is 1 micro-inch per second (1×10^{-6} in/sec).

Sound Fundamentals

Sound is a pressure wave transmitted through the air. It is described in terms of loudness or amplitude (measured in decibels), frequency or pitch (measured in Hertz [Hz] or cycles per second), and duration (measured in seconds or minutes). The standard unit of measurement of the loudness of sound is the decibel. The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies. Sound waves below 16 Hz are not heard at all and are “felt” more like a vibration. Similarly, while people with extremely sensitive hearing can hear sounds as high as 20,000 Hz, most people cannot hear above 15,000 Hz. In all cases, hearing acuity falls off rapidly above about 10,000 Hz and below about 200 Hz. Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies, a special frequency dependent rating scale is usually used to relate noise to human sensitivity. The A-weighted decibel scale performs this compensation by weighting frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear.

Changes of 1 to 3 dBA are detectable under quiet, controlled conditions and changes of less than 1 dBA are usually indiscernible. A 3 dBA change in noise levels is considered the minimum change that is detectable with human hearing in outside environments. A change of 5 dBA is readily discernable to most people in an exterior environment whereas a 10 dBA change is perceived as a doubling (or halving) of the sound.

Noise is defined as unwanted sound, and, when overexposed, is known to have several adverse effects on people, including hearing loss, speech and sleep interference, physiological responses, and annoyance. Based on these known adverse effects of noise, the federal government, the State of California, and many local governments have established criteria to protect public health and safety and to prevent disruption of certain human activities.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Sound Measurement

Sound pressure is measured through the A-weighted measure to correct for the relative frequency response of the human ear. That is, an A-weighted noise level de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies of sound similar to the human ear's de-emphasis of these frequencies.

Unlike linear units such as inches or pounds, decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale, representing points on a sharply rising curve. On a logarithmic scale, an increase of 10 dBA is 10 times more intense than 1 dBA, 20 dBA is 100 times more intense, and 30 dBA is 1,000 times more intense. A sound as soft as human breathing is about 10 times greater than 0 dBA. The decibel system of measuring sound gives a rough connection between the physical intensity of sound and its perceived loudness to the human ear. Ambient sounds generally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud).

Sound levels are generated from a source and their decibel level decreases as the distance from that source increases. Sound dissipates exponentially with distance from the noise source. This phenomenon is known as "spreading loss." For a single point source, sound levels decrease by approximately 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from the source. This drop-off rate is appropriate for noise generated by on-site operations from stationary equipment or activity at a project site. If noise is produced by a line source, such as highway traffic, the sound decreases by 3 dBA for each doubling of distance in a hard-site environment. Line source noise in a relatively flat environment with absorptive vegetation decreases by 4.5 dBA for each doubling of distance.

Time variation in noise exposure is typically expressed in terms of a steady-state energy level equal to the energy content of the time varying period (called L_{eq}), or alternately, as a statistical description of the sound level that is exceeded over some fraction of a given observation period. These " L_n " values are typically used to demonstrate compliance for stationary noise sources with a city's or county's noise ordinance. Other values typically noted during a noise survey are the L_{min} and L_{max} . These values represent the minimum and maximum root-mean-square noise levels obtained over the measurement period.

Because community receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during the evening and at night, State law, as well as cities and counties, require that, for planning purposes, an artificial dBA increment be added to quiet time noise levels in a 24-hour noise descriptor called the CNEL or DNL.

Psychological and Physiological Effects of Noise

Physical damage to human hearing begins at prolonged exposure to noise levels higher than 85 dBA. Exposure to high noise levels affects our entire system, with prolonged noise exposure in excess of 75 dBA increasing body tensions, thereby affecting blood pressure, functions of the heart, and the nervous system. Extended periods of noise exposure above 90 dBA can result in permanent hearing damage. When the noise level reaches 120 dBA, even short-term exposure causes a tickling sensation in the ear, called the threshold of feeling. As the sound reaches 140 dBA, the tickling sensation becomes painful, called the threshold of pain. Table 5.13-1 shows typical noise levels from familiar noise sources.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-1 Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
Onset of physical discomfort	120+	
	110	Rock band (near amplification system)
Jet flyover at 1,000 feet		
	100	
Gas lawn mower at 3 feet		
	90	
Diesel truck at 50 feet, at 50 mph		Food blender at 3 feet
	80	Garbage disposal at 3 feet
Noisy urban area, daytime		
	70	Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet
Commercial area		Normal speech at 3 feet
Heavy traffic at 300 feet	60	
		Large business office
Quiet urban daytime	50	Dishwasher, next room
Quiet urban nighttime	40	Theater or large conference room (background)
Quiet suburban nighttime		
	30	Library
Quiet rural nighttime		Bedroom at night or concert hall (background)
	20	
		Broadcast/recording studio
	10	
Lowest threshold of human hearing	0	Lowest threshold of human hearing

Source: Caltrans 2013a.

Vibration Fundamentals

Vibration is an oscillating motion in the earth. Like noise, vibration is transmitted in waves, but through the earth or solid objects. Unlike noise, vibration is typically of a frequency that is felt rather than heard.

Vibration can be natural—such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or landslides—or human-caused, such as explosions, heavy machinery, or trains. Both natural and human-caused vibration may be continuous, such as from operating machinery, or impulsive, as from an explosion.

As with noise, vibration can be described by both its amplitude and frequency. Amplitude can be characterized in three ways—displacement, velocity, and acceleration. Particle displacement is a measure of the distance that a vibrated particle travels from its original position; for the purposes of soil displacement, it is typically measured in inches or millimeters. Particle velocity is the rate of speed at which soil particles move in inches

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

per second or millimeters per second. Table 5.13-2 presents the human reaction to various levels of peak particle velocity.

Table 5.13-2 Human Reaction to Typical Vibration Levels

Vibration Level Peak Particle Velocity (in/sec)	Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
0.006–0.019	Threshold of perception, possibility of intrusion	Vibrations unlikely to cause damage of any type
0.08	Vibrations readily perceptible	Recommended upper level of vibration to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected
0.10	Level at which continuous vibration begins to annoy people	Virtually no risk of “architectural” (i.e., not structural) damage to normal buildings
0.20	Vibrations annoying to people in buildings	Threshold at which there is a risk to “architectural” damage to normal dwelling—houses with plastered walls and ceilings
0.4–0.6	Vibrations considered unpleasant by people subjected to continuous vibrations and unacceptable to some people walking on bridges	Vibrations at a greater level than normally expected from traffic, but would cause “architectural” damage and possibly minor structural damage

Source: Caltrans 2013b.

Vibrations also vary in frequency, and this affects perception. Typical construction vibrations fall in the 10 to 30 Hz range and usually occur around 15 Hz. Traffic vibrations exhibit a similar range of frequencies; however, due to their suspension systems, buses often generate frequencies around 3 Hz at high vehicle speeds. It is less common, but possible, to measure traffic frequencies above 30 Hz.

The way in which vibration is transmitted through the earth is called propagation. As vibration waves propagate from a source, the energy is spread over an ever-increasing area such that the energy level striking a given point is reduced with the distance from the energy source. This geometric spreading loss is inversely proportional to the square of the distance. Wave energy is also reduced with distance as a result of material damping in the form of internal friction, soil layering, and void spaces. The amount of attenuation provided by material damping varies with soil type and condition as well as the frequency of the wave.

5.13.1.2 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

To limit population exposure to physically and/or psychologically damaging as well as intrusive noise levels, the federal government, the State of California, and local governments have established standards and ordinances to control noise.

Federal

Federal Highway Administration

Proposed federal or federal-aided highway construction projects at a new location, or the physical alteration of an existing highway that significantly changes the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of through-traffic lanes, require an assessment of noise and consideration of noise abatement per 23 CFR Part

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

772, *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise*. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has adopted noise abatement criteria for sensitive receivers—such as picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sport areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals—when “worst-hour” noise levels approach or exceed 67 dBA L_{eq} (FHWA 1978).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to FHWA standards, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has identified the relationship between noise levels and human response. The USEPA determined that over a 24-hour period, an L_{eq} of 70 dBA will result in some hearing loss. Interference with activity and annoyance will not occur if exterior levels are maintained at an L_{eq} of 55 dBA and interior levels at or below 45 dBA. These levels are relevant to planning and design and useful for informational purposes, but they are not land use planning criteria because they do not consider economic cost, technical feasibility, or the needs of the community; therefore, they are not mandated.

The USEPA also set 55 dBA L_{dn} as the basic goal for exterior residential noise intrusion. However, other federal agencies, in consideration of their own program requirements and goals, as well as the difficulty of actually achieving a goal of 55 dBA L_{dn} , have settled on the 65 dBA L_{dn} level as their standard. At 65 dBA L_{dn} , activity interference is kept to a minimum, and annoyance levels are still low. It is also a level that can realistically be achieved.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has set the goal of 65 dBA L_{dn} as a desirable maximum exterior standard for residential units developed with HUD funding (This level is also generally accepted within the State of California.) Although HUD does not specify acceptable interior noise levels, standard construction of residential dwellings typically provides 20 dBA or more of attenuation with the windows closed. Based on this premise, the interior L_{dn} should not exceed 45 dBA.

Occupational Health and Safety Administration

The federal government regulates occupational noise exposure common in the workplace through the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) under the USEPA. Noise limitations would apply to the operation of construction equipment and could also apply to any proposed industrial land uses. Noise exposure of this type is dependent on work conditions and is addressed through a facility’s Health and Safety Plan, as required under OSHA, and is therefore not addressed further in this analysis.

State

General Plan Guidelines

The State of California, through its General Plan Guidelines, discusses how ambient noise should influence land use and development decisions and includes a table of normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable uses at different noise levels, expressed in CNEL (OPR 2017). A conditionally acceptable designation implies new construction or development should be undertaken only

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements for each land use and needed noise insulation features are incorporated in the design. By comparison, a normally acceptable designation indicates that standard construction can occur with no special noise reduction requirements. The General Plan Guidelines provide cities and counties with recommended community noise and land use compatibility standards that can be adopted or modified at the local level based on conditions and types of land uses specific to that jurisdiction.

California Building Code

The California Building Code (CBC) is Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. CBC Part 2, Volume 1, Chapter 12, Section 1206.4, *Allowable Interior Noise Levels*, requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources not exceed 45 dBA in any habitable room. The noise metric is evaluated as either the L_{dn} or the CNEL, whichever is consistent with the noise element of the local general plan.

The State's noise insulation standards for non-residential uses are codified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, *Building Standards Administrative Code*, Part 11, *California Green Building Standards Code* (CALGreen). CALGreen noise standards are applied to new or renovation construction projects in California to control interior noise levels resulting from exterior noise sources. Proposed projects may use either the prescriptive method (Section 5.507.4.1) or the performance method (Section 5.507.4.2) to show compliance. Under the prescriptive method, a project must demonstrate transmission loss ratings for the wall and roof-ceiling assemblies and exterior windows when within a noise environment of 65 dBA CNEL or higher. Under the performance method, a project must demonstrate that interior noise levels do not exceed 50 dBA $L_{eq(1hr)}$.

Airport Noise Standards

California Code of Regulations Title 21, Subchapter 6, *Airport Noise Standards*, establishes 65 dBA CNEL as the acceptable level of aircraft noise for persons living in the vicinity of airports. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally incompatible in locations where the aircraft exterior noise level exceeds 65 dBA CNEL, unless an aviation easement for aircraft noise has been acquired by the airport proprietor or the residence is a high-rise with an interior CNEL of 45 dBA or less in all habitable rooms and has an air circulation or air conditioning system, as appropriate. Assembly Bill (AB) 2776 requires any person who intends to sell or lease residential properties in an airport influence area to disclose that fact to the person buying the property.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Contra Costa County does not have a specific noise ordinance for operational exterior stationary noise sources. However, the County Ordinance Code does include noise standards for other noise sources.

- **Title 7, *Building Regulations*, Section 716-8.1008, *Nuisances***, states that operations shall be controlled to prevent nuisances to public and private ownerships because of dust, drainage, removal of natural support of land and structures, encroachment, noise, and/or vibration.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

- **Title 8, General Regulations, Section 82-44.410, Conditions**, establishes exterior noise standards for special events. This section states that when a temporary event permit is granted for any event in a residential zoning district or at a residence in any other zoning district, the event shall not generate or emit any noise or sound that exceeds any of the levels specified in Table 5.13-3 when measured at the exterior of any dwelling unit on another residential property.

Table 5.13-3 Allowable Exterior Noise Levels for Events

Time Period	Noise Level (dBA)				
	L ₅₀	L ₂₅	L ₈	L ₂	L _{max}
9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.	60	65	70	75	80
8:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m.	55	60	65	70	75

Source: Contra Costa County Ordinance Code.

Note: Amplified sound is prohibited after eight p.m. Sundays through Thursdays and after ten p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, and holidays. A temporary event permit may not allow the use of amplified sound after these hours.

- **Title 8, Special Land Uses, Section 88-3.612, Noise**, establishes noise standards for wind energy conversion systems (WECS). Under this provision, a commercial WECS may not generate or emit any noise at any time that exceeds a maximum level of 65 dBA, measured at each line of the exterior project boundary. Additionally, a residential WECS may not generate or emit any noise at any time that exceeds a maximum level of 60 decibels (dBA), as measured at each line of the parcel upon which the residential WECS is installed.

Buchanan Field Airport Noise Management Program

The Buchanan Field Airport Noise Management Program includes Noise Abatement Procedures for airplanes and helicopters, such as arrivals, departures, and training procedures. The Noise Management Program also includes the following restrictions:

- Airplanes exceeding 78 dBA per Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) AC 36-3 are prohibited.
- The curfew for airplanes exceeding 75 dBA per AC 36-3 is between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. local.

Construction Noise and Vibration

Contra Costa County has not adopted specific limits or thresholds for construction noise and vibration. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides criteria for acceptable construction noise levels at sensitive receptors and groundborne vibration for various types of buildings. The recommended vibration criteria by the FTA are shown in Table 5.13-4, *Building Architectural Damage Limits*. The FTA construction noise criterion for residential receptors during daytime hour is 80 dBA L_{eq(8hr)}.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-4 Building Architectural Damage Limits

Building Category	PPV (in/sec)
I. Reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster)	0.5
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3
III. Nonengineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12

Source: FTA 2018.

5.13.1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Ambient Noise Measurements

Ambient noise monitoring was conducted within the EIR Study Area by PlaceWorks in April 2019 during weekday periods to determine a baseline noise level at different environments. Long-term (48-hour) measurements were conducted at four locations in the EIR Study Area, and short-term (15 minute) measurements were conducted at 19 locations in the EIR Study Area. All measurements were conducted from Tuesday, April 23, through Thursday, April 25, 2019. Short-term measurements were generally made during morning (i.e., 7:00 am to 10:00 am) and afternoon (i.e., 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm) peak commute hours.

Meteorological conditions during the measurement periods were favorable for outdoor sound measurements and were noted to be representative of the typical conditions for the season. All sound level meters were equipped with a windscreen during measurements.

All sound level meters used for noise monitoring satisfy the American National Standards Institute standard for Type 1 instrumentation.¹ The sound level meters were set to “slow” response and “A” weighting (dBA). The meters were calibrated prior to and after the monitoring period. All measurements were at least 5 feet above the ground and away from reflective surfaces. Noise measurement locations are described in this section and shown in Figures 5.13-1 through 5.13-6, *Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations*.

¹ Monitoring of ambient noise was performed using Larson-Davis Model LxT and 820 sound level meters.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

This page intentionally left blank.

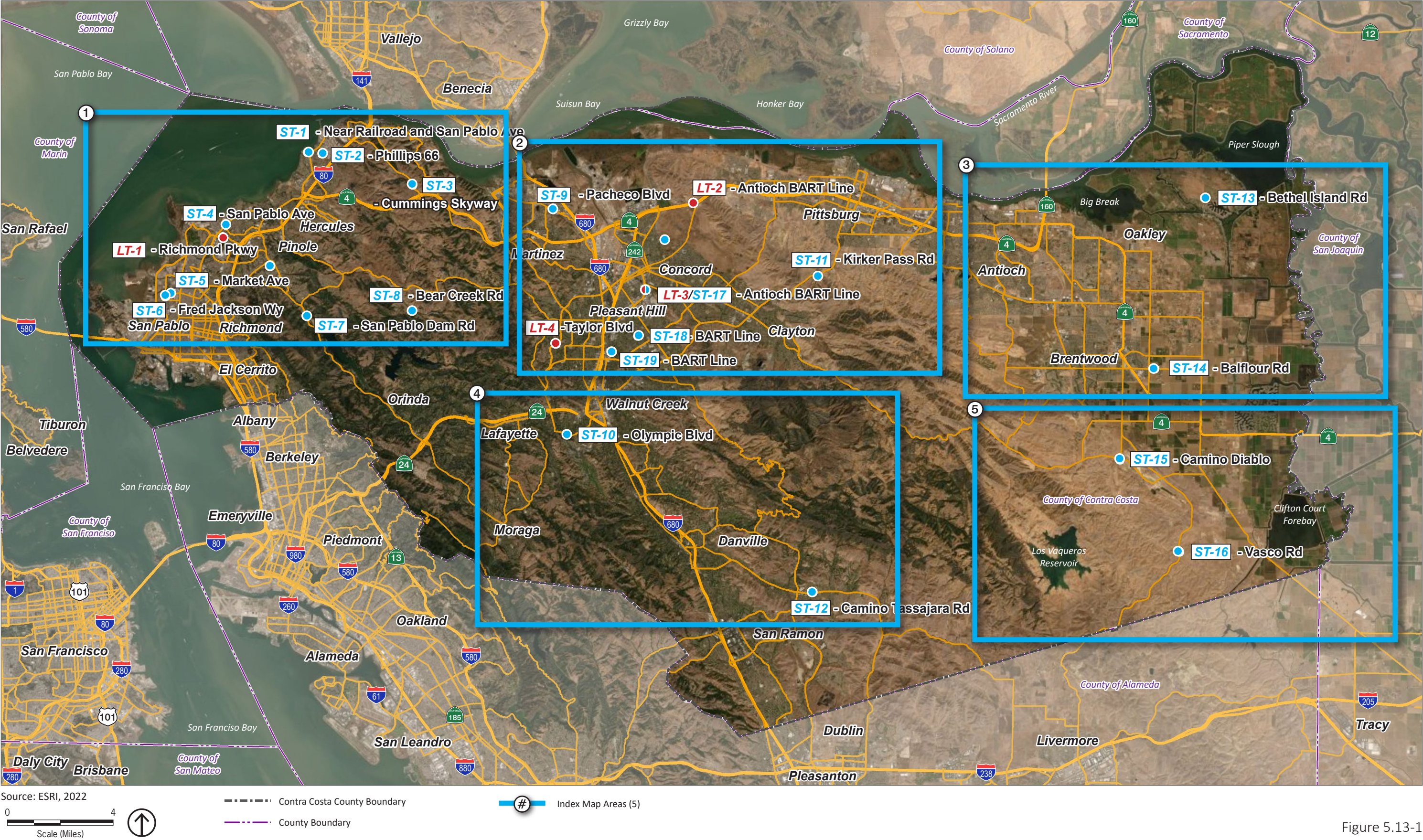
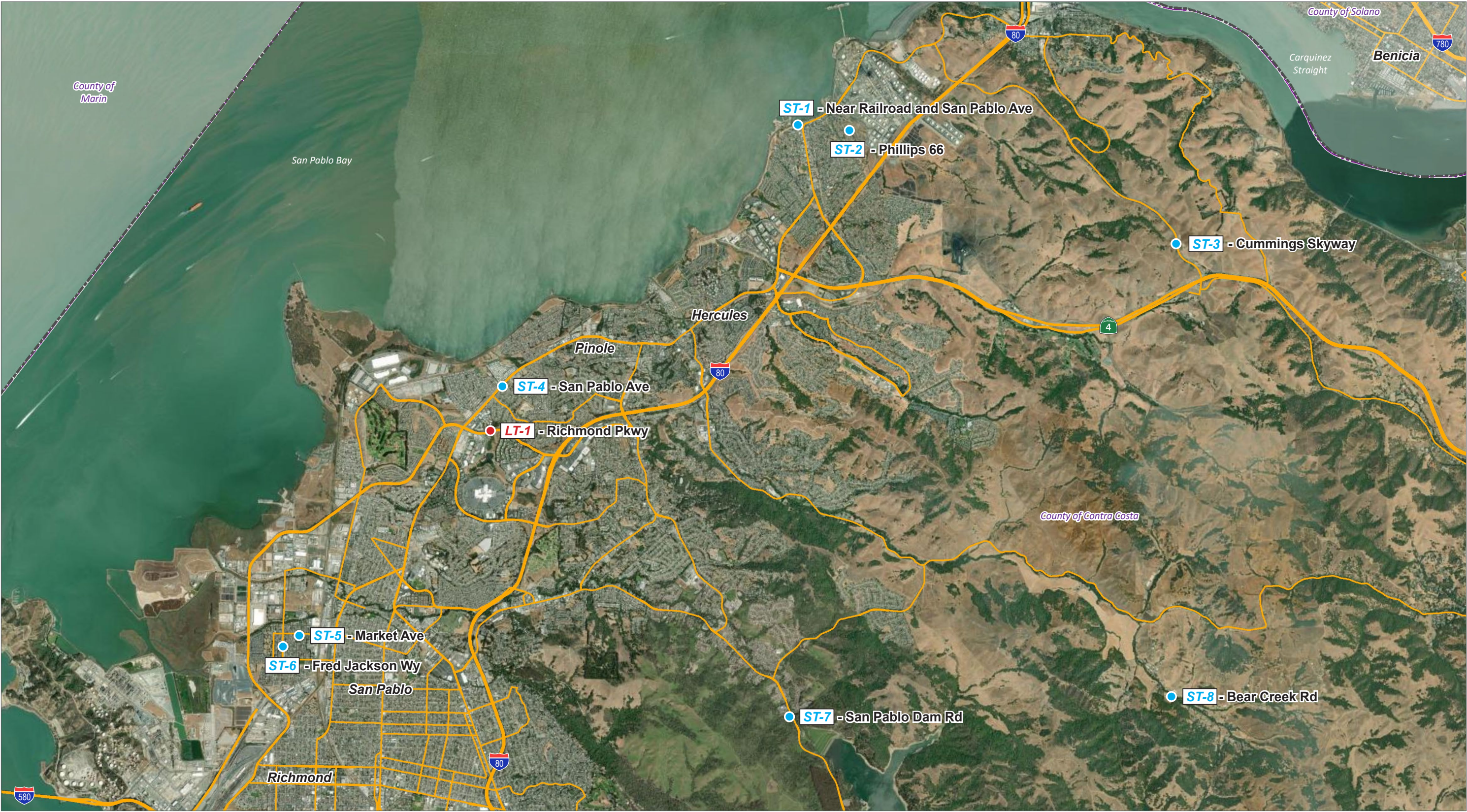
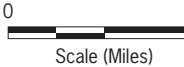


Figure 5.13-1
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Index Map)

NOISE



Source: ESRI, 2022



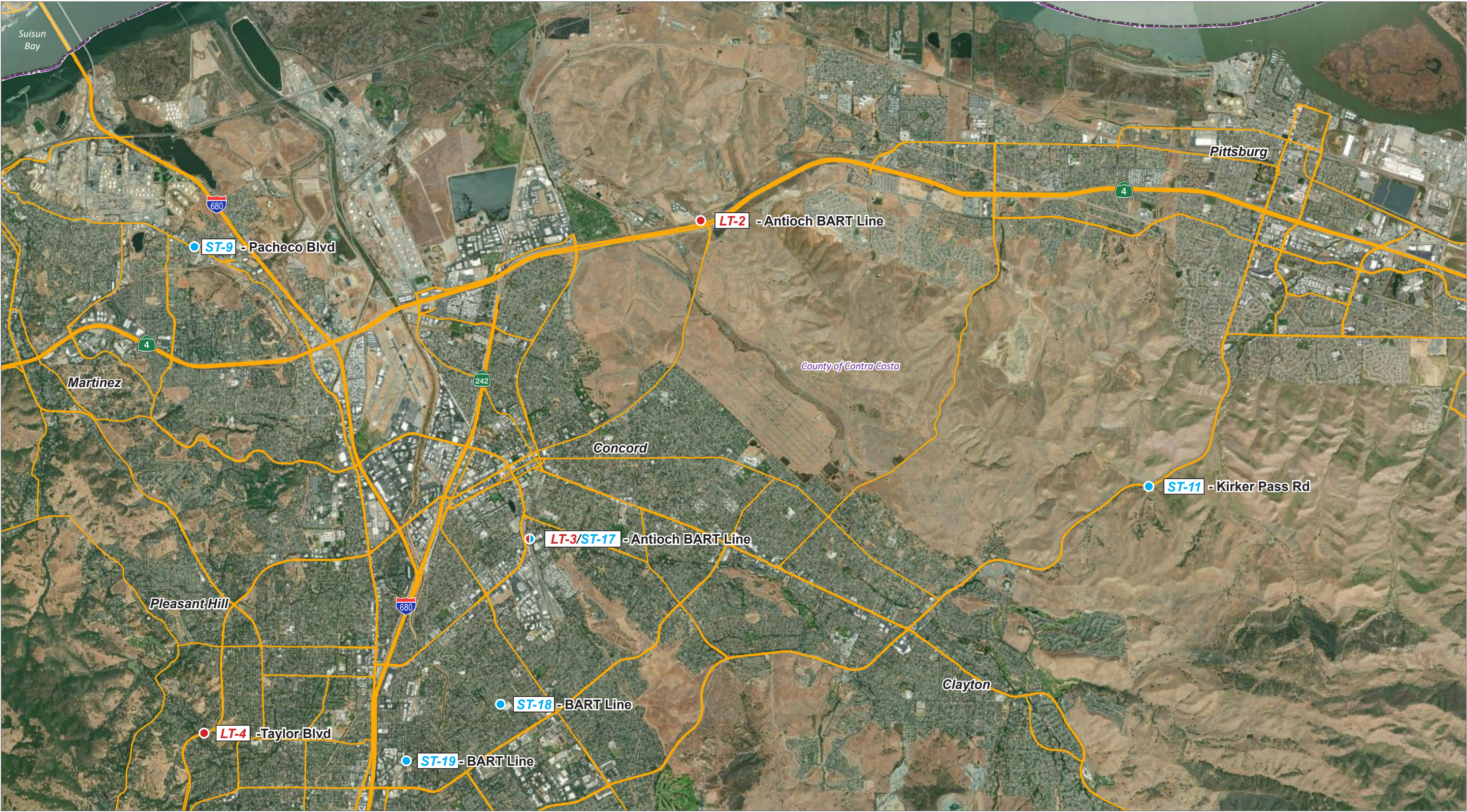
--- Contra Costa County Boundary

● **ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations

● **LT-X** Long-Term Noise Measurement Locations

Figure 5.13-2
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 1 of 5)

NOISE



Source: ESRI, 2022



--- Contra Costa County Boundary

- ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations
- LT-X** Long-Term Noise Measurement Locations

Figure 5.13-3
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 2 of 5)



Source: ESRI, 2022

0 1
Scale (Miles)



--- Contra Costa County Boundary

● **ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations

Figure 5.13-4
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 3 of 5)

NOISE



Source: ESRI, 2022



--- Contra Costa County Boundary

● **ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations

Figure 5.13-5
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 4 of 5)

NOISE



Source: ESRI, 2022



--- Contra Costa County Boundary

- - - County Boundary

● **ST-X** Short-Term Noise Measurement Locations

Figure 5.13-6
Approximate Countywide Noise Monitoring Locations (Map 5 of 5)

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Ambient Noise Monitoring Results

During the ambient noise survey, the CNEL noise levels at monitoring locations ranged from 66 to 80 dBA CNEL. The long-term noise measurement results are summarized later in this section and shown in Table 5.13-5, *Long-Term Noise Measurements Summary*, and a graphical summary of the daily trend during long-term noise measurements is provided in Appendix 5.13-1. The short-term noise measurement results are also summarized later in this section and shown in Table 5.13-6, *Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary*.

Table 5.13-5 Long-Term Noise Measurement Summary

Monitoring Location	Description	Long-Term Noise Level, dBA		
		CNEL	Lowest Leq(1hr)	Highest Leq(1hr)
LT-1	Richmond Parkway east of San Pablo Avenue 04/23/2019, 11:00 am	80	68.8	76.4
LT-2	Antioch BART Line along Evora Road 04/23/2019, 1:00 pm	75	63.3	71.9
LT-3	Antioch BART Line along San Miguel Road 04/23/2019, 2:00 pm	66	49.1	69.2
LT-4	Taylor Boulevard east of Withers Avenue 04/23/2019, 3:00 pm	76	54.1	76.8

Table 5.13-6 Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary

Monitoring Location	15-Minute Noise Level, dBA						
	Leq	L _{max}	L _{min}	L ₂	L ₈	L ₂₅	L ₅₀
ST-1	64.4	78.1	49.7	76.8	69.2	55.0	51.7
ST-2	47.8	55.3	45.1	52.6	49.4	48.1	47.1
ST-3	72.0	87.6	33.9	80.5	77.4	71.7	61.0
ST-4	74.3	87.8	44.0	80.8	78.8	75.7	72.0
ST-5	60.0	75.8	47.5	68.2	64.6	59.3	54.6
ST-6	59.7	77.1	47.1	68.8	64.7	57.6	52.6
ST-7	75.5	88.5	51.1	81.3	79.4	77.2	74.2
ST-8	56.0	76.1	34.3	67.7	56.7	43.8	39.8
ST-9	70.4	82.6	50.1	76.5	74.2	71.6	68.7
ST-10	70.1	77.3	43.6	74.7	73.6	71.8	69.4
ST-11	75.1	84.4	46.7	80.4	79.0	77.0	73.9
ST-12	69.2	81.0	41.3	76.4	74.0	70.8	65.0
ST-13	56.8	78.8	33.5	66.2	52.0	46.0	42.1
ST-14	68.3	85.3	38.2	76.4	72.7	68.1	62.0
ST-15	67.8	88.1	38.2	76.2	72.0	62.9	51.2
ST-16	73.4	87.7	60.5	81.2	78.6	72.2	68.8
5-Minute Noise Level, dBA at BART Rail Locations							
ST-17 ^a	57.0	69.3	47.2	62.5	60.3	57.9	55.0
ST-18 ^a	66.6	80.1	43.5	75.1	72.2	66.8	58.8
ST-19 ^a	53.1	66.5	45.8	61.6	55.6	52.3	50.7

^a 5-minute ambient measurements at BART rail locations only.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Long-Term Noise Monitoring Locations

- **Long-Term Location 1 (LT-1)** was on Richmond Parkway east of San Pablo Avenue. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet north of the Richmond Parkway westbound centerline. A 48-hour noise measurement was conducted, beginning at the 12:00 pm hour on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic.
- **Long-Term Location 2 (LT-2)** was at the intersection of the Willow Pass Road and State Route (SR-) 4 westbound onramp and in close proximity to the Antioch Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line in the median of SR-4. A 48-hour noise measurement was conducted, beginning at the 1:00 pm hour on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic and BART pass-bys.
- **Long-Term Location 3 (LT-3)** was on San Miguel Road north of Syston Drive and in close proximity to the Antioch BART line at the transition from an embankment to an elevated platform. A 48-hour noise measurement was conducted, beginning at the 2:00 pm hour on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic and BART pass-bys.
- **Long-Term Location 4 (LT-4)** was on Taylor Boulevard east of Withers Avenue. The measurement location was approximately 25 feet south of the Taylor Boulevard eastbound centerline. A 48-hour noise measurement was conducted, beginning at the 3:00 pm hour on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic.

Short-Term Noise Monitoring Locations

- **Short-Term Location 1 (ST-1)** was at Lone Tree Point Park in Rodeo. The measurement location was approximately 25 feet south of the park's property line with the Union Pacific right-of-way. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 8:52 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by light local traffic, wildlife such as birds, and occasional train pass-bys. In addition to the 15-minute ambient noise measurement, a train pass-by was measured, which consisted of an Amtrak with one engine and six cars. The train did not sound its horn while passing.
- **Short-Term Location 2 (ST-2)** was at the dead end of Mariposa Avenue east of Dempsey Way near the Phillips 66 Refinery. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 9:19 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by low ambient noise levels with a distant industrial hum, occasional small plane flyovers, distant traffic, and distant dogs barking.
- **Short-Term Location 3 (ST-3)** was on Cummings Skyway north of SR-4. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet west of the Cummings Skyway southbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 9:49 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds.
- **Short-Term Location 4 (ST-4)** was on San Pablo Avenue north of Shamrock Drive. The measurement location was approximately 18 feet east of the San Pablo Avenue northbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 8:35 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

- **Short-Term Location 5 (ST-5)** was on Market Avenue east of 5th Street. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet south of the Market Avenue eastbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 7:36 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds, dogs, and occasional train pass-bys.
- **Short-Term Location 6 (ST-6)** was on San Pablo Dam Road north of Tri Lane. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet west of the San Pablo Road southbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 9:17 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds.
- **Short-Term Location 7 (ST-7)** was in front of 1636 Fred Jackson Way. The measurement location was approximately 25 feet east of the Fred Jackson northbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 7:00 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds.
- **Short-Term Location 8 (ST-8)** was in front of 1174 Bear Creek Road. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 9:51 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by low-volume traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds, horses, and aircraft overflights.
- **Short-Term Location 9 (ST-9)** was in front of 3907 Pacheco Boulevard. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet north of the Pacheco Boulevard westbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 3:08 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic.
- **Short-Term Location 10 (ST-10)** was on Olympic Boulevard east of Newell Court. The measurement location was approximately 25 feet south of the Pacheco Boulevard westbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 3:08 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included aircraft overflights.
- **Short-Term Location 11 (ST-11)** was on Kirker Pass Road north of Hess Road. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet south of the Kirker Pass eastbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 4:03 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by traffic along Kirker Pass Road.
- **Short-Term Location 12 (ST-12)** was on Camino Tassajara Road east of Rassani Drive. The measurement location was approximately 20 feet north of the Camino Tassajara westbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 6:06 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic.
- **Short-Term Location 13 (ST-13)** was on Bethel Island Road north of Gateway Road. The measurement location was approximately 8 feet east of the Bethel Island Road northbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 3:50 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by birds, wind, and distant vehicular traffic. local traffic.
- **Short-Term Location 14 (ST-14)** was on Balfour Road east of Sellers Avenue. The measurement location was approximately 18 feet south of the Balfour road eastbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 4:34 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds when quiet (i.e., no traffic).

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

- **Short-Term Location 15 (ST-15)** was on Camino Diablo east of Walnut Boulevard. The measurement location was approximately 14 feet north of the Camino Diablo westbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 5:01 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic. Secondary noise sources included birds and house pumps.
- **Short-Term Location 16 (ST-16)** was on Vasco Road between Camino Diablo and the county boundary line. The measurement location was approximately 25 feet west of the Vasco Road southbound centerline. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 5:34 pm on Tuesday, April 23, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by local traffic.
- **Short-Term Location 17 (ST-17)** was on San Miguel Road north of Systron Drive and in close proximity to the Antioch BART line at the transition from an embankment to an elevated platform. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 3:30 pm on Thursday, April 25, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by BART rail noise.
- **Short-Term Location 18 (ST-18)** was at grade near the BART line along Minert Road east of Weaver Lane. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 3:41 pm on Thursday, April 25, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by BART rail noise.
- **Short-Term Location 19 (ST-19)** was on between Coggins Drive (north of Las Juntas Way) and the BART above ground rail line. A 15-minute noise measurement was conducted, beginning at 4:11 pm on Thursday, April 25, 2019. The noise environment of this site is characterized primarily by BART rail noise.

Existing Traffic Noise

On-road vehicles are the most prominent source of noise in the EIR Study Area. Traffic data provided by Fehr and Peers, which included 225 study roadway segments, average daily traffic volumes (ADT), vehicle mix (i.e., auto, medium-duty truck, and heavy-duty truck), and day, evening, and night splits were used to model existing traffic noise levels. The modeled roadways and existing noise contours for 60 dBA CNEL, 65 dBA CNEL, and 70+ dBA CNEL can be found in Appendix 5.13-1.

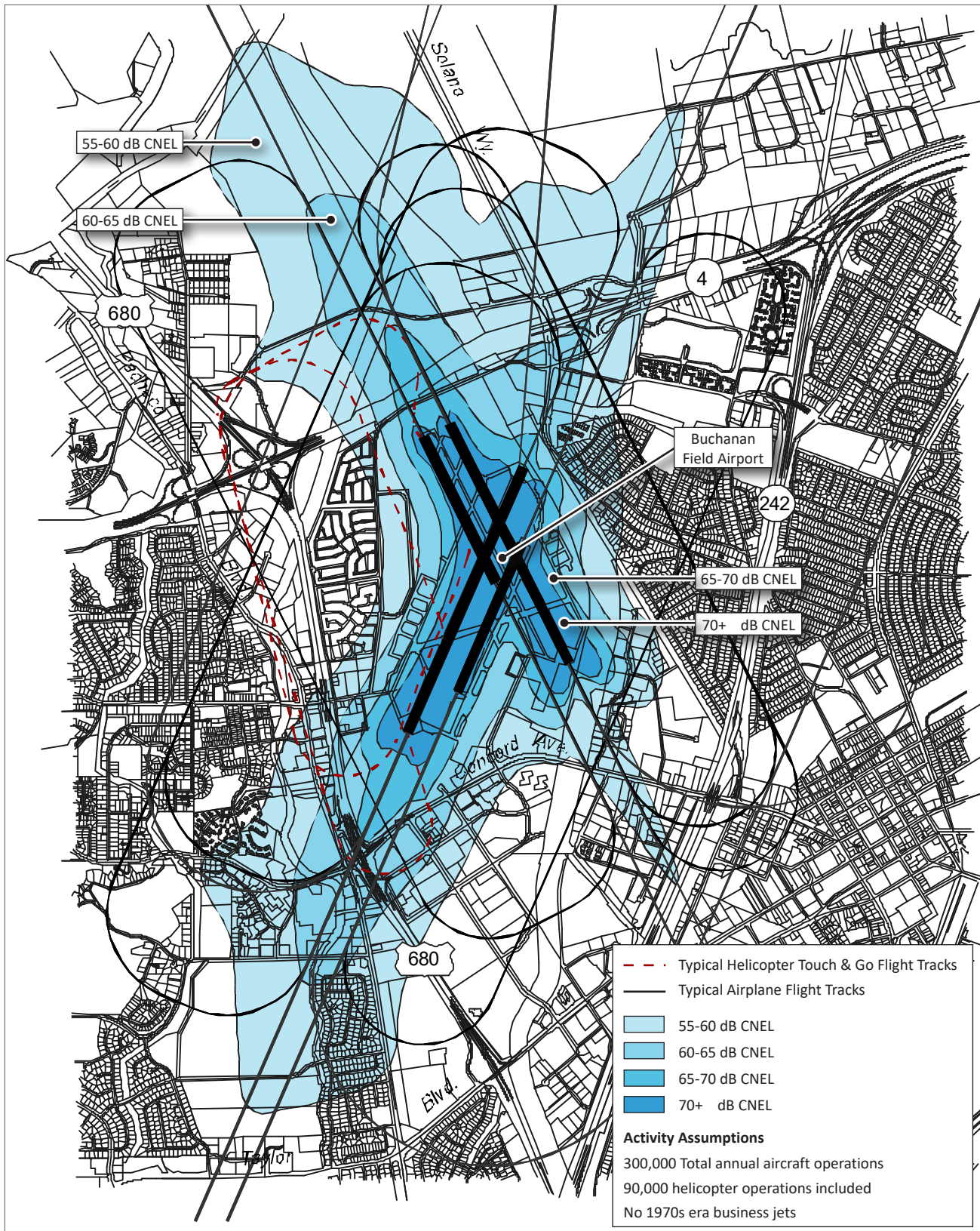
Aircraft Noise

Aircraft noise in the EIR Study Area can be intrusive to sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity of the two public airports—Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport.

Buchanan Field Airport

Buchanan Field Airport is a general aviation airport in unincorporated Concord. The airport has seen a decrease in aircraft operations from 350,000 in 1975 to approximately 119,355 in 2022 (AirNav 2023a). Helicopters account for approximately 35 percent of flight activity, which is primarily for flight training. It is projected that non-helicopter aircraft operations will increase by approximately 37 percent, which is consistent with the county's projected growth. Total operations are expected to reach no more than 320,000 operations per year, which would remain below the 1975 historic high of 350,000 operations (Contra Costa County 2000). As shown in Figure 5.13-7, *Buchanan Field Airport Noise Contours*, the 55 to 60 and 60 to 65 dB CNEL noise contours extend to portions of residential communities to the northeast and southwest.

NOISE



Source: Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan 2008.



Figure 5.13-7
Buchanan Field Airport Noise Contours

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

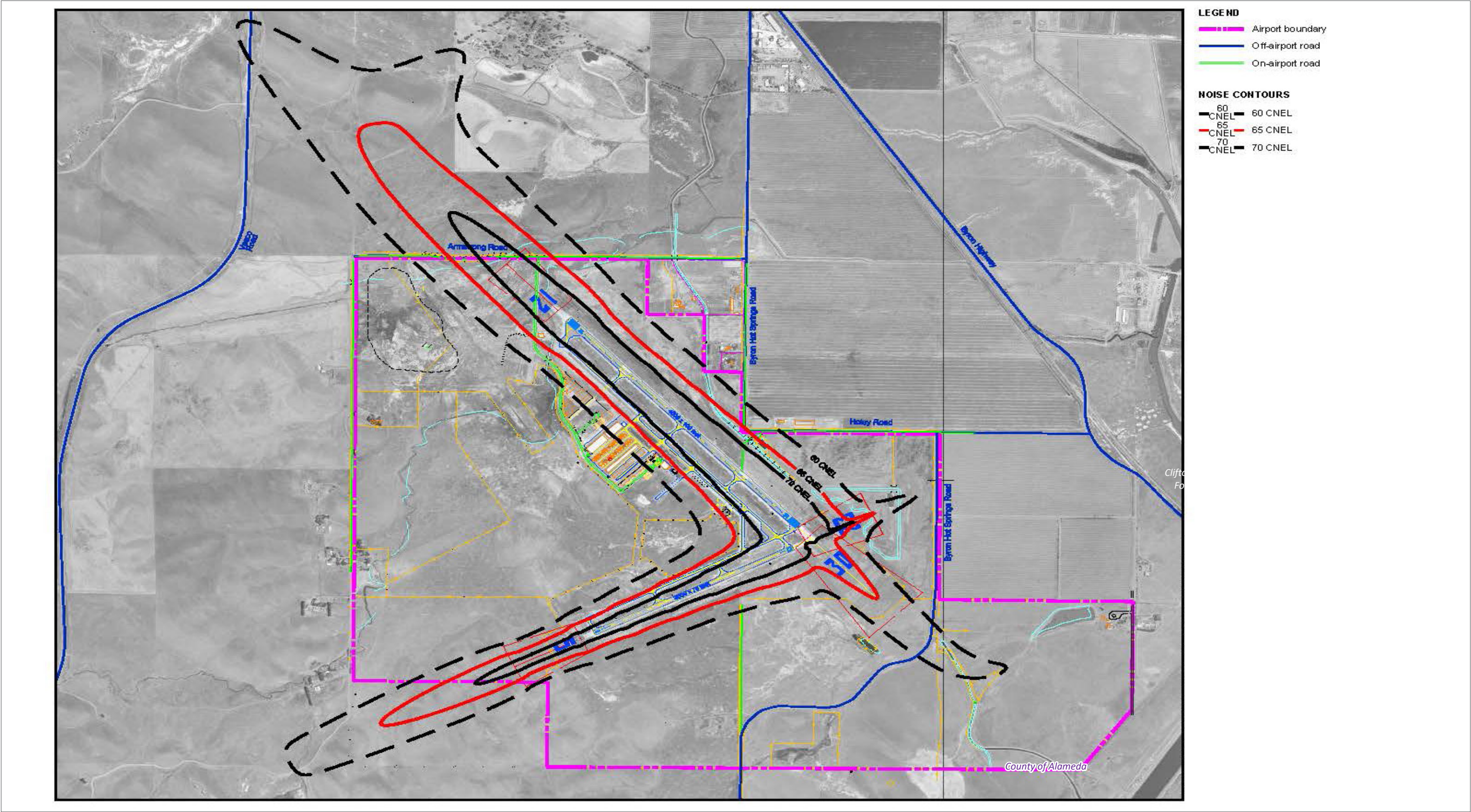
Byron Airport

Byron Airport is a County-owned airport that serves a variety of flying activities, including sky diving, sailplane, flights, and ultralight aircraft operations. In June 2022, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the Byron Airport Development Program. The Development Program included a new land use plan for the airport which broadened the range of uses allowed by right on the airport property. The County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) subsequently adopted amendments to the Byron Airport section of the County's Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) to add new policies and maps consistent with the most recent version of the Caltrans California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook. Currently 80 aircraft are based at Byron Airport (AirNav 2023b). At full buildout, the airport's capacity is approximately 380 aircraft. In 2021, approximately 82,855 aircraft operations took place (AirNav 2023b). Figure 5.13-8, *Byron Airport Noise Contours*, shows the projected airport noise contours.

Railroad Noise

Railroad operations are a substantial source of noise in some parts of the EIR Study Area. Day-night average noise levels vary throughout the EIR Study Area depending on the number of trains per day along a given rail line, the timing and duration of train pass-by events, and whether or not trains must sound their warning whistles near "at-grade" crossings. Noise levels commonly range from 65 to 75 dBA CNEL at land uses adjoining a railroad right-of-way. When trains approach a passenger station or at-grade crossing, they are required to sound their warning whistle within a quarter mile. Train warning whistles typically generate maximum noise levels of 105 to 110 dBA at 100 feet. The day-night average noise level at locations immediately adjacent to at-grade crossings and exposed to multiple train pass-by events per day can exceed 85 dBA L_{dn} /CNEL. Table 5.13-7, *Existing Railroad Noise Levels*, contains the calculated distances to the 65 dBA CNEL contours from existing railroad noise, both from the main line and within a quarter mile of grade crossings where horn warnings are required.

NOISE



Source: Byron Airport Master Plan 2005

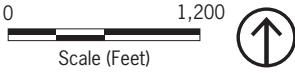


Figure 5.13-8
Byron Airport Noise Contours

5. Environmental Analysis
NOISE

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-7 Existing Railroad Noise Levels

Operator	Subdivision	Distance (feet) to 65 dBA CNEL Contour (Main Line)	Distance (feet) to 65 dBA CNEL Contour (Within ¼ Mile of Grade Crossing)
BNSF	Stockton Subdivision	210	382
BNSF	Stockton Subdivision west of Port of Chicago	210	355
RPRC	Chevron Lead	5	69
RPRC	Cutting Lead	5	69
RPRC	Harbor Lead	15	195
RPRC	LRT Lead	20	241
UP	Martinez Subdivision	175	NA ¹
UP	Martinez Subdivision south of Pinole	220	NA ¹
UP	Tracy Subdivision	10	73

Notes: Calculated using the FTA CREATE Model and FRA Grade Crossing Horn Model. See Appendix 5.13-1.

BNSF = Burlington Northern Santa Fe; RPRC = Richmond Pacific Railroad; UP = Union Pacific.

¹NA: Not Applicable because there are no at-grade crossings and therefore no horns.

Union Pacific: Tracy Subdivision

There currently is no freight traffic on the Union Pacific (UP) Tracy Subdivision from Mococo (Martinez) to the eastern boundary of Contra Costa County. The UP Tracy has been inactive for over 30 years but, according to UP, freight traffic may be reactivated in the future. Amtrak San Joaquin passenger trains travel on these tracks starting near Port Chicago where they cross over from the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Stockton Subdivision. The trains continue west on the UP Tracy Subdivision until joining with the UP Martinez Subdivision in Martinez. Only a short section between Port Chicago and Martinez is currently active with Amtrak San Joaquin passenger trains. There are 10 Amtrak San Joaquin passenger trains per day.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe: Stockton Subdivision

The BNSF Railway has freight traffic and Amtrak San Joaquin passenger traffic from Port Chicago to the eastern boundary of Contra Costa County. At Port Chicago, the westbound Amtrak San Joaquin trains switch to the UP Tracy Subdivision, from which point the BNSF only has freight traffic and the tracks terminate in Richmond.

Union Pacific: Martinez Subdivision

The UP Martinez Subdivision has freight traffic and passenger traffic. The Amtrak San Joaquin runs 10 trains per day, Amtrak Capitol Corridor runs 22 trains per day, Amtrak Coast Starlight runs two trains per day, and Amtrak California Zephyr runs two trains per day. The tracks enter Contra Costa County at the Benicia-Martinez Bridge and continue west. The UP Tracy Subdivision with Amtrak San Joaquin trains end at Ferry Street and merge onto the UP Martinez Subdivision.

Richmond Pacific Railroad

The Richmond Pacific Railroad (RPRC) is a terminal railroad serving the Chevron Refinery, the Richmond Yard, and other industrial customers in Richmond. The various RPRC tracks accommodate between 2 and 22 switching trains per day.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Quiet Zones

There are designated “quiet zones” in Richmond at Parchester Village and at select locations along the RPRC tracks in and around Richmond Harbor. In these locations, trains are not required to sound their warning whistle (though still may if the conductor deems it necessary for safety reasons).

Stationary Source Noise

Stationary sources of noise may occur from all types of land uses. Residential uses generate noise from landscaping, maintenance activities, and air conditioning systems. Commercial uses generate noise from heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; loading docks; and other sources. Industrial uses generate noise from HVAC systems, loading docks, and oil refinery machinery and activity. Noise generated by residential or commercial uses are generally short and intermittent. Industrial uses may generate noise on a more continual basis due to the nature of its activities. Nightclubs, outdoor dining areas, gas stations, car washes, fire stations, drive-throughs, swimming pool pumps, school playgrounds, athletic and music events, and public parks are other common noise sources.

Existing Vibration

Commercial and industrial operations in the EIR Study Area can generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the operational procedures and equipment. Such equipment-generated vibrations spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the vibration source varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. In addition, future sensitive receptors could be placed within close proximity to existing railroad lines through development in the EIR Study Area.

5.13.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would result in:

- N-1 Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
- N-2 Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.
- N-3 For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, if the project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Construction Noise and Vibration Thresholds

As mentioned previously, the County does not have specific limits or thresholds for construction noise. Therefore, the FTA construction noise criterion of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8hr)}$ is used in this analysis to assess construction noise impacts at sensitive receptors.

Stationary Noise Thresholds

The County does not provide exterior noise standards for operational stationary noise sources. However, it does provide maximum allowable exterior noise levels for special events (shown in Table 5.13-3) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. For the purposes of this analysis, these standards are used to determine significant stationary noise impacts with revised hours to include both daytime and nighttime periods, as shown in Table 5.13-8, *Allowable Exterior Noise Levels*.

Table 5.13-8 Allowable Exterior Noise Levels

Time Period	Noise Level (dBA)				
	L ₅₀	L ₂₅	L ₈	L ₂	L _{max}
Daytime, 7:00 am–7:00 pm ¹	60	65	70	75	80
Nighttime, 7:00 pm–7:00 am ¹	55	60	65	70	75

¹Standard daytime and nighttime hours.

Transportation Noise Thresholds

A project will normally have a significant effect on the environment related to noise if it will substantially increase the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas. Most people can detect changes in sound levels of approximately 3 dBA under normal, quiet conditions, and changes of 1 to 3 dBA are detectable under quiet, controlled conditions. Changes of less than 1 dBA are usually indiscernible. A change of 5 dBA is readily discernible to most people in an exterior environment. Based on this, the following thresholds of significance, similar to those recommended by the FAA, are used to assess traffic noise impacts at sensitive receptor locations. A significant impact would occur if the traffic noise increase would exceed:

- 1.5 dBA in ambient noise environments of 65 dBA CNEL and higher
- 3 dBA in ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL
- 5 dBA in ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA CNEL

Vibration Thresholds

As mentioned previously, the County does not have specific limits or thresholds for construction vibration. Therefore, the recommended criteria by the FTA for vibration damage shown in Table 5.13-4 are used in this analysis.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

5.13.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.13.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to noise. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P7.2:** Work with the Federal Aviation Administration and aviation operators to minimize conflicts with residential areas and other sensitive receptors.
- ***Policy TR-P7.3:*** *Regulate the location of private airfields and heliports to protect public safety and minimize impacts on nearby residents and sensitive receptors.*
- ***Policy TR-P7.4:*** *Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County ALUCP.*
- **Policy TR-P7.5:** Partner with the cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill in making land use decisions that support Buchanan Field Airport's ongoing viability while protecting public safety, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.
- **Policy TR-P7.6:** Enhance Byron Airport's viability by protecting it from incompatible urban encroachment, such as large-scale residential development, and providing infrastructure that supports existing and planned airport activities, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and ALUCP.

Health and Safety Element

- **Goal HS-14:** An acceptable noise environment in all areas of the county.
 - ***Policy HS-P14.1.*** *Require projects that would locate noise-sensitive land uses in areas where the projected ambient noise level is greater than the "normally acceptable" noise level indicated in Table HS-3 of the General Plan to provide an acoustical analysis that recommends appropriate mitigation to meet the noise compatibility standards.*
 - ***Policy HS-P14.2.*** *Require new housing developments, hotels, and motels exposed to a DNL of 60 dB or greater to provide a detailed acoustical analysis describing how the project will provide an interior DNL of 45 dB or less.*
 - ***Policy HS-P14.3.*** *Require new nonresidential uses exposed to a DNL of 65 dB or greater to provide a detailed acoustical analysis describing how the project will provide an interior sound level of 50 Leq (1-hr)*
 - ***Policy HS-P14.4.*** *Require new residential development in areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB due to single events, such as train operation, to provide an acoustical analysis describing how indoor noise levels from these single events will not exceed a maximum A-weighted noise level of 35 dB in bedrooms and 55 dB in other habitable rooms. In areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB, use an indoor residential noise-level threshold of 45 dB CNEL.*
 - ***Policy HS-P14.5.*** *Protect noise-sensitive land uses listed in Table HS-3 from adverse noise impacts by requiring mitigation to the degree feasible for projects that would increase long-term noise in excess of the following thresholds, when measured at the sensitive use's property line:*

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

- a) Greater than 1.5 dBA DNL increase for ambient noise environments of 65 dBA DNL and higher.
 - b) Greater than 3 dBA DNL increase for ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 DNL.
 - c) Greater than 5 dBA DNL increase for ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA DNL.
- **Policy HS-P14.6.** Design County projects to minimize long-term noise impacts on existing residents and follow best practices to minimize short-term impacts from construction noise.
- **Policy HS-P14.7.** Condition entitlements to limit noise-generating construction activities to the following:
 - a) Weekdays and non-holidays unless site-specific conditions warrant exception
 - b) Within 1,000 feet of noise-sensitive uses: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 - c) Over 1,000 feet from noise-sensitive uses: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Policy HS-P14.8.** Require a traffic noise analysis for development projects where the project would generate more than 40 percent of daily trips over existing average daily traffic (ADT) on impacted roadway segments. Projects below this threshold are assumed to have no significant traffic noise impact because they would increase noise levels by less than 1.5 dBA DNL, which is the most restrictive threshold for determining a significant traffic noise impact. This screening policy does not apply to projects involving a substantial number of new operational truck trips (e.g., warehouses).
- **Policy HS-P14.9.** Require effective measures along major transportation facilities/corridors to reduce impacts on adjacent noise-sensitive land uses.
- **Policy HS-P14.10.** Require new development to evaluate noise impacts on the natural environment, including impacts on wildlife, whenever appropriate.
- **Policy HS-P14.11.** When reviewing proposals for new vibration-sensitive uses near an existing railroad or Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line, use Table HS-4 to evaluate whether the sensitive uses could be exposed to excessive groundborne vibration. Projects with sensitive uses within the screening distances identified in the table will require preparation of a groundborne vibration and noise evaluation that is consistent with Federal Transit Administration-approved methodologies.
- **Action HSA14.1.** Study the feasibility of adopting a noise ordinance establishing maximum exterior noise levels at sensitive receptors for noise generated by permanent and temporary stationary, non-transportation sources and construction sources.
- **Action HSA14.2.** Pursue federal Quiet Zone status for rail crossings that are a noise nuisance to nearby residential areas and other noise-sensitive land uses.

5.1.1.1 PROPOSED CAP STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) that are applicable to noise.

5.13.4 Environmental Impacts

Traffic noise levels for existing and project conditions were estimated using the FHWA traffic noise prediction model methodology. The FHWA model predicts noise levels through a series of adjustments to a reference sound level. These adjustments account for distances from the roadway, volumes vehicle mix (i.e., auto, medium-duty truck, and heavy-duty truck), time of day split (i.e., day, evening, and night), speeds, and number of lanes data, which were provided by Fehr & Peers for highway and roadway segments in the county for

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

existing and future project conditions. The complete distances to the 70, 65, and 60 dBA CNEL noise contours for roadway segments in the county are included in Appendix 5.13-1.

As a result of the California Supreme Court decision regarding the assessment of the environment's impacts on projects (*California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, 62 Cal. 4th 369 (No. S 213478) issued December 17, 2015), it is generally no longer the purview of the CEQA process to evaluate the impact of existing environmental conditions on any given project. As a result, while the noise from existing sources is taken into account as part of the baseline, the direct effects of exterior noise from nearby noise sources relative to land use compatibility of a future project as a result of implementation of the project is typically no longer a required topic for impact evaluation under CEQA. Generally, no determination of significance is required except for certain school projects, projects affected by airport noise, and projects that would exacerbate existing conditions (i.e., projects that would have a significant operational impact). As required by the proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.1, new projects shall be required to meet acceptable exterior noise levels standards as established in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines from the General Plan. These guidelines, along with the future noise levels shown in the General Plan noise contour maps, should be used by the County as a guide for evaluating the compatibility of noise sensitive projects in potentially noisy areas.

Impact 5.13-1: Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project. [Threshold N-1]

Proposed General Plan

As part of implementing the proposed project, various individual future development projects would generate temporary noise level increases on and adjacent to construction sites in the EIR Study Area. Construction within the EIR Study Area would be limited to weekdays and non-holidays to the hours set forth in the proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.7. The hours would be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when construction occurs within 1,000 feet of a noise sensitive receptor; and 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. when construction occurs at distances greater than 1,000 feet from the nearest noise-sensitive receptor. Construction is performed in distinct steps, each of which has its own mix of equipment, and, consequently, its own noise characteristics. Table 5.13-9, *Reference Construction Equipment Noise Levels*, lists typical construction equipment noise levels recommended for noise-impact assessments based on a distance of 50 feet between the equipment and noise receptor.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-9 Reference Construction Equipment Noise Levels

Construction Equipment	Typical Max Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA L _{max}) ¹	Construction Equipment	Typical Max Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA L _{max}) ¹
Air Compressor	80	Pile-Driver (Impact)	101
Backhoe	80	Pile-Driver (Sonic)	95
Ballast Equalizer	82	Pneumatic Tool	85
Ballast Tamper	83	Pump	77
Compactor	82	Rail Saw	90
Concrete Mixer	85	Rock Drill	95
Concrete Pump	82	Roller	85
Concrete Vibrator	76	Saw	76
Crane, Derrick	88	Scarifier	83
Crane, Mobile	83	Scraper	85
Dozer	85	Shovel	82
Generator	82	Spike Driver	77
Grader	85	Tie Cutter	84
Impact Wrench	85	Tie Handler	80
Jack Hammer	88	Tie Inserter	85
Loader	80	Truck	84
Paver	85		

Source: FTA 2018.

As shown, construction equipment generates high levels of noise, with maximums ranging from 76 to 101 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. Construction of individual development projects associated with implementation of the proposed project would temporarily increase the ambient noise environment and would have the potential to affect noise-sensitive land uses in the vicinity of an individual project.

Construction noise levels are highly variable and dependent on the specific locations, site plans, construction details, and presence or absence of any natural or human-made barriers with potential acoustic dampening effects (e.g., the presence of vegetation, berms, walls, or buildings). Significant noise impacts may occur from operation of heavy earth-moving equipment and truck-haul operations that would occur with construction of individual development projects, which have not yet been developed, particularly if construction techniques, such as impact or vibratory pile driving, are proposed. The time of day that construction activity is conducted would also determine the significance of each project, particularly during the more sensitive evening/nighttime hours. However, construction would be localized and would occur intermittently for varying periods of time.

Because specific project-level information is inherently not available at this time, it is not possible nor appropriate to quantify the construction noise impacts at specific sensitive receptors. In most cases, construction of individual development projects associated with implementation of the proposed project would temporarily increase the ambient noise environment in the vicinity of each individual project, potentially affecting existing and future nearby sensitive uses. Proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.6 would help to mitigate County projects by requiring them to minimize short-term noise impacts on sensitive receptors by following best practices to minimize short-term impacts from construction noise. However, because construction activities associated with any individual development may occur near noise-sensitive receptors and

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

because, depending on the project type, equipment list, time of day, phasing, and overall construction durations, noise disturbances may occur for prolonged periods of time or during the more sensitive evening/nighttime hours, construction noise impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project are considered potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. While the proposed CAP would not directly result in any new development, the implementation of its actions may indirectly result in construction activity. Similar to construction activity under the proposed General Plan, such activity could occur near noise-sensitive receptors. Depending on the project type, equipment list, time of day, phasing, and overall construction durations, noise disturbances may occur for prolonged periods of time or during the more sensitive nighttime hours. Therefore, construction noise impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project are considered potentially significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.13-1 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

- N-1 Require construction contractors to implement the following measures for construction activities. Demolition, grading, and construction plans submitted to the County shall identify these measures and the County Department of Conservation and Development shall verify that the submitted plans include these notations prior to issuance of demolition, grading, and/or construction permits:
- During the entire active construction period, equipment and trucks used for project construction shall use the best-available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures, and acoustically attenuating shields or shrouds) available.
 - Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers and breakers) shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible. Where the use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used along with external noise jackets on the tools.
 - Stationary equipment, such as generators and air compressors, shall be located as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive uses.
 - Stockpiling shall be located as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive receptors.
 - Construction traffic shall be limited, to the extent feasible, to approved haul routes approved by the County Conservation and Development and Public Works Departments.
 - At least 10 days prior to the start of construction activities, a sign shall be posted at the entrance(s) to the job site, clearly visible to the public, that includes permitted construction days and hours, as well as the telephone numbers of the County's and contractor's authorized representatives that are assigned to respond in the event of a noise or vibration

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

complaint. If the authorized contractor's representative receives a complaint, they shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action to the County.

- Signs shall be posted at the job site entrance(s), within the on-site construction zones, and along queueing lanes (if any) to reinforce the prohibition of unnecessary engine idling. All other equipment shall be turned off if not in use for more than 5 minutes.
- During the entire active construction period and to the extent feasible, the use of noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, shall be for safety warning purposes only. For projects that are located in close proximity to noise-sensitive uses such as residences, the construction manager shall use smart back-up alarms, which automatically adjust the alarm level based on the background noise level, or switch off back-up alarms and replace with human spotters in compliance with all safety requirements and laws.
- Erect temporary noise barriers (at least as high as the exhaust of equipment and breaking line-of-sight between noise sources and sensitive receptors), as necessary and feasible, to maintain construction noise levels at or below the performance standard of 80 dBA L_{eq} . Barriers shall be constructed with a solid material that has a density of at least 4 pounds per square foot with no gaps from the ground to the top of the barrier.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.13-1 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.13-2 Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards. [Threshold N-1]

Proposed General Plan

Transportation Noise

Development that results in traffic increases can also result in long-term traffic noise increases on roadways and freeways in the county. New development and associated traffic noise increases could result in exposure of existing receptors or future planned development to substantial permanent noise increases. Depending on the proximity of future projects to other land use types and existing major freeways and roadways, traffic noise increases could expose sensitive receptors to substantial traffic noise levels that would exceed applicable noise standards. Future CNEL noise levels at 50 feet along local roadways for existing and future conditions provided by Illingworth & Rodkin (2023) are shown in Table 5.13-10, *Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways*.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Alhambra Valley Rd	Pereira Rd to Valley Orchard Ct	64	66	2
	West 2/3 of Castro Ranch Rd to Pereira Rd	63	66	3
	East 1/3 of Castro Ranch Rd to Pereira Rd	63	66	3
	Vasa Creek Rd to Alhambra Valley Rd	64	66	2
Appian Way	Kister Cir to Valley View Rd/Appian Way	69	72	3
	Northeast 2/3 of Santa Rita Rd to La Paloma Rd	68	71	3
	Garden Rd to San Pablo Dam Rd	68	70	2
	Sunhill Cir to Fran Way	67	69	2
	La Paloma Rd to Pebble Dr	67	70	3
	Pebble Dr to Sunhill Cir	67	69	2
	Manor Rd to Kister Cir	69	72	3
	Allview Ave to Rancho Rd	70	73	3
	Rancho Rd to Manor Rd	70	73	3
	Southwest 2/3 of Santa Rita Rd to La Paloma Rd	68	71	3
	Garden Rd to Santa Rita Rd	68	70	2
Arlington Ave	Rincon Rd to Arlington Ct	60	63	3
	Oberlin Ave to Coventry Rd	64	67	3
	Arlington Ct to Oberlin Ave	61	64	3
	Lam Ct to Rincon Rd	61	64	3
	Roberta Dr to Lam Ct	63	67	4
Bailey Rd	North 1/2 of San Marco Blvd to Willow Ave	70	73	3
	Second and third 1/6 from the South of Willow Ave to San Marco Blvd	70	73	3
	North 1/3 of San Marco Blvd to Myrtle Dr	70	73	3
	San Marco Blvd intersection	70	73	3
	South 1/9 of Willow Ave to San Marco Blvd	70	73	3
	California Delta Hwy interchange	70	73	3

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Bailey Rd	South 3/4 of Mary Ann Ln to Canal Rd	67	69	2
	Canal Rd to California Delta Hwy	71	73	2
	South 1/2 of Canal Rd to Canal Rd	68	71	3
	Willow Pass Rd to Mary Ann Ln/Placer Dr	66	69	3
	North 1/4 of Mary Ann Ln to Canal Rd	67	69	2
Balfour Rd	Byron Hwy to Bixler Rd	62	65	3
	West 1/2 of Sellers Ave to Byron Hwy	60	61	1
	East 1/2 of Sellers Ave to Byron Hwy	60	60	0
Bear Creek Rd	Bear Oaks Rd to Happy Valley Rd	60	64	4
	Alhambra Valley Rd to Bear Oaks Dr	61	65	4
Bethel Island Rd	Dutch Slough Rd to Wells Rd	66	70	4
	Wells Rd to Sandmound Blvd	67	70	3
Byron Hwy	Northwest 1/3 of Camino Diablo Rd to Byron Hot Springs Rd	69	71	2
	Northwest 1/4 of Holway Dr to Byron Hot Springs Rd	69	71	2
	Northwest 3/4 of Byron Hot Springs Rd to Clifton Ct	69	61	-8
	Southeast 2/3 of Camino Diablo Rd to Byron Hot Springs Rd	69	71	2
California Delta Hwy	Byron Hwy to Regatta Dr	71	73	2
	Newport Dr to Wayfarer Dr	71	74	3
	Bixler Rd to Newport Dr	72	74	2
	Regatta Dr to Bixler Rd	71	73	2
	Wayfarer Dr to County line	66	69	3
Camino Diablo Rd	N Vasco Rd to Holway Dr	69	70	1
	McCabe Rd to Holway Dr	69	70	1
Camino Tassajara	Oak Gate Dr to Shadow Creek Dr	66	68	2
	Conejo Dr to Buckingham Dr	71	73	2
	Crow Canyon Rd to Blackhawk Plaza Cir/Tassajara Ranch Dr	71	72	1
	Tassajara Ranch Dr to Conejo Dr	71	73	2

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Camino Tassajara	Parkhaven Dr to Jasmine Way	70	71	1
	Rassani Dr to Parkhaven Dr	70	72	2
	East 3/4 of Mansfield Dr/Jasmine Way to Oak Gate Dr/Lawrence Rd	69	70	1
	West 1/4 of Mansfield Dr/Jasmine Way to Oak Gate Dr/Lawrence Rd	69	70	1
	North 1/2 of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	62	65	3
	Johnston Rd to Highland Rd	63	66	3
	Finley Rd to Johnston Rd	63	66	3
	Third 1/6 from the North of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	62	65	3
	Second 1/4 from the South of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	62	65	3
	West 3/4 of Charbray St to Finley Rd	63	66	3
	Monterosso St to Knollview Dr	63	66	3
	West 9/10 of Knollview Dr to Blackhawk Dr	63	66	3
	East 1/10 of Knollview Dr to Blackhawk Dr	63	65	2
	Southeast 1/4 of Blackhawk Dr to Finley Rd	63	66	3
Castro Ranch Rd	Hillside Dr to San Pablo Dam Rd	63	66	3
	Olinda Rd to Amend Rd	64	67	3
	Country View Dr to Alhambra Valley Rd	61	65	4
Coggins Dr	Southeast 2/3 of Buskirk Ave/Oak Rd to Roble Rd	46	50	4
	West 1/3 of Buskirk Ave/Oak Rd to Roble Rd	44	49	5
Cummings Skwy	Crockett Blvd to John Muir Pkwy	61	64	3
Danville Blvd	Casa Maria Ct to Camille Ave	68	69	1
	Stone Valley Rd W to Casa Maria Ct	68	70	2
	Camille Ave to El Portal	68	70	2
Deer Valley Rd	Balfour Rd to Marsh Creek Rd	54	64	10
	Empire Mine Rd to Balfour Rd	66	69	3
	Balfour Rd to Chadbourne Rd	61	66	5
	South 3/4 of Deer Hill Ln to Empire Mine Rd	67	71	4
	Second 1/8 from the North of Deer Hill Ln to Empire Mine Rd	67	71	4
Delta Rd	Sellers Ave to Curlew Connex	61	64	3

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Evora Rd	Gwin Ave to Willow Pass Ct/Willow Pass Rd	63	63	0
	Southwest 1/2 of Willow Pass Ct to Driftwood Dr	69	71	2
	Northeast 1/2 of Willow Pass Ct to Driftwood Dr	69	71	2
Fred Jackson Way	Pittsburg Ave to Market Ave	51	57	6
Imhoff Dr	Waterbird Way to Solano Way	58	60	2
	Blum Rd to Imhoff Pl	61	64	3
	Imhoff Pl to Waterbird Way	60	64	4
Kirker Pass Rd	Black Diamond Mines to Pheasant Dr	73	75	2
	Black Diamond Mines to Myrtle Dr	73	75	2
Market Ave	4th St to 6th St	54	60	6
	Fred Jackson Way to 4th St	54	60	6
	2nd St to Fred Jackson Way	51	57	6
	West 3/4 of 6th St to Rumrill Blvd	57	63	6
Marsh Creek Rd	West 1/2 of Byron Hwy to Bixler Rd	56	62	6
	Northwest 1/3 of Russelmann Park Rd to Morgan Territory Rd	60	65	5
	Northwest 1/3 of Marsh Creek Rd/Clayton Rd intersection to Morgan Territory Rd	61	65	4
	South 2/3 of Vineyard Pkwy to Marsh Creek Rd/Camino Diablo Rd	58	61	3
	West 1/2 of Deer Valley Rd to Marsh Creek Rd	57	62	5
	Gill Dr to Deer Valley Rd	55	63	8
	Clayton Ranch of Russelmann Park Rd to Bragdon Way	59	64	5
	Bragdon Way to Gill Dr	59	64	5
	East 1/4 of Deer Valley Rd to Marsh Creek Rd	57	62	5
	Second 1/4 from the East of Deer Valley Rd to Old Marsh Creek Rd	57	62	5
Marsh Creek Rd	East 1/3 of California Delta Hwy/Vasco Rd to Walnut Blvd	69	62	-7
	North 1/3 of Vineyard Pkwy to Camino Diablo Rd	59	62	3
	Vineyard Pkwy intersection	59	64	5
	West 1/3 of Orchard Ln to Walnut Blvd	69	62	-7

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
	California Delta Hwy to Orchard Ln	69	69	0
	Sellers Ave to Byron Hwy	69	63	-6
	Walnut Blvd to Sellers Ave	69	62	-7
	Fertado Ln to Bixler Rd	56	62	6
	East 1/3 of Byron Hwy to Fertado Ln	56	62	6
N Vasco Rd	Central 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	63	70	7
	South 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	63	70	7
	North 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	74	78	4
Oak Rd	Wayne Dr to Treat Blvd	64	64	0
	Coggins Dr to Elena Ct	61	65	4
	Elena Ct to Las Juntas Way	63	65	2
	Las Juntas Way to Wayne Dr	58	62	4
Old Marsh Creek Rd	Southwest 3/4 of Vineyard Pkwy to California Delta Hwy/Vasco Rd	60	64	4
Olympic Blvd	Boulevard Way to Willow Ave	71	73	2
	Newell Ct to Boulevard Way/Tice Valley Blvd	70	71	1
	Pleasant Hill Rd to Windtree Ct	70	71	1
	Windtree Ct to Newell Ct	70	71	1
	Crawford Cr to Newell Ave	71	73	2
	Newell Ave to Paulson Ln	70	71	1
	Willow Ave to Crawford Ct	71	73	2
Pacheco Blvd	Wygat Dr to Morello Ave	68	68	0
	Camino del Sol to Arthur Rd/Pacheco Blvd	70	69	-1
	Morello Ave to Adelaide Dr	68	68	0
Pacheco Blvd	Adelaide Dr to Camino del Sol	69	68	-1
	Southeast 2/3 of Arnold Dr to Blum Rd	64	69	5
	Northwest 1/3 of Arnold Dr to Blum Rd	61	67	6

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
	Arthur Rd to Arnold Dr	61	67	6
	Carolos Dr to 1st Ave N	64	68	4
	Muir Rd to N Buchanan Cir	66	69	3
	Blum Rd to Muir Rd	68	71	3
	Center Ave to 2nd Ave S	67	70	3
	1st Ave N to Center Ave	65	68	3
	West 1/2 of Howe Rd to Wygal Dr	67	68	1
	Palm Ave to Santa Fe Ave	67	68	1
	Shell Ave to Palm Ave	68	69	1
	Santa Fe Ave to Howe Rd	68	68	0
	Central 1/3 of Howe Rd to Morello Ave	67	68	1
Parr Blvd	East 2/3 of Richmond Pkwy to Fred Jackson Way	58	61	3
	East 1/2 of Fred Jackson Way to Goodrick Ave	59	62	3
	West 1/2 of Richmond Pkwy to Fred Jackson Way	60	61	1
Pinole Valley Rd	Marlin Ct to Alhambra Valley Rd/Castro Ranch Rd intersection	60	65	5
Pittsburg Ave	West 1/2 of Richmond Pkwy to Central St	56	59	3
	Central St to Fred Jackson Way	53	57	4
	East 1/2 of Richmond Pkwy to Central St	55	58	3
Pleasant Hill Rd	Purson Ln to Rancho View Dr	71	72	1
Pomona St	West 2/3 of Merchant St to Eastshore FWY	67	69	2
Reliez Valley Rd	Grayson Rd to Gloria Ter	65	66	1
	Gloria Ter to Withers Ave	65	67	2
	Southeast 1/2 of Hidden Pond Rd to Silverhill Dr	67	68	1
	Tavan Estates Dr to Silverhill Way	67	69	2
Reliez Valley Rd	Silverhill Dr to Grayson Rd	68	69	1

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Richmond Pkwy	Parr Blvd to Pittsburg Ave	75	76	1
San Pablo Ave	Kay Rd to Shamrock Dr	70	73	3
	Northeast 3/4 of Richmond Pkwy to Kay Rd	71	74	3
	Shamrock Dr to Tara Hills Dr	70	73	3
	Tara Hills Dr to Oconnor Dr	70	73	3
	Railroad Ave to California St	68	70	2
	San Pablo Ave and Parker Ave intersection to Railroad Ave	68	70	2
	West 1/2 of California St to A St	68	69	1
	Southwest 1/8 of California St to Refinery Rd	68	69	1
	Vista del Rio St to Merchant St	67	69	2
	Cummings Skwy to Vista del Rio St	67	69	2
	Union Oil Company to A St	67	69	2
	A St to Cummings Skwy	67	69	2
	Greenridge Dr to Lila Ln	66	69	3
San Pablo Dam Rd	Hillcrest Rd to La Colina Rd	71	73	2
	El Portal Dr to Hillcrest Rd	69	72	3
	La Colina Rd to Campbell Ln	70	72	2
	North 1/2 of Castro Ranch Rd to Old San Pablo Dam Rd	68	70	2
	Southeast 1/2 of Old San Pablo Dam Rd to Bear Creek Rd	68	70	2
	Central 1/3 of Old San Pablo Dam Rd to Old San Pablo Dam Rd	68	70	2
	Third 1/6 from the South of Old Pablo Dam Rd to Old Pablo Dam Rd	68	70	2
	Oak Creek Rd to Castro Ranch Rd	66	69	3
	Lila Ln to Valley View Rd	66	69	3
	Valley View Rd to Jodie Ln	66	68	2
Sellers Ave	Central 1/3 of Sunset Rd to Chestnut St	54	58	4
	Redhaven St to Balfour Ave	54	58	4

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Sellers Ave	South 1/2 of Sycamore Ave to Chestnut St	54	58	4
	Chestnut St to Redhaven Ave	57	62	5
	Fourth 1/8 from the North of Sycamore Ave to Chestnut St	54	58	4
	North 2/3 of Sunset Rd to Sycamore Ave	54	58	4
	Second 1/6 from the South of Sunset Rd to Sycamore Ave	54	58	4
Sobrante Ave	Fran Way to Valley View Rd	66	69	3
Stone Valley Rd	Northeast 3/4 of Alamo Glen Dr/Stone Creek Pl to Smith Rd	66	69	3
Sunset Rd	Sellers Ave to Eden Plains Rd	59	60	1
	Eden Plains Rd to Byron Hwy	60	63	3
Taylor Blvd	Twinview Pl to Withers Ave	70	72	2
	North 1/2 of Withers Ave to Pleasant Hill Rd	70	72	2
	South 1/2 of Withers Ave to Pleasant Hill Rd	71	72	1
Treat Blvd	Augello Ct/Maywood Dr to Cherry Ln	72	74	2
	Oak Rd to Jones Rd	73	73	0
	Jones Rd to Augello Ct/Maywood Dr	73	74	1
	Cherry Ln to Sheppard Rd	72	74	2
Valley View Rd	Sobrante Ave to Fleetwood Dr	66	69	3
	Amend Rd to Olinda Rd	64	67	3
	San Pablo Dam Rd to Olinda Rd	64	67	3
	Southeast 2/3 of Morninside Dr to Via Giaranita	64	67	3
	Pine Hill Dr to Quiet Ln	63	67	4
	Appian Way to Sobrante Ave	69	72	3
Walnut Blvd	Marsh Creek Rd to Vasco Rd	66	73	7
Willow Pass Rd	Evora Rd to Goble Dr	69	73	4
	Bella Vista Ave to Loftus Rd	66	69	3
	West 1/3 of Clearland Dr to Bailey Rd	67	71	4
	Port Chicago Hwy to Alberts Ave	68	72	4

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-10 Existing and Future Modeled Noise Levels Along Surrounding Roadways

Roadway	Segment	CNEL at 50 feet from the Roadway Centerline, dBA		Increase over Existing, dBA
		Existing	2045	2045
Willow Pass Rd	Goble Dr to Port Chicago Hwy	69	73	4
	Alberts Ave to Enes Ave	67	72	5
	Alves Ln to Clearland Dr	67	72	5
	Marin Ave to Alves Ln	67	72	5
	Solano Ave to Fairview Ave	67	70	3
	East 2/3 of Clearland Dr to Bailey Rd	67	71	4
	Bailey Rd to Solano Ave	68	71	3
	Madison Ave to Bella Vista Ave	67	70	3
	Fairview Ave to Madison Ave	67	70	3

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

As shown in Table 5.13-10, significant traffic noise increases are estimated along numerous study roadway segments from implementation of the proposed project when analyzed using thresholds similar to those recommended by the FAA, which are identified in the proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.5. The traffic noise increase is the difference between the projected future noise level and the existing noise level. The modeling also shows that along several roadway segments, a decrease in traffic noise levels is anticipated from implementation of the proposed project. Implementation of proposed General Policies HS-P14.5, HS-P14.6, and HS-P14.9 would help reduce impacts by utilizing best practices and requiring mitigation as feasible for roadways that exceed the thresholds in Policy HS-P14.5 in order to reduce long-term (traffic) impacts to adjacent noise sensitive land uses. However, traffic noise increases would still be potentially significant.

Table 5.13-11, *Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances*, presents the future distances from the 60, 65, and 70 dBA CNEL contours along the local roadways. With the implementation of proposed General Plan Policies HS-P14.1 and HS-P14.2, noise-sensitive land uses would either be in areas where existing noise levels are normally acceptable for the specific land use (as shown in Table HS-3 of the proposed General Plan), or a detailed acoustical analysis would be required to identify appropriate mitigation to meet the noise compatibility standards. In addition, future noise-sensitive land use projects that are exposed to a DNL of 60 dB or greater are required to provide a detailed acoustical analysis demonstrating how the project would provide an interior DNL of 45 dB or less.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Alhambra Valley Rd	Pereira Rd to Valley Orchard Ct	25	60	125
	West 2/3 of Castro Ranch Rd to Pereira Rd	30	60	135
	East 1/3 of Castro Ranch Rd to Pereira Rd	25	60	130
	Vasa Creek Rd to Alhambra Valley Rd	30	60	130
Appian Way	Kister Cir to Valley View Rd/Appian Way	65	140	295
	Northeast 2/3 of Santa Rita Rd to La Paloma Rd	55	120	255
	Garden Rd to San Pablo Dam Rd	50	115	245
	Sunhill Cir to Fran Way	45	95	210
	La Paloma Rd to Pebble Dr	50	105	225
	Pebble Dr to Sunhill Cir	45	100	215
	Manor Rd to Kister Cir	65	145	310
	Allview Ave to Rancho Rd	75	165	355
	Rancho Rd to Manor Rd	75	165	355
	Southwest 2/3 of Santa Rita Rd to La Paloma Rd	55	120	255
	Garden Rd to Santa Rita Rd	55	115	250
Arlington Ave	Rincon Rd to Arlington Ct	20	40	80
	Oberlin Ave to Coventry Rd	30	65	140
	Arlington Ct to Oberlin Ave	20	40	90
	Lam Ct to Rincon Rd	20	40	95
	Roberta Dr to Lam Ct	30	65	140
Bailey Rd	North 1/2 of San Marco Blvd to Willow Ave	75	165	355
	Second and third 1/6 from the South of Willow Ave to San Marco Blvd	75	165	355
	North 1/3 of San Marco Blvd to Myrtle Dr	75	165	355
	San Marco Blvd intersection	75	165	355
	South 1/9 of Willow Ave to San Marco Blvd	75	165	355
	California Delta Hwy interchange	75	165	355

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Bailey Rd	South 3/4 of Mary Ann Ln to Canal Rd	45	95	205
	Canal Rd to California Delta Hwy	80	170	375
	South 1/2 of Canal Rd to Canal Rd	55	115	250
	Willow Pass Rd to Mary Ann Ln/Placer Dr	40	85	185
	North 1/4 of Mary Ann Ln to Canal Rd	40	90	195
Balfour Rd	Byron Hwy to Bixler Rd	25	50	110
Bear Creek Rd	Bear Oaks Rd to Happy Valley Rd	20	40	90
	Alhambra Valley Rd to Bear Oaks Dr	20	50	105
Bethel Island Rd	Dutch Slough Rd to Wells Rd	50	105	225
	Wells Rd to Sandmound Blvd	50	105	225
Byron Hwy	Northwest 1/3 of Camino Diablo Rd to Byron Hot Springs Rd	55	120	260
	Northwest 1/4 of Holway Dr to Byron Hot Springs Rd	55	120	265
	Southeast 2/3 of Camino Diablo Rd to Byron Hot Springs Rd	55	120	255
California Delta Hwy	Byron Hwy to Regatta Dr	80	180	385
	Newport Dr to Wayfarer Dr	85	190	405
	Bixler Rd to Newport Dr	95	205	445
	Regatta Dr to Bixler Rd	80	170	370
	Wayfarer Dr to County line	40	90	190
Camino Diablo Rd	N Vasco Rd to Holway Dr	45	100	220
	McCabe Rd to Holway Dr	50	100	220
Camino Tassajara	Oak Gate Dr to Shadow Creek Dr	40	85	180
	Conejo Dr to Buckingham Dr	75	165	350
	Crow Canyon Rd to Blackhawk Plaza Cir/Tassajara Ranch Dr	70	155	335
	Tassajara Ranch Dr to Conejo Dr	75	165	350
	Parkhaven Dr to Jasmine Way	60	130	285
	Rassani Dr to Parkhaven Dr	60	135	295
	East 3/4 of Mansfield Dr/Jasmine Way to Oak Gate Dr/Lawrence Rd	50	110	240

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Camino Tassajara	West 1/4 of Mansfield Dr/Jasmine Way to Oak Gate Dr/Lawrence Rd	50	115	250
	North 1/2 of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	25	50	110
	Johnston Rd to Highland Rd	25	55	120
	Finley Rd to Johnston Rd	25	55	120
	Third 1/6 from the North of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	25	50	110
	Second 1/4 from the South of Highland Rd to Windemere Pkwy	20	50	105
	West 3/4 of Charbray St to Finley Rd	30	60	130
	Monterosso St to Knollview Dr	30	60	130
	West 9/10 of Knollview Dr to Blackhawk Dr	25	55	120
	East 1/10 of Knollview Dr to Blackhawk Dr	25	50	110
	Southeast 1/4 of Blackhawk Dr to Finley Rd	30	60	130
Castro Ranch Rd	Hillside Dr to San Pablo Dam Rd	25	60	125
	Olinda Rd to Amend Rd	35	70	155
	Country View Dr to Alhambra Valley Rd	25	50	110
Cummings Skwy	Crockett Blvd to John Muir Pkwy	20	40	85
Danville Blvd	Casa Maria Ct to Camille Ave	40	90	195
	Stone Valley Rd W to Casa Maria Ct	45	100	215
	Camille Ave to El Portal	45	100	220
Deer Valley Rd	North 1/2 of Chadbourne Rd to Albers Ct	20	40	90
	Central 2/4 of Chadbourne Rd to Marsh Creek Rd	20	40	90
	South 1/2 of Briones Valley Rd to Marsh Creek Rd	20	40	90
	Empire Mine Rd to Balfour Rd	40	85	190
	Balfour Rd to Chadbourne Rd	25	60	125
	South 3/4 of Deer Hill Ln to Empire Mine Rd	60	130	285
	Second 1/8 from the North of Deer Hill Ln to Empire Mine Rd	60	130	280
Delta Rd	Sellers Ave to Curlew Connex	20	45	95

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Evora Rd	Southwest 1/2 of Willow Pass Ct to Driftwood Dr	60	125	275
	Northeast 1/2 of Willow Pass Ct to Driftwood Dr	60	130	280
Imhoff Dr	Blum Rd to Imhoff Pl	20	45	95
	Imhoff Pl to Waterbird Way	20	40	90
Kirker Pass Rd	Black Diamond Mines to Pheasant Dr	115	250	535
	Black Diamond Mines to Myrtle Dr	110	240	515
Marsh Creek Rd	Northwest 1/3 of Russelmann Park Rd to Morgan Territory Rd	25	50	110
	Northwest 1/3 of Marsh Creek Rd/Clayton Rd intersection to Morgan Territory Rd	25	50	115
	Gill Dr to Deer Valley Rd	20	40	80
	Clayton Ranch of Russelmann Park Rd to Bragdon Way	20	45	100
	Bragdon Way to Gill Dr	20	45	95
	Vineyard Pkwy intersection	20	40	90
	California Delta Hwy to Orchard Ln	45	95	200
N Vasco Rd	Central 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	50	100	220
	South 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	45	100	215
	North 1/3 of Camino Diablo to County line	175	375	810
Oak Rd	Wayne Dr to Treat Blvd	20	40	90
	Coggins Dr to Elena Ct	25	50	110
	Elena Ct to Las Juntas Way	20	50	105
Old Marsh Creek Rd	Southwest 3/4 of Vineyard Pkwy to California Delta Hwy/Vasco Rd	20	45	95
Olympic Blvd	Boulevard Way to Willow Ave	75	160	350
	Newell Ct to Boulevard Way/Tice Valley Blvd	60	135	290
	Pleasant Hill Rd to Windtree Ct	60	130	285
	Windtree Ct to Newell Ct	60	135	290
	Crawford Cr to Newell Ave	80	170	360
	Newell Ave to Paulson Ln	60	130	280

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
	Willow Ave to Crawford Ct	70	160	340
	Wygat Dr to Morello Ave	40	85	185
	Camino del Sol to Arthur Rd/Pacheco Blvd	40	95	200
	Morello Ave to Adelaide Dr	35	75	160
	Adelaide Dr to Camino del Sol	40	80	180
	Southeast 2/3 of Arnold Dr to Blum Rd	40	90	190
	Northwest 1/3 of Arnold Dr to Blum Rd	35	70	155
	Arthur Rd to Arnold Dr	35	70	155
	Carolos Dr to 1st Ave N	35	90	165
Pacheco Blvd	Muir Rd to N Buchanan Cir	40	90	200
	Blum Rd to Muir Rd	55	120	255
	Center Ave to 2nd Ave S	50	105	230
	1st Ave N to Center Ave	40	80	180
	West 1/2 of Howe Rd to Wygat Dr	35	80	175
	Palm Ave to Santa Fe Ave	40	80	175
	Shell Ave to Palm Ave	40	90	200
	Santa Fe Ave to Howe Rd	40	85	180
	Central 1/3 of Howe Rd to Morello Ave	35	75	160
Pinole Valley Rd	Marlin Ct to Alhambra Valley Rd/Castro Ranch Rd intersection	20	50	105
Pleasant Hill Rd	Purson Ln to Rancho View Dr	70	150	325
Pomona St	West 2/3 of Merchant St to Eastshore FWY	40	90	195
	Grayson Rd to Gloria Ter	30	60	135
	Gloria Ter to Withers Ave	30	70	150
Reliez Valley Rd	Southeast 1/2 of Hidden Pond Rd to Silverhill Dr	40	85	180
	Tavan Estates Dr to Silverhill Way	40	85	185
	Silverhill Dr to Grayson Rd	45	100	215

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Richmond Pkwy	Parr Blvd to Pittsburg Ave	120	265	570
San Pablo Ave	Kay Rd to Shamrock Dr	85	180	390
	Northeast 3/4 of Richmond Pkwy to Kay Rd	85	190	405
San Pablo Ave	Shamrock Dr to Tara Hills Dr	75	160	350
	Tara Hills Dr to Oconnor Dr	75	160	350
	Railroad Ave to California St	50	100	220
	San Pablo Ave and Parker Ave intersection to Railroad Ave	45	100	220
	West 1/2 of California St to A St	45	100	215
	Southwest 1/8 of California St to Refinery Rd	45	100	215
	Vista del Rio St to Merchant St	40	85	190
	Cummings Skwy to Vista del Rio St	40	90	190
	Union Oil Company to A St	45	95	205
	A St to Cummings Skwy	45	95	205
San Pablo Dam Rd	Greenridge Dr to Lila Ln	45	95	210
	Hillcrest Rd to La Colina Rd	80	175	380
	El Portal Dr to Hillcrest Rd	70	150	320
	La Colina Rd to Campbell Ln	70	150	320
	North 1/2 of Castro Ranch Rd to Old San Pablo Dam Rd	50	110	240
	Southeast 1/2 of Old San Pablo Dam Rd to Bear Creek Rd	50	110	240
	Central 1/3 of Old San Pablo Dam Rd to Old San Pablo Dam Rd	50	110	240
	Third 1/6 from the South of Old Pablo Dam Rd to Old Pablo Dam Rd	50	110	240
	Oak Creek Rd to Castro Ranch Rd	40	90	190
	Lila Ln to Valley View Rd	40	90	200
	Valley View Rd to Jodie Ln	40	85	180
Sobrante Ave	Fran Way to Valley View Rd	40	90	195
Stone Valley Rd	Northeast 3/4 of Alamo Glen Dr/Stone Creek Pl to Smith Rd	40	85	190
Sunset Rd	Eden Plains Rd to Byron Hwy	20	40	80

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Table 5.13-11 Proposed General Plan Traffic Noise Contour Distances

Roadway	Segment	Distance from Centerline to Traffic Noise Contours, feet ¹		
		70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA
Taylor Blvd	Twinview Pl to Withers Ave	70	150	330
	North 1/2 of Withers Ave to Pleasant Hill Rd	70	150	320
	South 1/2 of Withers Ave to Pleasant Hill Rd	70	155	330
Treat Blvd	Augello Ct/Maywood Dr to Cherry Ln	85	190	405
	Oak Rd to Jones Rd	85	180	390
	Jones Rd to Augello Ct/Maywood Dr	90	195	420
	Cherry Ln to Sheppard Rd	90	190	410
Valley View Rd	Sobrante Ave to Fleetwood Dr	45	100	210
	Amend Rd to Olinda Rd	30	70	150
	San Pablo Dam Rd to Olinda Rd	30	65	140
	Southeast 2/3 of Morninside Dr to Via Giaramita	30	70	155
	Pine Hill Dr to Quiet Ln	30	70	155
	Appian Way to Sobrante Ave	65	140	300
Walnut Blvd	Marsh Creek Rd to Vasco Rd	80	180	385
Willow Pass Rd	Evora Rd to Goble Dr	85	180	390
	Bella Vista Ave to Loftus Rd	45	95	200
	West 1/3 of Clearland Dr to Bailey Rd	60	135	290
	Port Chicago Hwy to Alberts Ave	70	155	330
	Goble Dr to Port Chicago Hwy	80	175	375
	Alberts Ave to Enes Ave	70	150	320
	Alves Ln to Clearland Dr	65	140	300
	Marin Ave to Alves Ln	70	145	315
	Solano Ave to Fairview Ave	55	115	250
	East 2/3 of Clearland Dr to Bailey Rd	60	135	290
	Bailey Rd to Solano Ave	60	130	285
	Madison Ave to Bella Vista Ave	50	105	225
	Fairview Ave to Madison Ave	55	115	250

¹ Distance to the Traffic Noise Contours have been rounded to the nearest 5

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Rail and Airport Noise

Table 5.13-12 contains the calculated distances to the 65 dBA L_{dn} /CNEL contours from future railroad noise. The same methodology that was used to estimate existing railroad noise contours was used for future railroad activity. Though implementation of the proposed project would not cause a direct increase in rail activity, future residential development could be placed within distances to rail that could expose them to noise levels that exceed the applicable noise standard for the respective land use type.

In addition, future noise-sensitive land uses could be in areas that exceed the “Normally Acceptable” noise standards due to airport operations (see Figures 5.13-7 and 5.13-8 for airport noise contours). Implementation of proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.4 would require that new residential development in areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB due to single events, such as train operation (which can also extend to airport activity), provide an acoustical analysis describing how indoor noise levels from these single events will not exceed a maximum A-weighted noise level of 35 dB in bedrooms and 55 dB in other habitable rooms. In areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB, an indoor residential noise-level threshold of 45 dB CNEL is required. However, impacts would still be potentially significant.

Table 5.13-12 Future Railroad Noise Levels

Operator	Subdivision	Distance (feet) to 65 dBA CNEL Contour (Main Line)	Distance (feet) to 65 dBA CNEL Contour (Within ¼ Mile of Grade Crossing)
BNSF	Stockton Subdivision	265	449
BNSF	Stockton Subdivision west of Port of Chicago	265	421
RPRC	Chevron Lead	6	87
RPRC	Cutting Lead	6	87
RPRC	Harbor Lead	20	236
RPRC	LRT Lead	28	289
UP	Martinez Subdivision	230	NA ¹
UP	Martinez Subdivision south of Pinole	285	NA ¹
UP	Tracy Subdivision	270	413

Source: Calculated using the FTA CREATE Model and FRA Grade Crossing Horn Model. See Appendix 5.13-1.

¹NA: Not Applicable because there are no at grade crossings, and therefore, there are no noise horns.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. While the proposed CAP would not directly result in any new development, the implementation of its actions, which may indirectly result in new development, would be subject to the same County standards that apply to development under the proposed General Plan, as applicable. The proposed CAP does not include strategies or actions that would otherwise result in permanent noise increases (e.g., rail or traffic noise) and certain other noise-generating sources, such as wind turbines, would be subject to County noise standards, so impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.13-2 would be potentially significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Mitigation Measures Considered

In compliance with CEQA, “each public agency shall mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment of project it carries out or approves whenever it is feasible to do so” (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(b)). The term “feasible” is defined in CEQA to mean “capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors” (Public Resources Code Section 21061.1). A number of measures were considered for mitigating or avoiding traffic noise impacts (Impact 5.13-2).

Special Roadway Paving

Notable reductions in tire noise have been achieved via implementation of special paving materials, such as rubberized asphalt or open-grade asphalt concrete overlays. For example, the California Department of Transportation conducted a study of pavement noise along Interstate 80 in Davis (Caltrans 2011) and found an average improvement of 6 to 7 dBA compared to conventional asphalt overlay.

Although this amount of noise reduction from rubberized/special asphalt materials would be sufficient to avoid the predicted noise increase due to traffic in some cases, the potential up-front and ongoing maintenance costs are such that the cost versus benefits ratio² may not be feasible and reasonable and would not mitigate noise to a level of less than significant in all cases. In addition, the study found that noise levels increased over time due to pavement raveling, with the chance of noise-level increases higher after a 10-year period.

Sound Barrier Walls

Some, if not most, residences in the EIR Study Area have direct access via driveways to the associated impacted roadways. Barrier walls would prevent access to individual properties and would be infeasible. Further, these impacted homes are on private property outside of the control of future project developers, so there may be limited admittance onto these properties to construct such walls. Lastly, the costs versus benefits ratio in relation to the number of benefited households may not be feasible and reasonable in all cases.

Sound Insulation of Existing Residences and Sensitive Receptors

Exterior-to-interior noise reductions depend on the materials used, the design of the homes, and their conditions. To determine what upgrades would be needed, a noise study would be required for each house to measure exterior-to-interior noise reduction. Sound insulation may require upgraded windows, upgraded doors, and a means of mechanical ventilation to allow for a “windows closed” condition. There are no funding mechanisms and procedures that would guarantee that the implementation of sound insulation features at each affected home would offset the increase in traffic noise to interior areas and ensure that the State’s 45 dBA CNEL standard for multiple-family residences would be achieved.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.13-2 would remain significant and unavoidable.

² Cost versus benefit considerations are in terms of the number of households benefited, per the general methodology employed by Caltrans in the evaluation of highway sound walls.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

Impact 5.13-3: Individual construction developments for future projects may expose sensitive uses to excessive levels of groundborne vibration. [Threshold N-2]

Proposed General Plan

Construction Vibration Impacts

Construction activity from projects within the EIR Study Area would generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures and equipment. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. Vibration from construction activities rarely reaches the levels that can damage structures but can achieve the audible and perceptible ranges in buildings close to the construction site. Table 5.13-13, *Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment*, lists reference vibration levels for construction equipment.

Table 5.13-13 Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Approximate PPV Vibration Level at 25 Feet (in/sec)
Pile Driver, Impact (Upper Range)	1.518
Pile Driver, Impact (Typical)	0.644
Pile Driver, Sonic (Upper Range)	0.734
Pile Driver, Sonic (Typical)	0.170
Vibratory Roller	0.210
Large Bulldozer	0.089
Caisson Drilling	0.089
Loaded Trucks	0.076
Jackhammer	0.035
Small Bulldozer	0.003

Source: FTA 2018.
in/sec = inches per second; PPV = peak particle velocity.

As shown in Table 5.13-13, vibration generated by construction equipment has the potential to be substantial, since it has the potential to exceed the FTA criteria for architectural damage (i.e., 0.12 inches per second [in/sec] PPV for fragile or historical resources, 0.2 in/sec PPV for nonengineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry). Construction details and equipment for future project-level developments under the proposed General Plan are not known at this time but may cause vibration impacts. As such, this would be a potentially significant impact.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Operational Vibration Impacts

Operational vibration is typically associated with commercial and industrial uses, which can generate varying levels of groundborne vibration, depending on operational procedures and equipment. Other sources of groundborne vibration include rail traffic and subways. The proposed General Plan would allow for the future development of commercial and industrial land uses, which could generate significant levels of operational vibration. Therefore, impacts would be potentially significant.

Rail Vibration Impacts

Placement of new receptors near existing or future rail right-of-way could expose people to substantial vibration levels, depending on the proximity to rail alignments and depending on the type of rail and daily frequency of service. Regarding rail vibration, it is extremely rare for operations to cause substantial or even minor cosmetic damage to buildings. Proposed General Plan Policy HS-P14.11 provides guidance for reviewing proposals for new vibration-sensitive uses near an existing railroad or BART line. This policy directs the County to use Table HS-4 in the proposed General Plan to evaluate whether the sensitive uses could be exposed to excessive groundborne vibration. Projects with sensitive uses within the screening distances identified in the table would require preparation of a groundborne vibration and noise evaluation that is consistent with FTA-approved methodologies. However, due to the programmatic nature of this analysis, specific distances from transit types to future sensitive land uses cannot be determined at this time because project-specific details are unknown. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. While the proposed CAP would not directly result in any new development, the implementation of its actions, which may indirectly result in new development (such as wind farms or battery storage projects), would be subject to the same County standards that apply to development under the proposed General Plan, as applicable. The 2024 CAP does not include any strategies or actions that would otherwise result in new sources of vibration, so impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.13-3 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

- N-2 Prior to issuance of a grading or building permit for a project requiring pile driving during construction within 135 feet of fragile structures, such as historical resources, 100 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (e.g., most residential buildings), or within 75 feet of engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster); or a vibratory roller within 25 feet of any structure, the project applicant shall prepare a noise and vibration analysis to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to these activities. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer. The vibration levels shall not exceed FTA architectural damage thresholds (i.e., 0.12 inches per second [in/sec] peak particle velocity [PPV] for fragile or historical resources, 0.2

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

in/sec PPV for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry). If vibration levels would exceed this threshold, alternative uses such as drilling piles as opposed to pile driving and static rollers as opposed to vibratory rollers shall be used. If necessary, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to ensure vibration thresholds are not exceeded.

- N-3 During the project-level CEQA process for industrial development projects or other projects that could generate substantial vibration levels near sensitive uses, such as residential uses, a noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to the operations of that individual development. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer and shall follow the latest CEQA guidelines, practices, and precedents.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.13-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.13-4: Implementation of the proposed project would not expose future residents to excessive levels of airport-related noise. [Threshold N-3]

Proposed General Plan

Aircraft noise in the county is typically characterized as occasional, and the majority of flights served by the Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport are for training or recreational purposes. Pursuant to Section 21096 of the Public Resources Code, the lead agency must consider whether the project will result in a safety hazard or noise problem for persons using the airport or for persons residing or working in the project area. Future housing development or other sensitive uses could be in areas that exceed the 60 dBA CNEL as a result of implementation of the proposed project. However, the following proposed General Plan policies would reduce impacts to a less than significant impact:

- **Policy TR-P7.3:** Regulate the location of private airfields and heliports to protect public safety and minimize impacts on nearby residents and sensitive receptors.
- **Policy TR-P7.4:** Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County ALUCP.
- **Policy HS-P14.1.** Require projects that would locate noise-sensitive land uses in areas where the projected ambient noise level is greater than the "normally acceptable" noise level indicated in Table HS-3 to provide an acoustical analysis that recommends appropriate mitigation to meet the noise compatibility standards.
- **Policy HS-P14.2.** Require new housing developments, hotels, and motels exposed to a DNL of 60 dB or greater to provide a detailed acoustical analysis describing how the project will provide an interior DNL of 45 dB or less.
- **Policy HS-P14.4.** Require new residential development in areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB due to single events, such as train operation, to provide an acoustical analysis describing how indoor noise levels from these single events will not exceed a maximum A-weighted noise level of 35 dB in

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

bedrooms and 55 dB in other habitable rooms. In areas exposed to a DNL in excess of 65 dB, use an indoor residential noise-level threshold of 45 dB CNEL.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. The proposed CAP would not directly result in any new development that would place sensitive receptors near airport noise sources, nor would it facilitate the development of new airstrips or airports. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.13-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.13-4 would be less than significant.

5.13.5 Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in various land uses across the county (e.g., residential, commercial, and industrial uses). This growth would result in an increase in roadway traffic volumes and associated noise levels for major arterial and collector roadways throughout the county. Cumulative development conditions would result in a cumulative increase in roadway noise levels.

Future cumulative transportation noise levels are projected to exceed the established noise standards, resulting in a significant cumulative impact. While traffic volumes would likely increase regardless of the implementation of the proposed project, the proposed project would introduce future development that would contribute to cumulative traffic volumes. Consequently, the proposed project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable. Implementation of the mitigation measures identified would reduce the project's contribution to cumulative traffic noise impacts, but not to a level that is less than significant.

5.13.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impact would be less than significant: Impact 5.13-4.

Without mitigation, the following impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.13-1:** Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project.
- **Impact 5.13-2:** Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards.
- **Impact 5.13-3:** Individual construction developments for future projects may expose sensitive uses to excessive levels of groundborne vibration.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

5.13.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.13-1

- N-1 Require construction contractors to implement the following measures for construction activities. Demolition, grading, and construction plans submitted to the County shall identify these measures and the County Department of Conservation and Development shall verify that the submitted plans include these notations prior to issuance of demolition, grading, and/or construction permits:
- During the entire active construction period, equipment and trucks used for project construction shall use the best-available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, equipment re-design, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures, and acoustically attenuating shields or shrouds) available.
 - Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers and breakers) shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible. Where the use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used along with external noise jackets on the tools.
 - Stationary equipment, such as generators and air compressors, shall be as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive uses.
 - Stockpiling shall be as far as feasible from nearby noise-sensitive receptors.
 - Construction traffic shall be limited, to the extent feasible, to approved haul routes approved by the County Conservation and Development and Public Works Departments.
 - At least 10 days prior to the start of construction activities, a sign shall be posted at the entrance(s) to the job site, clearly visible to the public, that includes permitted construction days and hours, as well as the telephone numbers of the County's and contractor's authorized representatives that are assigned to respond in the event of a noise or vibration complaint. If the authorized contractor's representative receives a complaint, they shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action to the County.
 - Signs shall be posted at the job site entrance(s), within the on-site construction zones, and along queueing lanes (if any) to reinforce the prohibition of unnecessary engine idling. All other equipment shall be turned off if not in use for more than 5 minutes.
 - During the entire active construction period and to the extent feasible, the use of noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, shall be for safety warning purposes only. The construction manager shall use smart back-up alarms, which automatically adjust the alarm level based on the background noise level or switch off back-up alarms and replace with human spotters in compliance with all safety requirements and laws.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

- Erect temporary noise barriers (at least as high as the exhaust of equipment and breaking line-of-sight between noise sources and sensitive receptors), as necessary and feasible, to maintain construction noise levels at or below the performance standard of 80 dBA Leq. Barriers shall be constructed with a solid material that has a density of at least 4 pounds per square foot with no gaps from the ground to the top of the barrier.

Impact 5.13-2

Mitigation Measures Considered

Notable reductions in tire noise have been achieved via the implementation of special paving materials, such as rubberized asphalt or open-grade asphalt concrete overlays. For example, the California Department of Transportation conducted a study of pavement noise along Interstate 80 in Davis (Caltrans 2011) and found an average improvement of 6 to 7 dBA compared to conventional asphalt overlay.

Although this amount of noise reduction from rubberized/special asphalt materials would be sufficient to avoid the predicted noise increase due to traffic in some cases, the potential up-front and ongoing maintenance costs are such that the cost versus benefits ratio³ may not be feasible and reasonable and would not mitigate noise to a level of less than significant in all cases. In addition, the study found that noise levels increased over time due to pavement raveling, with the chance of noise-level increases higher after a 10-year period.

Sound Barrier Walls

Some, if not most, residences in the EIR Study Area have direct access via driveways to the associated impacted roadways. Barrier walls would prevent access to individual properties and would be infeasible. Further, these impacted homes are on private property outside of the control of future project developers, so there may be limited admittance onto these properties to construct such walls. Lastly, the costs versus benefits ratio in relation to the number of benefitted households may not be feasible and reasonable in all cases.

Sound Insulation of Existing Residences and Sensitive Receptors

Exterior-to-interior noise reductions depend on the materials used, the design of the homes, and their conditions. To determine what upgrades would be needed, a noise study would be required for each house to measure exterior-to-interior noise reduction. Sound insulation may require upgraded windows, upgraded doors, and a means of mechanical ventilation to allow for a “windows closed” condition. There are no funding mechanisms and procedures that would guarantee that the implementation of sound insulation features at each affected home would offset the increase in traffic noise to interior areas and ensure that the State’s 45 dBA CNEL standard for multiple-family residences would be achieved.

³ Cost versus benefit considerations are in terms of the number of households benefitted, per the general methodology employed by Caltrans in the evaluation of highway sound walls.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

Impact 5.13-3

- N-2 Prior to issuance of a grading or building permit for a project requiring pile driving during construction within 135 feet of fragile structures, such as historical resources, 100 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (e.g., most residential buildings), or within 75 feet of engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster); or a vibratory roller within 25 feet of any structure, the project applicant shall prepare a noise and vibration analysis to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to these activities. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer. The vibration levels shall not exceed FTA architectural damage thresholds (i.e., 0.12 inches per second [in/sec] peak particle velocity [PPV] for fragile or historical resources, 0.2 in/sec PPV for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry). If vibration levels would exceed this threshold, alternative uses such as drilling piles as opposed to pile driving and static rollers as opposed to vibratory rollers shall be used. If necessary, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to ensure vibration thresholds are not exceeded.
- N-3 During the project-level CEQA process for industrial development projects or other projects that could generate substantial vibration levels near sensitive uses, such as residential uses, a noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts related to the operations of that individual development. This noise and vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer and shall follow the latest CEQA guidelines, practices, and precedents.

5.13.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.13-1

Implementation of Mitigation Measure N-1 would reduce potential noise impacts during construction to the extent feasible. However, due to the potential for proximity of construction activities to sensitive uses, the number of construction projects occurring simultaneously, and the potential duration of construction activities, Impact 5.13-1 could result in a temporary substantial increase in noise levels above ambient conditions. Therefore, impacts would remain ***significant and unavoidable***. It should be noted that the identification of this program-level impact does not preclude the finding of less-than-significant impacts for subsequent projects analyzed at the project level.

Impact 5.13-2

As demonstrated under the heading *Mitigation Measures Considered*, there are no feasible or practical mitigation measures available to reduce project-generated traffic noise to less-than-significant levels for existing residences along the affected roadway. No individual measure and no set of feasible or practical mitigation measures are available to reduce project-generated traffic noise to less-than-significant levels in all cases. Thus, traffic noise would remain a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact in the EIR Study Area. It should be noted that the

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

identification of this program-level impact does not preclude the finding of less-than-significant impacts for subsequent projects analyzed at the project level.

Impact 5.13-3

With implementation of Mitigation Measures N-2 and N-3, coupled with adherence to associated performance standards, Impact 5.13-3 would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. Specifically, Mitigation Measure N-2 would reduce potential vibration impacts during construction below the pertinent thresholds, and Mitigation Measure N-3 (operations-related vibration) would reduce potential vibration impacts from proposed sensitive uses near existing railroads and facilities to less-than-significant levels. No significant and unavoidable vibration impacts would remain.

5. Environmental Analysis NOISE

5.13.9 References

- AirNav.com. 2023a, November 27. Buchanan Field Airport. <https://www.airnav.com/airport/CCR>
- . 2023b, November 27. Byron Airport. <https://www.airnav.com/airport/c83>
- Caltrans (California Department of Transportation). 2011. *I-80 Davis OGAC Pavement Noise Study*.
- . 2013a, September. *Technical Noise Supplement (“TeNS”)*.
- . 2013b. *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*.
- . 2020. *Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol For New Highway Construction, Reconstruction, and Retrofit Barrier Projects*.
- Contra Costa, County of. May 2019. Noise Management Program.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45928/Noise-Management-Program-Brochure-2019-PDF?bidId=>.
- . 2000, December 13. Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/851/Cover-Introduction-and-County-wide-Policies?bidId=>.
- . 2022, June. Contra Costa County Code.
https://library.municode.com/ca/contra_costa_county/codes/ordinance_code.
- . n.d. Buchanan Filed Noise Program. [https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3804/Buchanan-Field-Noise-Program#:~:text=The%20Noise%20Management%20Program%20\(PDF,over%20residential%20neighborhoods%20whenever%20possible](https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3804/Buchanan-Field-Noise-Program#:~:text=The%20Noise%20Management%20Program%20(PDF,over%20residential%20neighborhoods%20whenever%20possible).
- FHWA (Federal Highway Administration). 1978, December. Federal Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model. United States Department of Transportation Report No. FHWA-RD77-108.
- FTA (Federal Transit Administration). 2018, September. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*. US Department of Transportation.
- Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. 2017. *State of California General Plan Guidelines*.
- Harris, Cyril M. 1998. Handbook of Acoustical Measurements and Noise Control. 3rd edition. Woodbury, NY: Acoustical Society of America.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 1974, April. *EPA Identifies Noise Levels Affecting Health and Welfare*.

5. Environmental Analysis

NOISE

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential population and housing impacts from future development that could occur by adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

5.14.1 Environmental Setting

5.14.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

Housing Accountability Act

The Housing Accountability Act (HAA) was passed in 1982 and amended under Assembly Bill 678 and Senate Bill 167 in 2017 with the aim to limit the ability of local government to restrict the development of new housing. Specifically, the HAA prohibits a local agency from disapproving, or conditioning approval in a manner than renders infeasible, a housing development project for very low-, low-, or moderate-income households or an emergency shelter unless the local agency makes specified written findings based on a preponderance of evidence in the record.

Housing Crisis Act

Senate Bill (SB) 330, or the Housing Crisis Act of 2019, aims to address California's housing shortage by expediting the approval process for housing development of all types, particularly in regions suffering the worst housing shortages and highest rates of displacements. To address the crisis, SB 330 prohibits some local discretionary land use controls currently in place and generally requires cities and counties to approve all housing developments that comply with current zoning codes and general plans. SB 330 requires that a housing development project only be subject to the ordinances, policies, and standards adopted and in effect when a preliminary application is submitted, notwithstanding the provisions of the HAA or any other law, subject to certain exceptions.

Regional

Association of Bay Area Governments

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is a regional planning agency encompassing nine counties in the San Francisco Bay Area, including Contra Costa County. ABAG is responsible for conducting the Bay Area's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process every eight years via the Housing Methodology Committee in conjunction with local elected officials and staff, stakeholders, and residents from around the region.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has approved the ABAG Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan. HCD's approval comes after action by the ABAG Executive Board to approve the Final RHNA, which occurred on December 16, 2021. The Final RHNA Plan distributes the Bay Area's portion of the state housing needs to local jurisdictions within the nine-county region and reports the methodology used for determining the RHNA (ABAG 2021).

Local

Affordable Housing Finance Committee

The Affordable Housing Finance Committee (AHFC) works with the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development to develop recommendations for the Board of Supervisors concerning the allocation of Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOWPWA), and other State and local funds among eligible affordable housing programs and projects in the county (DCD 2021).

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 822-2 – Residential Density Bonus

The purposes of this chapter are to provide incentives to produce housing for very low income, lower income, moderate income, or senior households; facilitate the development of affordable housing; implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the County's General Plan Housing Element; and establish procedures for complying with Government Code Section 65915.

Chapter 822-4 – Inclusionary Housing Ordinance

The goal of this chapter is to ensure that affordable housing units are added to the county's housing stock in proportion to the increase in new housing units in the county.

An update to the inclusionary housing in-lieu fees for rental and for-sale housing was brought to the Board of Supervisors and approved in December 2018, which became effective in February 2019. The County's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance was updated on November 25, 2019, and February 1, 2022.

The 2023-2031 Housing Element amends and continues the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to increase the supply of affordable housing.

Contra Costa County 6th Cycle Housing Element

Contra Costa County adopted the 6th Cycle Housing Element on December 12, 2023, and received certification of the adopted Element on January 22, 2024. The Housing Element is required to identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs and include statements of the County's goals, policies, quantified objectives, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. State law (Government Code Sections 65580–65589.8) mandates the content of the Housing Element and requires an analysis of:

- Population and employment trends

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

- The fair share of the regional housing needs
- Household characteristics
- An inventory of land suitable for residential development
- Governmental and non-governmental constraints on the improvement, maintenance, and development of housing
- Special housing needs
- Opportunities for energy conservation
- Publicly assisted housing developments that may convert to non-assisted housing developments

The purpose of these requirements is to demonstrate adequate housing resources to meet the assigned RHNA for all housing categories.

The 6th Cycle Housing Element includes the following policies applicable to population and housing:

- **Policy HE-P1.4:** Ensure that the County's condominium conversion ordinance (Chapter 926-2.202) mitigates impacts to displaced tenants and ensures the quality of units being sold to homeowners.
- **Policy HE-P1.5:** Preserve existing affordable housing developments at risk of converting to market-rate housing through promotion of bond refinancing and other mechanisms.
- **Policy HE-P2.1:** Support development of affordable housing by non-profit and for-profit developers through affordable housing funding sources, regulatory incentives such as density bonus, and/or flexible development standards through planned unit developments.
- **Policy HE-P2.3:** Increase the supply of affordable housing and mixed-income housing through the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.
- **Policy HE-P2.4:** Actively promote accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) construction as a viable means of meeting affordable housing needs by design, particularly in higher resource communities, and those communities identified as RCAAs in the central and southern portions of the county.
- **Policy HE-P2.5:** Encourage innovative housing design and building types to lower housing costs and provide high quality options for affordable housing.
- **Policy HE-P3.1:** Expand affordable housing opportunities for households with special needs, including but not limited to seniors, persons with disabilities, large households, single parents, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with mental illness, persons with development disabilities, farmworkers, and persons experiencing homelessness.
- **Policy HE-P3.2:** Continue to support non-profit service providers that help meet the diverse housing and supportive service needs of the community.
- **Policy HE-P3.3:** Continue to require inclusion of ADA accessible units in all new construction projects receiving County financing.
- **Policy HE-P3.4:** Encourage housing programs that provide wrap-around social and supportive services for residents in need of services.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- **Policy HE-P4.2:** Continue to support the provision of rental assistance to extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households.
- **Policy HE-P4.3:** Prioritize and encourage financial support to non-profit organizations that own or operate housing for persons with developmental disabilities.
- **Policy HE-P4.4:** Designate additional land to address the County's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation.
- **Policy HE-P6.1:** Establish and maintain development standards that streamline housing development while protecting quality of life goals.
- **Policy HE-P6.2:** Provide financial and/or regulatory incentives where feasible and appropriate to offset or reduce the costs of affordable housing development, including density bonuses and flexibility in site development standards.
- **Policy HE-P6.3:** Encourage P-1 zoning in areas with significant numbers of non-conforming parcels and uses.
- **Policy HE-P7.1:** Prohibit discrimination in the sale or rental of housing to anyone on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, disability, gender identity sexual orientation, familial status, marital status, or other such arbitrary factors.
- **Policy HE-P7.2:** Provide financial support to non-profit organizations providing fair housing services.
- **Policy HE-P7.4:** Ensure that housing programs prioritize the needs of underserved communities, benefit lower-income residents, and avoid gentrification as neighborhoods are improved.

5.14.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

There are 19 incorporated cities and towns in Contra Costa County, which is where the majority of the countywide population resides. Table 5.14-1, *Contra Costa County Population Growth*, shows the population of the incorporated and unincorporated parts of the county in 2010 and 2020, along with the corresponding growth rates, based on information provided by Department of Finance (DOF). As shown in the table, the incorporated areas experienced a 9.75-percent increase in population, while the unincorporated areas experienced an 8.80-percent increase over that timeframe.

Table 5.14-1 Contra Costa County Population Growth

Contra Costa County	2010 Population	2020 Population	Growth	Percentage Change
Incorporated	889,240	975,944	+86,704	9.75%
Unincorporated	159,785	173,851	+14,066	8.80%
County Total	1,049,025	1,149,795	+100,770	9.60%

Source: DOF 2020.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

Housing

Table 5.14-2, *Housing Unit Growth in the EIR Study Area*, shows the estimated housing units in the EIR Study Area in 2010 and 2020, along with the corresponding growth. The DOF estimates that a total of 62,401 housing units existed in the EIR Study Area in 2010, increasing to 64,481 units in 2020, which equates to a 3.33-percent increase over that timeframe.

Table 5.14-2 Housing Unit Growth in the EIR Study Area

Housing Units	2010	2020	Growth	Percentage Change
Total Housing Units	62,401	64,481	2,080	3.33%
Single-Family Units	50,098	51,546	1,448	2.89%
Multifamily Units	9,485	10,119	634	6.68%
Mobile Homes	2,818	2,816	-2	-0.07%
Occupied	57,706	60,575	2,869	4.97%
Vacancy Rate	7.5%	6.1%	--	--
Persons per Household	2.75	2.86	--	--

Source: DOF 2020.

¹ Single-family units include "single detached" and "single attached" categories.

² Multifamily units contain "two to four" and "five plus" categories.

As noted in Section 5.14.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, HCD has approved the ABAG RHNA Plan. Table 5.14-3, *2023-2031 Regional Housing Needs Allocation*, shows the RHNA for the unincorporated county for the 2023 to 2031 period. The RHNA determined that a total of 7,610 housing units will need to be accommodated within the EIR Study Area.

Table 5.14-3 2023-2031 Regional Housing Needs Allocation

Income Category	Area Median Income Percentage	2023-2031 RHNA
Very Low	<50%	2,072
Low	50-80%	1,194
Moderate	80-120%	1,211
Above Moderate	>120%	3,133
Total		7,610

Source: ABAG 2021

Employment

Table 5.14-4, *EIR Study Area Employment Growth (5-Year Increment)*, shows employment estimates and growth in the EIR Study Area from 2010 to 2020 in five-year increments. As shown in the table, the number of employed residents in the EIR Study Area has increased over this timeframe, growing by a total of 16.41 percent. The majority of this growth occurred in the 2010 to 2015 timeframe.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Table 5.14-4 EIR Study Area Employment Growth (5-Year Increment)

Year	Employed Residents	Growth from 2010	Percentage Change from 2010
2010	76,035	--	--
2015	87,830	11,795	15.51%
2020	88,515	12,480	16.41%

Source: ABAG 2022.

As shown in Table 5.14-5, *Industry by Occupation in the EIR Study Area (2010 and 2020)*, there was a total employed civilian workforce (16 years and older) in the EIR Study Area of 72,641 in 2010 and 85,951 in 2020. The largest occupational sector in both years was Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance, which experienced a 16.77-percent increase within the last decade. The second largest sector in both years was Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services, which experienced a 41.67-percent increase in that decade. The third largest sector was Retail Trade, which experienced a 6.50-percent increase between 2010 and 2020.

Table 5.14-5 Industry by Occupation in the EIR Study Area (2010 and 2020)

Industry/Occupation	Estimated Employees 2010 (Percentage of Total)		Estimated Employees 2020 (Percentage of Total)		Percentage Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	285	0.39%	469	0.55%	64.56%
Construction	6,130	8.44%	8,108	9.43%	32.27%
Manufacturing	5,551	7.64%	5,844	6.80%	5.28%
Wholesale trade	2,143	2.95%	2,133	2.48%	-0.47%
Retail trade	7,985	10.99%	8,504	9.89%	6.50%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3,810	5.24%	4,338	5.05%	13.86%
Information	2,005	2.76%	2,049	2.38%	2.19%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	7,969	10.97%	7,037	8.19%	-11.70%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	10,358	14.26%	14,674	17.07%	41.67%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	15,145	20.85%	17,685	20.58%	16.77%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4,527	6.23%	7,487	8.71%	65.39%
Other services, except public administration	3,831	5.27%	4,111	4.78%	7.31%
Public administration	2,902	3.99%	3,512	4.09%	21.02%
TOTAL	72,641	100%	85,951	100%	--

Source: Census 2010a; Census 2020b.

Growth Projections

Plan Bay Area 2050 is the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area, adopted October 21, 2021. Although it provides regional growth projections, it does not differentiate between Contra Costa County as a whole and the unincorporated portion of the county. The earlier version of the Plan, Plan Bay Area 2040, does provide growth projections for the unincorporated county.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

Plan Bay Area 2040 was adopted by the ABAG Executive Board and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) on July 26, 2017. Table 5.14-6, *Summary of the EIR Study Area's Projected Growth (5-Year Increments)*, shows the Plan Bay Area 2040 Growth Pattern projected household and job growth for the EIR Study Area through 2040. The EIR Study Area population is expected to increase by 19.92 percent by 2040. Households are expected to increase by 13.77 percent, housing units by 12.11 percent, and employment by 6.52 percent by the year 2040.

Table 5.14-6 Summary of the EIR Study Area's Projected Growth (5-Year Increments)

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Percentage Increase (2020-2040)
Population	166,030	178,900	184,585	189,455	199,105	19.92%
Households	59,480	62,780	64,195	65,195	67,670	13.77%
Housing Units ¹	62,020	64,265	65,050	66,475	69,530	12.11%
Employment	50,025	50,030	50,300	51,365	53,285	6.52%

Source: ABAG 2022.

¹ Housing units include single-family and multifamily units.

5.14.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- P-1 Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- P-2 Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

5.14.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.14.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to population and housing. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Stronger Communities Element

- **Action SC-A1.3:** With input from residents of Impacted Communities, amend County Ordinance Code Title 8 – Zoning to create an Impacted Communities Overlay Zone that applies to areas within and adjacent to Impacted Communities and establishes requirements for discretionary permits for nonresidential developments of 25,000 square feet or more. The overlay zone will include additional required project findings that promote environmental justice, health, and safety. Projects able to satisfy the required findings will:

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- a) Provide benefits that support the community objectives, such as those identified in the Community Profile
- b) Provide economic benefits for the community.
- c) Avoid unwelcome permanent displacement of existing residents or businesses in the community.
- d) Support community resiliency, cohesion, and safety.
- e) Positively impact health and quality of life within the community.

As part of the process to develop this ordinance, create guidance for demonstrating consistency with these findings.

- **Policy SC-P6.1:** Ensure that future improvements in Impacted Communities will not result in a net loss of affordable housing or significant preventable displacement of residents.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P1.1:** *The General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR) assumes the following maximum development projections for the year 2045:*
 - a) 23,200 new dwelling units.
 - b) 1.2 million square feet of new commercial and office space.
 - c) 5 million square feet of new industrial space.

If new development approved within the unincorporated county reaches the maximum number of residential units and commercial/office and industrial square feet projected in the General Plan EIR, require that environmental review conducted for any subsequent development project address growth impacts that would occur from development exceeding the General Plan EIR's projections.

- **Action LU-A1.1:** *Track growth to ensure it does not exceed the development projections analyzed in the General Plan EIR and described in Policy LU-P1.1 without subsequent environmental review.*
- **Action LU-A1.2:** Periodically update County Ordinance Code Titles 7 – Building Regulations, 8 – Zoning, 9 – Subdivisions, and 10 – Public Works and Flood Control to maintain consistency with State law and newly adopted or revised planning documents (General Plan, Specific Plans, etc.); address emerging issues; and respond to economic, technological, and social trends.
- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
- **Policy LU-P2.2:** Enhance the ULL's effectiveness by supporting efforts to acquire and permanently protect land along the ULL boundary.
- **Policy LU-P2.3:** Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.
- **Policy LU-P2.4:** Prohibit major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive minor subdivisions of lots outside the ULL that were created through previous subdivisions.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P3.1:** Support regional efforts to achieve a jobs-housing balance within the county and within subregions of the county by maintaining an adequate supply of developable land designated for job-generating uses. For any General Plan amendment proposing to convert commercial, industrial, or office land uses to a residential or non-urban land uses, evaluate the project's effect on the local and countywide jobs-housing balance.
- **Policy LU-P3.2:** Encourage residential development in or near existing employment centers, and development of job-generating uses near areas that are primarily residential. Where large-scale residential or commercial development is planned, encourage a mix of housing and employment opportunities unless doing so would exacerbate a severe jobs-housing imbalance in the area.
- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility and transit use, shorter commutes, and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
- **Policy LU-P3.4:** Encourage conversion of existing commercial areas to mixed-use nodes and corridors.
- **Action LU-A3.2:** Develop and maintain an inventory of County-owned surplus lands with residential development potential and post the inventory on the County's website.
- **Policy LU-P5.1:** Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.
- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Action LU-A5.2:** Work with LAFCO and utility service providers to:
 - a) Annex lands planned for urban development by this General Plan into their service areas.
 - b) Detach private lands, especially agricultural or rural lands, from district boundaries if they are not planned for urban development and are not currently served.
- **Policy LU-P6.4:** Coordinate with LAFCO to ensure that city annexations and related land use decisions do not:
 - a) Interfere with attainment of the County's land use goals as expressed in this General Plan. Include Housing Element inventory sites unless provisions have been made to transfer the site's assigned units to the receiving city's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).
 - b) Create new unincorporated "islands" (i.e., isolated areas substantially surrounded by incorporated cities).
- **Policy LU-P6.5:** Encourage cities to annex unincorporated "islands", such as the Ayers Ranch and San Miguel neighborhoods.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- **Policy LU-P7.1:** Plan for a variety of housing types. Encourage innovative, nontraditional designs and layouts in response to evolving housing trends and needs.
- **Policy LU-P7.2:** Provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the population, ensuring that affordable housing is distributed throughout the county and is not concentrated in traditionally lower-income areas. Promote development of affordable housing near public transit and essential services whenever possible.
- **Policy LU-P7.3:** Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible uses and activities that will adversely affect public health and safety.
- **Policy LU-P7.4:** Require new residential development to be planned, designed, and constructed in a way that promotes health, minimizes hazard exposure for future residents, and mitigates potential adverse effects on natural resources and the environment.

Transportation Element

- **Policy TR-P1.5:** Ensure new highways constructed outside the Urban Limit Line are not growth-inducing through land-use controls, access limitations, and other appropriate measures.

Growth Management Element

- **Policy GM-P3.6:** Provide housing opportunities for all income levels by implementing the programs contained in the Housing Element.
- **Action GM-A3.1:** Submit a biennial report to the CCTA on implementation of actions outlined in the Housing Element as part of the biennial GMP Compliance Checklist. The report will demonstrate reasonable progress in providing housing opportunities for all income levels using one of the following methods:
 - a) Comparing the number of housing units approved, constructed, or occupied within the unincorporated county over the preceding five years with the number of units needed on average each year to meet the housing objectives established in the Housing Element; or
 - b) Illustrating how the County has adequately planned to meet the existing and projected housing needs through adoption of land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development; or
 - c) Illustrating how the County's General Plan and zoning regulations facilitate improvement and development of sufficient housing to meet those objectives.

5.14.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions from the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to population and housing:

Strategy CE-1: Provide access to affordable, clean, safe, and healthy housing and jobs.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

Strategy CE-1 Actions:

- Encourage companies and entrepreneurs from local universities and national labs to create jobs in such industries as renewable energy, transportation technology, diverse forms of manufacturing, biotech/biomedical, and clean tech.
- Provide support for State and federal programs that support family-sustaining jobs in sustainable industries, efforts to support organized labor, and living wage labor standards.

Strategy BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated county, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels.

Strategy BE-2 Actions:

- Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy.
- Create a detailed roadmap to convert existing homes and businesses to use low- or zero-carbon appliances. The roadmap should include steps to support converting buildings to rely on low- or zero-carbon energy using an equitable framework that minimizes the risk of displacement or significant disruptions to existing tenants.
- Evaluate options for incentivizing and requiring additions and alterations to be energy efficient and to achieve the lowest feasible levels of GHG emissions, including upgrades to the building electric panel, as needed.
- Ensure County-led and supported retrofit programs incentivize and prioritize conversion of buildings built before 1980 and emphasize assistance to owners of properties that are home to very low-, low-, and moderate-income residents and/or located in Impacted Communities, as permitted by available funding.

5.14.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.14-1: The proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the EIR Study Area. [Threshold P-1]

Proposed General Plan

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR, the proposed General Plan is a high-level policy document that will replace the existing General Plan as the County's overarching policy document that defines a vision for future change and sets up a framework for growth. The proposed General Plan considers growth through 2045 but does not include specific development proposals. The General Plan is the policy document that projects the amount of reasonably foreseeable growth given past growth trends and the ability of existing services and infrastructure to support future growth.

Future development in the EIR Study Area is projected to occur through approved and pending development projects and on vacant and underutilized parcels within unincorporated communities that are designated for a use that allows development. Therefore, the proposed General Plan could induce substantial, unplanned

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

population growth directly or indirectly in any particular location. As of 2020, the EIR Study Area has a population of approximately 174,000 with about 64,000 homes (DOF 2020). The proposed General Plan is projected to result in an increase of 23,200 new housing units and 65,600 new residents in the EIR Study Area by 2045. This equates to a 38-percent increase in housing units and a 36-percent increase in total population over the 25-year planning timeframe.

Approximately 33 percent of this residential growth would be required to fulfill the unincorporated county's 2023-2031 RHNA of 7,610 units, which is growth dictated by California Housing Law and not the County (ABAG 2021). It is anticipated that future RHNA cycles will continue to dictate additional housing growth within the EIR Study Area after 2031 and through the proposed General Plan's 2045 horizon.

As shown in Table 5.14-6, regional projections for the EIR Study Area anticipate an approximately 12-percent increase in housing units and a 20-percent increase in population by 2040. The development potential under the proposed General Plan would allow for a 38-percent increase in housing units and population by 2045. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would exceed current regional projections for housing by 26 percent and population by 18 percent based on these factors alone. However, it is important to note that regional projections used were from Plan Bay Area 2040 and not the updated Plan Bay Area 2050 because the more recent Plan does not differentiate between Contra Costa County as a whole and the unincorporated portion of the county. In addition, Plan Bay Area relies on local general plan growth projections when preparing growth forecasts, so the proposed project would be incorporated into future growth forecasts.

The proposed Land Use Element serves as the blueprint for the development of public and private property in the EIR Study Area and sets the foundation for future growth, change, and preservation. The following Land Use Element policies and actions would serve to minimize potential adverse impacts related to growth:

- **Policy LU-P1.1:** The General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR) assumes the following maximum development projections for the year 2045:
 - a) 23,200 new dwelling units.
 - b) 1.2 million square feet of new commercial and office space.
 - c) 5 million square feet of new industrial space.

If new development approved within the unincorporated county reaches the maximum number of residential units and commercial/office and industrial square feet projected in the General Plan EIR, require that environmental review conducted for any subsequent development project address growth impacts that would occur from development exceeding the General Plan EIR's projections.

- **Action LU-A1.1:** Track growth to ensure it does not exceed the development projections analyzed in the General Plan EIR and described in Policy LU-P1.1 without subsequent environmental review.
- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

- **Policy LU-P2.3:** Limit development outside the ULL to non-urban uses, such as agriculture, mineral extraction, wind and solar energy production, natural carbon sequestration, other resource-based uses, and essential infrastructure.
- **Policy LU-P2.4:** Prohibit major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive minor subdivisions of lots outside the ULL that were created through previous subdivisions.
- **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development.
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P3.1:** Support regional efforts to achieve a jobs-housing balance within the county and within subregions of the county by maintaining an adequate supply of developable land designated for job-generating uses. For any General Plan amendment proposing to convert commercial, industrial, or office land uses to residential or non-urban land uses, evaluate the project's effect on the local and countywide jobs-housing balance.
- **Policy LU-P5.1:** Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.
- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, major roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Action LU-A5.2:** Work with LAFCO and utility service providers to:
 - a) Annex lands planned for urban development by this General Plan into their service areas.
 - b) Detach private lands, especially agricultural or rural lands, from district boundaries if they are not planned for urban development and are not currently served.

The policies and actions described would limit development to areas that are planned for urban uses and direct the County to monitor and control growth in the EIR Study Area to ensure it remains within the development projections analyzed in this EIR.

Although the proposed General Plan would accommodate population and housing growth that exceeds the Plan Bay Area 2040 projections, it would not introduce a substantial amount of unplanned population in the EIR Study Area because it will become the overriding policy document that plans for such growth. All potential future development would be required to adhere to the policy guidance described, which limits development to areas that are already planned for urban uses, as well as comply with any required site-specific infrastructure improvements and pay any project-specific impact fees. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not induce substantial unplanned population growth either directly or indirectly and the impact is less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP does not include projects that would result in residential development nor an unanticipated increase in density or population growth outside of what was accounted for and projected within the proposed General Plan. Some CAP strategies could promote the construction of utility-scale energy projects (e.g., solar, battery storage, substation, and transmission) and water facilities and supplies. However, these types of facilities would not directly serve residential uses such that they would induce population growth in their vicinity. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.14-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.14-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.14-2: The proposed project would not result in the displacement of people and/or housing. [Threshold P-2]

Proposed General Plan

Implementation of the proposed General Plan is projected to result in an increase of 23,200 housing units in the EIR Study Area over a 25-year horizon, contributing to a net increase in housing units. It is anticipated that residential development would occur on vacant sites, as well as through redevelopment on sites that may include existing housing units, although no major redevelopment projects are envisioned in the General Plan. Therefore, it is possible that construction activities could displace an unknown number of existing residents or housing units. However, all redevelopment would be voluntary in nature, and no housing units would be displaced without permission of the property owners.

In addition, the County's 6th Cycle Housing Element includes policies that minimize potential adverse impacts related to population and housing displacement. For example, Policy HE-P1.4 directs the County to maintain a condominium conversion ordinance aimed at mitigating the impacts to displaced tenants and ensuring the quality of the units being sold to homeowners. Also, Policy HE-P1.5 directs the County to preserve existing affordable housing developments at risk of converting to market-rate housing through bond refinancing and other mechanisms.

Because the proposed General Plan would allow a net increase of housing and does not envision substantial redevelopment projects, and because the existing Housing Element includes policies that protect existing neighborhoods and housing, the impact related to housing displacement would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that does not include projects that would displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing. To the contrary, the proposed CAP strategies and actions would support affordable housing, promote stability in housing, and otherwise support development as already anticipated by General Plan land use assumptions. Implementation of the strategies and actions in the proposed CAP could involve retrofitting existing building or requiring new developments to incorporate water conservation systems and energy efficiency upgrades, as outlined in Strategy BE-2. This strategy includes an action to create a detailed road map to convert existing homes and business to all-electric appliances while including equitable requirements, additional compensation for Impacted Communities, and a methodical conversion without displacement or disruptions. These retrofits and upgrades for new developments are not anticipated to displace substantial housing or population. This impact would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.14-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.14-2 would be less than significant.

5.14.5 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project would not result in considerable contributions to any significant cumulative impacts. While the proposed project would allow population and housing growth as described in Impact Discussions 5.14-1 and 5.14-2, this growth is necessary to meet housing needs in the region. Implementation of the proposed project would remedy this situation in a manner that would not result in significant adverse impacts on the environment. The growth would occur under the proposed General Plan, which will become the overriding policy document that plans for growth in the unincorporated county and which will be used for future regional growth forecasting. Meanwhile, countywide growth is managed across all jurisdictions in the county in support of the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard and ULL that limit growth to areas that are already planned for urban uses. Therefore, cumulative population and housing impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.14.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.14.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

5.14.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis POPULATION AND HOUSING

5.14.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). 2021. *Final Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan: San Francisco Bay Area, 2023-2031*. https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-12/Final_RHNA_Allocation_Report_2023-2031-approved_0.pdf.
- . 2022. Plan Bay Area 2040, Projections 2040 By Jurisdiction, Projections 2040 - Forecasts for Population Households and Jobs. https://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/Projections_2040-ABAG-MTC-web.pdf
- Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (DCD). 2021. *Contra Costa County Affordable Housing Finance Committee Bylaws*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/70022/Affordable-Housing-Finance-Committee-Bylaws-PDF>.
- Department of Finance (DOF). 2022, May. Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates.
- . 2020. E-TE1 City and County Test Estimates of Population and Housing, March 31, 2020, and Census 2010. <https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/Test-Estimates/>.
- US Census Bureau (Census). 2010a. Table S2405 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- . 2010b. 2020 Census Data (P17: Average Household Size by Age) Summary File. <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/doc/sf1.pdf>.
- . 2020a. Table S2405 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/doc/sf1.pdf>.
- . 2020b. 2020 Census State Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/72110/Contra-Costa-County-Places-Data-Profiles---2020-Redistricting-Data-PDF>.

5. Environmental Analysis

POPULATION AND HOUSING

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.15 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential public services impacts from adopting and implementing the proposed project and from future development and activities that could occur under the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project. This section covers the following public services:

- Fire protection and emergency services
- Police protection
- School services
- Library services
- Parks and Recreation

Public and private utilities and service systems, including water, wastewater, and solid waste services and systems, are addressed in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*.

5.15.1 Fire Protection and Emergency Services

5.15.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State

California Building Code

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design through Title 24, Part 2, of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), commonly referred to as the “California Building Code” (CBC). The CBC is updated every three years. It is generally adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local conditions. Contra Costa County regularly adopts each new CBC update under County Ordinance Code Division 74, *Building Code*. Commercial and residential buildings are plan-checked by local County building officials for compliance with the CBC. Typical fire safety requirements of the CBC include the installation of sprinklers in all high-rise buildings and other facilities; the establishment of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction in high fire hazard severity zones; requirements for smoke-detection systems and exiting requirements; and the clearance of debris.

California Fire Code

The 2007 California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the CCR) establishes regulations to safeguard against hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises. The Fire Code also establishes requirements intended to provide safety and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The provisions of the Fire Code apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of every building or structure throughout the State of California (CBSC 2008). The Fire Code

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

includes regulations regarding fire-resistance-rated construction, fire protection systems such as alarm and sprinkler systems, fire services features such as fire apparatus access roads, means of egress, fire safety during construction and demolition, and wildland-urban interface areas.

California Health and Safety Code

Additional State fire regulations are set forth in Section 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code, which include regulations for building standards, fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers, smoke alarms, high-rise building and child-care facility standards, and fire suppression training.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Sections 1270, *Fire Prevention*, and 6773, *Fire Protection and Fire Fighting Equipment*, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. The standards include, but are not limited to, guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials, fire hose sizing requirements, restrictions on the use of compressed air, access roads, and the testing, maintenance, and use of all firefighting and emergency medical equipment.

Mitigation Fee Act (California Government Code 66000-66008)

Assembly Bill (AB) 1600, the Mitigation Fee Act, requires a local agency establishing, increasing, or imposing an impact fee as a condition of development to identify the purpose of the fee and the use to which the fee is to be put. The agency must also demonstrate a reasonable relationship between the fee and the purpose for which it is charged, and between the fee and the type of development project on which it is to be levied. This act became enforceable on January 1, 1989.

Local

Mutual Aid Agreements

Fire protection mutual aid is defined as an agreement between two fire agencies in which they commit to respond to calls for services in the other agency's jurisdiction when they are called, at no cost to the requesting agency. Automatic aid is not only predetermined, but one or more additional departments are automatically dispatched to certain locations or types of alarms at the same time as the home department. Mutual aid agreements in the county are discussed later under the heading *Existing Conditions*.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Under Chapter 818-2 of the County Ordinance Code, a fire protection facilities fee is required as a condition of approval for the issuance of any building permit for new construction within the unincorporated portion of any service area for which existing fire protection facilities are overextended. An additional administration fee is also collected prior to the issuance of a building permit. These fees are used for the purposes of acquiring or improving fire protection facilities serving the service area.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Additionally, County Ordinance Code Title 9, *Subdivisions*, includes several provisions relevant to fire protection and suppression as they apply to subdivision map approval. These include street design (turning radius, width, slope, etc.) and provision of fire hydrants. Furthermore, the County has adopted the 2022 California Fire Code, which contains fire-safety-related building standards, such as construction standards, vehicular and emergency access, fire hydrants and fire flow, and sprinkler requirements.

Existing Conditions

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) provides fire protection and emergency medical response services for approximately 628,200 people within Contra Costa County. CCCFPD is an all-hazards fire district providing traditional fire protection, wildland firefighting, emergency medical services, Advanced Life Support (ALS), ambulance transport, various special operations (e.g., water rescue, hazardous materials response, marine firefighting, and technical rescue), and a comprehensive life-safety and prevention program that includes inspections, a dedicated fire investigation unit, code enforcement, plan reviews, and public education.

In 2016, CCCFPD developed a unique arrangement with American Medical Response, Inc. (AMR) that they refer to as the “Alliance.” The program utilizes AMR emergency medical services personnel to staff CCCFPD’s ALS ambulances, assisted by CCCFPD firefighters certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) or Paramedics and functioning in a first-responder capacity.

CCCFPD operates the Contra Costa Regional Fire Communications Center (CCRFCC), which serves as a secondary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for most fire and emergency medical service (EMS) 911 calls in the county. CCRFCC provides dispatch to its district, plus the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District and four other fire agencies. The Center dispatches more than 140,000 emergency and non-emergency fire and EMS incidents annually. CCCFPD currently maintains approximately 435 funded positions, including staff in the dispatch center.

CCCFPD currently maintains 26 fire stations throughout the county. CCCFPD personnel includes 335 operations staff, 21 dispatchers, 26 fire prevention staff, and 40 administrative/support staff. In 2020, CCCFPD responded to over 47,000 fire, emergency medical service, and other incidents. CCCFPD follows the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1710 (NFPA) for providing an effective firefighting force of at least 17 personnel on the initial response to a single-family residential structure fire. Across the District, the travel time for the full first alarm contingent of 17 personnel is 12 minutes, 90 percent of the time, for suburban areas. The average travel time for all priority incidents is just over 8 minutes. The number of priority incidents within six minutes travel of a fire station during 2020 for CCCFPD was 96 percent, or 31,074 of 32,161 total priority incidents (CCCFPD 2021).

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Independent Fire Protection Districts

Several other independent fire districts also provide fire protection services to both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county. The Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD) provides fire suppression and emergency services to Kensington, with one operating station. The KFPD also receives aid from the El Cerrito Fire Department (KFPD 2019). The Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District (MOFPD) provides services to the cities of Moraga and Orinda with five stations operating in the district. The Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District (RHFPD) services approximately 32 square miles that contain 34,000 residents in the City of Hercules and in Rodeo (RHFPD 2022). The San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District (SRVFPD) services the Cities of San Ramon and Danville and the unincorporated communities of Tassajara, Blackhawk, and Alamo with ten fire stations. The Crockett-Carquinez Fire Protection District (CCFPD) is a volunteer fire department that serves Crockett, Valona, Port Costa, and Tormey. The boundaries of these fire protection districts are shown in Figure 5.15-1, *Fire Protection District Boundaries in Contra Costa County*.

A separate fire district, the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD), previously served the eastern part of the county, but it was annexed into the CCCFPD and dissolved in 2022 (CCLAFCO 2022).

Response Times and ISO Ratings

Table 5.15-1, *Response Times and ISO Ratings (2014) for Fire Districts in Contra Costa County*, shows the response times that were reported by each fire protection district to the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (CCLAFCO) in 2015. It also shows the Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings that were received by each district in 2014. This rating is intended to reflect a community's local fire protection capacity for property insurance rating purposes. ISO classifies communities from 1 (the best) to 10 (the worst) based on how well the community scores on the ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, which grades such features as water distribution, fire department equipment, manpower, and fire alarm facilities (CCLAFCO 2016).

Table 5.15-1 Response Times and ISO Ratings (2014) for Fire Districts in Contra Costa County

Area/Agency	90 Percent of Responses	ISO Rating
West County		
KFPD	7:37	2
City of Richmond	8:20	2
City of El Cerrito	6:51	2
City of Pinole	8:38	3
RHFPD	9:43	2/2X
CCFPD	9:40	3/10
Central County		
SRVFPD	7:01	02/2Y
MOFPD	8:20	3/9
East County		
ECCFPD ^a	11:58	4/10
Other		
CCCFPD	(8:20) ¹	3/8

^a Although the ECCFPD has been annexed into the CCCFPD, they were the service provider for East County at the time data was collected.

Source: CCLAFCO 2016

¹ CCCFPD 2021

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

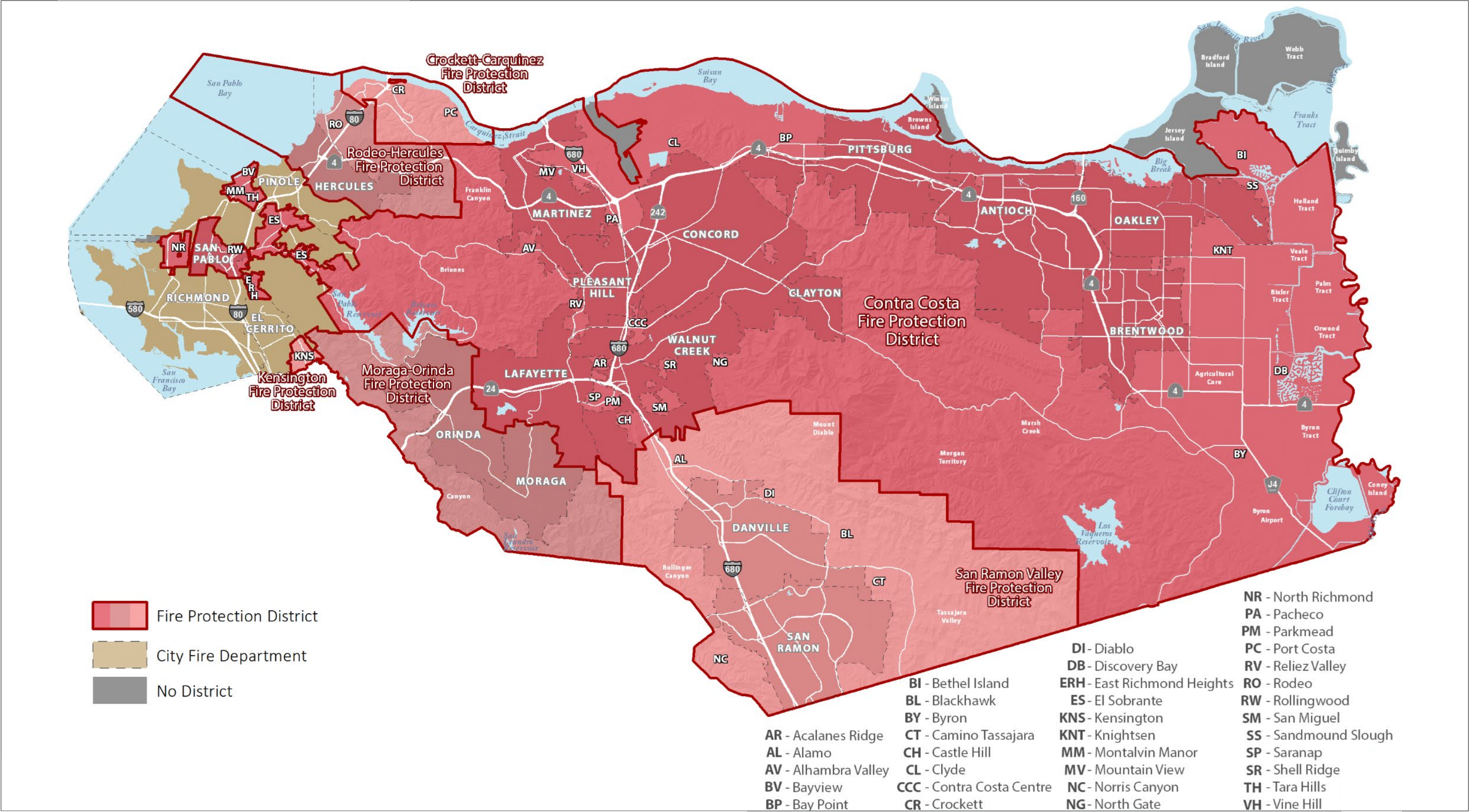


Figure 5.15-1
Fire Protection District Boundaries in Contra Costa County

5. Environmental Analysis
PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Mutual Aid Agreements

All fire agencies in the county have signed the California State Master Mutual Aid Agreement that is administered by the State Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). All agencies have also signed the Contra Costa County Fire Chief's Mutual Aid Plan, which was last updated in 1997. The County Fire Chiefs are assigned the responsibility to establish and manage the County Mutual Aid Plan that governs day-to-day interagency cooperation when an emergency exceeds the operational capability of any fire agency, by Cal OES, under the State Master Mutual Aid Agreement (CCLAFCO 2016). Table 5.15-2, *Overview of Mutual Aid Agreements*, shows these agreements for fire protection in the county. Note that this information was sourced from the CCLAFCO Municipal Services Review of Fire and EMS Services, which was released in 2016. The recent annexation of ECCFPD will likely lead to changes in these agreements.

Table 5.15-2 Overview of Mutual Aid Agreements

Boundary	Automatic Aid Provided to	Automatic Aid Received from	Mutual Aid Partners
City of Cerrito FD	Cities of Albany, Berkely, Pinole and Richmond, CCCFPD, MOFPD, RHFPD	Cities of Albany, Berkeley, and Richmond	Cities of Berkeley and Oakland, CCCFPD, EBRPD, and CAL FIRE
City of Pinole FD	City of El Cerrito, CCCFPD, CCFPD, RHFPD	CCCFPD, CCFPD, RHFPD	EBRPD and CAL FIRE
City of Richmond FD	Cities of El Cerrito and Pinole, CCCFPD, RHFPD	Cities of El Cerrito and Pinole, CCCFPD, RHFPD	ECCFPD, CAL FIRE, CCFPD, EBRPD, MOFPD, SRVFPD
CCCFPD	Cities of Benecia, Pinole, and Richmond, ECCFPD, MOFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD	Cities of Richmond and Pinole, ECCFPD, MOFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD	EBRPD, CAL FIRE
CCFPD	City of Vallejo, RHFPD	RHFPD	City of Vallejo, EBRPD, CAL FIRE
MOFPD	City of Oakland, CCCFPD	Cities of Oakland and El Cerrito, CCCFPD	Cities of Berkeley and Oakland, CAL FIRE, Alameda County
RHFPD	City of Pinole, CCCFPD, CCFPD	City of Pinole, CCCFPD, CCFPD	EBRPD and CAL FIRE
SRVFPD	Alameda County, CCCFPD	Alameda County, CCCFPD	Cities of El Cerrito, Richmond, and Pinole, Alameda County, ECCFPD, CAL FIRE, CCFPD, MOFPD, RHFPD

FD = Fire Department

EBRPD = East Bay Regional Parks District

CAL FIRE = California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Source: CCLAFCO 2016

5.15.1.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- FP-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection services.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.1.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to fire protection services. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P4.3:** Discourage new below-market-rate housing in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the Wildland-Urban Interface, and Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. If below-market-rate housing must be constructed within these zones, require it to be hardened or make use of nature-based solutions to ensure it remains habitable to the greatest extent possible.
- **Policy HS-P4.6:** In hazard-prone areas, such as slopes exceeding 15 percent, mapped floodplains, High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones, allow for decreased residential density, including below the minimum density requirement for the applicable land use designation, as the severity of risk increases.
- **Policy HS-P7.1:** Deny applications for new residential subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and discourage residential subdivisions in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- **Policy HS-P7.2:** Require any construction of buildings or infrastructure within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA or in the WUI, as shown on Figures HS-10 and HS-11, to incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the State Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulation for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply.
- **Policy HS-P7.3:** Require new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA (as shown on Figure HS-10) or in the WUI (as shown on Figure HS-11), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints (as shown on Figure HS-21), to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and approve the traffic control plan prior to issuance of building permits.
- **Policy HS-P7.4:** Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA and projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA, as shown in Figure HS-10, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. The fire protection plan shall include measures for fire-resistant construction materials and modifying fuel loading, as well as a plan to maintain that protection over time. The fire protection plan shall include:
 - a) A risk analysis
 - b) Fire response capabilities
 - c) Defensible space requirements
 - d) Fire safety requirements for infrastructure
 - e) Building ignition resistance

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- f) Mitigation measures and design for non-conforming fuel modification
- g) Wildfire education
- h) Maintenance and limitations
- i) A plan for emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation
- **Policy HS-P7.5:** Work with property owners within mapped High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the LRA or SRA or in the WUI areas to establish and maintain fire breaks and defensible space, vegetation clearance, emergency access roads, water supply and fire flow, signage, and firefighting infrastructure that meets current adopted State, County, or community fire safety standards.
- **Policy HS-P7.6:** Promote installation of smoke detectors at the time of sale or lease agreement, and maintenance of smoke detectors in existing residences and commercial facilities that were constructed prior to the requirement for their installation.
- **Policy HS-P7.7:** Work with water service providers and fire protection agencies to promote the long-term integrity of water supplies to meet firefighting needs and ensure that new and existing developments in high fire risk areas have suitable water delivery infrastructure.
- **Policy HS-P7.8:** Construct critical facilities, such as Office of Emergency Services facilities and other uses on the County's designated critical facilities list, with fire-resistant materials, defensible space, and fire-resistant landscaping that allows them to maintain structural integrity and ensure functional operation to the greatest extent feasible. Avoid locating these facilities in high fire risk areas to the extent possible.
- **Action HS-A7.1:** *Collaborate with local fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to update and implement the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Contra Costa County.*
- **Action HS-A7.2:** Support local fire protection agencies with efforts to seek funding for development and implementation of a continuous vegetation management program in fire hazard severity zones and WUI areas.
- **Action HS-A7.3:** Update countywide fire hazard severity zone and WUI mapping as new data becomes available from the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.
- **Action HS-A7.4:** Following a large fire, evaluate the feasibility and resilience of redevelopment, and consider changes to building or development standards to improve resilience.
- **Action HS-A7.5:** *Collaborate with local and regional fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to develop a fire safe education program to provide information about State fuel modification, defensible space, access, water, signage, and other fire safe regulations.*
- **Action HS-A7.6:** Pursue grants and other funding mechanisms to retrofit ventilation systems at County buildings to provide refuge for residents during periods of unhealthy air quality caused by excessive wildfire smoke.
- **Policy HS-P12.1:** Continue implementing the Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors and certified by FEMA and is incorporated into this Health and Safety Element.
- **Policy HS-P12.2:** *Locate facilities and uses on the County's designated critical facilities list outside of identified hazard areas whenever possible, accounting for how climate change may increase frequency and intensity of hazards. If*

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

critical facilities must be in hazard areas, ensure these facilities and their access routes are protected from the hazard risks inherent to each location.

- **Policy HS-P12.4:** Ensure there are adequate identified locations for alternate care sites, especially in Impacted Communities.
- **Action HS-A12.1:** Update the Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan as necessary to remain compliant with State and federal laws and reflect changing climate conditions.
- **Action HS-A12.2:** Incorporate the assessments and projections for future emergency service needs from the most recent Municipal Services Reviews into updates of the Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- **Action HS-A12.3:** At least once every eight years, evaluate the effectiveness of and update the public safety, preparedness, and hazard mitigation policies in this Health and Safety Element, with consideration given to changing climate conditions.
- **Action HS-A13.3:** Coordinate with local fire districts to develop and maintain minimum roadway, ingress, and egress standards for evacuation of residential areas in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- **Action HS-A13.4:** Develop an evacuation education program to help inform community members about the Contra Costa County Community Warning System and recommended approaches to evacuation.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Goal PFS-3:** Adequate, fair, and cost-effective funding for public facilities, infrastructure, and services.
 - **Policy PFS-P3.1:** Coordinate with LAFCO, infrastructure and service providers, and cities to ensure infrastructure and services are reliable and provided in a cost-effective and equitable manner.
 - **Policy PFS-P3.2:** *Require new development to pay its fair share of public improvement costs for infrastructure, facilities, maintenance, and services based on the proportionate cost of serving the project.*
 - **Policy PFS-P3.3:** *When new development cannot adequately be served by existing infrastructure and facilities or through the County's impact fee programs, require a public facilities financing plan that identifies the necessary public improvements and establishes an equitable plan to pay for and develop the required improvements.*
 - **Policy PFS-P3.4:** *When communities request levels of County services that exceed the countywide standard, require creation of (or annexation into) a County Service Area, community facilities district, or equivalent mechanism to fund the supplemental service costs. Allow exceptions for enhanced services in Impacted Communities if alternative funding sources can be identified.*
 - **Policy PFS-P3.6:** When adopting, amending, and imposing impact fees, community benefits agreements, and developer exactions, consider the effects of such fees and exactions upon individual project economics, housing supply, economic development, and the County's broad goals and objectives related to overall community development. If gap funding can be identified, consider fee reductions or exemptions for projects in Impacted Communities that are consistent with the community objectives identified in their Community Profile.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- **Action PFS-A3.1:** Implement an equitable and standardized approach to property tax sharing with cities during the annexation process.
- **Action PFS-A3.2:** *Regularly update development impact fees to ensure new development pays its fair share of infrastructure and service costs.*
- **Goal PFS-6:** Efficient and effective law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services for all communities.
 - **PFS-P6.1:** Require new development to support effective law enforcement and fire protection by providing a safe and accessible public realm for all.
 - **PFS-P6.3:** *During the discretionary review process for projects with potential to increase demand on fire protection services, consult with the applicable fire district to identify any upgrades to fire protection facilities, infrastructure, and equipment needed to reduce fire risk and improve emergency response.*

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The following strategies and actions from the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to fire protection services:

Strategy BE-3: Increase the amount of electricity used and generated from renewable sources in the county.

Strategy BE-3 Actions:

- Require new commercial parking lots with 50 or more spaces to mitigate heat gain through installation of shade trees, solar arrays, or other emerging cooling technologies. Prioritize the use of solar arrays where feasible and appropriate. (HS-P8.3)
- Encourage property owners to pursue financial incentives for solar installations and energy storage technologies, such as battery storage systems, on new and existing buildings.
- Work with MCE to increase enrollment, especially in the Deep Green tier.
- Continue to enroll all eligible, non-solar-equipped County facility electricity accounts in MCE territory in the Deep Green tier.
- Work with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and other organizations that provide fire protection services to provide education and promote incentives for battery storage systems that can increase the resilience of homes and businesses to power outages.
- Encourage installation of battery storage systems in new and existing buildings, especially buildings with solar energy systems and buildings that provide essential community services. (COS-P14.7)
- Provide information about battery storage systems with all applications for new home construction and solar panel installations.
- Pursue implementation of recommendations of the 2018 Renewable Resource Potential Study.
- Evaluate the least-conflict feasible locations for stand-alone battery storage systems and modify land use regulations to enable such use in these locations.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.15-1: The proposed project could introduce new structures and residents into the CCCFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD, KFPD, and CCFPD's service boundaries, thereby increasing the requirement for fire protection facilities and personnel. [Threshold FP-1]

Proposed General Plan

As discussed under Section 5.15.1.1, *Environmental Setting*, the EIR Study Area is served by several fire protection districts including the CCCFPD, HRFPD, SSRVFPD, KFPD, and CCFPD. The total growth projected in the unincorporated county by 2045 under the proposed General Plan is approximately 23,200 new housing units, 65,600 new residents, 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space, and 5 million square feet of new industrial space.¹ The increase in population as a result of the proposed General Plan would be expected to generate the typical range of service calls, including fire, emergency medical service, and other incidents. New fire personnel, vehicles, and equipment would be required to provide adequate response times to serve future development. Therefore, the CCCFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD, KFPD, and CCFPD's respective costs to maintain equipment and facilities and to train and equip personnel would also increase. However, the additional personnel and materials costs would likely be gradual as the increase in population would occur incrementally over time.

As detailed in the policies and actions included under Goal PFS-3 in the proposed Public Facilities and Services Element, future development would help to fund public facilities and services, including fire protection services. For example, Policy PFS-P3.2 requires that new development pay its fair share of public improvement costs for services based on the proportionate cost of serving the project. Action PFS-A3.2 would require the County to regularly update its development fees to support Policy PFS-P3.2. Policy PFS-P3.3 would require new development lacking sufficient infrastructure and facilities to implement a public facilities financing plan. The proposed General Plan's wildfire safety-related policies within the Health and Safety Element would also ensure that new development is designed and operated under stringent safety standards, thereby reducing the demand on fire services.

As such, it would be possible to assess the need for additional fire and emergency medical service personnel and equipment and address these needs to ensure that adequate fire service response time standards are maintained. However, as a matter of information, if and when the construction or expansion of facilities to accommodate additional personnel or equipment should become necessary, CEQA review, General Plan provisions, Ordinance Code regulations, and payment of impact fees would all be required. The County would continue to monitor service needs and construct facilities as needed over time. The impact on fire protection and emergency medical response services would be less than significant.

¹ Refer to Chapter 3, *Projection Description*.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and to help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to fire protection services. Strategy BE-3 under the proposed CAP would seek to accelerate the replacement of electricity generated by fossil fuels with electricity generated from renewable or carbon-free sources. To implement this strategy, the CAP directs the County to work with CCCFPD and other organizations that provide fire protection services to promote participation in the Self-Generation Incentive Program and related efforts to provide education and incentives for battery storage programs. The Self-Generation Incentive Program is a statewide initiative to provide incentives for battery storage systems among other energy storage systems. While this action directs coordination with the county's fire protection districts to potentially provide increased fire protection services, it is not likely to result in the need for new facilities. Therefore, impacts from the proposed CAP are considered less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.15-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.15-1 would be less than significant.

5.15.1.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Projected development under the proposed General Plan, combined with existing, planned, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development within the service areas of CCCFPD, RHFPD, SRVFPD, KFPD, and CCFPD and nearby fire departments and protection districts that provide mutual aid, would increase the demand on fire protection and emergency medical services. This increased demand may result in increased requests for mutual aid from regional and State agencies like CAL FIRE or EBRPD, as shown in Table 5.15-2. It is not anticipated that increased mutual aid requirements would result in the need for additional fire protection facilities because mutual aid would be provided via existing facilities, equipment, and personnel at the time of the mutual aid request. In addition, future development projects, including fire protection facilities, would be subject to subsequent project-level CEQA review at such time as an application is submitted.

All new development proposed in the county would be subject to the California Building Code and California Fire Code, which would help to prevent and minimize the occurrences of fire, increasing the ability of the county's fire service providers to provide adequate fire protection services. Subsequent project-level CEQA review of future development, along with compliance with the California Building and Fire Codes, would ensure that cumulative environmental impacts associated with the continued provision of fire protection and emergency medical response services would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.15.1.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.1.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.1.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.15.2 Police Protection

5.15.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State

Emergency Response/Evacuation Plans

Government Code Section 8607(a) directs Cal OES to prepare a Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, which sets forth measures by which a jurisdiction should handle emergency disasters. The program is intended to provide effective management of multiagency and multijurisdictional emergencies in California. SEMS consists of five organizational levels, which are activated as necessary: (1) Field Response, (2) Local Government, (3) Operational Area, (4) Regional, and (5) State. Local governments must use SEMS to be eligible for funding of their response-related personnel costs under State disaster assistance programs. Contra Costa County has adopted an Emergency Operations Plan that is consistent with the SEMS.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 42-2 - Disaster Council and Emergency Services

Under County Ordinance Code Section 42-2.602, *Administrator of Emergency Services*, the County Administrator is the Administrator of Emergency Services, and in charge of the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Administrator of Emergency Services assumes the ultimate responsibility and authority for directing the Contra Costa Operational Area's emergency management organization (including emergency response and recovery). The Administrator of Emergency Services is responsible for implementing the Emergency Operations Plan (Contra Costa 2016).

The Contra Costa Emergency Services Policy Board (ESPB) functions as the Contra Costa County Disaster Council, as described in County Ordinance Code Section 42-2.404, *Emergency Services Policy Board*. The ESPB is an advisory body providing assistance and advice to the County Administrator and as appropriate to the Director of Emergency Services on emergency preparedness planning efforts and the coordination of such planning efforts throughout the county. The ESPB reviews and makes recommendations on emergency and mutual aid plans and agreements and such ordinances, resolutions, and regulations as are necessary to implement those plans and agreements.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Additionally, the Operational Area Council serves as an advisory council to the ESPB. The Operational Area Council consists of emergency managers from incorporated cities, special districts, key utilities and businesses, and staff of the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff (CCCOS), Office of Emergency Services. It discusses and considers countywide emergency management areas and issues and makes recommendations to the ESPB through the Office of Emergency Services.

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors Policy on Police Services Impacts

The County Board of Supervisors has adopted a policy requiring projects to mitigate their impacts on law enforcement services. Minor subdivisions (subdivisions creating four or fewer lots) are required to pay a one-time fee of \$1,000 per lot. Major subdivisions (subdivisions creating five or more lots) are required to create a police services district. Lots within the district are assessed with an annual base fee of \$200, which is adjusted annually based on the consumer price index. A variety of other fees are assessed for residential projects that do not involve a subdivision (e.g., an apartment project) and nonresidential projects.

Existing Conditions

Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff

CCCOS is the largest law enforcement agency in Contra Costa County with 1,100 total personnel providing a full range of services to over one million residents in the 715-square mile county (CCCOS 2023). The Office provides uniformed law enforcement services to approximately 517,454 residents in all unincorporated areas of the county except Kensington, which is served by a special district. CCCOS also provides services to contract cities (i.e., Danville, Lafayette, and Orinda) and special districts. CCCOS oversees air support (i.e., helicopters), marine patrol, dispatch, investigations, coroners, County detention facilities, custody alternative, court security, forensic services, the police academy, and the Office of Emergency Services (CCCOS 2023). According to a report made by the Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury in 2020, the staffing ratio of patrol deputies serving the population in the unincorporated part of the county per 1,000 residents is 1.06. The state average is 1.46 sworn officers per 1,000 residents (CC Civil Grand Jury 2020). Additionally, the report claims that there were 65 unfilled sworn officer positions in the CCCOS, which accounts for approximately 10 percent of the Office's capacity.

Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services

The Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services is a branch of the CCCOS that provides disaster planning services, coordinates disaster outreach for public agencies and contract cities in the county, and helps County departments with emergency preparedness, disaster mitigation, and recovery. It also serves as a liaison with Cal OES for all County agencies. In addition to providing preparedness training, this division oversees responsibility for County staff in the EOC (CCCOS 2022).

The CCCOS is also aided by the Contra Costa Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). CERT facilitates the training of community members by emergency personnel in basic response skills to allow community members to help effectively and efficiently in an emergency and apply their training to help those in need of emergency services when emergency personnel are overwhelmed (CCCERT 2022).

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- PP-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection services.

5.15.2.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to police protection services. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Goal PFS-3:** Adequate, fair, and cost-effective funding for public facilities, infrastructure, and services.
 - **Policy PFS-P3.1:** Coordinate with LAFCO, infrastructure and service providers, and cities to ensure infrastructure and services are reliable and provided in a cost-effective and equitable manner.
 - ***Policy PFS-P3.2:*** *Require new development to pay its fair share of public improvement costs for infrastructure, facilities, maintenance, and services based on the proportionate cost of serving the project.*
 - ***Policy PFS-P3.3:*** *When new development cannot adequately be served by existing infrastructure and facilities or through the County's impact fee programs, require a public facilities financing plan that identifies the necessary public improvements and establishes an equitable plan to pay for and develop the required improvements.*
 - ***Policy PFS-P3.4:*** *When communities request levels of County services that exceed the countywide standard, require creation of (or annexation into) a County Service Area, community facilities district, or equivalent mechanism to fund the supplemental service costs. Allow exceptions for enhanced services in Impacted Communities if alternative funding sources can be identified.*
 - **Policy PFS-P3.6:** When adopting, amending, and imposing impact fees, community benefits agreements, and developer exactions, consider the effects of such fees and exactions upon individual project economics, housing supply, economic development, and the County's broad goals and objectives related to overall community development. If gap funding can be identified, consider fee reductions or exemptions for projects in Impacted Communities that are consistent with the community objectives identified in their Community Profile.
 - ***Action PFS-A3.2:*** *Regularly update development impact fees to ensure new development pays its fair share of infrastructure and service costs.*
- **Goal PFS-6:** Efficient and effective law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services for all communities.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- **Policy PFS-P6.2:** Design, improve, and maintain public spaces to maximize visibility and safety through appropriate lighting and landscaping.
- **Action PFS-A6.1:** *Engage community members, law enforcement, and local leaders, and amend the County Ordinance Code to incorporate standards for new development that support a safe, accessible public realm for all through environmental design..*

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed CAP that are applicable to police protection services.

5.15.2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.15-2: The proposed project could introduce new structures and residents into the CCCOS service boundaries, thereby potentially increasing the requirement for police protection facilities and personnel. [Threshold PP-1]

Proposed General Plan

While no specific development proposals are directly associated with the proposed General Plan, theoretical development would result in an increase in population and thus an increase in demand for police protection services from the CCCOS. As discussed under Impact 5.15-1, development under the proposed General Plan could result in an increase of approximately 65,600 new residents in the county. As development occurs, there would be an increase in calls for service which may require additional police personnel. Future development is expected to generate the typical range of service calls. Additional police personnel, vehicles, and equipment would likely be required to provide adequate response times to serve future growth. Therefore, the County's costs to maintain equipment and facilities and to train and equip personnel would also increase. However, the additional personnel and materials costs would likely be gradual as the increase in population would occur incrementally over time.

Several policies and actions proposed in the General Plan would ensure that future development would be provided police services and contribute to the funding of such services. As discussed under Impact 5.15-1, Policies PFS-3.2 and PFS-3.3 would require new development to pay its fair share of costs for public improvements and services or develop a public facilities financing plan in the event that existing infrastructure cannot adequately serve the development. Action PFS-A6.1 also directs the County to revise the County Ordinance Code to incorporate standards for new development that support a safe, accessible public realm for all through environmental design, thereby decreasing potential demand for police services. The County also currently levies land development impact fees to fund police services (Contra Costa 2022). This includes a one-time fee of \$1,000 per lot for subdivisions creating four or fewer lots or the requirement to create a police services district for subdivisions creating five or more lots that levy fees starting at \$200 annually for lots in the district. Fees are also levied on other types of residential projects and non-residential projects.

As such, it would be possible to assess the need for additional police personnel and equipment and address these needs to ensure that the law enforcement response time standards in the county are maintained. However, as a matter of information, if and when the construction or expansion of facilities to accommodate additional personnel or equipment could become necessary, CEQA review, proposed General Plan provisions, Ordinance

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Code regulations, and payment of impact fees would all be required. Therefore, the impact on police protection services would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and to help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to police protection services. The CAP does not include any strategies or actions that would result in a direct increase in demand for police protection services, nor does it otherwise address police services. As such, the proposed CAP would have no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.15-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.15-2 would be less than significant.

5.15.2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative increases in development in the county would require increased police protection services to serve new development. The increase in demand for police protection services from implementation of cumulative projects would have the potential to result in the need to construct or expand existing police facilities, which would have the potential to create an adverse impact on the environment. While the majority of cumulative projects require discretionary actions and would be required to demonstrate compliance with CEQA prior to project approval, they would incrementally increase the need for law enforcement services. Operational funding for the CCCOS is derived from various sources of tax revenue that contribute to the General Fund and development impact fees. Provided that staff and facilities are expanded to serve future development in the unincorporated county, the proposed project would contribute less than significant cumulative impacts.

5.15.2.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.15.2.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.2.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.3 School Services

5.15.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State

Development Impact Fees/SB 50

Proposition 1A, the Kindergarten–University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 1998, or Senate Bill (SB) 50, was approved by the voters in November 1998. SB 50 provides a comprehensive school facilities financing and reform program and enables a statewide bond issue to be placed on the ballot. Under the provisions of SB 50, school districts are authorized to collect fees to offset the costs associated with increasing school capacity as a result of development and related population increases. The funding goes to acquiring school sites, constructing new school facilities, and modernizing existing school facilities. SB 50 establishes a process for determining the amount of fees developers would be charged to mitigate the impact of development on school districts from increased enrollment. According to Section 65996 of the California Government Code, development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation.”

Under this legislation, there are three levels of developer fees that may be imposed on new development by the governing school district. Level I fees are assessed based on the proposed square footage of residential, commercial/industrial, and/or parking structure uses. Level II fees require the developer to provide one-half of the costs of accommodating students in new schools, and the State provides the remaining half. To qualify for Level II fees, the governing board of the school district must adopt a School Facilities Needs Analysis and meet other prerequisites in accordance with Section 65995.6 of the California Government Code. Level III fees apply if the State runs out of bond funds, allowing the governing school district to impose 100 percent of the cost of school facility or mitigation on the developer, minus any local dedicated school monies.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Division 812 - School Facility Dedications

The purpose of the County’s School Facilities Dedication Ordinance is to provide a method for financing interim school facilities necessitated by new residential developments causing conditions of overcrowding. The Ordinance states that in an attendance area that has been considered overcrowded according to Chapter 812-6 of the Code, the owner of a proposed residential development as a condition of approval of obtaining of a building permit shall dedicate land, pay fees in lieu thereof, or do a combination of both, for classroom and related facilities for elementary and/or high schools, including all mandated educational programs.

Existing Conditions

Contra Costa County has the ninth largest public-school population in the state, containing 18 public school districts and 285 total schools, including both public and private schools. The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) provides support services including budget approval, fiscal, technology infrastructure,

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

and communication support to schools and school districts in the county. Table 5.15-3, *Contra Costa County School Enrollment 2013-2023*, shows the trends in enrollment over the last decade, as reported by CCCOE. Overall, the county experienced 0.92-percent growth in school enrollment over this time.

Table 5.15-3 Contra Costa County School Enrollment 2013-2023

School Year	Enrollment	Percentage Change
2013-2014	173,020	0.93%
2014-2015	174,802	1.03%
2015-2016	176,413	0.92%
2016-2017	177,370	0.54%
2017-2018	177,770	0.23%
2018-2019	177,516	-0.14%
2019-2020	178,406	0.5%
2020-2021	173,021	-3.02%
2021-2022	170,955	-1.19%
2022-2023	169,225	-1.10%

Source: CCCOE 2021; CDE 2023.

According to the California Department of Education's Overcrowded School Program, 20 schools in Contra Costa County are considered critically overcrowded. These include 16 schools in West Contra Costa Unified, two in Antioch Unified, and two in San Ramon Valley Unified (DOE 2022).

Table 5.15-4, *Contra Costa School Districts Characteristics*, shows the current enrollment and latest available capacity of each district. The capacities shown in this table were obtained from publicly available school impact fee justification studies that twelve of the eighteen public school districts in the county conducted between the years of 2016 and 2022. Moraga School District provided a capacity estimate in its 2015 School District Master Plan. As indicated in the table, Brentwood Union Elementary, Liberty Union High, Pittsburg Unified, Martinez Unified, and West Contra Costa Unified have enrollments that exceed the districts' estimated capacities according to their respective school fee justification reports and the enrollment for the districts during the 2021 to 2022 school year.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Table 5.15-4 Contra Costa School Districts Characteristics

School District	Number of Schools ¹	Students ¹	Student-Teacher Ratio ¹	Capacity
Acalanes Union High	5	5,535	19.5	5,892 ²
Antioch Unified	25	15,652	22.4	--
Brentwood Union Elementary	11	9,023	24.3	9,015 ³
Byron Union Elementary	4	1,319	22.9	--
Canyon Elementary	1	72	24	--
John Swett Unified	4	1,312	20.1	--
Knightesen Elementary	2	608	21.7	--
Lafayette Elementary	5	3,261	20.8	3,706 ⁴
Liberty Union High	5	8,222	22.4	6,840 ⁵
Martinez Unified	9	3,983	21.3	3,976 ¹⁴
Moraga	4	1,769	21.7	2,280 ¹³
Mt. Diablo Unified	53	29,908	22.9	34,411 ⁶
Oakley Union Elementary	9	4,939	22.8	6,483 ⁷
Orinda Union Elementary	5	2,478	20.2	3,087 ⁸
Pittsburg Unified	13	11,015	21.8	10,208 ⁹
San Ramon Valley Unified	37	30,726	22.6	30,938 ¹⁰
Walnut Creek Elementary	7	3,467	22.9	3,976 ¹¹
West Contra Costa Unified	54	27,383	23.5	24,464 ¹²

Source:

¹ NCES 2022

² Acalanes Union High School District 2020

³ Brentwood Union Elementary School District 2020

⁴ Lafayette Elementary School District 2020

⁵ Liberty Union High School District 2016

⁶ Mt. Diablo Unified School District 2020

⁷ Oakley Union School District 2020

⁸ Orinda Union School District 2020

⁹ Pittsburg Unified School District 2018

¹⁰ San Ramon Valley Unified School District 2018

¹¹ Walnut Creek Elementary School District 2018

¹² West Contra Costa Unified School District 2020

¹³ Moraga School District 2015

¹⁴ Martinez Unified School District 2022

Shaded fields indicate school districts whose capacity is exceeded by current enrollment

Pursuant to SB 50 and County Ordinance Code Division 812, all school districts in the county levy a school development impact fee to offset costs associated with increasing school capacity. Antioch Unified School District (USD), Livermore USD, Mt. Diablo USD, Oakley UESD, Pittsburg USD, San Ramon Valley USD, and West Contra Costa USD directly collect fees directly for development within the jurisdiction of the district. The remaining 12 districts levy fees through the County Building Inspection Division (Contra Costa 2021).

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As mentioned previously, 12 of the 18 districts in the county have conducted developer fee studies for the purposes of calculating and justifying the appropriate developer impact fee for development within the district. The studies include a student generation factor (SGF) that was used to estimate the number of students that will be added to the district through the development of new housing, commercial, and industrial development. These rates represent the students per residential housing unit and are shown for each of the districts with available data in Table 5.15-5, *Student Generation Factors for Contra Costa County School Districts*.

Table 5.15-5 Student Generation Factors for Contra Costa County School Districts

School District	Single-Family SGF	Multiple-Family SGF	Commercial/Industrial SGF
Acalanes Union High ¹	0.1579	0.0679	0.0073
Brentwood Union Elementary ²	0.407	0.397	0.053
Lafayette Elementary ³	0.3459	0.1658	--
Liberty Union High ⁴	0.1436	0.056	--
Martinez Unified ¹²	0.3649	0.1668	0.189
Mt. Diablo Unified ⁵	0.3546	0.3049	0.0036
Oakley Union Elementary ⁶	0.4033	0.3516	0.028
Orinda Union Elementary ⁷	0.3495	0.1772	0.01
Pittsburg Unified ⁸	0.6671	0.3637	0.055
San Ramon Valley Unified ⁹	0.656		0.492
Walnut Creek Elementary ¹⁰	0.3334	0.1237	--
West Contra Costa Unified ¹¹	0.131		0.0005

Source:

¹ Acalanes Union High School District 2020

² Brentwood Union Elementary School District 2020

³ Lafayette Elementary School District 2020

⁴ Liberty Union High School District 2016

⁵ Mt. Diablo Unified School District

⁶ Oakley Union School District 2020

⁷ Orinda Union School District 2020

⁸ Pittsburg Unified School District 2018

⁹ San Ramon Valley Unified School District 2022

¹⁰ Walnut Creek Elementary School District 2018

¹¹ West Contra Costa Unified School District 2020 (commercial/industrial SGF: students/square foot of commercial/industrial space)

¹² Martinez Unified School District 2022

Note:

All commercial/industrial student generation factors are expressed in students per employee housing unit, except for West Contra Costa Unified School District which is expressed in students per square foot of commercial/industrial space.

5.15.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- SS-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for school services.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.3.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to school services. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The existing General Plan goals, policies, and actions that have been incorporated into the proposed goal, policy, or action are shown in parentheses following the text, when applicable.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Goal PFS-9:** Primary, secondary, and higher education facilities that serve the varied educational needs of all county residents.
 - ***Policy PFS-P9.1:*** *When reviewing new development proposals, coordinate with affected school districts to ensure adequate school capacity is or will be available, school sites are designated or dedicated if necessary, and adequate access is provided.*
 - **Policy PFS-P9.2:** Encourage dedication of school sites through density transfer of the dedicated acreage or other incentives.
 - **Policy PFS-P9.3:** Encourage school districts to use school sites for multiple community purposes, such as recreation, and to locate new schools in conjunction with and/or adjacent to parks and trails.

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed CAP that are applicable to school services.

5.15.3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.15-3: Development under the proposed project could generate new students who would impact the school enrollment capacities of area schools and result in the need for new and/or expanded school facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts [Threshold SS-1].

Proposed General Plan

A significant impact would result if, in order for the school districts to adequately serve the EIR Study Area, increased school enrollment would require the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing schools, the construction or operation of which would cause significant environmental impacts. New development under the proposed General Plan would cause an increase in student population over the next 20 years. The projected increase in students across the EIR Study Area would likely be gradual for the duration of the proposed project as more housing units are incrementally added to the EIR Study Area.

Under the proposed project, approximately 23,200 new housing units are projected to be developed across the unincorporated county by 2045. The average of all school districts' published single- and multiple-family generation factors is 0.295 students per housing unit, per the student generation factors shown in Table 5.15-5. Therefore, approximately 6,844 new students would be added to the unincorporated county's student population from new residential development. Similarly, development under the proposed General Plan could

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

result in 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space and 5 million square feet of new industrial space. If using West Contra Costa USD's 2020 SGF for students per square foot of commercial/industrial space² shown in Table 5.15-5, the resulting increase in student population from new commercial and industrial development is approximately 3,100 students. Therefore, approximately 9,944 total new students would be added to the unincorporated county over the planning horizon of the proposed project.

To ensure that school capacities are not exceeded from new development, the proposed Public Facilities and Services Element includes Policy PFS-P9.1 which directs the County to coordinate with affected school districts to ensure adequate school capacity is or will be available, school sites are designated or dedicated if necessary, and adequate access is provided, when reviewing new development proposals. Additionally, existing funding mechanisms would lessen potential impacts related to an increase in the student population. As described in Section 5.15.3.1, all districts in the county are funded through the payment of development fees pursuant to SB 50/Government Code Section 65995 and County Ordinance 812. These fees are required to be paid by future development prior to issuance of building permits and would be used to offset the impact of the number of new students generated by the anticipated population increase under the proposed General Plan. Ultimately, the provision of schools is the responsibility of the school district. SB 50 provides that the statutory fees found in the Government and Education Codes are the exclusive means of considering and mitigating for school impacts. Imposition of the statutory fees constitutes full and complete mitigation (Government Code Section 65995[b]).

Furthermore, a school district and a development project have the option of entering into various alternative mitigation agreements to ensure the timely construction of school facilities to house students from new residential development. The primary financing mechanism authorized in these mitigation agreements is the formation of a community facilities district, pursuant to the Mello-Roos Community District Act of 1982. In lieu of an alternative mitigation agreement, State-mandated school facilities fees, which help maintain adequate school facilities and levels of service, may also reduce potential impacts, as described previously.

The existing regulatory setting, including funding mechanisms, would ensure that potential impacts to school facilities and services with development under the proposed General Plan would be less than significant. Furthermore, the proposed General Plan includes goals and policies to maintain adequate levels of service for schools. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and to help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to school services. There are no strategies or actions in the proposed CAP that relate to school services, nor would the CAP directly contribute to population growth in the EIR Study Area that would result in increased student population. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no impacts.

² As seen in Table 5.15-5, most school districts express commercial/industrial SGF by students per employee housing unit. West Contra USD's commercial/industrial SGF is used to estimate the increase in student population since its school fee justification report included calculations for student generation factors that incorporate the square footage of commercial/industrial space.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.15-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.15-3 would be less significant.

5.15.3.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Implementation of the proposed project is expected to result in population growth that would increase student enrollment in the county's school districts. Current State law requires that the environmental impact of new development on grade school facilities is considered fully mitigated through the payment of required development impact fees. All new development associated with the proposed project would be required to pay the applicable development impact fees. Furthermore, any significant expansion of school facilities or development of new school facilities would be subject to the appropriate CEQA environmental review, which would identify any site-specific impacts and provide mitigation to reduce those impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts on school facilities are considered less than cumulatively considerable.

5.15.3.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.15.3.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.3.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.15.4 Library Services

5.15.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

No existing regulations apply to library services.

Existing Conditions

The Contra Costa County Library System was founded in 1913 and currently contains 26 community libraries with approximately 650,000 cardholders. In 2019, Contra Costa County Library became the first county library in California and largest in the state to eliminate overdue fines on library materials (CCC Library 2018). The library system also provides digital resources for residents, including in such areas as newspapers, kid literature and learning, homework help, novels, and research (CCC Library 2022).

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.4.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- LS-1 Result in a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for library services.

5.15.4.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to library services. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Policy PFS-P10.1:** Prioritize expansion of library services in Impacted Communities.
- ***Policy PFS-P10.3:*** *Provide adequate funding for maintaining and improving library operations.*
- ***Action PFS-A10.1:*** *Develop library service and facility standards, identify standards not being met, and seek necessary resources to achieve those standards.*
- ***Action PFS-A10.2:*** *Adopt a library impact fee to ensure new development mitigates its impact on library services.*

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

There are no strategies or actions in the proposed CAP that are applicable to library services.

5.15.4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.15-4: Development under the proposed project could generate new residents in the county and result in the need for new and/or expanded library facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts. [Threshold LS-1]

Proposed General Plan

Projected development under the proposed General Plan would result in the potential for increased demand for library services within the county to the extent that expansion and construction of new facilities could be required. As described previously, the horizon-year projection for the proposed General Plan includes approximately 65,600 new residents in the county. To meet the future demand for library services, the proposed Public Facilities and Services Element would include Policy PFS-P10.3 which requires the County to ensure the County budget has adequate funding for maintaining and improving library services. Action PFS-A10.1 directs the County to develop library service and facility standards, while PFS-A10.2 directs the County to adopt a library impact fee to ensure that new development mitigates its impacts on library services.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Future development would also generate new tax revenues and funding sources for the Contra Costa Library System consisting of property taxes, State assistance, and revenue from fines, fees, and other miscellaneous revenue. Furthermore, development or expansion of libraries would be subject to the County's policies that protect environmental resources including environmental review and impact mitigation per CEQA. Impacts associated with development of new libraries are therefore determined to be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and to help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to library services. There are no strategies or actions in the proposed CAP that relate to library services, nor would the CAP directly contribute to population growth in the EIR Study Area that would result in increased population. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.15-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impacts 5.15-4 would be less than significant.

5.15.4.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

While population within both the EIR Study Area and incorporated parts of the county is expected to increase over time, therefore increasing the use of the Contra Costa Library System services and facilities, the proposed General Plan policies and actions described would ensure that library impacts are mitigated.

In addition to an impending requirement for library impact fees, future development would generate new tax revenues, and funding sources for the Contra Costa Library System would consist of property taxes, State assistance, and revenue from fines, fees, and other miscellaneous revenue. Furthermore, development or expansion of libraries would be subject to the County's policies that protect environmental resources including environmental review and impact mitigation per CEQA. Cumulative impacts associated with development of new libraries are therefore determined to be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.15.4.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.15.4.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are needed.

5.15.4.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.5 Parks and Recreation

5.15.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

State

Quimby Act

The Quimby Act, also known as Government Code Section 66477, was established in 1965 and provides provisions in the State Subdivision Map Act for the dedication of parkland and/or payment of in-lieu fees as a condition of approval of certain types of residential projects. Previously, a city or county could only use these fees to provide parks that served the developer's proposed subdivision. However, AB 1359, signed in 2013, allows cities and counties to use developer-paid Quimby Act fees to provide parks in neighborhoods other than the one in which the developer's subdivision is located. Overall, AB 1359 provides cities and counties with opportunities to improve parks and create new parks in areas that would not have benefited before. It also allows a city or county to enter into a joint/shared use agreement with one or more public districts to provide additional park and recreational access.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act (California Government Code Sections 53311 et seq.)

This law allows any county, city, special district, school district, or joint powers authority to establish a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (CFD) that can finance parks, cultural facilities, libraries, schools, fire and police protection, streets, sewer systems, and other basic infrastructure. By law, the CFD is also entitled to recover expenses needed to form the CFD and administer the annual special taxes and bonded debt.

Mitigation Fee Act

The Mitigation Fee Act allows counties and cities to establish fees that will be imposed on development projects to mitigate the impact on the jurisdiction's ability to provide specified public facilities to serve proposed development projects. In order to comply with the Mitigation Fee Act, a jurisdiction must follow four requirements: (1) Make certain determinations regarding the purpose and use of a fee and establish a nexus or connection between a development project or class of project and the public improvement being financed with the fee; (2) Segregate fee revenue from the general fund in order to avoid co-mingling of capital facilities fees and general funds; (3) For fees that have been in the possession of the jurisdiction for five years or more and for which the dollars have not been spent or committed to a project, the jurisdiction must make findings each fiscal year describing the continuing need for the money; and (4) Refund any fees with interest for which the findings noted cannot be made.

Regional

EBPRD Master Plan

The EBRPD provides and manages the regional parks for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, a 1,400-square mile area that is home to 2.6 million people. The EBRPD Master Plan (2013) defines the overall mission and vision for the Park District. It contains policies and descriptions of programs in-place for achieving the highest standards of service in resource conservation, management, interpretation, public access, and recreation. The

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

goal is to maintain a careful balance between the need to protect and conserve resources and the need to provide opportunities for recreational use of the parklands, both currently and in the future (EBRPD 2013).

East Bay Watershed Master Plan

The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) owns and manages approximately 29,000 acres of watershed land in the East Bay area. These lands surround five reservoirs (Briones, San Pablo, Upper San Leandro, Chabot, and Lafayette) and one basin area that does not contain a reservoir (Pinole Valley). The East Bay Watershed Master Plan provides long-term management direction for EBMUD-owned lands and reservoirs to ensure the protection of the EBMUD water resources and preserve environmental resources on EBMUD-owned lands (EBMUD 2018). The Plan also addresses EBMUD's response to a number of rising issues in the watershed, including climate change, invasive mussels, and toxic algae. It also incorporates plans for habitat conservation, grazing, and fire protection, and proposes changes to allow access to specific watershed trails by cyclists.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Pursuant to Government Code Section 66001, the County adopted the uncodified Ordinance No. 2007-17, which allows the County to collect impact fees on all residential projects on a per dwelling unit basis for the purpose of funding parks and recreation facilities identified in the Capital Improvement Program. Additionally, pursuant to Government Code Section 66477, as a condition of approval of a preliminary or final development plan or a tentative or final parcel map, the County requires that developers dedicate land or pay a fee in lieu thereof under Division 920, *Park Dedications*, of the County Ordinance Code.

Parks & Recreation Services Municipal Service Review

Government Code Section 56425 and Section 56430 state that Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) must conduct regional analyses of municipal services (i.e., Municipal Service Reviews, or MSRs) every five years or as necessary to support reviews of city, district, and jurisdictional spheres of influence (SOIs). Pursuant to this legislation, CCLAFCO is required to conduct a comprehensive review of municipal service delivery and update the SOIs of all agencies under CCLAFCO's jurisdiction. The MSR reviews services provided by public agencies—cities and special districts—whose boundaries and governance are subject to CCLAFCO. The latest MSR for parks and recreation services in the county was updated in 2021 and reviews the boundaries and services provided by four recreation and parks districts, nineteen of the county's incorporated cities and towns, eight county service areas, and four community service districts. It additionally identifies and provides recommendations for the county's disadvantaged communities.

Recreation and Parks District Master Plans

In February 2020, the Pleasant Hill Recreation and Parks District adopted a Parks, Facilities, and Recreation Master Plan that provides a thorough inventory of the District's parks and facilities and a summary of recreation programming and lays out a vision for future park and recreation facilities and investment priorities.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

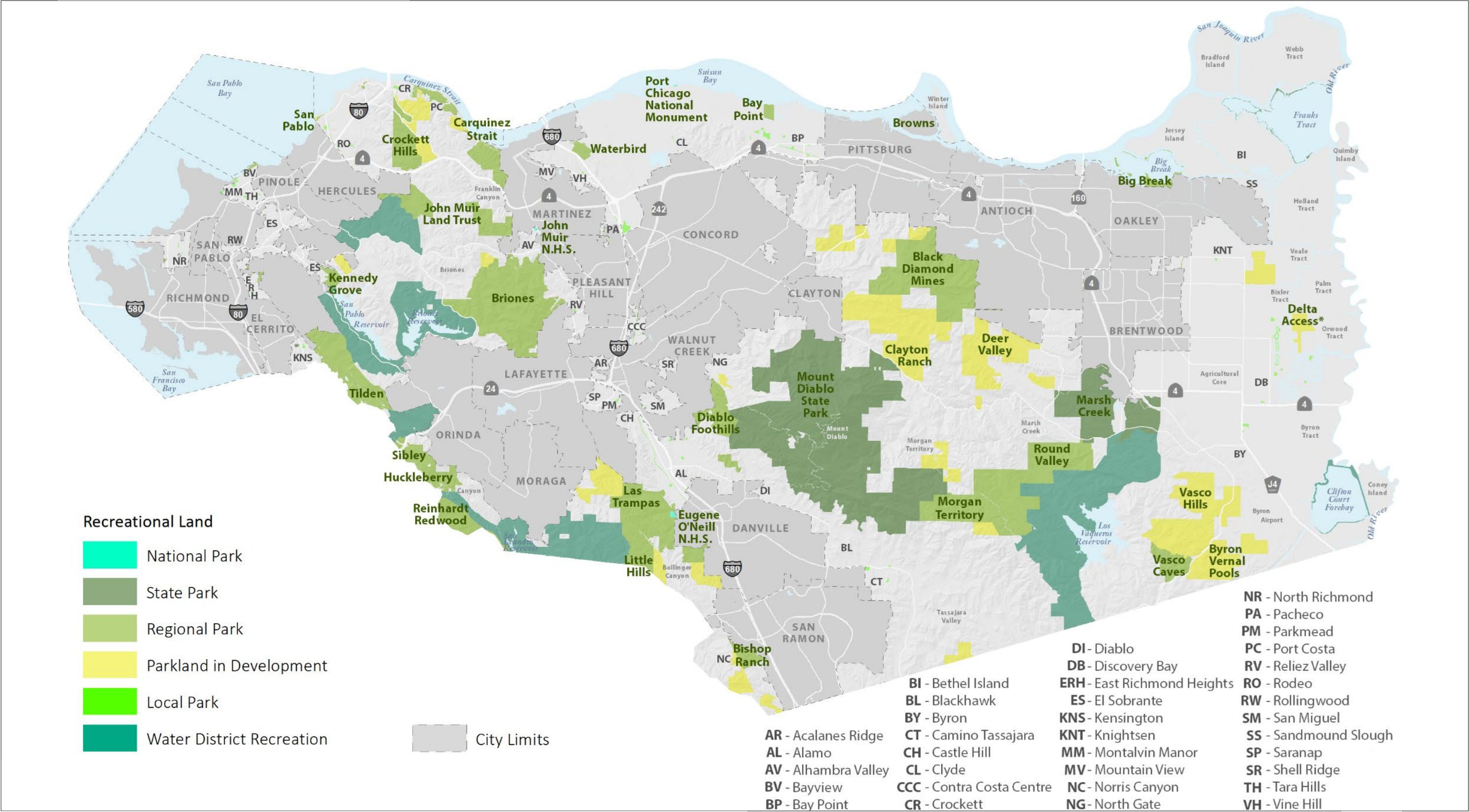
Existing Conditions

The parks and recreational areas in the county are managed and operated by a number of different entities. These include the U.S. National Park Service (NPS), California Department of Parks and Recreation (California State Parks), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), EBRPD, EBMUD, Contra Costa Water District (CCWD), various independent Parks and Recreation Service Districts, County Service Districts, Contra Costa County Public Works Department, and incorporated cities and towns in the county. The total acreage of all parks and recreation facilities in the county available to residents of the EIR Study Area is 108,393 acres, which includes 50,768 acres from local and regional parks/service districts, 29,950 acres from EMBUD and CCWD, 27,669 acres from NPS and California State Parks, and 6.93 additional acres from County facilities not managed under a parks or service district. The locations of all parks and recreational lands, including federal, State, regional, and locally managed facilities, are shown in Figure 5.15-2, *Contra Costa County Recreation Lands*.

National & State Parks

The NPS manages four historic sites in the county. The John Muir National Historic Site is in Martinez and consists of the Muir House and the 336-acre Strentzel-Muir fruit ranch (NPS 2020a). Additionally, the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site on the western edge of Danville contains the Tao House in addition to other historic buildings and 13.9 acres of open and landscaped land (NPS 2020b). The Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front Park is at 1414 Harbour Way South in Richmond and offers interactive exhibits that explore the area's connection to WWII industrial production (NPS 2023a). The Port Chicago National Memorial is at Military Ocean Terminal Concord and is dedicated to recognizing the victims of the Port Chicago disaster during WWII (NPS 2023b). NPS also owns the 326-acre area of Mount Wanda in the Briones Hills which offers hiking trails (NPS 2021). California State Parks operates three State parks in the county for recreational uses, including the 3,523-acre Frank Tracts State Recreation Area near Bethel Island, the 3,673-acre Marsh Creek State Historic Park south of Brentwood, and the 20,124-acre Mount Diablo State Park (CSP 2019). DWR operates the Clifton Court Forebay on the southeastern edge of the county, which provides water-based recreational opportunities (CSWRD 2022).

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION



Source: Parkland under Development by East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).



Figure 5.15-2
Contra Costa County Recreational Lands

5. Environmental Analysis
PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

East Bay Municipal Utility District & Contra Costa Water District

Additional outdoor recreation facilities are provided by EBMUD, which owns approximately 29,000 acres of land and reservoir surface areas in the East Bay Area, including the San Pablo Reservoir, Lafayette Reservoir, and Briones Reservoir. The San Pablo and Lafayette Reservoirs allow public access for boating, fishing, and swimming, while the Briones Reservoir is limited to college crew team practice (EBMUD 2018).

CCWD also provides recreational opportunities through the Los Vaqueros Watershed and Reservoir. CCWD offers boat rentals and allows fishing on the 1,900-acre reservoir in addition to trails and picnic facilities on the surrounding lands (CCWD 2022).

Parks and Recreation Districts

Several independent parks and recreation districts operate within the county, providing services to both incorporated and unincorporated areas. These include the Ambrose Recreation and Park District (RPD) that serves Bay Point; the Green Valley RPD that serves an area of northeast Danville; and the Pleasant Hill RPD that serves a portion of Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated area of Walden/Contra Costa Centre. The boundaries of these districts also overlap with those of nearby towns and cities, resulting in shared and jointly maintained facilities. Ambrose RPD's service boundary overlaps with the City of Pittsburg, Green Valley RPD's service boundary overlaps with the Town of Danville, and Pleasant Hill RPD's service boundary overlaps with the City of Pleasant Hill. Ambrose RPD provides two passive parks that include picnic areas and paths, and seven active parks with facilities such as playgrounds, sport fields, and basketball courts. Green Valley RPD maintains a 70-year-old swimming pool. Pleasant Hill RPD maintains 13 parks including five open space areas (CCLAFCO 2021). Further information about these districts is provided in Table 5.15-6, *Contra Costa County Parks and Recreation Services Summary*.

EBRPD provides recreation services to both Contra Costa County and Alameda County with nearly 125,000 acres across 73 parks. The District's lands are visited more than 25 million times each year, providing a variety of recreational opportunities including archery, biking, boating, kayaking, sailing, camping, day camps, resources for dogs, field trips, fishing, geocaching, golfing, hiking, horseback riding, movie nights, naturalist programs, and outdoor recreation programs (CCLAFCO 2021). EBRPD maintains 30 parks in the county and manages hundreds of additional acres of land in its land bank, which the District holds until the property is made suitable for public access (CCLAFCO 2021, EBRPD 2013).

Community Services Districts & County Service Areas

Of the six Community Services Districts (CSD) within the county, four offer park and recreation services to residents: Crockett CSD, Diablo CSD, Discovery Bay CSD, and the Kensington Police and Community Services District. Further information about the CSD's service areas and service ratios is provided in Table 5.15-6.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

The County's Public Works Department maintains 63 acres of parks and recreational facilities in the unincorporated areas of the county (CCCPW 2022).³ There are eight County Service Areas (CSA) in Contra Costa County that provide funding for enhanced park and recreation services in a specific area. CSA's M-16 (Clyde), M-17 (Tara Hills/Montalvin Manor), R-7 (Alamo), R-9 (El Sobrante), and R-10 (Rodeo) are administered by Contra Costa County, and CSAs M-29 (San Ramon), M-30 (Alamo Springs), and R-4 (Moraga) are administered by the City of San Ramon, the Town of Danville and the Town of Moraga, respectively, for enhanced park and recreation services provided within the city limits (CCLAFCO 2021).

Service District Ratios

As part of its MSR, CCLAFCO prepared an assessment of the capacity and quality of park services that are operated in the county. Table 5.15-6, *Contra Costa County Parks and Recreation Services Summary*, summarizes the acreage managed by each park district/CSD/CSA, the current and projected population in each service area that was used for the MSR, and the amount of park and recreation acreage per 1,000 residents as reported in the MSR. The table also includes a calculation of the acreage needed for each district/CSD/CSA to meet its applicable park and recreation facilities service standard. Goal 9-K in the existing Public Facilities/Services Element of the County's General Plan states that the County should achieve a level of park facilities of four acres per 1,000 population. While this target has been reduced to three acres per 1,000 residents in the proposed General Plan, four acres is used in 5.15-6 to show conservative estimates of the needed recreational acreage under existing conditions.

In addition, the Pleasant Hill RPD 2020 Master Plan recommends a service standard of 3.5 acres per 1,000 population, which is currently exceeded by the district. Furthermore, EBRPD exceeds the National Recreation and Park Association's municipal park system standard of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents with its 44 acres per 1,000 residents across its service area and 17.7 acres per 1,000 residents in Contra Costa County. No other district, CSD, or CSA in the county currently implements a park and recreation facilities service standard, and therefore their acre deficits have been calculated using the County's four acres per 1,000 residents standard (CCLAFCO 2021).

³ This calculation includes parks that are maintained by the County and within the service areas of other districts, including two parks in Discovery Bay, six parks in Bay Point, one park in Contra Costa Centre, and two parks in North Richmond.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Table 5.15-6 Contra Costa County Parks and Recreation Services Summary

Park District/Community Service District/County Service Area	Population		Acres ¹	Acres per 1,000 Residents	Acres Needed to Meet Service Standard
	2020	2040			
Ambrose RPD	28,240	35,377	28.7	1	84.7
Green Valley RPD	1,205	1,244	1.2	1	3.6
Pleasant Hill RDP	41,552	43,975	270	6.2	Standard Met
EBRPD	1,153,561	1,332,206	50,352.50	17.7	Standard Met
Crockett CSD	3,309	3,465	6.2	1.87	7
Diablo CSD	808	835	1	1.24	2.2
Discovery Bay CSD	15,215	15,754	29.8	1.96	31
Kensington Police and CSD	5,270	5,449	10	1.9	11.1
M-16 (Clyde)	733	750	2.4	3.3	0.51
M-17 (Tara Hills/ Montalvin Manor)	9,757	10,058	11	1.1	28.3
M-29 (San Ramon)	33,057	34,228	--	4.5	Standard Met
M-30 (Alamo Springs)	140	145	--	3.8	0.03
R-4 (Moraga)	17,916	18,474	--	3.4	10.7
R-7 (Alamo)	15,587	16,111	31	2	31.2
R-9 (El Sobrante)	14,546	16,217	0.1	0	58.2
R-10 (Rodeo)	9,141	9,393	11	1.2	25.6

Source: CCLAFCO 2021

¹ There are no County-owned parks in service areas M-29, M-30, and R-4. Parks and recreation services are provided to M-29 by the City of San Ramon, M-30 by service area R-7, and R-4 by the Town of Moraga.

The MSR concludes that additional parks and recreation space are needed within all districts except the Pleasant Hill RPD to meet the existing General Plan's goal of four acres per 1,000 residents. However, the MSR notes that there are park and open space areas that are either within the jurisdictions' boundaries or in close proximity, granting residents access to additional parkland and open space. These additional park and open space areas, most of which are owned/operated by EBRPD or EBMUD, effectively increase the parkland acreage per resident for each district.

Trails

Trails act as linear parks, typically just for non-motorized use. They provide safe connections between residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other destinations. Major regional trails in Contra Costa County include portions of the San Francisco Bay Trail, a 500-mile network of trails along San Francisco and San Pablo Bays that is managed collaboratively by several agencies, including the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Association of Bay Area Governments, and EBRPD; portions of the 50-mile Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail that is managed by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council; and the 26-mile Iron Horse Regional Trail, 13.5-mile Contra Costa Canal Regional Trail, and 19-mile Delta de Anza Regional Trail managed by EBRPD. The county's trail network is shown in Figure 5.15-3, *County Trails Network*.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

This page intentionally left blank.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

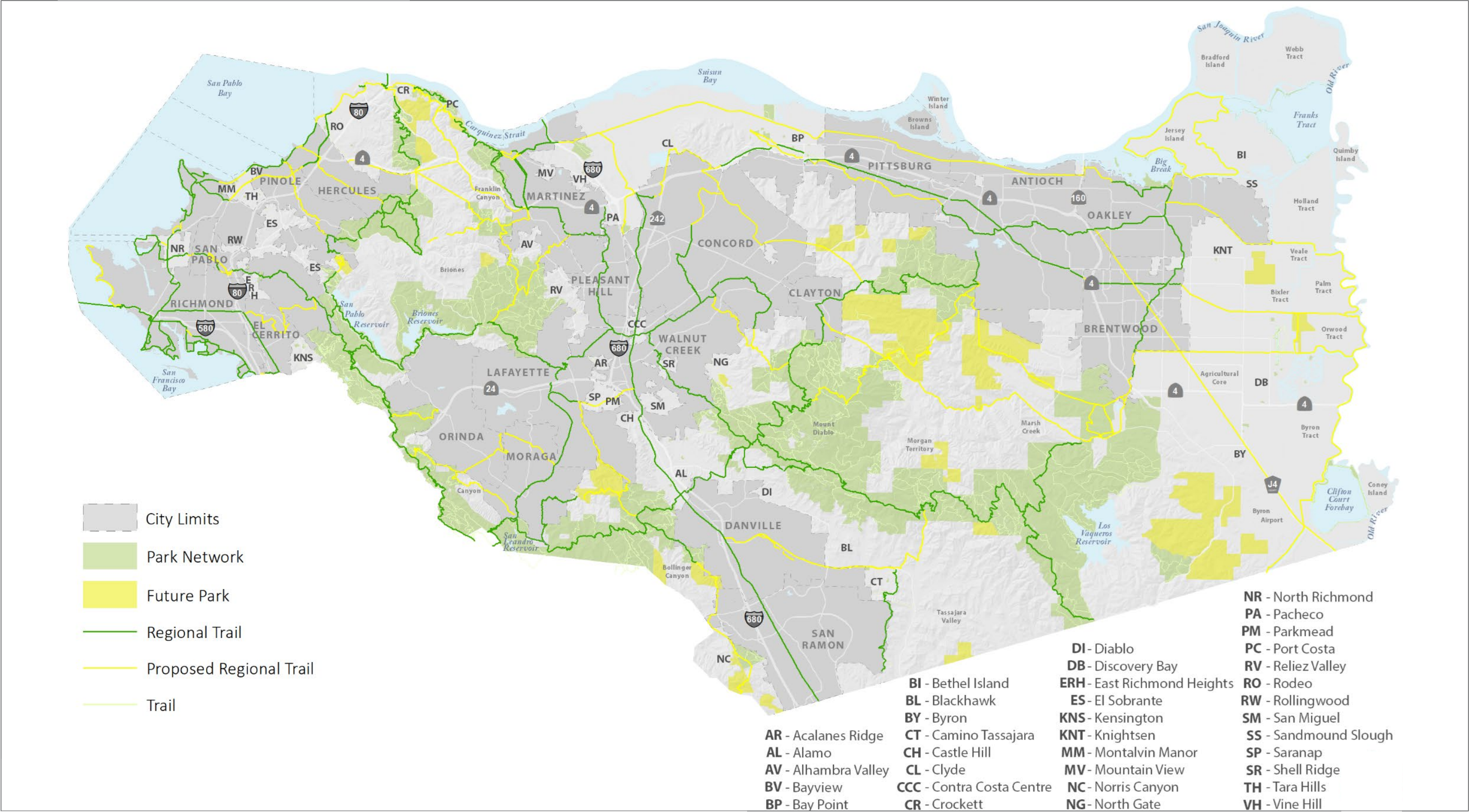


Figure 5.15-3
County Trails Network

5. Environmental Analysis
PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.5.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- R-1 Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- R-2 Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

5.15.5.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to parks and recreation services. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Stronger Communities Element

- **Policy SC-P2.2:** Encourage development, preservation, and reinvestment that strengthen the unique character of each unincorporated community and advance community and neighborhood resilience. Ensure that future private and public projects provide infrastructure, parks and playgrounds, complete streets, trees and landscaping, streetscapes, signage, and sustainable building design that reflect and improve the character of the community, along with long-term maintenance mechanisms to ensure continued benefit from the improvements into the future.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **Policy COS-P1.3:** Discourage conversion of land designated Resource Conservation or Parks and Recreation to urban uses. If such conversion occurs, require mitigation through permanent protection of other open space or park lands for habitat, scenic, or recreation benefits at a ratio to be determined based on the biological, scenic, or recreational value of the land, but not less than 3:1.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Goal PFS-8:** An easily accessible, integrated system of high-quality parks and trails to meet the needs of all residents.
- **Policy PFS-P8.1:** Support development of a variety of local amenities that meet a diverse range of recreational needs, such as ballfields, all-abilities playgrounds, tot lots, spraygrounds, adult fitness courses, gymnasiums, swimming pools, sport courts, passive parks, pocket parks, urban gardens, and trails.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- **Policy PFS-P8.2:** *Provide a local park within a safe 10-minute walk for all residents in urban communities or within a 5-minute drive for residents in suburban communities, as indicated in Figures PFS-9 and PFS-10 (of the Public Facilities and Services Element).*
- **Policy PFS-P8.3:** Increase access to diverse, high-quality parks, green space, recreational facilities, trails, and natural environments for residents of Impacted Communities, including through multiple transportation modes. Partner with other agencies and non-governmental organizations to obtain funding, and design and maintain these facilities to offer a safe and comfortable environment for residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Policy PFS-P8.4:** Prioritize and promote recreational activity programs and opportunities in Impacted Communities.
- **Policy PFS-P8.5:** *Whenever possible, require projects subject to the Park Dedication or Park Impact Fee Ordinances to develop park and recreation amenities listed in, or added to, the County's Park Capital Improvement Plan. Park Impact fees or in-lieu fees should be assessed when the County determines developer improvements are not feasible.*
- **Policy PFS-P8.6:** Support expanded access to recreation opportunities by working with other agencies to co-locate parks and trails with public facilities, such as schools and utility easements, with Impacted Communities prioritized.
- **Policy PFS-P8.8:** Support expanded public access to the waterfront and development of water-related recreational opportunities, such as fishing and boating.
- **Policy PFS-P8.9:** Support development of a comprehensive and interconnected network of trails, including intra- and inter-regional trails like the San Francisco Bay Trail, Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail, Great California Delta Trail, and Marsh Creek Corridor Trail, that provides public access to shorelines, ridges, and other scenic areas, connects residents with open space and nature, and links urban areas with parks and other recreational facilities.
- **Action PFS-A8.1:** Create an internal County entity that works across departments and non-County agencies to coordinate planning and funding of unincorporated local parks, recreational facilities, and trails.
- **Action PFS-A8.2:** Coordinate with recreation and park districts and cities to prepare a parks and open space needs assessment for all unincorporated communities, prioritizing Impacted Communities. Integrate the results of the assessment into a Parks Master Plan and the Parks Capital Improvement Program and implement improvements that address barriers to outdoor physical activity, such as inadequate infrastructure and safety concerns.
- **Action PFS-A8.3:** *Annually update park dedication and in-lieu fee requirements based on the Consumer Price Index for All Customers, All Items for the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose Metropolitan Area to accommodate for increases or decreases in development costs. Conduct a fee study at least once every 10 years to reflect changes in the cost of land, local park and recreational needs, and development conditions.*

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The following strategies and actions from the proposed CAP are applicable to parks and recreation services:

Strategy CE-3: Increase access to parks and open space.

Strategy CE-3 Actions:

- Establish a goal for all residents to live within a half-mile of a park or other green space.
- Support land acquisition for new parks and open space areas and protect such lands through fee title acquisition or through deed restrictions like conservation easements.
- Continue to construct and develop opportunities for new trails.
- Support investment in existing park facilities, in partnership with regional agencies.
- Increase the tree canopy on public property, especially in Impacted Communities and areas with a high heat index, by prioritizing funding for new street tree planting and maintenance.

5.15.5.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.15-5: The proposed project could generate additional residents that would increase the use of existing park and recreational facilities but would not require the immediate provision of new and/or expanded recreational facilities. [Thresholds R-1 and R-2]

Proposed General Plan

As discussed in Section 5.15.5.1, *Environmental Setting*, a total of 108,393 acres of parks and recreation land are available to residents of the unincorporated county. This acreage includes regional park facilities managed by EBRPD, EBMUD, and CCWD, as well as State and federal park facilities. Development under the proposed General Plan would introduce approximately 65,600 new residents, which would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities. The California Department of Finance's E-5 Population and Housing Estimates estimate the total 2023 population for Contra Costa County (incorporated and unincorporated) to be 1,147,653 people; based on that estimate, the existing total park acreage per 1,000 residents in all of Contra Costa County is 94.45.⁴ If no further parkland is added, the ratio of parkland per 1,000 population would decrease to 89 acres of parks per 1,000 residents when the projected residential buildout of the proposed General Plan is added to the county's total population. However, this is a very conservative assumption; it is expected that parks will be acquired, expanded, and/or made publicly accessible as part of private development over the horizon of the proposed General Plan.

As shown, the combination of existing local, regional, State, and national parks and recreation facilities exceed all targets for parks and recreation service standards for both the county's existing population and future population that includes the projected growth under the General Plan. In addition, while this calculation includes the total population of both the incorporated and unincorporated county to account for the use of regional park and recreational facilities, most incorporated jurisdictions also provide local parks and recreation

⁴ Note that State and federal parks and recreation facilities included in the parks and recreation acreage are available for use to residents outside of the county.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

facilities for their respective populations that have not been accounted for in this calculation. However, as noted in Table 5.15-6, most local districts and service areas providing parks and recreation facilities in the county do not currently provide enough service within their district to meet the County's existing service standard of four acres per 1,000 residents. As shown in the proposed Policy PFS-P8.2, the County aims to provide a local park within a safe 10-minute walk for all residents in urban communities or within a 5-minute drive for residents in suburban communities, as indicated in Figures PFS-9 and PFS-10 of the proposed Public Facilities and Services Element. While the county does not have a deficit of regional parks and recreation facilities, additional local facilities are likely needed to meet the existing and future demand of development.

To offset impacts from future development, all new projects must adhere to County Ordinance Code Division 720 (Ordinance No. 2007-17), which collects impact fees from new development to fund parks and recreation services. The County's continued implementation of park improvement and development projects would ensure that the adequate amount of parkland would be available. Each RPD and CSD (of those that provide parks and recreation services) also collect revenue from property taxes, assessments, and service charges to fund improvements, which in turn would serve to reduce the potential for deterioration of existing facilities. Several additional policies and actions under Goal PFS-8 of the proposed Public Facilities and Services Element would also help to provide adequate local facilities. For example, Policy PFS-P8.5 states that whenever possible, the County shall require projects subject to the Park Dedication or Park Impact Fee Ordinances to develop park and recreation amenities listed in, or added to, the County's Park Capital Improvement Plan. Park impact fees or in-lieu fees should be assessed when the County determines developer improvements are not feasible. Action PFS-A8.3 would help to implement this policy by requiring an annual update of the park dedication and in-lieu fee requirements. Action PFS-A8.1 would also support local parks by creating a cross-agency County entity that coordinates the planning and funding of local parks, recreational facilities, and trails.

The estimated timing or location of new facilities or the exact nature of these facilities are not known, so project-specific environmental impacts that would occur from their construction and operation cannot be determined at this time. However, depending on the type, size, and location of new parks, the construction of new parks would be subject to environmental review and the mitigating policies and mitigation measures described in this EIR to ensure the impacts from the construction would be less than significant. The construction of project-specific parks would require permitting and review in accordance with County standards, which would ensure that any environmental impacts are disclosed and mitigated to the extent possible. This EIR is a programmatic document and does not evaluate the environmental impacts of future project-specific development. Therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and to help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any impacts with regard to parks and recreational services. As part of the CAP's climate adaptation and equity strategies, the provision of parks for health and climate-related uses is encouraged. For example, Strategy NI-5, which aims to minimize the urban heat island effect through use of green infrastructure, includes an action that encourages the County to plant trees in urbanized areas and open spaces which in turn promotes the creation of new or more inviting public spaces. Strategy CE-3 specifically targets the increase of access to parks and open space by encouraging the County to

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

adopt a target to provide all residents a park or other green space within a half-mile of their dwelling, supporting land acquisition for new parks and open space areas and protecting such lands through fee title acquisition or through deed restrictions like conservation easements, continuing to construct and develop opportunities for new trails, and supporting investment in existing park facilities in partnership with regional agencies.

The proposed CAP would not directly contribute to increased population growth in the EIR Study Area and includes several strategies and actions aimed at improving and providing parks and recreational facilities in the county. As such, the CAP is expected to have beneficial impacts on parks and recreational facilities, resulting in a less than significant impact finding.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.15-5 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.15-5 would be less than significant.

5.15.5.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Future development, along with other existing, planned, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the region, would increase the use of existing parks and would contribute to the cumulative demand for regional and local parks and recreational facilities and services in the county. As discussed under Impact 5.15-5, existing local, regional, State, and national parks and recreational facilities would be able to meet the service standard for the projected growth in the county under the proposed General Plan. However, as information on cumulative growth in other jurisdictions is not currently available, this calculation does not account for all potential population growth in the county that would utilize the regional, State, and national parks and recreational facilities in the county. Regardless, future development in the county would be required to provide adequate park facilities to meet the demand of proposed development at a local level. Environmental impacts resulting from the provision of park and recreational facilities would be identified by subsequent project-level environmental review in conjunction with individual development projects.

Individual development projects would also be subject to development impact fees to fund the provision of physical parkland, community recreation, and other public purposes. These fees and policy provisions would ensure that the RPDs, CSDs, and CSAs would adequately provide for park and recreation needs for residents, while environmental review of new development would mitigate any environmental impacts of park and recreation facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact on parks and recreation services.

5.15.5.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.5.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.5.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

5.15.6 References

- Acalanes Union High School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2020, February 20. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study.
<https://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/cms/lib/CA01001364/Centricity/Domain/638/Cooperative%20Strategies%20School%20Fee%20Justification%20Study.pdf>
- Brentwood Union School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2020, February 20. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study. <https://brentwood-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1535349787149/1420876603890/3335625624224919401.pdf>
- California Department of Education (DOE). 2023, June 3 (Accessed). Data Quest- Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade: Contra Costa County Report.
<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrGrdYears.aspx?cds=07&aggllevel=county&year=2022-23>
- . 2003, April 22 (last reviewed February 7, 2022). Critically Overcrowded School Program.
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/co/>
- California State Parks (CPS). N.D. 2022, June 6 (Provided). Statistical Report 2018/19 Fiscal Year.
- California State Water Resources Department (CSWRD). 2022, May 29 (Accessed). SWP Facilities.
<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/State-Water-Project/SWP-Facilities>
- Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury (CC Civil Grand Jury). 2020, May 15. Report 2004 Police Department Staffing Impact on Community Policing Services and Personnel. <https://www.cc-courts.org/civil/docs/grandjury/2019-2020/2004/2004-PoliceDepartmentStaffing.pdf>
- Contra Costa, County of (Contra Costa). 2022. Land Development Fee Schedule (Adopted May 24, 2022).
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/62479/Land-Development-Fee-Schedule-PDF>
- . 2021, April 8. How to pay for School Development Fees.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45625/How-to-pay-for-school-Development-Fees?bidId=>
- . 2016. Emergency Operations Plan.
<https://www.cocosherriff.org/home/showpublisheddocument/168/637284267426930000>
- Contra Costa County Community Emergency Response Team (CCCCERT). 2022, May 26 (Accessed). CERT Overview. <https://sites.google.com/view/contracostacert/cert>
- Contra Costa Fire Protection District. 2021, July. Fire District Annexation Feasibility Study.
<https://cccfd.org/annexation-1>

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- Contra Costa County Library (CCC Library). 2022, August 24 (Accessed). Digital Resources (webpage). <https://ccclib.org/digital-resources/>
- . 2018, December 11. Contra Costa County Library is saying goodbye to fines. <https://ccclib.org/news/goodbye-to-fines/>
- Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE). 2021. CCCOE Annual Report 2020-2021. https://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/about_c_c_c_o_e/about/c_c_c_o_e_annual_report
- Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff (CCCOS). 2022, May 26 (Accessed). Emergency Services Division. <https://www.cocosherriff.org/disaster-preparedness/emergency-services-division2023>
- . 2023, April 6 (Accessed). Office of the Sheriff Overview. <https://www.cocosherriff.org/about-us/office-of-the-sheriff-overview>
- Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (CCLAFCO). 2022, February 9. Executive Officer's Report LAFCO 21-11 February 9, 2022 (Agenda). <https://www.contracostalafco.org/agenda/2022/020922/11%20-%20LAFCO%2021-11%20Annexation%20of%20East%20Contra%20Costa%20Fire%20Protection%20District%20to%20Contra%20Costa%20County%20Fire%20Protection%20District%20and%20Dissolution.pdf>
- . 2021, March. Parks & Recreation Services Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Updates. https://www.contracostalafco.org/municipal_service_reviews/Contra%20Costa%20LAFCO%20Parks%20and%20Recreation%20Services%20MSR%20-%20Public%20Review%20Draft%20-%20March%202021.pdf
- . 2016, August 13. 2nd Round EMS/Fire Services Municipal Service Review/Sphere of Influence Updates. https://www.contracostalafco.org/municipal_service_reviews/fire_and_emergency_medical_services/FireEMS%20MSR%20Final%20Report%20with%20Attachments%208-10-16.pdf
- Contra Costa Public Works. 2022, May 31 (Accessed). Parks and Recreation. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/446/Parks-and-Recreation>
- Contra Costa Water District (CCWD). 2022, June 3 (Accessed). About Los Vaqueros. <https://ccwater.com/152/About-Los-Vaqueros#:~:text=The%20Los%20Vaqueros%20Watershed%20consists,and%20eastern%20Contra%20Costa%20County.>
- Department of Finance (DOF). 2022, January. E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates.
- East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). 2018. Master Plan. <https://www.ebmud.com/recreation/east-bay/east-bay-watershed-master-plan-update>

5. Environmental Analysis PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD). 2013. Master Plan.
https://www.ebparks.org/sites/default/files/master_plan_2013_final.pdf
- East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD). 2022, May 25 (Accessed). About The District.
<https://eccfpd.specialdistrict.org/about-the-district>
- Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD). 2019, July. Third Amendment to Agreement for Services By and Between the Kensington Fire Protection District and the City of El Cerrito.
<https://www.kensingtonfire.org/files/edcac13b0/kfpd-el+cerrito+contract+and+amendments-10292019093325.pdf>
- Lafayette School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2020, January 31. Lafayette School District Residential Development School Fee Justification Study.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1398K1uSnRdL77XXCmW7FIfGvHPoJrN2V/view>
- Liberty Union High School District (Prepared by Jack Schreder & Associates, Inc.). 2016, April 4. Facility Needs Assessment for Liberty Union High School District.
<https://ca01001129.schoolwires.net/cms/lib/CA01001129/Centricity/Domain/1522/2016%20NA%20Final%20-%20LIBERTY%20UNION%20HIGH.pdf>
- Martinez Unified School District (Prepared by Jack Schreder & Associates, Inc.). 2020, June 8. Level I Developer Fee Study for Martinez Unified School District. <http://martinez-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1518855823782/1506151006406/1966416670429665726.pdf>
- . (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2022, July 22. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study.
- Moraga School District. 2015. Moraga School District Master Plan 2015-2024. <http://msd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1266997316035/1377669550459/2184706394258740489.pdf>
- Mount Diablo Unified School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2020, April 27. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study. <https://mdusd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1516177890045/1575703006235/7310912508292245420.pdf>
- National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). 2022, May 27 (Accessed). Common Core of Data- Public School District Data for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 School Years Contra Costa County Search.
https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_list.asp?Search=1&State=06&County=Contra+Costa
- National Parks Service (NPS). 2021, January 6. Mount Wanda Hiking Trail.
<https://www.nps.gov/thingstodo/mount-wanda-hiking-trail.htm>
- . 2020a, January 6. John Muir National Historic Site Cultural Landscape. (Accessed on 2022, June 6).
<https://www.nps.gov/articles/725020.htm#0/57/-664>

5. Environmental Analysis

PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

- . 2020b, December 21. Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site Cultural Landscape. (Accessed on 2022, June 6). <https://www.nps.gov/articles/725018.htm#4/34.45/-98.53>
- . 2023a, December 12 (accessed). Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park California. <https://www.nps.gov/rori/playourvisit/placestogo.htm>
- . 2023b, December 12 (accessed). Port Chicago Memorial Tour. <https://www.nps.gov/thingstodo/port-chicago-memorial-tour.htm#:~:text=The%20Port%20Chicago%20Naval%20Magazine,California%2C%20in%20the%20United%20States.>
- Oakley Union Elementary School District. 2020, April 23. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study. <http://ouesd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1531973284482/1563866277263/424935083510517020.pdf>
- Orinda Union School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2020, May 18. Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study. <http://orinda-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1500178971491/1436853922665/122912271700868127.pdf>
- Pittsburg Unified School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2018, February 22. Pittsburg Unified School District Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study. <https://www.pittsburg.k12.ca.us/cms/lib/CA01902661/Centricity/Domain/121/PUSD%20-%20DEVELOPER%20FEES%20JUSTIFICATION%20STUDIES%20COMMERCIAL-INDUSTRIAL.pdf>
- Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District (RHFPD). 2022, May 25 (Accessed). History. <https://www.rhfd.org/about/history/>
- San Ramon Valley Unified School District. 2022, May. School Facility Fee Justification Report for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Development Projects. <https://www.srvusd.net/documents/Departments/Facilities/Development-Impact-Fees/San-Ramon-Valley-USD-Level-I-2022-05-17.pdf>
- Walnut Creek School District (Prepared by Cooperative Strategies). 2018, May 8. Walnut Creek School District Residential Development School Fee Justification Study. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sO4Kel9PDl7et-XAkmRp51F5zFQkq0hG/view>
- West Contra Costa Unified School District. 2020, June. West Contra Costa Unified School District. School Facility Fee Justification Report For Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development Project. https://www.wccusd.net/cms/lib/CA01001466/Centricity/Domain/40/West%20Contra%20Costa%20USD%20-%20Level%20I%202020_final.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis

5.16 TRANSPORTATION

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Contra Costa County Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential transportation impacts from adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) modeling and analysis for the proposed project was provided by Fehr and Peers and is included as Appendix 5.16-1, *Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis Methodology and Results for the Contra Costa County General Plan Update Memorandum*, of this Draft EIR.

5.16.1 Environmental Setting

5.16.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State

Assembly Bill 1358 (California Complete Streets Act)

Assembly Bill (AB) 1358, or the California Complete Streets Act, was signed into law on September 30, 2008. Since January 1, 2011, AB 1358 has required circulation element updates to address the transportation system from a multimodal perspective. The Act states that streets, roads, and highways must “meet the needs of all users in a manner suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the General Plan.” The Act requires a circulation element to plan for all modes of transportation where appropriate, including walking, biking, car travel, and transit. In addition, the Act requires circulation elements to consider the multiple users of the transportation system, including children, adults, seniors, and the disabled. Contra Costa County adopted its Complete Streets Ordinance in 2016.

Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 32

AB 32, or the Global Warming Solutions Act, was signed into law on September 27, 2006. AB 32 established a comprehensive program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to combat climate change. This Bill required the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop a plan to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The AB 32 Scoping Plan contains the main strategies identified by CARB to reduce GHG emissions, including direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, market-based mechanisms, and an AB 32 program implementation regulation for funding. In 2016, the State Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 32, which codified a 2030 GHG emissions reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels. CARB recognizes cities and counties as “essential partners” in reducing GHG emissions. CARB has developed a Local Government Toolkit with guidance for GHG reduction strategies such as improving transit, developing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, increasing government fleet vehicle efficiency, and other strategies.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act)

SB 375, or the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, provides incentives for cities, counties, and developers to bring housing and jobs closer together and to improve public transit. The goal of the legislation is to reduce the number and length of automobile commuting trips, helping to meet the statewide targets for reducing GHG emissions set by AB 32.

SB 375 requires each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) to add a broader vision for growth to its transportation plan — called a sustainable communities strategy (SCS). The SCS must lay out a plan to meet the region's transportation, housing, economic, and environmental needs in a way that enables the area to lower GHG emissions. The SCS should integrate transportation, land use, and housing policies to plan for achievement of the emissions target for each region. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and SCS were most recently adopted in 2021 under the title Plan Bay Area 2050. However, as explained in Section 5.16.4.1, *Methodology*, the data and forecasts in MTC/ABAG's previous RTP/SCS, Plan Bay Area 2040, are currently used within the Contra Costa Countywide Travel Demand Model.

Senate Bill 743

Passed in 2013, SB 743 changes the focus of transportation impact analysis in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) from measuring impacts to drivers, to instead measuring the impact of driving. The change is being made by replacing vehicle delay-based metrics (e.g., Level of Service [LOS]) with a VMT approach. This shift in transportation impact focus is intended to better align transportation impact analysis and mitigation outcomes with the State's goals to reduce GHG emissions, encourage infill development, and improve public health through development of multimodal transportation networks. LOS or other delay metrics may still be used to evaluate the impact of projects on drivers as part of land use entitlement review and impact fee programs. In December 2018, the Natural Resources Agency finalized updates to Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines, including the incorporation of SB 743 modifications. The Guidelines' changes were approved by the Office of Administrative Law and as of July 1, 2020, are now in effect statewide.

To help lead agencies with SB 743 implementation, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) produced the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, which provides guidance about the variety of implementation questions they face with respect to shifting to a VMT metric. Key guidance from this document includes:

- VMT is the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impact.
- OPR recommends tour- and trip-based travel models to estimate VMT, but ultimately defers to local agencies to determine the appropriate tools.
- OPR recommends measuring VMT for residential and office projects on a "per rate" basis.
- OPR recommends that a per capita or per employee VMT that is 15 percent below that of existing development may be a reasonable threshold. In other words, an office project that generates VMT per employee that is more than 85 percent of the regional VMT per employee could result in a significant impact. OPR notes that this threshold is supported by evidence that connects this level of reduction to the State's emissions goals.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- OPR recommends that where a project replaces existing VMT-generating land uses, if the replacement leads to a net overall decrease in VMT, the project would lead to a less-than significant transportation impact. If the project leads to a net overall increase in VMT, then the thresholds described above should apply.
- Lead agencies have the discretion to set or apply their own significance thresholds.
- While requiring a change in the methodology of assessing transportation impacts (LOS to VMT), Public Resources Code Section 21099 notes that this change “does not relieve a public agency of the requirement to analyze a project’s potentially significant transportation impacts related to...safety....”

Regional

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments

MTC is the transportation planning, coordinating, and financing agency for the nine-county Bay Area region, including Contra Costa County. It also functions as the federally mandated MPO for the region. It is responsible for regularly updating the RTP, which is a comprehensive blueprint for the development of mass transit, highway, airport, seaport, railroad, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Plan Bay Area 2050 is the Bay Area’s RTP/SCS. Plan Bay Area 2050 was prepared by MTC in partnership with ABAG, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission; it was last updated on October 21, 2021 (ABAG & MTC 2021). The SCS sets a development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce GHG emissions from transportation (excluding goods movement) beyond the per capita reduction targets identified by CARB. An overarching goal of Plan Bay Area 2050 is to concentrate development in areas where there are existing services and infrastructure rather than allocate new growth to outlying areas where substantial transportation investments would be necessary to achieve the per capita passenger VMT and associated GHG emissions reductions.

MTC has established its policy on complete streets in the Bay Area. The policy states that projects funded all, or in part, with regional funds (e.g., federal, State Transportation Improvement Program, and bridge tolls) must consider the accommodation of all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, as described in Caltrans Deputy Directive 64. These recommendations do not replace locally adopted policies regarding transportation planning, design, and construction. Instead, they facilitate the accommodation of pedestrians, including wheelchair users, and bicyclists into all projects where bicycle and pedestrian travel is consistent with current adopted regional and local plans.

As part of the implementing framework for Plan Bay Area, Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Transit Priority Areas (TPAs) are identified as areas where concentrated development can have beneficial environmental effects and reduce adverse environmental impacts. As shown on Figure 5.16-1, *Priority Development Areas and Transit Priority Areas*, the EIR Study Area has two TPAs along the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line and six PDAs, including North Richmond, the San Pablo Avenue Corridor (which encompasses parts of Montalvin Manor and Rodeo), Downtown El Sobrante, Contra Costa Centre, and the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART station.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area

This Plan identifies infrastructure improvements that can enhance bicycle safety and mobility throughout District 4 and remove some of the barriers to bicycling in the region with respect to Caltrans-owned and operated facilities and infrastructure. The Plan was developed in cooperation with local and regional partners to ensure that the improvements on the State highway system complement proposals for local networks. The Plan is also intended to inform future investments on the State transportation network by Caltrans and other jurisdictions. The Plan's top tier projects in the county include bike corridor improvements on SR-123, -242, and -4 and on I-580, -680, and -80 (Caltrans 2018).

Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan for the Bay Area

This Plan implements the goals of the 2017 Caltrans statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan, *Toward an Active California*, and is part of a comprehensive planning process to identify locations with bicycle and pedestrian needs in each Caltrans district across California. The Plan is used by Caltrans staff, as well as regional and local agency partners, to address high priority needs along and across the State Transportation Network, which includes the State Highway System (SHS) and all other multimodal facilities owned and operated by Caltrans, including parallel paths, frontage roads, and other facilities not directly on a SHS mainline. Needs identified in this Plan also inform future investments on the SHS by Caltrans and local partners (Caltrans 2021).

Local

Contra Costa County Congestion Management Program

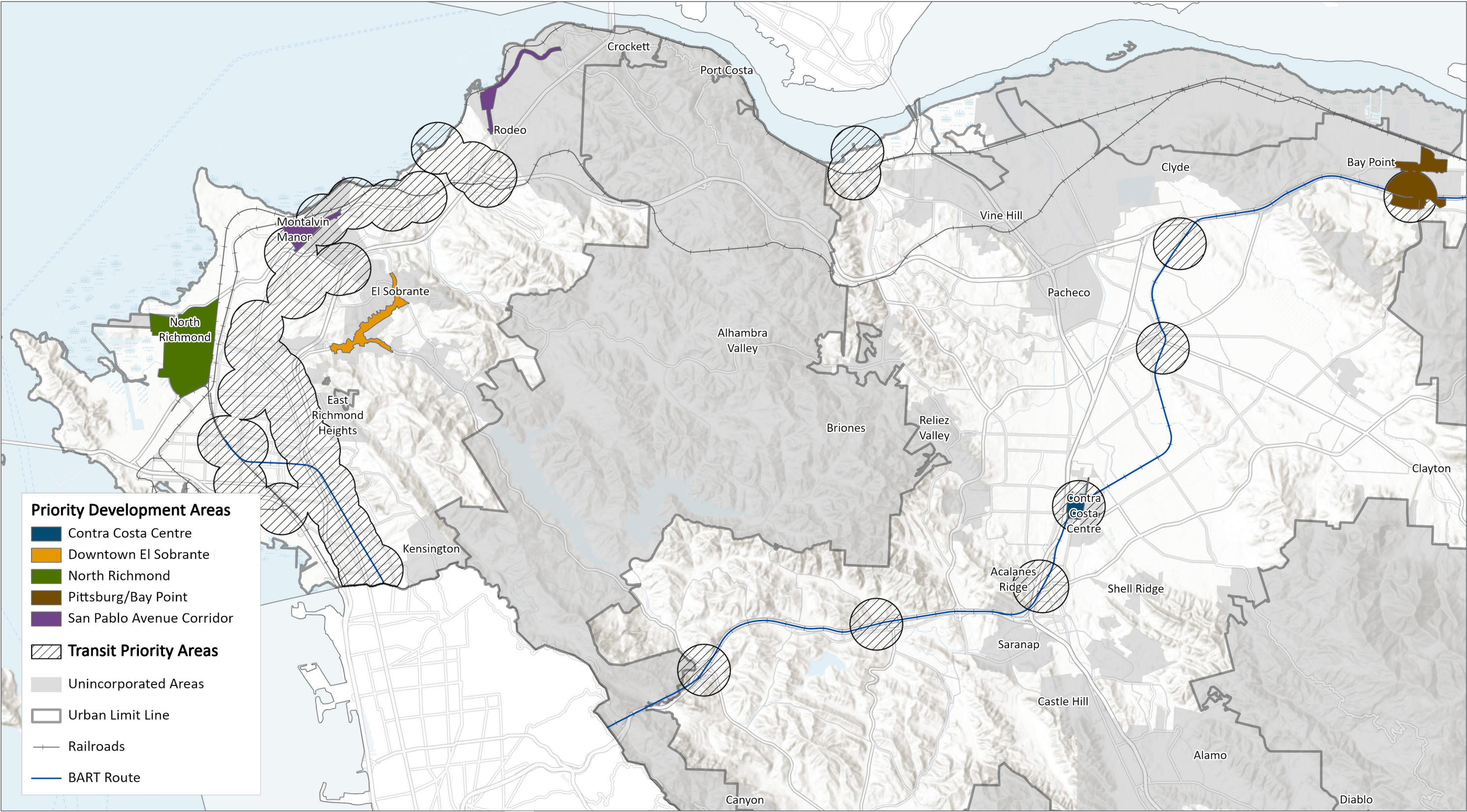
The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) is Contra Costa County's designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA). It is responsible for implementing programs to ensure traffic levels remain manageable. As the CMA, CCTA is in charge of coordinating land use, air quality, and transportation planning among local jurisdictions. A Congestion Management Program (CMP) was created to spend the funds allocated to these projects, known as Measure J. This measure is a one-half cent countywide sales tax used for transportation improvements within the county. The revenue must be spent on projects and programs included in the CCTA Transportation Expenditure Plan (Expenditure Plan). The Expenditure Plan designates 18 percent of the annual sales tax revenue as "return-to-source" funds (CCTA 2021a).

Contra Costa Countywide Transportation Plan

The Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) is intended to carry out the following countywide transportation goals:

- Enhance the movement of people and goods on highways and arterial roads.
- Manage the impacts of growth to sustain Contra Costa County's economy and preserve its environment.
- Provide and expand safe, convenient, and affordable alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.
- Maintain the transportation system.

TRANSPORTATION



Source: Metropolitan Transportation Agency/Association of Bay Area Governments, 2020



Figure 5.16-1
Priority Development Areas and Transit Priority Areas

5. Environmental Analysis
TRANSPORTATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

The CTP incorporates five sub-regional Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance (see Figure 5.16-2, *Routes of Regional Significance*). This is one of the primary vehicles for achieving the Measure J Growth Management Program's goal of reducing the cumulative impacts of growth. The Action Plans also fulfill a key requirement of CCTA's CMP. This is a State-mandated program for evaluating the impact of land use decisions on the regional transportation system and establishing performance measures. Each Action Plan contains these components:

- Long-range assumptions about future land uses based on local general plans and travel demand based on household and job growth.
- Designation of Routes of Regional Significance
- Regional transportation objectives that can be measured and timed.
- Specific actions to be implemented by each jurisdiction.
- A process for consultation on environmental documents.
- A procedure for reviewing the impacts of local general plan amendments that could affect transportation objectives.
- A schedule for reviewing and updating the Action Plans.

Growth Management Program and CCTA VMT Guidance

CCTA has developed guidance for member jurisdictions to use in developing their own VMT analysis methods, metrics, and thresholds of significance. This document addresses the procedures a jurisdiction should undergo when evaluating the impacts of new development, CCTA's process for assessing compliance with the growth management program requirement, and the tools and procedures that local jurisdictions must have to be in compliance with the Growth Management Program.

Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The Contra Costa Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (CBPP) was initially produced in 2003 and last updated in 2018 by CCTA. The County relies on this document as its own plan rather than developing and adopting a separate plan, as some other jurisdictions choose to do. The CBPP covers the entire county, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas. It is built on the CTP, using the strategies and policies of that plan to establish bicycle and pedestrian-specific goals and identify actions the CCTA can take to accomplish them. The plan identifies a network of key low-stress connections that should be implemented to allow people of all ages and abilities to connect across the county by bicycle or walking. The Plan also addresses emerging issues and concerns such as "Vision Zero" and docked and dockless bike share. It also identifies Pedestrian Priority Areas in the county where more people are expected to walk and where safety issues are most acute (CCTA 2018).

Contra Costa Countywide Transportation Safety Policy and Implementation Guide

CCTA's Countywide Transportation Safety Policy and Implementation Guide was published in August 2021. CCTA launched their Vision Zero Framework & Systemic Safety Approach effort to serve as the basis for transportation planning, policy, design, construction, and funding throughout Contra Costa County. Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all fatalities and severe injuries that result from traffic collisions. The Vision Zero approach views transportation-related fatalities as preventable, not inevitable, and relies on multidisciplinary

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

collaboration that is informed by data and focused on equity. This document establishes a countywide policy of intent to work with partner agencies to encourage each jurisdiction to adopt and implement Vision Zero by committing to encourage and support actions toward eliminating transportation-related fatalities and severe injuries using a collaborative, culturally sensitive, and multidisciplinary approach. Vision Zero is encouraged to be integrated consistently countywide as standard practice in local and regional transportation planning and engineering (CCTA 2021b).

Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan

The Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan was born from the 2017 CTP. The CTP identified a need to address the challenges associated with: (1) different types of accessible transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities; (2) multiple transportation providers, including cities, transit operators, social services agencies, and non-profit organizations; and (3) diverse, and sometimes overlapping, service areas. The ATS Plan is also intended to address the unfulfilled recommendations of three previous studies which were similar in scope. While the 2016 and 2020 Transportation Expenditure Plans did not succeed in accessing sales tax measure funds, they did further set expectations for the Plan to ultimately "implement a customer-focused, user friendly, seamless coordinated system." The ATS Plan also helps fulfill a requirement by MTC in its Resolution 4321 that CMAs must meet the following mobility management requirement: "Each county must establish or enhance mobility management programs to help provide equitable and effective access to transportation." Mobility management in this context refers to a centralized point of contact that facilitates ease of use of a variety of transportation modes by people with disabilities and older adults (CCTA 2021c).

Community-Based Transportation Plans

Community-based transportation plans (CBTPs) are sponsored by MTC and intended to improve mobility options for low-income and underserved communities. There are two CBTPs that include unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County, one for the Richmond area that was completed in 2004 and updated in 2020, and another for the Pittsburg-Bay Point area that was completed in 2007 and updated in 2020. Each plan was developed with key stakeholders, transportation service providers, and community members to develop actions toward improving all types of transportation, increasing access to services, improving local quality of life, providing environmental benefits, and adding to the sense of community in the area.

5. Environmental Analysis
TRANSPORTATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Regional Transportation Planning Committee 'RTPC' Development Impact Fees

Development impact fees are levied by Regional Transportation Planning Committees (RTPC) in the jurisdictions of their member agencies. The Tri-Valley Transportation Council/Southwest Area Transportation Committee (TVTC/SWAT) oversees the expenditures of development fees for transportation in the Tri-Valley area and includes Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, Town of Danville, and Cities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, and San Ramon as member agencies. The Lamorinda Program Management Committee/Southwest Area Transportation Committee (LPMC/SWAT) provides the same oversight for the Lamorinda area, representing Contra Costa County and the Cities of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda. The West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) administers the West County Subregional Transportation Mitigation Program and includes as member agencies Contra Costa County and the Cities of El Cerrito, Hercules, Pinole, Richmond, and San Pablo, along with the transit providers AC Transit, BART, and WestCAT. TRANSPLAN coordinates the regional transportation interests of the communities in eastern Contra Costa County and includes Contra Costa County and the Cities of Antioch, Brentwood, Oakley, and Pittsburg as member agencies. TRANSPLAN administers the East Contra Costa Regional Fee Program. TRANSPAC (Transportation Partnership and Cooperation) is the RTPC for central Contra Costa County and represents the Cities of Clayton, Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated areas of central Contra Costa County. The fee program for the TRANSPAC region requires jurisdictions to execute a “developer-sponsored mitigation agreement” with affected central county jurisdictions when a proposed development would generate more than 100 peak hour trips of which 50 or more are interregional trips on Routes of Regional Significance as opposed to a uniform fee for all development (TRANSPAC 2008).

Short-Range Transit Plans

All transit agencies are required to submit Short-Range Transit Plans (SRTPs) to comply with various Federal Transit Administration and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requirements. As described in Section 5.16.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, several transit agencies provide service within the EIR Study Area. Each of the following agencies have published SRTPs that guide the provision of transit service within each agency’s respective service areas, some of which overlap:

- San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), last updated November 1, 2022
- Alameda-Contra Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit), last updated January 27, 2023
- Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection), last updated January 27, 2023
- Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority (Tri-Delta Transit), last updated August 26, 2020
- Western Contra Costa Transit Authority (WestCAT), last updated January 27, 2023

Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines

The Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines (“TAG” or “Guidelines”) are provided to aid in the preparation of traffic analysis for project applicants and staff in light of the passage of SB 743. The purpose of this document is to establish a uniform approach, methodology, and tool set to evaluate the impacts of land use decisions and related transportation projects on the County’s transportation system. Given what is anticipated to be a rapidly evolving approach to VMT mitigation as a result of SB 743, this is a “living

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

document” and will be updated periodically to reflect newly acquired data and relevant policies. The CEQA thresholds of significance (“TOS”) impact criteria listed below require a proposed project’s transportation impact analysis to compare the VMT per person/employee to the VMT per person/employee for the county or Bay Area region. A proposed project should be considered to have a significant impact if the project VMT is greater than:

- **Residential Projects:** 15 percent below the countywide average home-based VMT per capita
- **Employment Projects (office, industrial and institutional projects):** 15 percent below the Bay Area average commute VMT per employee
- **Regional Retail (>50,000 square feet):** 15 percent below the Bay Area average total VMT per service population
- **Mixed-Use Projects:** 15 percent below the countywide average total VMT per service population

Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan

The Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan (ATP) provides a comprehensive study of the needs and opportunities to improve bicycling and walking throughout the unincorporated areas of the county. The ATP outlines investments in new bicycle facilities, upgraded crossings, enhanced trail connections, and improved walkways. The ATP was adopted by the County on March 29, 2022 (Contra Costa 2022).

Contra Costa County Vision Zero Action Plan

On March 1, 2022, Contra Costa County adopted the Action Plan from the Vision Zero Final Report that was developed collaboratively between the County’s Public Works Department, Department of Conservation and Development, and Health Services Department. The purpose of the Plan is to identify opportunities to enhance safety for all modes through implementation of a Safe System approach. The report builds on the engineering-focused Systemic Safety Analysis Report (SSAR) to provide a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and holistic approach to safety.

Complete Streets Policy of Contra Costa County

The County’s Complete Streets Policy was adopted by Resolution No. 2016/374 by the Board of Supervisors on July 12, 2016. This Ordinance requires that as feasible, and as opportunities arise, Contra Costa County incorporate complete streets infrastructure into existing streets to improve the safety and convenience of users, with the particular goal of creating a connected network of facilities accommodating each category of users, increasing connectivity across jurisdictional boundaries, and accommodating existing and anticipated future areas of travel origination or destination. The Policy identifies that a well-connected network should include non-motorized connectivity to schools, parks, commercial areas, civic destinations, and regional non-motorized networks on both publicly owned roads and land and private developments (or redevelopment areas).

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

Contra Costa County Area of Benefit (AOB) Program

An “Area of Benefit” (AOB) is a transportation mitigation program related to a specific geographic area of unincorporated Contra Costa County in which the County imposes transportation mitigation fees. This fee is a type of development impact fee on new development to fund new development’s share of the transportation improvements required to satisfy transportation demands within that geographic area. The County has a total of 14 traffic AOB programs.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Transportation Demand Management Ordinance

As adopted in Chapter 82-32 of the County Ordinance Code, the intent of this the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program is to further the transportation goals of the County’s General Plan, the Measure C Growth Management Program, Contra Costa County’s CMP, and the Bay Area Clean Air Plan. Section 82-32.004 states that the purpose of the program is to implement the provisions of the General Plan to promote a more balanced transportation system that takes advantage of all modes of transportation by:

- Incorporating pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access into improvements proposed in development applications
- Incorporating the overall intent and purpose of the chapter into the land use review and planning process
- Allowing requests for reductions in the off-street parking requirements for residential or nonresidential projects that have a conceptual TDM program
- Providing information to residents on opportunities for walking, bicycling, ridesharing, and transit

This Ordinance applies to all development, both residential and nonresidential (Section 82-32.006), and provides requirements for these development types separately.

Division 722, Fire Code

Division 722, *Fire Code*, of the County Ordinance Code is intended to adopt the 2022 California Fire Code, which is set forth in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9 (based on the 2021 International Fire Code published by the International Code Council). Division 722 also lists the changes, additions, and deletions to the Fire Code that have been adopted by the County. One such amendment is to Section 105.6.25 of the Fire Code, which per the County’s amendments, reads:

- **Access for fire apparatus.** Plans shall be submitted and a permit is required to install, improve, modify, or remove public or private roadways, driveways, and bridges for which Fire District access is required by the Fire Code.

Division 92, General Provisions, Division 96, Improvements, and Division 98, Streets

These divisions of the County Ordinance Code provide requirements and standards relative to frontage and subdivision improvements. Updates to these portions of the Ordinance Code will be necessary to bring them into conformance with the proposed General Plan.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Division 1006, Road Dedications and Setbacks and Division 1002, Encroachments

Article 1006-2.10, *Road Standards of Division 1006*, provides the County standards for roadways and improvement to roadways. Division 1002 provides the County's standards for encroachments on right-of-way. Development in the county is subject to these provisions of the Ordinance Code, as applicable.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

5.16.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following information pertaining to the existing roadways, transit network and services, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the county is from the Transportation Baseline Report prepared by Fehr and Peers in 2019 for the proposed General Plan.¹

Roadway Network

Freeways

The freeways in Contra Costa County are Interstate (I-) 680, I-80, I-580, State Route (SR) 4, SR 24, SR 242, and SR 160. These roadways are identified in Figure 5.16-2, *Routes of Regional Significance*.

- **I-680** functions as a central spine for Contra Costa County, passing through the entire length of the county from north to south. On the north end, I-680 passes over the Benicia Bridge and connects to Solano County. On the south end, the freeway continues southward through Alameda County and on to Santa Clara County. Most of Contra Costa County's job centers are along or near I-680, including downtown Walnut Creek, the Contra Costa Centre/Pleasant Hill BART station area, and the Bishop Ranch Business Park. I-680 also serves as a primary commute route for county residents who work in the Tri-Valley portion of Alameda County or in Silicon Valley. Major current and upcoming investments in the I-680 corridor are focused on improving traffic flow through the addition of HOV/Express Lanes, exploring opportunities for applying innovative technologies to better manage demand, and improving the I-680/SR 4 interchange.
- **I-80** passes through the western portion of Contra Costa County from the Alameda County boundary up to the Carquinez Bridge connecting to Solano County. I-80 is a major regional and interregional travel route and is one of the busiest corridors in the region, as the primary connection from San Francisco to Sacramento and continuing on across the country to New York City. The I-80 corridor through western Contra Costa County has long been one of the most congested in the region, as it serves commuters headed to and from the employment centers of Oakland and San Francisco. Recent investments have established the I-80 Smart Corridor, using ramp metering and signal coordination, real-time traveler information, and variable speed advisories to help manage traffic on this critical corridor.
- **I-580** spans a small portion of western Contra Costa County; it separates from I-80 in the Alameda County city of Albany, then proceeds westward through Richmond to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, thereby connecting Contra Costa County to Marin County.
- **SR 4** is the primary east-west corridor across Contra Costa County. Starting at I-80 in western Contra Costa County, SR 4 proceeds eastward through the central part of the county and serves as the primary access route for eastern Contra Costa County, eventually connecting across the San Joaquin County boundary. The portion of SR 4 in eastern Contra Costa County was recently expanded, including HOV lanes and a BART extension to Antioch. Upcoming improvements along SR 4 will be focused in the central part of the county, including HOV lanes, targeted mixed-flow lane additions to address current

¹ This report is available online here: https://envisioncontracosta2040.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/CCC_Baseline_Report_Oct2019.pdf.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

bottlenecks, and improvements to the I-680/SR 4 interchange, as well as exploring options for an integrated corridor mobility program through the central and eastern parts of the county.

- **SR 24** is an east-west freeway in the central part of the county. It connects to Alameda County at the Caldecott Tunnel and travels eastward to connect with I-680 in Walnut Creek.
- **SR 242** is a short freeway segment connecting I-680 to SR 4 in Concord.
- **SR 160** is a very short freeway segment connecting SR 4 in Antioch to the Antioch Bridge and on to Sacramento County.

Given Contra Costa County's central location and the presence of several major interregional corridors within the county boundaries, several roadways are subject to significant levels of traffic congestion and delay. MTC regularly tracks the most congested commute routes in the region; in their analysis of 2017 data, three of the ten most congested commute corridors in the Bay Area were found in Contra Costa County:

- #2: I-80 westbound in the morning from Hercules to the Bay Bridge
- #5: SR 4 eastbound in the afternoon between Martinez and Concord
- #10: I-680 northbound in the afternoon from Danville to Walnut Creek

Of these three corridors, eastbound SR 4 from Martinez to Concord has experienced the most dramatic change. It was not in the top ten in 2015 but by 2017 it was ranked at #5, reflecting the effects of increased residential development in eastern Contra Costa County and greater levels of commuting through central and western portion of the county.

Expressways

The existing General Plan defines expressways as controlled-access moderate speed roadways serving intercity or intercounty trips. Expressways often have at-grade intersections and typically do not allow direct access to abutting parcels. Some of the roads designated as expressways in the existing General Plan include Richmond Parkway, Kirker Pass Road, Taylor Boulevard, and Vasco Road.

Arterials

The primary function of arterial streets is to move traffic relatively long distances and connect freeways to local-serving street networks. Limited access is provided to abutting parcels in many cases. Arterials typically operate at relatively high speeds and can serve between 10,000 and 40,000 vehicles per day; minor arterials may carry fewer than 10,000 vehicles per day. Most intersections along arterials are signalized, often with a coordinated and interconnected signal system. Some of the primary arterials in Contra Costa include San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo Dam Road, Danville Boulevard/San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Camino Tassajara, and Byron Highway.

Transit Network

The County's transit routes, as described below, are also shown in Figure 5.16-2, *Routes of Regional Significance*.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

BART

BART operates two lines in Contra Costa County. The Richmond line serves the western part of the county, with stations at El Cerrito Plaza, El Cerrito del Norte, and Richmond (which offers an opportunity to transfer to Amtrak). Two BART routes use this line; the Richmond-San Francisco route connects to San Francisco and on to Daly City, while the Richmond-Berryessa route connects to the Berryessa community in San Jose. Both routes operate at 15-minute frequencies throughout most of the day.

The Antioch line serves central and eastern Contra Costa County, with stations at Orinda, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre, Concord, North Concord/Martinez, Pittsburg/Bay Point, Pittsburg Center, and Antioch, and connects to San Francisco and on to the San Francisco International Airport and Millbrae. The Antioch–San Francisco–Millbrae route is heavily utilized and operates at as little as 5-minute frequencies during peak commute hours, including some limited-service trains that operate only between Pleasant Hill and downtown San Francisco.

The two most utilized of the 12 BART stations in Contra Costa County are El Cerrito del Norte and Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre. In 2015, El Cerrito del Norte averaged approximately 8,800 daily riders, and Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre averaged about 7,400 daily riders. The mode of access to Contra Costa County BART stations varies widely depending on the station's local context. For example, none of the top ten BART stations system-wide for walking and biking are in Contra Costa County. Most of the stations in the county exist in a suburban and vehicle-oriented part of the region, and thus are more frequently accessed by personal vehicle. Some of the top stations system-wide for vehicle drop-offs are in Contra Costa County, including Pittsburg/Bay Point, Walnut Creek, Lafayette, and El Cerrito del Norte. North Concord/Martinez, Orinda, Walnut Creek, Concord, and Lafayette are among the top ten stations system-wide for driving and parking at the station. Vehicle parking at most local BART stations is heavily utilized, and the parking lots typically fill up between 7:30 and 8:00 AM.

Amtrak

Amtrak service in Contra Costa County occurs along the San Joaquin line, which connects the Bay Area south to Bakersfield, and along the Capitol Corridor line, which connects southward to San Jose and northward to Sacramento. These services are locally administered by two joint powers authorities (JPA): the San Joaquin JPA and Capitol Corridor JPA. In California, Caltrans administered these Amtrak lines until transferring these duties to the local JPAs in 2015.

There are multiple departures daily on both lines. The San Joaquin line serves all three of the stops within Contra Costa County: Richmond (allowing a transfer to BART), Martinez, and Antioch. The Capitol Corridor stops at Richmond and Martinez. Amtrak also provides access to further destinations, with the California Zephyr line connecting Martinez to Chicago, and the Coast Starlight line connecting Martinez to Los Angeles and Seattle.

Parking is available at all three Contra Costa County Amtrak stations, with pricing and hours varying by location. The Martinez station parking lot is owned by the City of Martinez and includes 136 regular spaces. The Richmond station parking lot is owned by BART and includes 20 regular spaces for Amtrak users. Parking at

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

the Antioch station is provided in public parking lots owned by the City of Antioch, with 42 regular spaces in the nearest lot.

The City of Hercules is planning a regional intermodal transportation center, which would include a rail station, ferry terminal, and bus service. The City of Oakley has a planned station that would be served by the San Joaquin line.

San Francisco Bay Ferry

Starting in January 2019, the San Francisco Bay Ferry (operated by the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority [WETA]) operates ferry service between the Richmond Ferry Terminal and the Ferry Building in San Francisco. There are four runs in the primary commute direction during peak commute hours, as well as limited reverse commute service.

AC Transit

AC Transit serves the western parts of the county, including Richmond, El Cerrito, San Pablo, Pinole, El Sobrante, and Kensington, and most of Alameda County, with service to San Francisco and south to Santa Clara. San Pablo Avenue is the major spine for AC Transit bus service through western Contra Costa County, with important transfer hubs at the three local BART stations (El Cerrito Plaza, El Cerrito del Norte, and Richmond), as well as at Contra Costa College in San Pablo, Hilltop Mall in Richmond, and the Richmond Parkway Transit Center. East Bay Paratransit is operated by AC Transit and BART and fulfills the ADA paratransit obligations for both agencies transporting riders within the AC Transit service area.

County Connection

County Connection, formally known as the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority, provides service throughout the central part of the county including Clayton, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and nearby unincorporated areas. Important transfer hubs for County Connection buses are at the Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and Concord BART stations; the Martinez Amtrak station; and the Diablo Valley College campus in Pleasant Hill. County Connection also operates several express bus routes serving the Bishop Ranch employment center in San Ramon, offering connections to BART stations in Walnut Creek and Dublin/Pleasanton as well as to the Pleasanton ACE commuter rail station. County Connection LINK is the paratransit service that operates on the same schedule and in the same area as the County Connection's buses.

Tri Delta Transit

Tri Delta Transit serves eastern Contra Costa County, including the Cities of Antioch, Brentwood, Pittsburg, and Oakley, and the unincorporated area of Bay Point. Major transfer hubs for Tri Delta Transit are at the three local BART stations (Pittsburg/Bay Point, Pittsburg Center, and Antioch), as well as at Los Medanos College in Pittsburg and the downtown Brentwood park-n-ride. Tri Delta Transit's Dial-a-Ride service offers ADA paratransit within the same service area.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

WestCAT

WestCAT serves the far western communities of Richmond, Pinole, and Hercules, as well as nearby unincorporated communities such as Rodeo and Crockett. Important transfer hubs for WestCAT are at the Hilltop Mall in Richmond, the Richmond Parkway Transit Center, and the Hercules Transit Center. Express buses extend to the El Cerrito del Norte BART station, and WestCAT also operates one regional express bus (LYNX) from the Hercules Transit Center to San Francisco. WestCAT operates a dial-a-ride service, both for ADA paratransit customers and for the general public in some of the more rural parts of the service area.

Other Transit Operators with Service to Contra Costa County

Additional bus operators, including SolTrans, Golden Gate Transit, Livermore Amador Valley Transit (also known as Tri-Valley Wheels), and Napa VINE operate primarily in other parts of the Bay Area but have express service connecting to BART stations in Contra Costa County.

Existing Bicycle Network

Bikeways connect areas across the county and are supported by a wide variety of agencies and jurisdictions. Countywide bikeways help connect residents in a practical and healthy alternative to driving through both on- and off-road facilities. The “countywide bikeway network” (CBN) was established in the 2003 CBPP and has been expanded on with the most recent CBPP update in 2018. This network is made up of bikeway corridors connecting cities, towns, and major destinations throughout the county. The existing network in addition to planned facilities under the CBPP are shown in Figure 5.16-3, *Existing and Planned Bicycle Network*. Key bicycle corridors included in the CBN include:

- The Bay Trail
- San Pablo Avenue corridor
- Connections between western and central parts of the county (Cummings Skyway/Franklin Canyon/SR 4; Alhambra Valley Road; San Pablo Dam Road; Carquinez Scenic Drive)
- Connections to Alameda County (Fish Ranch Road; Pinehurst Road; Canyon Road; Redwood Road)
- Iron Horse Trail
- Connections within the central part of the county (Olympic Boulevard; Mt. Diablo Boulevard; Geary Road; Main Street; Treat Boulevard; Monument Boulevard; Pleasant Hill Road; Contra Costa Boulevard; Taylor Boulevard; Ygnacio Valley Road; Concord Boulevard; Concord Avenue; Cowell Road; Turtle Creek Road)
- Connections between central and eastern parts of the county (Kirker Pass Road; Marsh Creek Road)
- Regional trails (e.g., Ohlone Greenway; Richmond Greenway; Delta de Anza Trail; American Discovery Trail)

Pedestrian Network

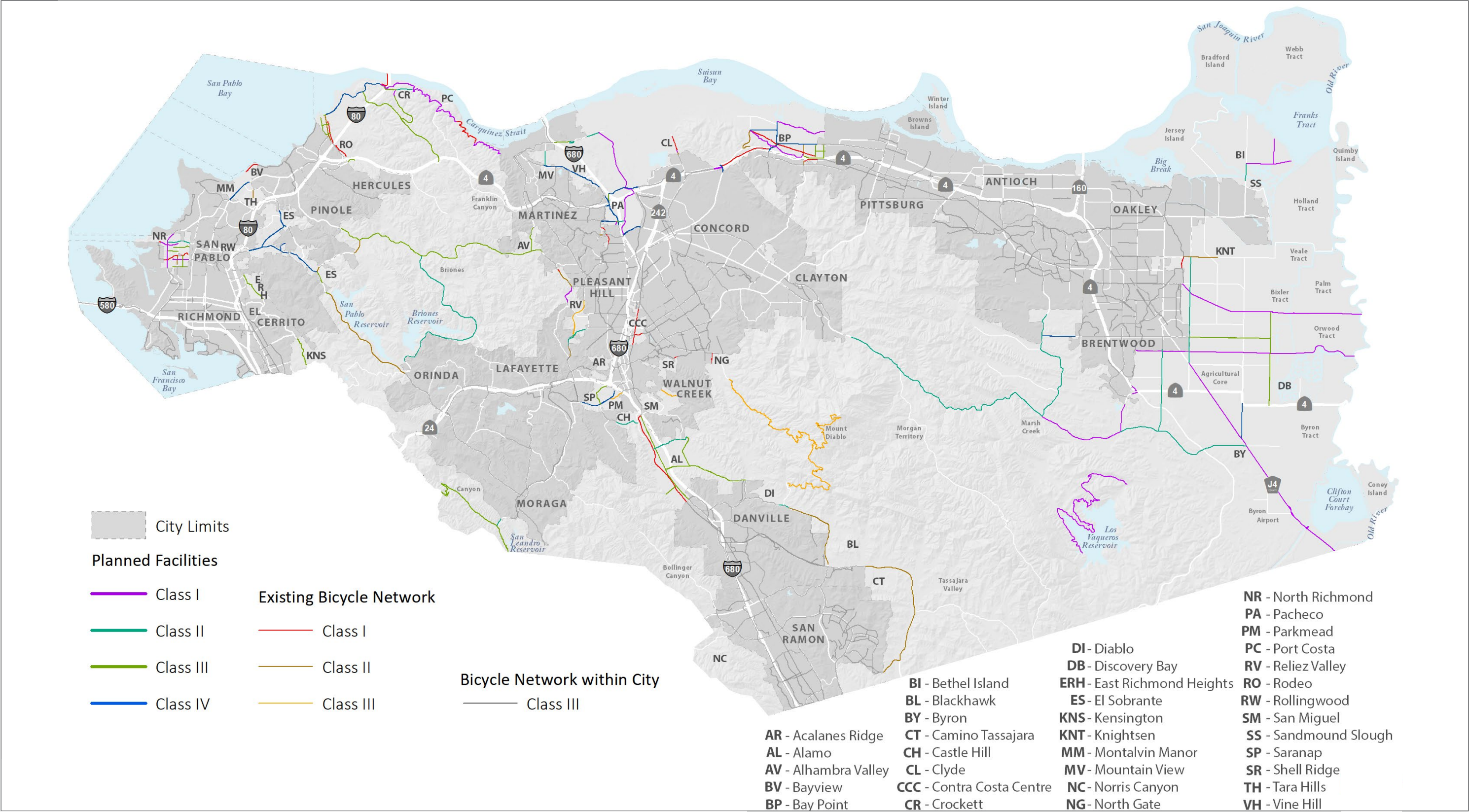
Walking as a mode of transportation is generally confined to short local trips, generally within one city or town and not across countywide networks. On a countywide level such as in the CBPP, the focus is maintained at a high level, prioritizing investments in pedestrian-oriented districts at BART stations and along routes to transit,

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

along routes to key activity centers such as schools, and near significant employment, shopping, or commercial centers. The CBPP identified areas of the county with high pedestrian traffic and acute safety issues, as shown in Figure 5.16-4 *Pedestrian Priority Areas*. Recommended treatments include ADA accessible walkways, curb ramps, safer intersections, traffic calming when appropriate, direct pedestrian connections, and streetscape improvements.

TRANSPORTATION

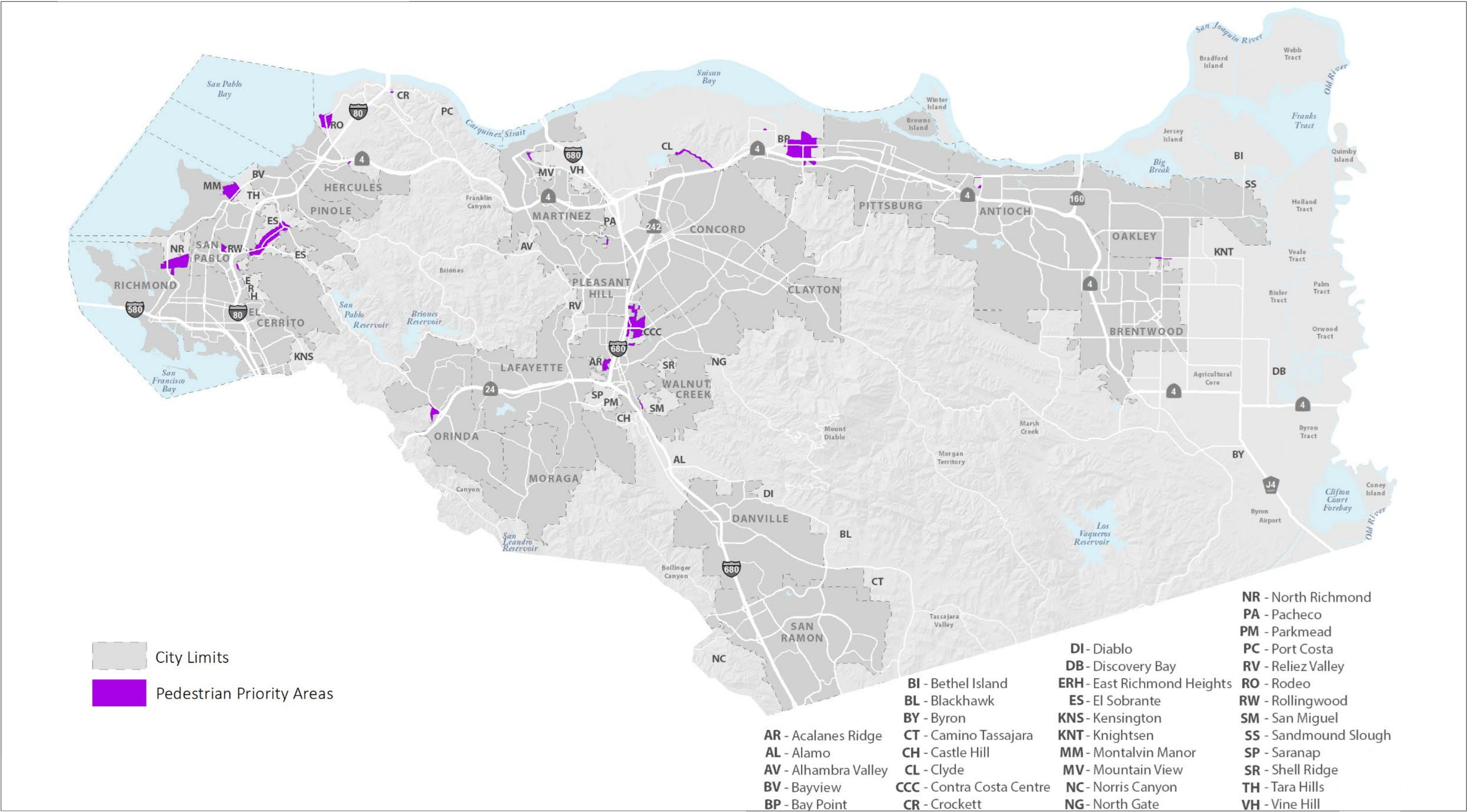


Source: Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan, April 2022.



Figure 5.16-3
Existing and Planned Bicycle Network

TRANSPORTATION



Source: Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA): 2018 Contra Costa Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Figure 5.16-4
Pedestrian Priority Areas

5. Environmental Analysis

5.16.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- T-1 Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- T-2 Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 (b).
- T-3 Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- T-4 Result in inadequate emergency access.

5.16.2.1 CONTRA COSTA COUNTY THRESHOLDS

The County's Guidelines (see Section 5.16.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines), present several forms of VMT metrics that must be used to evaluate the impacts of land development projects. For example, it is required that residential projects use a metric of VMT per resident for all home-based trips, while employment projects use a metric of VMT per employee for only the home-based-work trip purpose. Mixed-use projects are recommended to use a metric of total VMT per service population (where service population is the summation of residential population and employment).

Since the proposed General Plan will involve land development of many different types, sizes, and locations, the metric of total VMT per service population was determined to be the most appropriate for this analysis, as it captures all trip purposes from all types of development.

The County's Guidelines present thresholds of significance that can be used to determine the significance of a project's VMT impacts. The basic threshold is that a project's VMT metric be at least 15 percent below a specific point of comparison. The point of comparison varies depending on the type of project: for residential projects, the point of comparison is the countywide average home-based VMT per capita, while for employment projects the point of comparison is the Bay Area regional average commute VMT per employee. For mixed-use projects, the threshold is that the project's total VMT per service population be at least 15 percent below the countywide average VMT per service population.

It is important to note that, while the OPR guidance (see discussion of SB 743 in Section 5.16.1.1, *Regulatory Background*) recommends that project-level impacts be evaluated against baseline conditions, for this analysis the total VMT per service population of the proposed project is being evaluated under both baseline (2020) and future (2045) conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

5.16.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.16.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to transportation. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- **Policy LU-P2.1:** Continue implementing the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard, using the County 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.
- **Policy LU-P2.5:** Encourage infill development..
- **Policy LU-P2.6:** Encourage clustering of allowable densities to reduce development footprints; protect scenic resources, natural features, and open spaces; and avoid hazardous areas (e.g., floodplains).
- **Policy LU-P3.1:** Support regional efforts to achieve a jobs-housing balance within the county and within subregions of the county by maintaining an adequate supply of developable land designated for job-generating uses. For any General Plan amendment proposing to convert commercial, industrial, or office land uses to residential or non-urban land uses, evaluate the project's effect on the local and countywide jobs-housing balance.
- **Policy LU-P3.2:** Encourage residential development in or near existing employment centers, and development of job-generating uses near areas that are primarily residential. Where large-scale residential or commercial development is planned, encourage a mix of housing and employment opportunities unless doing so would exacerbate a severe jobs-housing imbalance in the area.
- **Policy LU-P3.3:** Encourage extremely high-density, mixed-use development that combines employment, housing, and services near major transit facilities. Such development should be planned and designed to encourage walking, micromobility, and transit use; shorter commutes; and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles.
- **Policy LU-P3.5:** Welcome development that supports the countywide goal of reducing VMT, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet climate change targets. Require projects that do not support the County's VMT-reduction goals to incorporate necessary changes (e.g., design, land use mix) to ensure they support those goals.
- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, roadways, drainage improvements) when evaluating development proposals and deny development applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Action LU-A5.1:** In 2025 and at least once every five years thereafter, evaluate the County's off-street parking standards to ensure their continued applicability in light of changing conditions, trends, and technology. Each evaluation should assess the appropriateness of reducing or eliminating parking minimums, taking off-site impacts into account, and recommend strategies for reducing parking demand.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy LU-P7.2:** Provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the population, ensuring that affordable housing is distributed throughout the county and is not concentrated in traditionally lower-income areas. Promote development of affordable housing near public transit and essential services whenever possible.
- **Policy LU-P7.5:** *Require new residential projects to provide convenient access/connections to public transit, local destinations, and multiuse trails whenever possible.*
- **Policy LU-P7.6:** *Within the ULL, allow properties with existing legally established residential development that exceeds the maximum density ranges specified in Table LU-1 to retain those densities in the event the existing development must be reconstructed for any reason.*

Transportation Element

- **Goal TR-1:** A transportation system that promotes active transportation, supports effective and equitable provision of transit services, and reduces greenhouse gases and other environmental harm.
- **Policy TR-P1.1:** In addition to any required California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review, evaluate the traffic operations effects of proposed projects in accordance with the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines and other appropriate policy supplements and transportation plans and best practices. When operational deficiencies are identified, the treatments to address those deficiencies should first prioritize reducing the project's vehicular trips and collision risks, and may secondarily consider adding vehicular capacity so long as the safety and movement of active modes are not compromised. Exceptions to the level of service (LOS) operational standards presented in the Transportation Analysis Guidelines may be granted if the treatments necessary to address operational deficiencies would conflict with other priorities in this General Plan and if the project is otherwise consistent with this Plan.
- **Policy TR-P1.2:** Prioritize expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to address the significant latent demand for these active transportation modes.
- **Policy TR-P1.3:** Ensure emerging transportation technologies and travel options, such as autonomous and zero-emission vehicles and transportation network companies, support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.5:** Ensure new highways constructed outside the Urban Limit Line are not growth-inducing through land-use controls, access limitations, and other appropriate measures.
- **Policy TR-P1.6:** Partner with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to better manage traffic operations on the State highway system in Contra Costa County through the application of ramp metering, construction of high-occupancy toll (HOT)/Express or other managed lanes, and other capacity-management techniques.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy TR-P1.8:** Support improvement and expansion of passenger and commuter rail service countywide, with emphasis on transformative projects such as the Hercules Intermodal Transit Center and BART extensions in the I-80 corridor toward Crockett and SR 4 corridor toward Brentwood.
- **Policy TR-P1.9:** Encourage transit use by supporting expansion of first-mile/last-mile programs, including micro-mobility.
- **Policy TR-P1.10:** Enhance multi-modal access to all transit stops, including local routes as well as passenger and commuter rail stations and ferry terminals, prioritizing stops which serve vulnerable and mobility-impaired populations.
- **Policy TR-P1.12:** Continue to improve zero-emission vehicle (including electric bicycle) charging/fueling infrastructure within new development and public rights-of-way, incorporating new technologies whenever possible.
- **Policy TR-P1.13:** Require designs for new parking facilities to incorporate zero-emission vehicle charging/fueling infrastructure and maximize opportunities for adaptive reuse.
- **Action TR-A1.1:** Develop and promote mobility alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles, including but not limited to micromobility, zero-carbon rideshare strategies, and public transit.
- **Action TR-A1.2:** Review and update the County's Transportation Demand Management Guidelines at least once every five years to incorporate current best practices.
- **Action TR-A1.3:** Update the Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines on an as-needed basis.
- **Action TR-A1.7:** Partner with transit providers, cities, and CCTA to develop a countywide transit stop program that takes a holistic approach to transit stop planning and construction. Push for the program to address right-of-way adequacy (i.e., sufficient space for bus pullouts and amenities), amenities (e.g., shelters, seating), and improvements around stops to increase accessibility (e.g., curb ramps, sidewalk widening).
- **Action TR-A1.8:** Work with transit agencies to provide convenient ways for residents to report transit shelters and other amenities (e.g., lighting, seating) that are in disrepair. Encourage and promote reporting countywide, especially in Impacted Communities.
- **Action TR-A1.9:** Pursue funding and other resources to implement the Accessible Transportation Services Strategic Plan and similar plans and initiatives that expand the hours of operation, operational boundaries, convenience, and quality of accessible transit to improve mobility for seniors, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations.
- **Action TR-A1.10:** Support establishment of a Bay Area-wide transit fare equity program that includes free or means-based transit passes for qualifying residents of Impacted Communities.
- **Action TR-A1.11:** Coordinate with CCTA and other local and regional agencies to implement the Contra Costa Electric Vehicle Readiness Blueprint and related policies and apply best practices in zero-emission vehicle charging/fueling infrastructure requirements.
- **Action TR-A1.12:** Update the County Ordinance Code as necessary to support advances in zero-emission vehicle charging/fueling infrastructure, including for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- **Action TR-A1.13:** Advocate for legislation requiring micromobility and other transportation technology providers to accept responsibility for and mitigate the physical, operational, and financial impacts of their services upon local jurisdictions.
- **Goal TR-2:** A transportation system that protects human life.
 - **Policy TR-P2.1:** Pursue the priorities identified in the County's Vision Zero and other safety programs, through prioritization of safety projects and incorporation of safety considerations into all transportation planning efforts.
 - **Policy TR-P2.2:** Minimize conflicts between vehicles and people who walk, bike, or use micromobility through careful site planning, paying particular attention to driveway locations and internal pedestrian circulation, and prioritizing safety for active modes of travel.
 - **Policy TR-P2.3:** Require installation of or provide energy-efficient street lighting to improve public safety and comfort in urbanized areas. Prioritize installation in Impacted Communities, particularly at parks, transit stops, alleyways, bike and pedestrian paths, trails, and other appropriate areas, consistent with community preferences.
 - **Action TR-A2.1:** Maintain a Vision Zero Working Group to regularly review collision data and evaluate the effectiveness of Vision Zero and other safety strategies.
 - **Action TR-A2.2:** Identify and address neighborhood-specific issues and needs in Impacted Communities, prioritizing installation of sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, street lighting, street trees, bicycling infrastructure, transit stop amenities, traffic calming, and other safety and comfort improvements, especially in residential areas and near schools, libraries, and recreational facilities. Explore innovative methods to ensure these facilities are maintained. Engage school districts, neighborhood groups, and the local Safe Routes to School Program in implementing this action.
 - **Action TR-A2.3:** Coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission and railroads to design and implement projects that address safety concerns and conflicts from at-grade rail crossings.
- **Goal TR-3:** Transportation facilities and services that are planned, funded, built, and maintained in a coordinated, cooperative, and effective manner.
 - **Policy TR-P3.1:** Maintain an inclusive and orderly approach to interagency, inter-departmental, and stakeholder coordination on long-range capital planning and the design of specific transportation projects, including consultation with affected community and stakeholder organizations and appropriate commissions and committees.
 - **Policy TR-P3.2:** *Coordinate planning, construction, and maintenance of streets, transit infrastructure, non-motorized rights-of-way and associated facilities, the countywide bicycle network, and Pedestrian Priority Areas with neighboring jurisdictions and CCTA.*
 - **Policy TR-P3.3:** Partner with cities, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), and other involved agencies to plan and implement ferry service that benefits unincorporated county residents.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy TR-P3.4:** Work with project applicants and property owners to establish community facilities districts or other funding mechanisms to pay for construction, operation, and maintenance of new transportation infrastructure and programs without creating an undue financial burden on existing residents, businesses, or the County. Consider that new, innovative infrastructure may cost more to maintain than facilities installed in the past, and that the increase in ongoing maintenance costs is a potential reason to deny a development application.
 - **Policy TR-P3.5:** Pursue regional, State, and federal funding to augment locally generated funds to construct and maintain transportation infrastructure.
 - **Action TR-A3.1:** Coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions, CCTA, and the Regional Transportation Planning Committees to plan, design, and implement Complete Streets concepts on Routes of Regional Significance.
 - **Action TR-A3.2:** Partner with CCTA, neighboring and regional agencies, and stakeholders to explore and implement options for transportation system funding, including assessment districts, county service areas, impact fees, tax revenue, and other funding sources.
 - **Action TR-A3.3:** Continue updating the County's Area of Benefit impact fee programs as a mechanism to collect fair-share contributions from new development and fund needed transportation improvements.
- **Goal TR-4:** A roadway network that accommodates multi-modal travel options for all county residents, businesses, and visitors, regardless of age, ability, race, culture, or economic status.
- **Policy TR-P4.1:** *Plan, design, and maintain improvement projects involving County roadways in accordance with the County's adopted Complete Streets Policy, other applicable policies (e.g., Vision Zero and other safety initiatives), planning documents such as the County Active Transportation Plan and CCTA Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and best practices (e.g., Caltrans, American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials, and National Association of City Transportation Officials guidance).*
 - **Policy TR-P4.2:** *Require transportation infrastructure serving new development to be designed using best practices, contemplating existing and planned land uses, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit facilities, and connections to adjoining areas.*
 - **Policy TR-P4.3:** Create connections between neighborhoods in unincorporated areas and adjacent jurisdictions to improve multi-modal access to local destinations, such as schools, parks, shopping, health services, and workplaces.
 - **Policy TR-P4.4:** Manage access points along arterial and collector roadways to minimize the number of new driveway or street-type intersections. Consolidate existing street and driveway intersections to limit conflict points as opportunities arise.
 - **Policy TR-P4.5:** Require installation of or provide wayfinding signage (accessible to persons who are vision impaired), to aid navigation where necessary or desirable.
 - **Policy TR-P4.6:** Enhance streetscapes in nonresidential areas, making them more pedestrian-friendly by reducing off-street parking and setback requirements and augmenting traffic-calming measures. **Policy TR-P4.7:** Encourage walkability and safety by streamlining implementation of traffic-calming measures through the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy TR-P4.8:** Minimize speeding through residential neighborhoods by implementing appropriate roadway design standard, traffic-calming, and other holistic solutions, as well as enforcement.
 - **Policy TR-P4.9:** Protect residential neighborhoods from outside or cut-through traffic by implementing appropriate design solutions aimed at keeping through traffic on arterials and collectors.
 - **Policy TR-P4.10:** *Design roadway infrastructure, including traffic-calming and complete streets features, to accommodate emergency response vehicles while maintaining the safety of vulnerable road users.*
 - **Action TR-A4.1:** Update the County Standard Plans on an as-needed basis to reflect best practices in context sensitivity, complete streets, travel safety, and environmental sustainability.
 - **Action TR-A4.2:** Ensure that the (CRIPP):
 - a) Reflects current and best transportation planning practices.
 - b) Implements adopted transportation and land development policies.
 - c) Complies with public review requirements.
 - d) Presents planned transportation system improvements with an implementation schedule.
 - **Action TR-A4.3:** Develop guidance for managing curb space in ways that are sensitive to the land use context, with considerations for freight deliveries, parking, active transportation use, users with limited mobility, transportation network companies, outdoor dining, and other curb uses that may emerge.
- **Goal TR-5:** Support people who walk, bike, roll, or use mobility devices by creating safe, equitable, connected, and comfortable facilities for all ages and abilities.
- **Policy TR-P5.1:** Plan, design, construct, and maintain facilities for walking, bicycling, and rolling to serve people of all ages, abilities, and income levels, including children, seniors, families, and people with limited mobility.
 - **Policy TR-P5.2:** Coordinate with Caltrans to provide safe and comfortable highway interchange crossings for people of all ages and abilities who walk, bike, or use micromobility.
 - **Policy TR-P5.3:** Prioritize construction of capital improvement projects identified in the County's Active Transportation Plan.
 - **Policy TR-P5.4:** *Ensure that fee programs include active transportation facilities, and require new development to contribute funds, right-of-way, and/or provide active transportation facilities themselves, where feasible.*
 - **Policy TR-P5.5:** Maintain pedestrian and active transportation facilities to the same standard as roads and other transportation infrastructure, including repair and cleanup of all bikeway types and shared-use pathways.
 - **Policy TR-P5.6:** Support use of temporary, quick-build, demonstration, and pilot pedestrian and bicycle improvements to test their effectiveness, and promote active transportation strategies to the public.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy TR-P5.7:** Encourage walking, bicycling, and micromobility as the travel modes of choice for short to medium-length trips, such as trips to schools, parks, transit stops, local shopping areas, and neighborhood services.
 - **Policy TR-P5.8:** Partner with neighboring jurisdictions, transit agencies, community members, and business organizations to plan and construct sustainable streets in business and commercial areas. Consider forming community facilities districts or business improvement districts to help fund and maintain improvements.
 - **Policy TR-P5.9:** Support micromobility options such as bike-, e-bike-, and e-scooter-share.
 - **Policy TR-P5.10:** Require generous parking for bicycles and other mobility devices at key destinations, such as shopping centers, schools, workplaces, transit stations, and multiple-family housing.
 - **Action TR-A5.1:** Partner with CCTA and neighboring jurisdictions to build out the countywide bicycle and pedestrian network, prioritizing completion of the Low-Stress Countywide Bicycle Network and pedestrian safety improvement projects in the County's Pedestrian Priority Areas, as described in the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
 - **Action TR-A5.2:** Construct innovative bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including Class IV separated and protected bikeways, bicycle superhighways, and other low-stress facility types, as described in the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and in contemporary, best-practice transportation planning and engineering guidance. Use contextually appropriate green infrastructure and landscaping to separate vehicular lanes from bicycle and pedestrian facilities whenever feasible.
 - **Action TR-A5.3:** Periodically review the scoring formula for active transportation projects to ensure continued prioritization of projects in Impacted Communities.
 - **Action TR-A5.4:** Partner with the cities, EBRPD, and CCTA to develop uniform guidance to manage active shared mobility services.
 - **Action TR-A5.5:** Consider allowing temporary and permanent re-orientation of public space towards increased outdoor activity, including walking, bicycling, rolling, dining, and other social uses.
- **Goal TR-6:** Safe and efficient movement of goods consistent with the County's goals to reduce emissions, protect public safety, and support economic development, local access, and circulation.
- **Policy TR-P6.1:** Partner with neighboring jurisdictions, CCTA, and the MTC to manage regional movement of goods through unincorporated areas, minimizing impacts on residents and other sensitive receptors.
 - **Policy TR-P6.2:** Support roadway improvements that facilitate regional goods movement, such as construction of SR 239 and the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector near Byron, and replacement of the Old River Bridge near Discovery Bay.
 - **Policy TR-P6.3:** Work with ABAG/MTC to improve resilience, speed, and reliability of goods movement through expansion of smaller ports-of-entry which will increase redundancy, thereby limiting exposure to disruptive events at larger congested ports.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy TR-P6.4:** Use all available policy tools to ensure that trucks use designated truck routes.
 - **Policy TR-P6.5:** Work with railroads to preserve non-operational contiguous railroad rights-of-way, and highly encourage construction of grade-separated railroad crossings along active lines to support current and future rail operations and ensure the long-term viability of these rail corridors. When no longer in operation, maintain options for future use of the corridors for trails or other public purposes.
 - **Policy TR-P6.6:** Support development of short-line railroad infrastructure and operations in industrial areas to facilitate rail access to Class I railroad lines, attract potential businesses seeking rail-served properties, ease traffic congestion caused by goods movement on regional highways, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - **Policy TR-P6.7:** Support deepening and ongoing maintenance of the deep-water ship channels between San Francisco Bay and Stockton and continued deep-water access to the county's Northern Waterfront.
 - **Policy TR-P6.8:** Support continued operation, maintenance, and further development of ports and terminals consistent with federal, State, and County environmental policies and economic priorities.
- **Goal TR-7:** Safe and viable general and commercial aviation activities in Contra Costa County.
- **Policy TR-P7.1:** Partner with other agencies to obtain funding for planning, development, improvement, operation, and maintenance of general and commercial aviation facilities.
 - **Policy TR-P7.2:** Work with the Federal Aviation Administration and aviation operators to minimize conflicts with residential areas and other sensitive receptors.
 - **Policy TR-P7.3:** Regulate the location of private airfields and heliports to protect public safety and minimize impacts on nearby residents and sensitive receptors.
 - **Policy TR-P7.4:** Protect the County's airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise by ensuring that all future development within each Airport Influence Area is consistent with the Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
 - **Policy TR-P7.5:** Partner with the cities of Concord and Pleasant Hill in making land use decisions that support Buchanan Field Airport's ongoing viability while protecting public safety, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
 - **Policy TR-P7.6:** Enhance Byron Airport's viability by protecting it from incompatible urban encroachment, such as large-scale residential development, and providing infrastructure that supports existing and planned airport activities, consistent with the Airport Master Plan and Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
 - **Policy TR-P7.7:** Embrace emerging aviation-related technologies, such as drones, electric-powered aviation, and vertical takeoff and landing aircraft, to promote economic development and support the County's goals for reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, improving public safety, and increasing equitable mobility.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Action TR-A7.1:** Update the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan every 5 to 10 years to maintain consistency with applicable federal and State requirements, regional plans, and this General Plan, and to achieve the County's goals for Buchanan Field Airport and Byron Airport.

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P7.3:** *Require new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA (as shown on Figure HS-10) or in the WUI (as shown on Figure HS-11), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints (as shown on Figure HS-21), to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and approve the traffic control plan prior to issuance of building permits.*
- **Policy HS-P7.4:** *Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA and projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA, as shown in Figure HS-10, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. The fire protection plan shall include measures for fire-resistant construction materials and modifying fuel loading, as well as a plan to maintain that protection over time. The fire protection plan shall include:*
 - a) *A risk analysis*
 - b) *Fire response capabilities*
 - c) *Defensible space requirements*
 - d) *Fire safety requirements for infrastructure*
 - e) *Building ignition resistance*
 - f) *Mitigation measures and design for non-conforming fuel modification*
 - g) *Wildfire education*
 - h) *Maintenance and limitations*
 - i) *A plan for emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation*
- **Policy HS-P13.1:** Except for infill sites, require new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the WUI, and 100-year or 200-year floodplain to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes, and encourage the same for existing development.
- **Action HS-A13.1:** Partner with cities and public protection agencies to delineate evacuation routes, identifying their capacity, safety, and viability under different hazard scenarios, as well as emergency vehicle routes for disaster response, and where possible, alternate routes where congestion or road failure might reasonably be expected to occur. Update as new information and technologies become available.
- **Action HS-A13.2:** At least once every five years, update maps identifying neighborhoods with only one emergency evacuation route.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- **Action HS-A13.3:** Coordinate with local fire districts to develop and maintain minimum roadway, ingress, and egress standards for evacuation of residential areas in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Growth Management Element

- **Policy GM-P1.1:** Maintain in place a local program to mitigate development impacts on nonregional routes and other facilities to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with that estimated growth. Ensure revenue provided from this program is not used to replace private developer funding of any required improvements that have or would have been committed to any project.
- **Policy GM-P1.2:** Participate in a regional development mitigation program to establish fees, exactions, assessments, or other mitigation measures to fund regional or subregional transportation improvements needed to mitigate the impacts of planned or forecast development on the regional transportation system.
- **Action GM-A1.1:** Require development projects to provide local mitigation or fees as established for proposed new development.
- **Action GM-A1.2:** Require development projects to pay regional development mitigation fees established by the locally applicable Regional Transportation Planning Committees(s) (RTPC) in accordance with the RTPC's adopted program.
 - TRANSPAC (Central County): Subregional Transportation Mitigation Program (STMP)
 - TRANSPLAN (East County): East Contra Costa Regional Fee and Financing Authority (ECCRFFA)
 - SWAT (Southwest County): Lamorinda Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP)
 - WCCTAC (West County): Subregional Transportation Mitigation Program (STMP)
 - TVTC: Tri-Valley Transportation Development Fee Program (TVTDF)
- **Action GM-A1.3:** Biennially prepare the seven-year Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP) outlining capital projects sponsored by the County that are necessary to maintain and improve mobility, and implement the transportation-related goals, policies, and actions of this General Plan. The CRIPP must include approved projects and an analysis of the costs of the proposed projects as well as a financial plan, including funding sources, for providing the improvements.
- **Policy GM-P2.1:** Participate in an ongoing and collaborative multi-jurisdictional planning process with other jurisdictions and agencies, the RTPCs, and the CCTA to create a balanced, safe, and efficient transportation system and manage the impacts of growth.
- **Policy GM-P2.2:** Work with the RTPCs and CCTA to develop, update, and implement Action Plans for the network of designated Routes of Regional Significance (Figures TR-2 through TR-4 in the Transportation Element), set Regional Transportation Objectives (RTOs) for those routes, and identify actions for achieving the RTOs. The Action Plans must also include a process for reviewing and monitoring the traffic impacts of proposed new developments.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy GM-P2.3:** Apply CCTA's travel demand forecasting model and *Technical Procedures* to the analysis of General Plan amendments affecting land use or circulation and development projects that generate more than 100 peak-hour trips to determine their effects on the regional transportation system, and compliance with the applicable Action Plan Multimodal Transportation Service Objectives/Regional Transportation Objectives.
- **Policy GM-P2.4:** Circulate traffic impact analyses to affected jurisdictions and the RTPCs for review and comment and cooperate in assessment and mitigation of traffic impacts in neighboring jurisdictions resulting from County actions.
- **Policy GM-P2.5:** Work with the appropriate RTPCs to develop the mitigation program outlined in GM-A1.2.
- **Policy GM-P2.6:** Participate in preparation of the CCTA's Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the ongoing countywide transportation planning process.
- **Policy GM-P2.7:** Help maintain the CCTA's travel demand modeling system by providing information on proposed land uses, planned and approved development and transportation projects, and proposed improvements to the transportation system, including those projects the County has adopted as part of its seven-year CRIPP, and long-range plans relative to the Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG's) projections for households and jobs within the unincorporated area.
- **Action GM-A2.1:** Work with the RTPCs and CCTA to help develop other plans, programs, and studies to address transportation and growth management issues.
- **Action GM-A2.2:** Participate in the CCTA's established conflict resolution process as needed to resolve disputes related to development and implementation of Action Plans and other programs described in the GME and other applicable General Plan elements.
- **Policy GM-P3.1:** Consider the impacts that the County's land use development policies have on the local, regional, and countywide transportation system, including the level of transportation capacity that can reasonably be provided.
- **Policy GM-P3.2:** Through the development review process, support accommodation of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access for new development by applying the County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, Complete Streets Policy, Active Transportation Plan, and related best practices.
- **Policy GM-P3.3:** Demonstrate reasonable progress in providing housing opportunities for all income levels and demonstrate reasonable progress in meeting housing goals.
- **Policy GM-P3.4:** Incorporate policies and standards into the development approval process that support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access in new developments.
- **Policy GM-P3.5:** Promote carpools, vanpools, other ridesharing, and park-and-ride lots by maintaining in place and enforcing a TDM ordinance that reflects best practices and, at a minimum, conforms to the CCTA's adopted model TDM ordinance or resolution.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- **Policy GM-P4.1:** Maintain a voter-approved ULL as defined in the Principles of Agreement to the Measure J GMP (as amended by CCTA Ordinance 06-04), through March 31, 2034, the end of the Measure J sales tax. Enforce the ULL as stipulated in the Land Use Element.

5.16.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategy and actions from the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to transportation impacts:

Strategy TR-1: Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-carbon commuting, and using public transit for travel within, to, and from the county.

Strategy TR-1 Actions:

- Track over time projects that add pedestrian and bicycle facilities to document the County's implementation of the County Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP); Complete Streets checklist; Vision Zero Report and Action Plan; Active Transportation Plan; and equity-focused plans, programs, and policies.
- Improve the safety and comfort of bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities using best practices to encourage more people to use such facilities.
- Work with CCTA to fill gaps in the countywide Low-Stress Bike Network, as outlined in the 2018 Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Prioritize providing access for Impacted Communities and constructing protected bicycle facilities.
- In collaboration with key partners, support efforts to establish or join a shared mobility program that provides access to conventional bicycle, e-bikes, and other micromobility modes.
- Support efforts to expand the service area and frequency of regional transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, the San Francisco Bay Ferry, and WestCAT.
- Maximize development of jobs and affordable housing near high-quality transit service to support a jobs-housing balance.
- Market the county's Northern Waterfront to attract innovative companies with jobs for residents.
- Maintain in place and enforce a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance that reflects best practices, and, at a minimum, conforms to Contra Costa Transportation Authority's adopted model TDM ordinance or resolution. (GM-P3.5)
- Improve county-wide safety for bicyclists by advocating for the passage of Vulnerable Road User Laws.
- Secure additional funding for the maintenance and expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Support efforts to obtain additional funding to maintain and expand public transit operations and infrastructure improvements.
- Support CCTA to develop and implement methods for tracking EV and e-bike charging and availability across jurisdictions.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

- Support CCTA and regional transit agencies in providing “last mile” transportation connections and options.
- Encourage and support increased regional integration of transit systems to promote more equitable fare structures, fare integration, easier transfers, including coordinated transfers between different transit systems and reduced wait times, improved information sharing, and generally a more seamless and modern system.

5.16.4 Environmental Impacts

5.16.4.1 METHODOLOGY

As described in the Guidelines, project VMT should be estimated using the Contra Costa Countywide Travel Demand Model that is maintained by CCTA (often referred to as the CCTA Model). The CCTA Model allows analysts to forecast regional and local travel behavior as a function of local land use development decisions, transportation network infrastructure planning, and land use and network policies. The currently available CCTA Model reflects data included in Plan Bay Area 2040 and has a horizon year of 2040. Although the Bay Area RTP/SCS was recently updated with adoption of Plan Bay Area 2050, the currently available CCTA Model is still the best available tool for analysis of VMT impacts in Contra Costa County as it has the greatest level of detail of land uses and transportation facilities throughout the county.

The CCTA model can be used to determine both the trip generation and trip lengths of the vehicle trips associated with the proposed project. This calculation is done in the Model via the production and attraction trip matrices to be able to attribute automobile vehicle trips to the land use that generates the trip. The CCTA Model accounts for all trips within the nine-county Bay Area, and accounts for trips between the Bay Area and neighboring regions.

Using data derived from the proposed General Plan development projections (see Chapter 3, *Project Description*), the CCTA model was applied for two different scenarios and VMT calculations were prepared for each one:

- **Baseline No Project:** VMT was calculated using the year 2020 CCTA Model. This scenario serves as the baseline or point of comparison for environmental impact determinations related to the 2045 General Plan scenario.
- **Cumulative Plus Project:** VMT was calculated using the year 2045 CCTA Model with the proposed General Plan land use changes added to the appropriate transportation analysis zones (TAZs). The horizon year of the CCTA model available at the time this analysis was conducted was 2040. To create a year 2045 scenario, land use in the areas outside of unincorporated county was extrapolated based on the 2020 and 2040 data sets from the available CCTA Model. Further, the recently adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 was checked to see if additional transportation network enhancements were planned in Contra Costa County between 2040 and 2045, and that information was used to update the 2040 CCTA Model roadway network to reflect anticipated year 2045 conditions.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

Impact 5.16-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. [Threshold T-1]

Proposed General Plan

As discussed in Section 5.15.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, several programs, plans, and policies guide the planning of circulation systems in the EIR Study Area. In general, the overarching goals of these policy documents are to ensure a safe, efficient, and accessible multi-modal transportation network for all users that also reduces VMT to improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed General Plan would guide development in the unincorporated county to the planning horizon year of 2045, but it would not otherwise result in any immediate development actions and impacts to the county's circulation system. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant if the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions are consistent with and support the equivalent policy guidance of the applicable program, plan, ordinance, or policy.

While the proposed General Plan includes several policies and actions specific to roadway, bicycle, transit, and pedestrian facilities, the policies and actions listed under Goal TR-3 specifically target coordination and consistency with other agencies for the purpose of providing well-planned, funded, and maintained transportation facilities. For example, Policy TR-P3.1 would direct the County to coordinate planning, construction, and maintenance of streets, transit infrastructure, non-motorized rights-of-way and associated facilities, the countywide bicycle network, and Pedestrian Priority Areas with neighboring jurisdictions and CCTA. Action TR-A3.1 similarly directs the County to work with neighboring jurisdictions, CCTA, and the RTPCs (see Section 5.16.1.1) to implement complete streets concepts. Action TR-A3.2 would also have the County partner with these agencies to explore and implement options for transportation system funding, including assessment districts, county service areas, impact fees, tax revenue, and other funding sources. Similarly, the policies and actions included in the proposed Growth Management Element ensure that the County fulfills its obligations under Measure J. Each of these policies and actions, as listed in Section 5.16.3.1, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions*, address coordination with other transportation-related agencies. These policies and actions, in addition to others shown under Goal TR-3 in Section 5.16.3.1, and those discussed below related to specific transportation facility types, express a commitment to consistency with the planning efforts of other agencies and would help to ensure that the proposed project does not conflict with these efforts.

With regard to impacts of future development under the proposed General Plan, the County requires all development to go through a review of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities in the area surrounding the individual development project to ensure that developments do not conflict with existing or planned facilities supporting those travel modes. Therefore, development under the proposed General Plan would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, ordinances or programs related to circulation systems and impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Roadway

CCTA implements and manages several countywide programs that direct circulation improvements on County roadways, including the CMP and Growth Management Program. These programs help to ensure that County roadway improvements are organized and funded. The County's Transportation Demand Management Ordinance (Chapter 82-32 of the County Ordinance Code) helps to implement these CCTA programs within the EIR Study Area. Development under the proposed General Plan would be subject to TDM requirements in addition to transportation impact development fees, as applicable. Projects would also be subject to review under the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines. Several proposed General Plan policies and actions also demonstrate compliance with and support CCTA's and the County's roadway-related programs. These include Policy TR-P1.4, which would direct development to comply with the TDM strategies for reducing single-occupant vehicle usage, and Policy TR-P1.6, which directs the County to partner with CCTA and Caltrans to better manage traffic operations on the State highway system in the county. Action TR-A1.1 would ensure that the County reviews and updates the TDM guidelines at least every five years to incorporate best practices. Through these and other policies and actions throughout the Transportation Element, the proposed General Plan shows consistency with the goals and intent of the County/CCTA's roadway-related programs, plans, policies, and ordinances. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Both CCTA and the County also manage and implement several bicycle and pedestrian-related planning efforts, including the Countywide Transportation Safety Policy and Implementation Guide and CBPP from CCTA, which focus on improving safety for and access to active transportation options across both the incorporated and unincorporated county, and the County's ATP, Vision Zero Action Plan, and Complete Streets Policy that promote similar goals and efforts within the jurisdiction of unincorporated Contra Costa County. The policies and actions included under Goal TR-5 of the proposed Transportation Element express the County's commitment to improving active transportation including by prioritizing construction of capital improvement project in the County ATP, per Policy TR-P5.3, and supporting the explicit goals of the Complete Streets Policy, per Policy TR-P5.1. Action TR-A5.1 would also support CCTA bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts by directing the County to partner with CCTA to build out the countywide bicycle and pedestrian network. Through these and other policies and actions throughout the Transportation Element, the proposed General Plan shows consistency with the goals and intent of the County/CCTA's bicycle and pedestrian facility-related programs, plans, policies, and ordinances. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Transit Service and Facilities

As discussed in Section 5.16.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, the EIR Study Area is served by numerous transit agencies that provide residents opportunities for long-range and short-range travel across the county and Bay Area region. Each of these agencies has published planning documents that guide the provision of their services and update the documents as necessary to accommodate demand for service. Future potential development under the proposed General Plan would contribute to an increased use of transit in the EIR Study Area due to growth in population and employment. However, several goals, policies, and actions within the proposed Transportation Element would support the goals of these agencies by encouraging enhanced transit access and

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

increased coordination of service needs and opportunities in the county. For example, Policy TR-P1.8 would support improvement and expansion of passenger and commuter rail service countywide and Policy TR-P1.10 directs the County to enhance multi-modal access to all transit stops. Several actions under Goal TR-1 would also ensure that transit planning efforts are coordinated between the County and providers, including Action TR-A1.6 which directs the County to partner with transit providers, cities, and CCTA to develop a countywide transit stop program that takes a holistic approach to transit stop planning and construction. Action TR-A1.7 would have the County work with transit agencies to provide options for residents to report transit shelters and other amenities that are in disrepair.

Through these and other policies and actions throughout the Transportation Element, the proposed General Plan shows consistency with the goals and intent of transit agency's programs, plans, policies, and ordinances. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Summary

In summary, the proposed Transportation Element includes goals, policies, and actions that both support the goals of circulation-related planning efforts and requirements and specifically direct consistency and coordination with the county's circulation planning and other transportation-related agencies' efforts. All development under the proposed General Plan would be required to comply with existing transportation-related laws and policies as applicable, so impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and help the county to adapt to changing climate conditions, the proposed CAP is not expected to result in any specific impacts with regard to conflicts with circulation-related policies and planning. Similar to the proposed General Plan, the proposed CAP provides a policy framework that supports the goals of the transportation planning efforts discussed previously. For example, Strategy TR-1 provides actions for improvements to walking, biking and other zero-carbon commuting options to reduce GHG emissions, which reference support of the County's TDM program, CCTA programs, and regional transit agencies. As such, the proposed CAP is expected to result in beneficial impacts with regard to this impact and would have no significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.16-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.16-1 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Impact 5.16-2: Implementation of the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b). [Threshold T-2]

Proposed General Plan

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) states that a land use project would have a less-than-significant impact if the VMT in the project area are expected to be less than that of existing conditions. As discussed under Section 5.16.2.1, *Contra Costa County Thresholds*, VMT can be measured in different ways. For the purpose of this analysis, the metric of total VMT per service population was determined to be the most appropriate, as it captures all trip purposes from all types of development. This approach aligns with the guidance provided by OPR and follows the methodology described in the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines.

Screening

As described in the County Guidelines, there are four screening criteria that can be applied to screen projects out of conducting project-level VMT analysis:

1. **Small Projects.** Projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 daily vehicle trips, projects of 10,000 square feet or less of nonresidential space or 20 residential units less, or otherwise generating less than 836 VMT per day.
2. **Projects in Transit Priority Areas (TPAs).** Residential, retail, office, or mixed-use projects proposed within a half- mile of an existing major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor (see Figure 5.16-1).
3. **Projects in Low VMT Areas.** Residential projects (home-based VMT) at 15 percent or below the baseline countywide home-based average VMT per capita, or employment projects (employee VMT) at 15 percent or below the baseline Bay Area average commute VMT per employee in areas with low VMT that incorporate similar VMT-reducing features (e.g., density, mix of uses, and transit accessibility).
4. **Public Facilities.** Public facilities (e.g., emergency services, passive parks [i.e., low-intensity recreation and open space], libraries, community centers, and public utilities) and government buildings.

The County Guidelines are primarily focused on analyzing the effects of individual, site-specific land use projects, and the screening criteria are designed as such. The proposed General Plan is a long-range and large-scale plan that will affect land uses of a wide range of sizes and types, in a range of locations throughout the EIR Study Area, and over a long planning horizon. As such, the proposed project does not fit within any of the above screening criteria and thus requires a full VMT assessment.

VMT Assessment

As described in Section 5.16.1.1 and Section 5.16.2.1, the County has adopted VMT thresholds for land use development projects. For the purposes of this evaluation and based on the VMT thresholds described previously, the impact would be significant if the implementation of the project would generate total VMT per

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

service population that is higher than 85 percent of the Contra Costa countywide average total VMT¹ per service population. It is important to note that, while the OPR guidance recommends that project-level impacts be evaluated against baseline conditions, for this analysis the total VMT per service population of the proposed project is being evaluated under both baseline (2020) and future (2045) conditions, as described in Section 5.16.2.1. This is because a General Plan is a long-range, large-scale planning document that will be implemented over many years, so a comparison to both baseline and future conditions can provide relevant and meaningful information to project reviewers.

A summary of the two CCTA model scenarios (baseline and cumulative) are shown in Table 5.16-1, *Summary of VMT Results*.

Table 5.16-1 Summary of VMT Results

Boundary	Metrics	Baseline (2020) No Project	Cumulative (2045) Plus Project
EIR Study Area	Total VMT	6,764,785	8,130,277
	Service Population ¹	203,484	274,311
	Total VMT per Service Population	33.2	29.6
Contra Costa County (combined incorporated and unincorporated areas)	Total VMT	40,148,708	48,504,298
	Service Population ¹	1,360,651	1,712,018
	Total VMT per Service Population	29.5	28.3
	Threshold: 85% of Countywide Total VMT per Service Population	25.1	24.1

Notes:

¹Service Population is defined as the sum of residential population and employment.

Source: Contra Costa Countywide Travel Demand Model; Fehr & Peers 2023 (Appendix 5.16-1).

This analysis shows that VMT rates in the EIR Study Area are projected to decline between the 2020 Baseline and the 2045 Cumulative Plus Project scenario with implementation of the proposed General Plan, from 33.2 in the baseline to 29.6 in the cumulative scenario. This Cumulative Plus Project scenario VMT per service population is slightly higher than the countywide average VMT per service population of 29.5 in the 2020 Baseline; it is also higher than the countywide average of 28.3 in the Cumulative Plus Project scenario. These results indicate that, despite the projected per capita VMT reduction in the EIR Study Area between the 2020 baseline and the future 2045 scenario, implementation of the proposed project would result in VMT per service population that exceeds the 85-percent threshold values of 25.1 (baseline) and 24.1 (cumulative).

Figures 5.16-5a, *VMT Map 2020 Baseline*, and 5.16-5b, *VMT Map 2045 Cumulative Plus Project*, show the areas of the EIR Study Area that have relatively higher and lower values of VMT. Areas of relatively lower VMT tend to be areas with higher density residential development, good proximity to high-quality transit, and a mix of land uses so that residents need to travel shorter distances to visit shops, essential businesses, and places of employment, for both modeled scenarios.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Policy Considerations

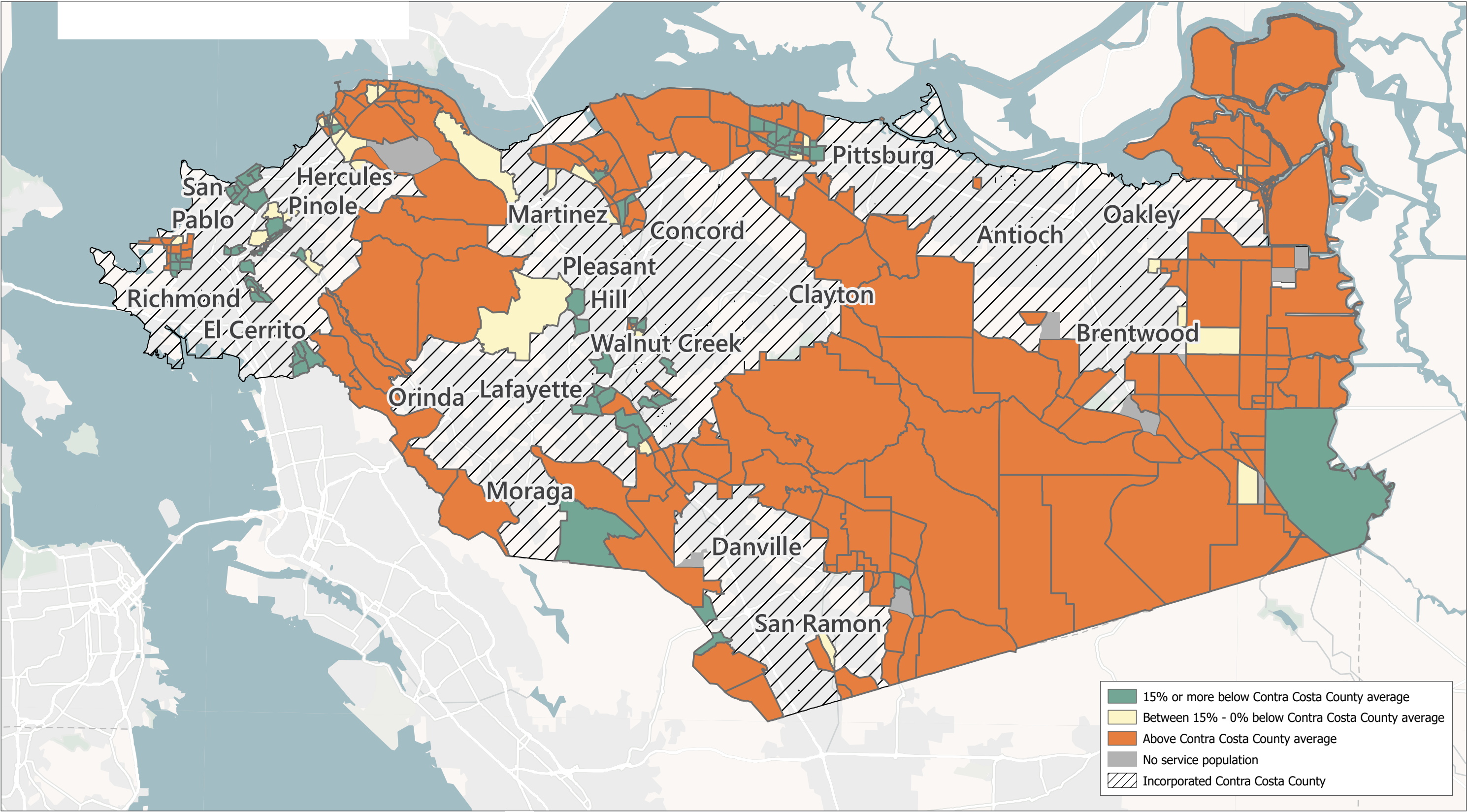
The VMT impacts of projects consistent with the proposed project have been addressed in the VMT analysis of this EIR and no further analysis would be necessary. All projects must comply with the County's VMT guidelines. Projects that result in a significant impact may be required to implement TDM strategies and other specific project design strategies to reduce VMT.

The County's TDM Ordinance and guidelines encourage project developers to use creative and effective ways to reduce motor vehicle trips and their associated impacts. The Ordinance requires that all residential projects containing 13 or more dwelling units provide information to the residents about public transit, ridesharing, and active transportation options available in the vicinity of the project. Both residential and non-residential project developers are required to consult with the local transit provider about any needed infrastructure to connect the project with nearby transit services. Further, the guidelines present a range of potential TDM measures that project developers can consider, ranging from physical improvements that would be incorporated into the project's design (such as bike racks, traveler information kiosks, or pedestrian facilities linking the project site to a nearby transit stop) to operational programs that would be implemented once the project is occupied (such as providing transit or rideshare incentives).

Other strategies that may be implemented on a project-level to reduce VMT, consistent with the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association's (CAPCOA) Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity, are as follows:

- Increase building density.
- Integrate a higher number of affordable and below-market-rate housing units.
- Increase the mix of uses by adding retail or services within a residential site or within convenient walking distance.
- Reduce the number of parking spaces provided.
- Unbundle parking costs (i.e., sell or lease parking separately from the housing unit or the commercial enterprise).
- Provide car-sharing, bike-sharing, or scooter-sharing programs.
- Subsidize transit passes, with particular emphasis on transit passes for residents of affordable housing that is in proximity to high-quality transit services.
- Consider participation in a future VMT mitigation program, such as a fee program, bank, or exchange, to provide funding for actions that operate at a scale larger than an individual development site, such as constructing bicycle facilities, operating shuttle services around employment centers, or increasing the frequency of existing transit services. No local or regional VMT mitigation program currently exists; however, should such a program be implemented, development projects could participate in the program to purchase mitigation credits to achieve needed VMT mitigation instead of, or in addition to, on-site TDM measures.

TRANSPORTATION

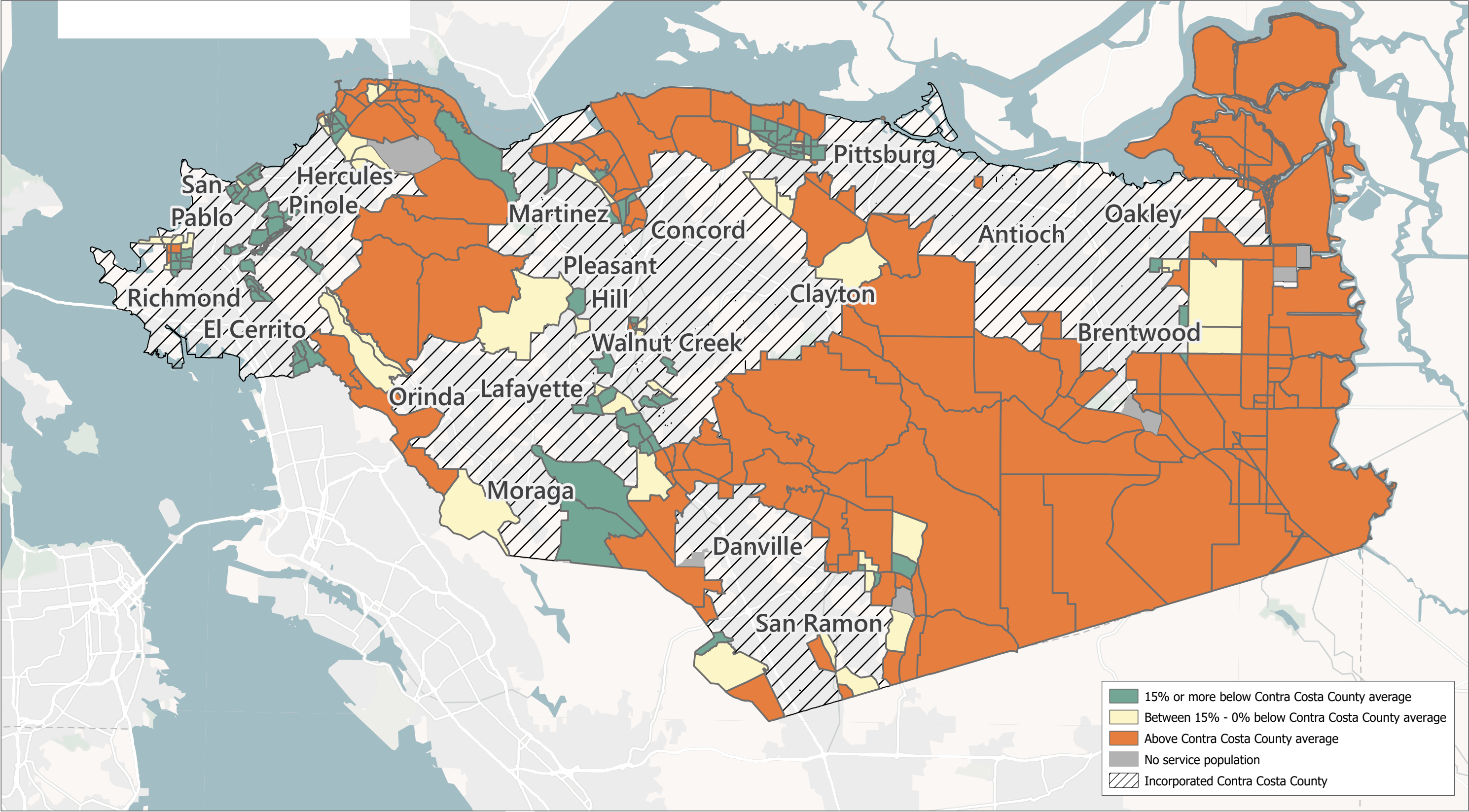


Source: Fehr & Peers, 2023.



Figure 5.16-5a
VMT Map 2020 Baseline

TRANSPORTATION



Source: Fehr & Peers, 2023.



Figure 5.16-5b
VMT Map 2045 Cumulative Plus Project

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

The potential effectiveness of each strategy should be evaluated based on the calculation steps, recommendations, and limitations described in the CAPCOA Handbook.

In addition to VMT-reducing strategies that can be implemented on a project level, the proposed General Plan includes numerous policies that target the reduction of VMT through County planning efforts, including prioritizing the construction of active transportation infrastructure and safety improvements to existing infrastructure (i.e., Policy TR-P1.2, Action TR-A3.1, Action TR-A2.2, all policies and actions under Goal TR-2, TR-4, and TR-5); expanding transit access (i.e., Policies TR-P1.8, TR-P1.9, TR-P1.10, TR-P1.11, and TR-P4.2 and Actions TR-A1.5, TR-A1.6, TR-A1.7, TR-A1.8, TR-A1.9); encouraging high-density, infill, and mixed-use development where feasible (i.e., Policies LU-P2.1, LU-P2.5, LU-P2.6, LU-P3.3); encouraging efforts to put jobs near housing and housing near transit (i.e., Policies LU-P3.1, LU-P3.2, LU-P5.2, LU-P7.2, and LU-P7.5); evaluating reductions to parking minimums (i.e., Action LU-A5.1); and the requirement for all projects to support these VMT-reducing efforts (i.e., Policy LU-P3.4). Many of these policies and actions overlap with the CAPCOA handbook strategies listed previously.

Summary

The proposed General Plan will guide long-range development over a broad geographic area; therefore, it is not possible to predict with precision which strategies may be implemented at specific locations and at specific times. Further, the CCTA Model does not readily account for many of these measures, particularly those related to site-specific physical improvements, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and ongoing operational or incentive programs. For those reasons, the potential effects of the TDM and VMT reduction strategies outlined in this discussion are not included in the VMT estimates presented in this analysis.

Since there is considerable uncertainty about the feasibility of any particular TDM measure for any specific future development project, as well as uncertainty about the timing of implementation and about whether a program to fund off-site mitigation options might be implemented at some point in the future, it would not be possible to conclude that adding the strategies listed would definitely bring the future EIR Study Area VMT down to the 15 percent threshold level. Because the proposed project would exceed the countywide average total VMT per service population under both the baseline and cumulative scenarios, impacts are considered significant and unavoidable.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions in the unincorporated county and provide guidance to the County for adapting to changing climate conditions; therefore, it is consistent with the intent of CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) to reduce VMT. As shown in Table 4, *Proportion of GHG Emissions, 2005 to 2019*, of the proposed CAP, transportation-related emissions have accounted for the highest share of emissions across all sectors and all years in the unincorporated county. To address this, the proposed CAP includes the “Clean Transportation Network” group of strategies, which includes Strategy TR-1 that provides actions for reducing VMT. As discussed under Impact Discussion 5.16-1, this strategy supports the County’s existing plans to ensure accessibility and safety for alternative transportation options, in addition to a suite of other actions that reflect OPR and CAPCOA guidance. These also include actions consistent with proposed General Plan policies and actions like establishing a micro-mobility program per Policy TR-P5.10,

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

maximizing jobs and housing near transit similar to Policies LU-P3.3 and LU-P7.2, and encouraging “last mile” connections for transit per Policy TR-P1.9.

The proposed CAP would therefore result in beneficial impacts to VMT and no environmental impacts would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.16-2 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures are available. As discussed previously, the proposed project is a programmatic General Plan and CAP and considerable uncertainty exists with regard to the implementation and feasibility of mitigation for individual development projects. A combination of the County’s TDM program, proposed General Plan policies and actions, proposed CAP strategies and actions, as well as additional mitigation strategies may mitigate impacts to less-than-significant for future development projects under the proposed project. However, while such measures are likely to result in less-than-significant VMT impacts when considered at an individual project level, they cannot be guaranteed and are not possible to fully quantify or mitigate at a countywide level as part of this programmatic analysis, particularly given the reduction needed to reach the applied significance threshold. As a result, the VMT impacts associated with the proposed project would be considered significant and unavoidable.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.16-2 would be significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.16-3: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). [Threshold T-3]

Proposed General Plan

While adoption of the proposed General Plan would not directly result in any physical development projects or construction activities, implementation of the policy framework in the proposed General Plan could result in transportation improvement projects. While these types of improvements could be installed and implemented under the proposed General Plan, they would be intended to facilitate movement throughout the EIR Study Area and accommodate existing local development, and would therefore be unlikely to introduce conflicts, hazards, or incompatible uses.

All subsequent development under the proposed General Plan, including residential, commercial, and industrial development, in addition to transportation improvement projects, would be subject to and designed in accordance with County standards and specifications that address potential design hazards, including sight distance, driveway placement, and signage and striping. Additionally, any new transportation facilities or improvements to such facilities associated with subsequent projects would be constructed based on industry design standards and best practices consistent with the County Ordinance Code, building design and inspection requirements, and any applicable community-based transportation plans. The County’s evaluation of projects’

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

access and circulation will incorporate analysis with respect to County standards for vehicular level of service and queueing, as well as for service to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

Furthermore, the proposed Transportation Element provides additional guidance to help design a sustainable and comprehensive transportation system that is safe and accessible for all users and modes of travel. For example, the policies and actions included under Goal TR-2 provide several strategies for reducing roadway hazards and improving safety. Policy TR-P2.1 directs the County to pursue the priorities in the County's Vision Zero program and Policy TR-P2.2 advises careful site planning and prioritization of safety for active modes of travel. Action TR-A2.3 would require coordination with the California Public Utilities Commission and railroads to design and implement projects that address safety concerns and conflicts from at-grade rail crossings. In compliance with the County's standards and the proposed General Plan policies and actions, development under the proposed General Plan would result in a less-than-significant impact to transportation hazards.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies for reducing GHG emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions. While the proposed CAP would not directly result in any new development, the implementation of its actions, which may indirectly result in new development, would be subject to the same County standards that apply to development under the proposed General Plan, as applicable. The proposed CAP does not include any strategies or actions that would otherwise result in roadway hazards, so impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.16-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.16-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.16-4: Development associated with the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access. [Threshold T-3]

Proposed General Plan

The implementation of transportation improvements supported by the proposed project would include modifications to the existing transportation network that could potentially impact emergency access response times. These modifications, along with land use changes under the proposed General Plan, could result in increased vehicle delays at intersections as well as along roadway segments. Although the project would reduce VMT overall, as described in Impact Discussion 5.16-2, increased delays at intersections could result in an increase in emergency response times. However, future development under the proposed project would be subject to the requirements contained in the County Ordinance Code, which includes requirements for emergency access, and would be reviewed by public safety officials for compliance with applicable safety, fire, and building codes as part of the County's entitlement process.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes several policies and actions that would help to ensure that roadways accommodate emergency access, including Policy TR-P4.10 in the proposed Transportation Element, which would ensure that roadway infrastructure within new development areas balances the accommodation of emergency response vehicles with the day-to-day safety of vulnerable road users. Additionally, policies and actions in the proposed Health and Safety Element that apply to evacuation routes would have similar impacts on emergency access routes. These include Policy HS-P7.3, which requires new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) or State Responsibility Area (SRA) or in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints, to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period; this policy would ensure that temporary roadway impairments are addressed within traffic control plans. In addition, Policy HS-P13.1 requires new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the WUI, and 100-year or 200-year floodplains to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes. Action HS-A13.1 would direct the County to partner with cities and public protection agencies to delineate evacuation routes, identifying their capacity, safety, and viability under different hazard scenarios, as well as emergency vehicle routes for disaster response, and where possible, alternate routes where congestion or road failure could occur.

Furthermore, emergency vehicles are able to use vehicle preemption technology (where possible) and sirens to reduce their response times, and they would continue to do so regardless of any roadway capacity modification. Locations that would experience a reduction in vehicular roadway capacity would undergo individual operations analyses to assess the potential impacts to emergency vehicle access, and mitigation measures would be developed as needed to reduce potentially significant impacts.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions identified would address emergency access by considering access routes, developing and updating emergency response plans, and incorporating emergency access considerations in the design of future street improvements. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not result in inadequate emergency access. Impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that aims to reduce GHG emissions and provide guidance to the County for adapting to changing climate conditions. Therefore, the proposed CAP would not have any direct impacts on emergency access. Strategy NI-2 of the proposed CAP provides an action that would require any new development in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, WUI, or SRA (as mapped in the Contra Costa County General Plan or most recently updated CAL FIRE maps) to prepare, maintain, and regularly implement a fire protection plan. Such development must meet or exceed State requirements for development in fire-prone areas, including for ingress and egress, water supply, and firefighting equipment access. This action supports the policies and actions in the proposed Health and Safety Element and would further ensure proper emergency access for the purpose of firefighting. As such, the proposed CAP would have potentially beneficial impacts on emergency access and no significant impacts would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.16-4 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.16-4 would be less than significant.

5.16.5 Cumulative Impacts

The context of the impact evaluation described in Impact Discussions 5.16-1 through 5.16-4 are in the cumulative context of the region. As described in these discussions, impacts related to bus transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and roadways in the EIR Study Area would be less than significant, as would those associated with emergency access (with mitigation) and roadway hazards. Most impacts would require project-specific evaluation to determine whether the project's design is consistent with relevant plans, ordinances, and policies; would create or increase roadway hazards; or result in inadequate emergency access. Additionally, projects would be evaluated under the County's Guidelines for assessing VMT impacts, during which it would be determined whether such projects would require VMT analysis or be screened out under the Guideline criteria. However, as determined under Impact 5.18-2, impacts associated with per capita regional VMT from the projected development under the proposed General Plan would be significant and unavoidable. Therefore, the impact on VMT would be cumulatively considerable.

5.16.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.16-1, 5.16-3, and 5.16-4.

Without mitigation, the following impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.16-2:** Implementation of the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 (b).

5.16.7 Mitigation Measures

Impact 5.16-2

No mitigation measures are feasible. While site-specific mitigation measures are available to reduce VMT impacts of future projects, the uncertainty regarding the timing and feasibility of implementing these measures at the scale of the proposed project prevents a finding of less-than-significant impacts.

5.16.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact 5.16-2

Impacts would be significant and unavoidable, as described previously. The potential reductions in VMT from the measures discussed above cannot be accurately quantified and therefore impacts regarding VMT would remain significant and unavoidable.

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

5.16.9 References

- Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (ABAG & MTC). 2021, October. Plan Bay Area 2050.
https://www.planbayarea.org/sites/default/files/documents/Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2018. Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area. https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/district-4/documents/d4-bike-plan/caltransd4bikeplan_report_lowres-r6.pdf
- . 2021. Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan for the Bay Area- Summary Report. <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/active-transportation-complete-streets/district4-finalreport-a11y.pdf>
- Contra Costa County (CCC). 2022, February. Contra Costa County Vision Zero Final Report.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/74273/Vision-Zero-Report---reduced-file-size-PDF>
- . 2022, April. Contra Costa County. Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/76572/Active-Transportation-Plan-Final-Report-reduced-file-size>
- . 2020, June 23. Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/70739/FINAL-CCC-Transportation-Analysis-Guidelines-v3-5-10-21?bidId=>
- . (Prepared by Fehr and Peers). 2019, October. Transportation Baseline Report.
https://envisioncontracosta2040.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/CCC_Baseline_Report_Oct2019.pdf
- . 2005. General Plan- Chapter 5: Transportation and Circulation Element.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30915/Ch5-Transportation-and-Circulation-Element?bidId=>
- Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). 2021a. Update of the Contra Costa Congestion Management Program. https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CMP21_MainDoc_Draft_Final_.pdf
- . 2021b, August 3. Contra Costa Countywide Transportation Safety Policy and Implementation Guide for Local Agencies. https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CCTA_VZ_How_To_Guide_Aug2021.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis TRANSPORTATION

- . 2021c, January. Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan.
http://64.166.146.245/docs/2021/TWIC/20210208_1743/44543_CCTA%20Contra%20Costa%20ATSP%20DRAFT.pdf
- . 2018, July 18. CCTA Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update.
https://ccta.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=409&meta_id=37817
- . 2017, September 20. Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
<https://ccta.net/planning/2017-countywide-transportation-plan/>
- . 2010, June 16. (Revised February 17, 2021). Growth Management Program- Implementation Guide.
https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GMP_Implementation_Guide_FINAL_02172021.pdf
- . 2008, February. Measure C Regional Transportation Mitigation Program- Summary Status Report.
<https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/5297affc06272.pdf#page=15>
- Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2018, December. Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA. https://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

5. Environmental Analysis

TRANSPORTATION

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential utilities and service system impacts from adopting and implementing the proposed project and from future development and activities that could occur under the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project. This section covers the following utilities and service systems:

- Wastewater Treatment and Collection
- Water Supply and Distribution Systems
- Storm Drainage Systems
- Solid Waste
- Energy Infrastructure

Impacts associated with the following public service and utility issues are addressed in other sections of this Draft EIR:

- Groundwater, water quality, floodzones, levees, and sea-level rise – Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*
- Electricity and natural gas infrastructure – Section 5.6, *Energy*

5.17.1 Wastewater Treatment and Collection

5.17.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 regulates the discharge of pollutants into watersheds throughout the nation. Under the CWA, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) sets wastewater standards and makes it unlawful to discharge pollution from a point source into any navigable waterway without obtaining a permit. Point sources include any conveyances, such as pipes and man-made drainage channels, from which pollutants may be discharged.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program was established as part of the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the United States. Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for broad categories of discharges, including point-source municipal waste discharges and nonpoint-source stormwater runoff. NPDES permits generally identify effluent and receiving water limits on allowable connections and/or mass emissions of pollutants contained in the discharge; prohibitions on discharges not specifically allowed under the permit; and provisions that describe required

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

actions by the discharger, including industrial pretreatment, pollution prevention, self-monitoring, and other activities. Wastewater discharge is regulated under the NPDES permit program for direct discharges into receiving waters and by the National Pretreatment Program for indirect discharges to a wastewater (sewage) treatment facility.

Pretreatment standards are pollutant discharge limits which apply to industrial users. The USEPA established the National Pretreatment Program and applies three types of standards: (1) general and specific prohibitions; (2) categorical pretreatment standards; and (3) local limits. All three types of standards can be enforced by the USEPA, the State, or local government and are typically expressed as numeric limits, narrative prohibitions, and best management practices (BMPs).

State

State Water Resources Control Board: General Waste Discharge Requirements

On May 2, 2006, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) adopted Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. 2006-0003) and a monitoring and reporting program (Order No. WQ-2013-0058-EXEC) for all publicly owned sanitary sewer collection systems in California with more than one mile of sewer pipes. All public agencies that own or operate a sanitary sewer system comprising more than one mile of pipes or sewer lines which convey wastewater to a publicly owned treatment facility must apply for coverage under this order. The order provides a consistent statewide approach to reducing sanitary sewer overflows (SSO).

The Waste Discharge Requirements require public agencies that own or operate sanitary sewer systems to develop and implement Sewer System Management Plans (SSMPs) and report all SSOs to the SWRCB's online reporting system. The SWRCB has delegated authority to nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) to enforce these requirements within their regions. Contra Costa County is under the jurisdiction of two RWQCBs: the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5). The RWQCBs are charged with conducting inspections of permitted discharges and monitoring permit compliance.

The SSMP evaluates existing sewer collection systems and provides a framework for minimizing the frequency and impact of SSOs. The SSMP includes an overflow emergency response plan; a fats, oil, and grease control program; scheduled inspections and condition assessment; design and construction standards; capacity assessment and management; and a monitoring program.

In addition, the RWQCBs issue NPDES permits to wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) within the county. Each NPDES permit has limits on discharge volumes and effluent concentrations, which includes a sampling and monitoring program. RWQCBs are also charged with conducting inspections of permitted discharges and monitoring permit compliance.

Sanitary District Act of 1923

The Sanitary District Act of 1923 (California Health and Safety Code Section 6400 et seq.) authorizes the formation of sanitation districts and enables the sanitation districts to construct, operate, and maintain facilities for the collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems

The SWRCB implements regulations to reduce the impact of wastewater sources on groundwater quality in accordance with State law (Assembly Bill [AB] 885) through its water quality control policy for siting, design, operation, and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) (i.e., septic systems) (Resolution No. 2012-0032). This policy establishes a statewide, risk-based, tiered approach for the regulation and management of OWTS installations and replacements that have affected, or will affect, groundwater or surface water to a degree that makes it unfit for drinking water or other uses or causes a health or public nuisance condition. RWQCBs incorporated the standards established in the OWTS policy or standards that are more protective of the environment and public health into their water quality control plans. Implementation is overseen by the SWRCB, RWQCBs, and local agencies (e.g., county and city departments and independent districts).

Local

NPDES Permits for Wastewater Treatment Plants

Waste discharge requirements for effluent discharged from various wastewater treatment facilities within the county are set forth in permits issued by RWQCBs—the San Francisco Bay RWQCB for facilities in the western portion of the county and the Central Valley RWQCB for facilities in the eastern portion of the county. The permitted discharge volumes and wastewater concentrations are listed in each NPDES permit for the WWTPs within the county and can be found on the websites of the two RWQCBs.

Municipal Service Reviews

Government Code Section 56430 requires the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (CCLAFCO) conduct municipal service reviews (MSRs) for services provided in the county. The purpose is to evaluate the current services and potential impacts to those services from projected future growth. The MSR is a prerequisite for a sphere of influence determination. CCLAFCO conducts MSRs on a countywide basis for water and wastewater as well as MSRs for West Contra Costa County, Central Contra Costa County, and East Contra Costa County. CCLAFCO also has prepared a MSR for Byron Sanitary District.

Contra Costa County Environmental Health Division

The Land Use Program under the Environmental Health Division is responsible for reviewing building plans for new structures or alterations and changes of use for existing structures on properties that have septic systems or are proposing to use a septic system. There are two categories of plan reviews. The general building plan review focuses on the location of a structure and whether it will meet the required setbacks from a septic system and will not interfere with the use of an approved sewage disposal system, reserve area, or disposal field area. The building plan review focuses on the proposed means of sewage disposal for structures. This process requires an applicant to prepare a building plan review application and submit required fees for review. The site and soil evaluation, septic system design review, and septic construction is a separate process (Contra Costa Environmental Health Division 2023).

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 420-6 – Sewage Collection and Disposal

Chapter 420-6 of the County Ordinance Code, *Sewage Collection and Disposal*, requires all structures in which plumbing fixtures are installed to be connected to either a sanitary sewer system or a septic system. Article 420-6.8 includes design standards, construction permits, and permit procedures for the design of OWTS. The Environmental Health Division reviews building plans for new structures and alterations and changes of use for properties with septic systems.

Chapter 916-4 – Sewers

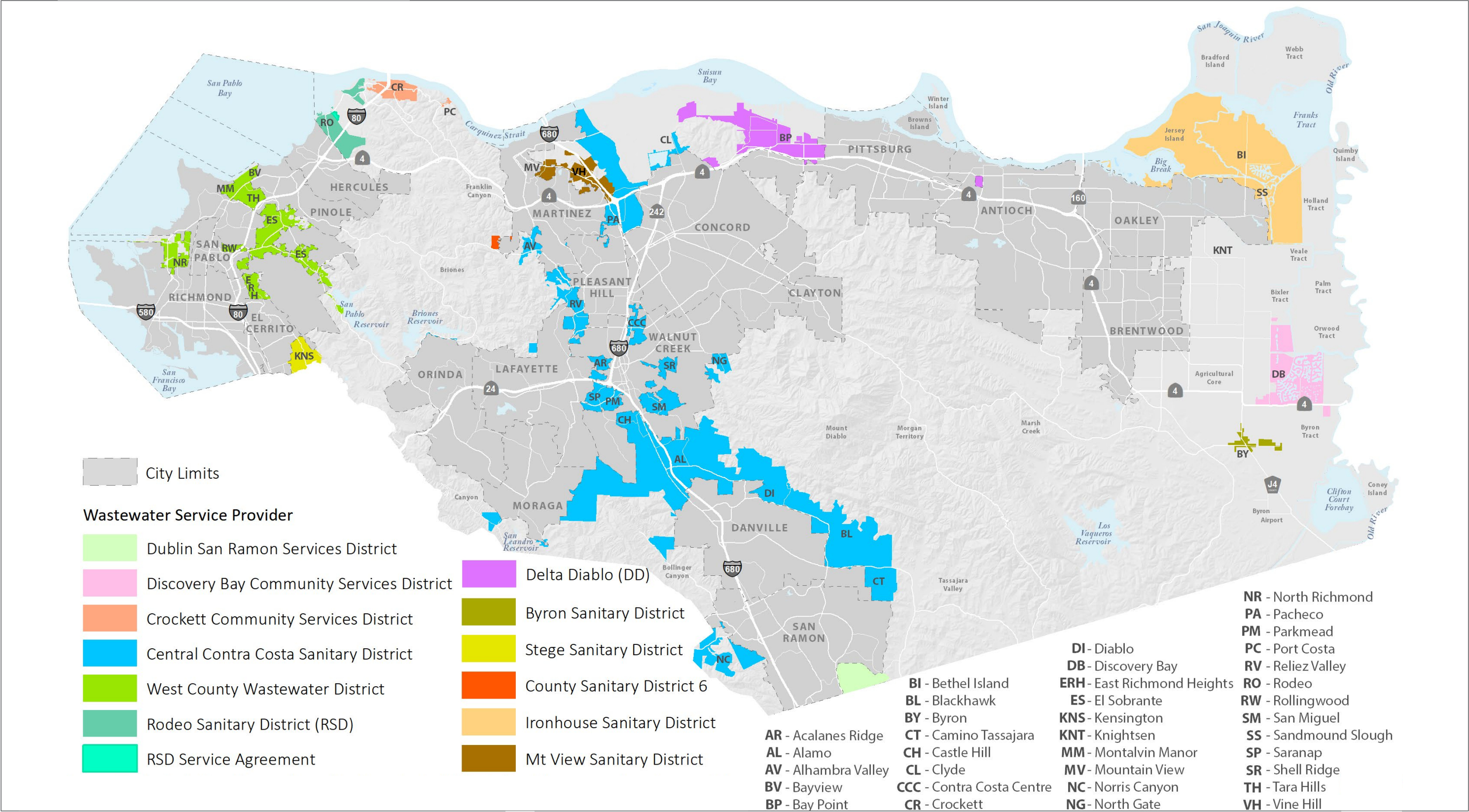
Chapter 916-4, *Sewers*, states that sewerage to a subdivision shall be provided by a public sanitation district or utility with adequate plant and facilities. If it is not feasible to construct, install, or connect to a sewerage system, a request for an alternate means of sewer disposal may be submitted to Environmental Health. The chapter further states that in those areas served by a sanitation district under the jurisdiction of the County, all sewage treatment facilities and appurtenances shall be constructed in accordance with the requirements and inspection of the Public Works Department subsequent to payment of all required fees and charges.

Existing Conditions

There are many wastewater treatment and collection services throughout Contra Costa County. Wastewater services are provided through 20 agencies: 7 cities and 13 sanitary districts. (CCLAFCO 2014). The largest wastewater service providers are the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD), which serves most of the Central County, and the West County Wastewater District, which serves much of West County. There are many smaller special districts that provide wastewater service in unincorporated Contra Costa County. Rural areas rely on OWTS to treat sewage on-site.

Figure 5.17-1, *Wastewater Service Districts*, shows the various wastewater service districts in the unincorporated county. Table 5.17-1 summarizes the 20 wastewater providers within the county, including the cities that are their own wastewater service providers.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS



Source: Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), 2023.



Figure 5.17-1
Wastewater Service Districts

5. Environmental Analysis
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Communities on Septic Systems

Generally, rural portions of the county rely on private septic systems because there are no close regional sewer services. Areas where septic systems are the predominant means of sewage disposal include:

- Alhambra Valley
- Briones
- Knightsen
- Unincorporated Brentwood
- Tassajara Valley
- Unincorporated South and Southwest County
- Ayers Ranch in unincorporated Concord
- Marsk Creek corridor east of Clayton

There previously was a moratorium on the construction of septic systems within certain areas of the county due to poor soil conditions, steep slopes and hills, and proximity to reservoirs. The areas included the former San Pablo Sanitary District, the Rodeo Creek watershed drainage area, the unincorporated area of Canyon, the area serviced by Sanitation District 15 on Bethel Island, the Muir Oaks-Vine Hill Way area of Martinez, and the El Toyonal area of Orinda. This moratorium has since been rescinded because new site and soil testing criteria and OWTs design standards are sufficient to protect water quality and public health. All applications in these areas will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to see if the required criteria and standards can be met. In some rural areas of the county, OWTs may not be permitted because of shallow groundwater tables, high nitrate concentrations in groundwater, and/or soil with poor percolation capacity.

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater treatment facility providers in the western portion of Contra Costa County are within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB and wastewater treatment plants in the eastern portion of the county are under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB. Table 5.17-2 provides a list of the WWTPs in the county. The largest WWTPs are Central Contra Costa County Sanitary District (CCCSD), which serves most of the central portion of the county, and East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which serves Alameda County and Kensington, El Cerrito, and portions of Richmond in Contra Costa County. All of the WWTPs currently have residual capacity to serve the increases in population with future growth in the county. In addition, water conservation efforts, Code requirements for low flow plumbing fixtures, and decreases in per capita water demands will reduce the wastewater generation rates and enable the WWTPs to accommodate future growth.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Table 5.17-1 Summary of Wastewater Collection Providers

Wastewater Collection Provider	Population Served ¹	Communities Served	Wastewater Discharge Location
Cities			
Antioch	105,117	Antioch	Delta Diablo Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)
Brentwood	53,278	Brentwood	Brentwood WWTP
Concord	134,095	Concord, Clayton, and Ayers Ranch	Flows into Central Contra Costa Sanitary District system
Hercules	24,060	Hercules	Pinole-Hercules WWTP shared with City of Pinole
Pinole	6,500	Pinole	Pinole-Hercules WWTP shared with City of Hercules
Pittsburg	64,294	Pittsburg	Delta Diablo WWTP
Richmond	68,000	Richmond	City of Richmond WWTP
Special Sanitation Districts			
Bryon Sanitary District	995	Byron	Bryon Sanitary District WWTP
Central Contra Costa Sanitary District	467,500	Central Contra Costa County	Central Contra Costa Sanitary District WWTP
County Sanitation District No. 6	100	Stonehurst Subdivision within City of Martinez (Alhambra Valley)	Septic tank systems, community disposal system with sand filter, UV disinfection and leach field disposal
Crockett Community Services District	3,284	Crockett and Port Costa	C&H Sugar-Crocket/Philip F. Meads WWTP and Port Costa WWTP
Delta Diablo Special District	190,567	Antioch, Pittsburg, and Bay Point	Delta Diablo WWTP and Recycled Water Facility
Dublin San Ramon Services District	78,327	Multi-county district serving Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, all locations within Dublin	Dublin San Ramon WWTP
East Bay Municipal Utility District	678,107 (includes Alameda County)	Parts of Contra Costa County and Alameda County	EBMUD WWTP
Ironhouse Sanitary District	37,569	Oakley, Bethel Island, Holland Tract, Hotchkiss Tract, Dutch Slough, and Sand Mound Slough	Water Recycling Facility – effluent used for agricultural irrigation and discharge into San Joaquin River
Mt. View Sanitary District	18,253	Portion of Martinez and adjacent unincorporated areas	Mt. View Sanitary District WWTP
Rodeo Sanitary District	8,000	Tormey and Rodeo	Rodeo Sanitary District WWTP
Stege Sanitary District	33,000	El Cerrito, Kensington, and portion of Richmond	EBMUD WWTP
Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District	13,500	Discovery Bay	Two WWTPs

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Wastewater Collection Provider	Population Served ¹	Communities Served	Wastewater Discharge Location
West County Wastewater District	92,976	San Pablo, portion of Richmond, portion of Pinole, and other unincorporated areas	West County Wastewater District WWTP

Source: CCLAFCO 2014

¹ Population numbers are from 2014 LAFCO report and do not reflect current values but are provided to give an idea of the size of the wastewater collection system.

Table 5.17-2 Wastewater Treatment Facilities within Contra Costa County

Wastewater Treatment Provider	Treatment Plant Capacity ¹	Average Flow Rate	Residual Capacity	Primary Disposal Method
Bryon Sanitary District WWTP	96,000 GPD	60,800 GPD	35,200 GPD	Discharge into percolation/evaporation ponds and land application
Central Contra Costa Sanitary District WWTP	53.8 MGD	34.2 MGD	19.6 MGD	Discharge to Suisun Bay with 5% of effluent diverted to its Water Recycling Plant
Crockett Community Services District - Port Costa WWTP	33,000 GPD	15,000 GPD	18,000 GPD	Discharge to Carquinez Strait
Crockett Community Services District – Joint Use C&H Sugar Company and Crockett Community Services District WWTP	35 MGD for cooling water through Outfall 1; 1.8 MGD for wastewater through Outfall 2	16 MGD for Outfall 1; 0.93 MGD for Outfall 2	19 MGD for Outfall 1; 0.87 MGD for Outfall 2	Discharge to Carquinez Strait
Delta Diablo WWTP	16.5 MGD	13 MGD	3.5 MGD	50% of effluent discharged to its Recycled Water Facility; 50% of effluent discharged to New York Slough
Dublin San Ramon WWTP	20.2 MGD plus Zone 7 reject water; proposed increase to 23.9 MGD	11.5 MGD	8.7-12.4 MGD	Discharge into Lower San Francisco Bay and Alamo Canal
East Bay Municipal Utility District WWTP	120 MGD	63 MGD	57 MGD	Discharge to Central San Francisco Bay via deep water outfall; about 2.3 MGD of effluent becomes recycled water as part of the East Bayshore Recycled Water Project
Ironhouse Sanitary District WWTP	4.3 MGD	2.78 MGD	1.52 MGD	Discharge into San Joaquin River through a 550-foot outfall with 16 diffusers
Mt. View Sanitary District WWTP	3.2 MGD	1.3 MGD	1.9 MGD	Advanced secondary treatment and discharge into constructed wetland and then Peyton Slough, a tributary to Carquinez Strait
Rodeo Sanitary District WWTP	1.14 MGD	0.6 MGD	0.54 MGD	Discharge into San Pablo Bay
Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District WWTP	2.35 MGD	1.8 MGD	0.55 MGD	Two WWTPs with secondary treatment and discharge into Old River
West County Wastewater District WWTP	12.5 MGD	8.3 MGD	4.2 MGD	Treated wastewater sent to Richmond Advanced Recycled Expansion (RARE) facility and the North Richmond Water Reclamation Plan for recycling or is pumped to the Richmond WWTP for dichlorination and discharge into Central San Francisco Bay through a deep water outfall

Source: CCLAFCO 2014 and various WWTP NPDES permits.

*MGD – million gallons per day, GPD = gallons per day

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

5.17.1.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- U-1 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- U-2 Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

5.17.1.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to wastewater treatment and collection systems. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- ***Policy LU-P5.1:*** *Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.*
- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, major roadway, drainage improvements) when evaluating land use applications and deny applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Policy LU-P6.2:** Work collaboratively with cities and special districts (e.g., East Bay Regional Park District and utility providers) to address regional issues of mutual concern and coordinate on decisions and actions that affect residents of nearby unincorporated areas.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **COS-P7.2:** Partner with water and wastewater providers, GSAs, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide.
- **COS-P7.9:** Support wastewater reclamation and reuse programs that maximize use of recycled water.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- ***PFS-A1.3:*** *Notify and request comments from utility service providers on development applications.*
- **PFS-A1.4:** Upon each update to the Housing Element, perform an analysis of infrastructure needs and deficiencies in DUCs and explore funding mechanisms that could make extension of needed services and facilities feasible.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- **PFS-P2.2:** Pursuant to SB 1000, as part of the County's annual budgeting process, prioritize investments in public facilities, infrastructure, and services that benefit Impacted Communities and respond to their needs, particularly those needs identified in their Community Profiles.
- **PFS-P2.3:** Coordinate with service providers (e.g., water, wastewater, transit, and recreation districts) and advocate for proper planning, maintenance, and implementation of services and infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery in Impacted Communities.
- **PFS-P3.1:** *Coordinate LAFCO, infrastructure and service providers, and cities to ensure infrastructure and services are reliable and provided in a cost-effective and equitable manner.*
- **PFS-P3.2:** *Require new development to pay its fair share of public improvement costs for infrastructure, facilities, maintenance, and services based on the proportionate cost of serving the project.*
- **PFS-P3.3:** *When new development cannot adequately be served by existing infrastructure and facilities or through the County's impact fee programs, require a public facilities financing plan that identifies the necessary public improvements and establishes an equitable plan to pay for and develop the required improvements.*
- **PFS-P3.4:** *When communities request levels of County services that exceed the countywide standard, require creation of (or annexation into) a County Service Area, community facilities district, or equivalent mechanism to fund the supplemental service costs. Allow exceptions for enhanced services in Impacted Communities if alternative funding sources can be identified.*
- **PFS-P3.5:** *When new development needs ongoing infrastructure maintenance that exceeds County standards or existing funding levels, require creation of or annexation to a County service area, community facilities district, benefit assessment district, or other special funding unit to pay for those maintenance activities.*
- **PFS-P3.6:** When adopting, amending, and imposing impact fees, community benefits agreements, and developer exactions, consider the effects of such fees and exactions upon individual project economics, housing supply, economic development, and the County's broad goals and objectives related to overall community development. If gap funding can be identified, consider fee reductions or exemptions for projects in Impacted Communities that are consistent with the community objectives identified in their Community Profile.
- **PFS-A3.1:** Implement an equitable and standardized approach to property tax sharing with cities during the annexation process.
- **PFS-A3.2:** *Regularly update development impact fees to ensure new development pays its fair share of infrastructure and service costs.*
- **PFS-P4.6:** *Require new development to demonstrate the availability of a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound wastewater treatment system with adequate capacity.*

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) provides estimates of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the wastewater sector and accounts for the increase in emissions with implementation of the proposed General Plan. It also provides reduction strategies to minimize GHG emissions through water conservation, water-efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Any reduction in indoor

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

water demand would also result in a reduction in wastewater generation rates. There are a few specific actions that pertain to the wastewater sector, described herein.

Strategy DR-1: Reduce indoor and outdoor water use.

Strategy DR-1 Actions:

- Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available. (COS-P7.1)
- Require homes and businesses to install water-efficient fixtures at time of retrofit activities, in accordance with the California Building Standards Code.
- Continue to enforce the Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance and encourage the use of native and drought-tolerant landscaping for exempt residential and commercial landscapes through partnership with local and regional water agencies and other organizations.
- Partner with water and wastewater service providers, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide. (COS-P7.2)
- Facilitate offering of BayREN water bill savings programs through eligible community water providers.
- Encourage the installation of graywater and rainwater catchment systems, particularly for new construction, as feasible for wastewater infrastructure. Reduce regulatory barriers for these systems and explore creating incentives for installing these systems in new and existing buildings.
- Identify opportunities for graywater use in public spaces and implement them as feasible.
- Promote the installation of composting toilets at appropriate County facilities in locations without wastewater service.

5.17.1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.17-1: Sewer and wastewater treatment systems are adequate to meet project requirements. [Thresholds U-1 and U-2]

Proposed General Plan

Wastewater generation associated with the proposed General Plan was calculated using the 2045 horizon-year growth projections shown in Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR. The following generation rates were used (CCCSD 2010):

- Single-family residential: 195 gallons per day per dwelling unit (gpd/du)
- Multi-family residential: 105 gpd/du
- Commercial/Office: 0.1 gpd/square foot (sf)
- Industrial: 1,000 gpd/acre

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

These wastewater generation rates are conservative because new construction will be required to comply with the latest CALGreen Building Code, which typically results in a 20-percent reduction in water use and therefore wastewater generation (see Section 5.17.2.1 for more information about the CALGreen Building Code). The estimated increase in wastewater generation from 2020 to 2045 is shown on Table 5.17-3.

Table 5.17-3 Wastewater Demand Increase: Proposed General Plan

Category	No. of DUs or Square Feet	Wastewater Generation Factor (gpd/du or gpd/sf)	Increase in Wastewater Demand (gpd)
Single-Family Residential	7,100	195	1,384,500
Multi-Family Residential	16,100	105	1,690,500
Commercial/Office	1,200,000	0.1	120,000
Industrial	5,000,000	0.023 ¹	114,784
Total			3,309,784

¹Conversion from 1,000 gpd/acre to 0.023 gpd/sf
Sources: CCCSD, 2010; PlaceWorks, 2023.

The projected increase in wastewater discharge resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan is estimated to be 3.31 MGD. This increase would be distributed throughout the entire county such that the level of service would not substantially impact any individual wastewater collection provider or wastewater treatment facility. This projection also assumes that all new construction is connected to an existing or future sewer collection system, but some of the projected growth may be in rural areas where there is no available sewer connection and the residences would be on individual OTWSs. However, the Land Use Element (Policy LU-P5.1) states that new development should be focused in areas where infrastructure and services, such as sewer collection and wastewater treatment, can be provided. Also, as shown in Table 5.17-2, the wastewater treatment facilities within the county have a residual capacity of 99.7 MGD and therefore would be able to accommodate the projected growth.

In addition, many of the wastewater treatment and wastewater collection providers have capital improvement programs that will be fully implemented by 2045. EBMUD has a \$2.8 billion, five-year capital improvement program, which includes:

- Upgrades to its wastewater treatment facility
- Replacement and rehabilitation of aging pipelines and sewage collections systems
- Rebuilding neighborhood reservoirs
- Modernizing wastewater facilities

CCCSD's \$1.1 billion, 10-year capital improvement program includes improvements to its collection system, treatment facility, and expansion of recycled water facilities. Delta Diablo and the other wastewater collection and treatment providers have similar plans to expand wastewater treatment facility capacities and/or rehabilitate and replace aging sewer infrastructure.

In addition, all wastewater collection providers require new development projects to pay a sewer connection fee as well as monthly wastewater collection fees, which are used to continually upgrade components of the wastewater collection and treatment system through the capital improvement plan programs.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The proposed Land Use Element and Public Facilities and Services Element contain policies and actions that require local planning and development decisions to consider impacts to wastewater services. Policy LU-P5.1 states that development should only occur where community infrastructure can be provided. Policy PFS-P3.1 promotes cooperation between LAFCO and service providers to ensure that infrastructure and services can be provided. And Action PFS-A3.2 requires regular updates to development impact fees to ensure that new development pays its fair share of infrastructure and service costs.

Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not require the construction or expansion of wastewater treatment facilities within the county. Adherence to the County Ordinance Code requirements, continued water conservation efforts, and implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and actions would reduce wastewater generation rates over time, and therefore impacts associated with the sewer collection and wastewater treatment systems would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP provides estimates of GHG emissions in the water and wastewater sectors and accounts for the increase in emissions with implementation of the proposed General Plan. It also provides reduction strategies to minimize GHG emissions through water conservation, water-efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Any reduction in indoor water demand would also result in a reduction in wastewater generation rates. Therefore, the proposed CAP would not require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-1 would be less than significant.

5.17.1.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The area considered for cumulative impacts is all of Contra Costa County, including the EIR Study Area and incorporated parts of the county. Cumulative projects could cause significant impacts if they either exceeded wastewater treatment requirements of RWQCBs with jurisdiction in the county or generated wastewater exceeding the combined capacities of wastewater treatment facilities. Projects developed in the county are required to comply with the existing wastewater collection and treatment regulations discussed under Impact 5.17-1. The total increase in wastewater generation resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan is estimated at about 3.3 MGD (see Table 5.17-3). As discussed in Impact 5.17-1, the wastewater treatments facilities throughout the county have enough capacity for the 2045 projected flow rates.

Where infrastructure is available, all projects are required to connect to a wastewater collection system in one of the various districts identified in Table 5.17-1. Each of the districts maintains master service plans that include accommodations for future growth and collect development impact fees during the building permit

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

process to fund expansion and rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure. The County and RWQCB monitor the wastewater treatment facilities through their operating permits and will require action to expand treatment services if needed to address growth. The County may restrict or deny permits in areas that have no wastewater service until the expansion occurs, or it is demonstrated to be available at the time of building occupancy. As the County coordinates with the service providers as part of the development review process, and there are mechanisms in place to both monitor the capacity of the systems and to expand them should need arise, cumulative impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.17.1.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.1.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.17.1.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.2 Water Supply and Distribution Systems

5.17.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal

Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act, the principal federal law intended to ensure safe drinking water to the public, was enacted in 1974 and has been amended several times. The Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the USEPA to set national standards for drinking water, called the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, to protect against both naturally occurring and human-made contaminants. These standards set enforceable maximum contaminant levels in drinking water and require all water providers in the United States to treat water to remove contaminants, except for private wells serving fewer than 25 people. In California, the SWRCB conducts most enforcement activities. If a water system does not meet standards, it is the water supplier's responsibility to notify its customers.

America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018

America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA), signed into law on October 23, 2018, authorizes federal funding for water infrastructure projects; expands water storage capabilities; assists local communities in complying with the Safe Drinking Water Act and CWA; reduces flooding risks for rural, western, and coastal communities; and addresses significant water infrastructure needs in tribal communities. Additionally, AWIA requires that drinking water systems that serve more than 3,300 people develop or update risk assessments and emergency response

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

plans. Risk assessments and emergency response plans must be certified by the USEPA within the deadline specified by the AWIA.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, which was passed in California in 1969 and amended in 2013, is the basic water quality control law for California. Under this Act, the SWRCB has authority over State water rights and water quality policy. This Act divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a RWQCB to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local and regional level. RWQCBs engage in a number of water quality functions in their respective regions. RWQCBs regulate all pollutant or nuisance discharges that may affect either surface water or groundwater. As noted in Section 5.17.1, Contra Costa County is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5).

California's Urban Water Management Planning Act

The California Urban Water Management Planning Act and Section 10620 of the California Water Code require all urban water suppliers in California that provide water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or supply more than 3,000 acre-feet¹ of water annually to prepare and adopt an urban water management plan (UWMP) and update it every five years. This Act is intended to support conservation and efficient use of urban water supplies at the local level. The UWMP describes the service area of the water supplier; the projected 20-year water supply and demand for the service area in normal years, dry years and multiple dry years; and water recycling strategies.

Senate Bills 610 and 221

Senate Bill (SB) 610 and SB 221 amended State law to ensure better coordination between local water supply and land use decisions and confirm that there is an adequate water supply for new development. Specific projects are required to prepare a water supply assessment (WSA). The WSA is composed of information regarding existing and forecasted water demands as well as information pertaining to available water supplies for the new development. The following projects that are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are required to prepare a WSA:

- Residential developments consisting of more than 500 dwelling units.
- Shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
- Commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
- Hotels or motels, or both, having more than 500 rooms.
- Industrial, manufacturing, or processing plants or industrial parks planned to employ more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area.

¹ 1 acre-foot is the amount of water required to cover 1 acre of ground (43,560 square feet) to a depth of 1 foot.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- Mixed-use projects that include one or more of the projects specified above.
- Projects that would demand an amount of water equivalent to, or greater than, the amount of water required for 500 dwelling units.

SB 221 requires written verification that there is sufficient water supply available for new residential subdivisions that include over 500 dwelling units. The verification must be provided before commencement of construction for the project.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

On September 16, 2014, a three-bill legislative package was signed into law, composed of AB 1739, SB 1168, and SB 1319, collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The Governor's signing message states "a central feature of these bills is the recognition that groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally." Under the roadmap laid out by the legislation, local and regional authorities in medium and high priority groundwater basins must form groundwater sustainability agencies that oversee the preparation and implementation of groundwater sustainability plans.

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 (AB 1881) required the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to update the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) by 2009. The State's model ordinance was issued on October 8, 2009. Under AB 1881, cities and counties were required to adopt a State-updated model landscape water conservation ordinance by January 31, 2010, or to adopt a different ordinance that is at least as effective in conserving water as the updated MWELo.

The MWELo was revised In July 2015 via Executive Order B-29-15 to address the ongoing drought and to build resiliency for future droughts. The 2015 revisions to the MWELo increased water efficiency standards for new and retrofitted landscapes through more efficient irrigation systems, greywater usage, and on-site stormwater capture and by limiting the portion of landscapes that can be covered in turf.

California Building Code: CALGreen

The California Building Standards Commission adopted the California Green Building Standards Code, also known as CALGreen (California Code of Regulations, Part 11 of Title 24). CALGreen establishes building standards for sustainable site development, including water efficiency and water conservation measures. New residential and non-residential development must install water-conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings and comply with the MWELo for outdoor water use. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local building permit process. The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011. The County has regularly adopted each new CALGreen update under the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Title 7, *Building Regulations*. CALGreen is updated on a three-year cycle; the latest Code is dated 2022.

Recycled Water Regulations

To establish uniform requirements for the use of recycled water, the SWRCB adopted a statewide Recycled Water Policy on February 3, 2009. The purpose of the policy is to increase the use of recycled water from municipal wastewater sources and streamline permitting for recycled water projects. The Recycled Water Policy

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

was recently amended in 2018 and includes numeric goals for the use of recycled water, goals to encourage recycled water use in groundwater over-drafted areas and coastal areas, and annual reporting requirements for the volume of recycled water produced and used as well as the volume of wastewater treated and discharged (SWRCB 2023).

Two State agencies have primary responsibility for regulating the application and use of recycled water: the California Department of Public Health and the SWRCB. Planning and implementing water recycling projects entail numerous interactions with these regulatory agencies prior to project approval. The California Department of Public Health establishes the statewide effluent bacteriological and treatment reliability standards for recycled water uses in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4, Environmental Health. Title 22 establishes standards for each general type of use based on the potential for human contact with recycled water. The SWRCB is responsible for establishing and enforcing requirements for the application and use of recycled water within California. Permits are required from the SWRCB for water recycling operations. As part of the permit application process, applicants are required to demonstrate that the proposed recycled water operation would not exceed the ground and surface water quality objectives in the basin management plan and that the operation is compliant with Title 22 requirements.

California Health and Safety Code

A portion of the California Health and Safety Code is dedicated to water issues, including testing and maintenance of backflow prevention devices, coloring of pipes carrying recycled water, and programs addressing cross-connection control by water users.

California Plumbing Code

The California Plumbing Code was adopted as part of the California Building Code (CBC) and specifies technical standards of design, materials, workmanship, and maintenance for plumbing systems. The CBC is updated on a three-year cycle; the latest edition is dated 2022 and is effective as of January 1, 2023. One of the purposes of the Plumbing Code is to prevent conflicting plumbing codes within local jurisdictions. Among many topics covered in the Code are water fixtures, potable and non-potable water systems, and recycled water systems. The County adopts the latest 2022 California Plumbing Code under the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Title 7, *Building Regulations*, Division 78, *Plumbing Code*.

California Water Code

The California Water Code states that the water resources of the State must be put to beneficial use and that waste or unreasonable use of water should be prevented. The Water Code contains statutes regarding various water-related issues, including flood control, water rights, riparian rights, water quality, and the formation of municipal water districts.

Water Conservation Act of 2009

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SB X7-7) requires all water suppliers to increase water use efficiency. The legislation set an overall goal of reducing per capita water use by 20 percent by 2020, with an interim goal of a 10 percent reduction in per capita water use by 2015. Effective in 2016, urban retail water suppliers who do not meet the water conservation requirements established by this bill are not eligible for State water grants

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

or loans. SB X7-7 requires that urban water retail suppliers determine baseline water use and set reduction targets according to specified standards.

2018 Water Conservation Legislation

In 2018, the California Legislature enacted two policy bills (SB 606 and AB 1668) to establish long-term improvements in water conservation and drought planning to adapt to climate change and longer and more intense droughts in California. Pursuant to this legislation, DWR and the SWRCB will develop new standards for:

- Indoor residential water use
- Outdoor residential water use
- Commercial, industrial, and institutional (CII) water use for landscape irrigation with dedicated meters
- Water loss

Urban water suppliers will be required to stay within annual water budgets, based on their standards for their service areas, and to calculate and report their urban water use objectives in an annual water use report. For example, the bills define a daily standard for indoor residential use of 55 gallons per person until 2025, when it decreases to 52.5 gallons; it further decreases to 50 gallons by 2030. The legislation also includes changes to UWMP preparation requirements.

Mandatory Water Conservation

Following the declaration of a state of emergency on July 15, 2014, due to drought conditions, the SWRCB adopted Resolution No. 2014-0038 for emergency regulation of statewide water conservation efforts. These regulations, which went into effect on August 1, 2014, were intended to reduce outdoor urban water use and have all California households voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 20 percent. Water companies with 3,000 or more service connections were required to report monthly water consumption to the SWRCB. Most recently, Executive Order N-7-22 was issued by the State in March 2022 to adopt emergency water conservation regulations that include the following:

- Each urban water supplier shall submit to DWR an annual water supply and demand assessment.
- Urban water suppliers shall implement Level 2 restrictions from their water shortage contingency plans for water savings up to 20 percent.
- A ban on watering nonfunctional turf shall be implemented in the commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors.
- A county, city, or public agency shall not approve a permit for a new groundwater well in a basin that is classified as medium or high priority under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act without obtaining written verification from the Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and shall determine that the proposed extraction would not interfere with existing nearby wells and would not likely cause subsidence. This does not apply to domestic wells that provide less than 2 acre-feet per year (AFY) of groundwater or wells that exclusively provide groundwater to public water supply systems.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

SWRCB Division of Drinking Water

The California Division of Drinking Water regulates public water systems within California; oversees water recycling projects; permits water treatment devices; and supports and promotes water system security. The Division of Financial Assistance provides funding opportunities for drinking water system improvements; provides support for small water systems and for improving technical, managerial, and financial capacity; and certifies drinking water treatment and distribution operators. The Field Operations Branch of the Division of Drinking Water is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts and the regulatory oversight of approximately 7,500 public water systems to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water to all Californians. In this capacity, Field Operations Branch staff perform field inspections, issue operating permits, review plans and specifications for new facilities, take enforcement actions for noncompliance with laws and regulations, review water quality monitoring results, and support and promote water system security.

Local

Contra Costa County Water Agency

The Contra Costa County Water Agency (CCCWA) is part of the Department of Conservation and Development and advises the Board of Supervisors on water policy that may affect the county. The CCCWA advocates on local, state, and federal levels to protect and improve the water quality, flows, and overall health of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. East Contra Costa County covers a large area within the southwestern portion of the Delta, which is the sole water source for half of the county. The CCCWA is proactive in developing new strategies to export and store water during high flow periods in the Delta so that the current levels of exports during drier months can be decreased. These strategies and others are documented in the Delta Water Platform, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in May 2014. The CCCWA is also a member of the Delta Counties Coalition, which also includes Solano County, Yolo County, San Joaquin County, and Sacramento County. The Delta Counties Coalition advocates on behalf of local government, counties, and the four million people who live throughout the Delta region to protect and improve water quantity and quality in the Delta region (CCCWA 2023).

Urban Water Management Plans

UWMPs were prepared in 2020 by the water purveyors serving the county. These are important long-term planning documents for each water purveyor and are updated every five years in accordance with the California Water Code. Each UWMP assesses water supplies against expected water demands over a 30-year planning horizon and outlines actions to deal with shortages that may occur. Each UWMP contains a water shortage contingency plan to ensure that there is sufficient water supply during drought conditions.

East Contra Costa County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

The East Contra Costa County (ECCC) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning effort is a collaborative process to support all aspects of regional water management in East Contra Costa County. This includes integrated planning for water supply, water quality, watershed and habitat protection, and flood and stormwater management. Members include the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Pittsburg, several water purveyors that serve the area, and Contra Costa County. In 2019, the members of the ECCC IRWM prepared

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

an update to the 2013 IRWM Plan to include a discussion of the regional impacts of climate change to water supply and demand. Many of the water suppliers in the region are dependent on surface water supplies from the Delta. There is concern that climate change related to sea-level rise and extreme weather can impact access and the quality of surface water supplies from the Delta. Also, changes in seasonal runoff patterns can further reduce water supply reliability (East County Water Management Association 2019).

Groundwater Sustainability Plans

There are eight groundwater basins within the county. However, five of the basins are designated as very low priority because they have very low groundwater usage, mainly from private groundwater wells. Three of the groundwater basins are designated as medium priority basins and require the preparation and submittal of groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) to DWR. A groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) can submit an alternative plan instead of a GSP if the basin has operated within its sustainable yield for at least ten years. The Zone 7 Water Agency submitted an alternative plan for the Livermore Valley Groundwater Basin, which was approved by DWR. EBMUD and the City of Hayward submitted a GSP to DWR for the East Bay Plain groundwater basin. The East Contra Costa groundwater basin has seven GSAs, which are Bryon-Bethany Irrigation District, City of Antioch, Diablo Water District, East Contra Costa Irrigation District, Contra Costa County, Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District, and the City of Brentwood. They collectively submitted a GSP for this basin to DWR, which is currently under review.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Chapter 414-4 – Water Supply

Chapter 414-4, *Water Supply*, states that any person proposing to subdivide or develop a property needing water for domestic purposes shall demonstrate an approved water supply and obtain written approval from the Health Officer for the development. Any person proposing to install, construct, and/or operate a small water system, which is defined as two to 199 service connections, must submit an application to the Health Officer, who will make the necessary investigation and/or site evaluation for the proposed system. All small water systems shall meet the primary and secondary drinking water standards and shall be of sufficient supply to meet the requirements of all users under maximum demand conditions. Individual water systems, which are defined as a single-family residence, two single-family residences on one parcel, or one structure serving less than 25 persons, shall conduct water quality testing and well sustainable yield or pumping tests and submit the results to the Health Officer for review. Article 414-4.8, *Wells*, requires every person proposing to dig, drill, bore, or drill a water well or perform repair or alteration activities on an existing well to obtain a permit from the Health Officer and have the work conducted by a licensed well driller. Permit application and inspection fees are collected pursuant to adopted resolutions of the Board of Supervisors. Chapter 414-6 contains requirements for transporting water for domestic use and requires a permit application and associated fees to be submitted to the Health Officer.

Chapter 82-26 - Water Efficient Landscapes

Chapter 82-26, *Water Efficient Landscapes*, adopts the MWELO issued by the DWR. The MWELO provides for the conservation and protection of water resources through the efficient use of irrigation water; appropriate use of plant materials suitable for climate and location; and regular maintenance of landscaped areas. The

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

MWELO applies to all new construction projects with a landscape area equal to or greater than 500 square feet and rehabilitated landscape projects with an area equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet. A landscape application must be submitted to the County during the planning review process and must include a water-efficient landscape worksheet, landscape design plan, irrigation design plan, grading plan, and soil management report, as well as an application fee.

Chapter 82-30 - Dual Water Systems

Chapter 82-30, *Dual Water Systems*, establishes procedures for County cooperation with public water and wastewater agencies to incorporate dual water systems, where feasible, in the development of projects. A dual water system is defined as two separate distribution systems: one to convey water suitable for all potable needs, and one system for non-potable needs, which could be untreated surface or groundwater and/or recycled water. All development applications filed with the County that are 1) in a dual water system area, 2) greater than 15 acres, or 3) greater than 120,000 square feet of floor space are referred to the local water or wastewater agency for determination and designation of its requirements for dual water systems.

Existing Conditions

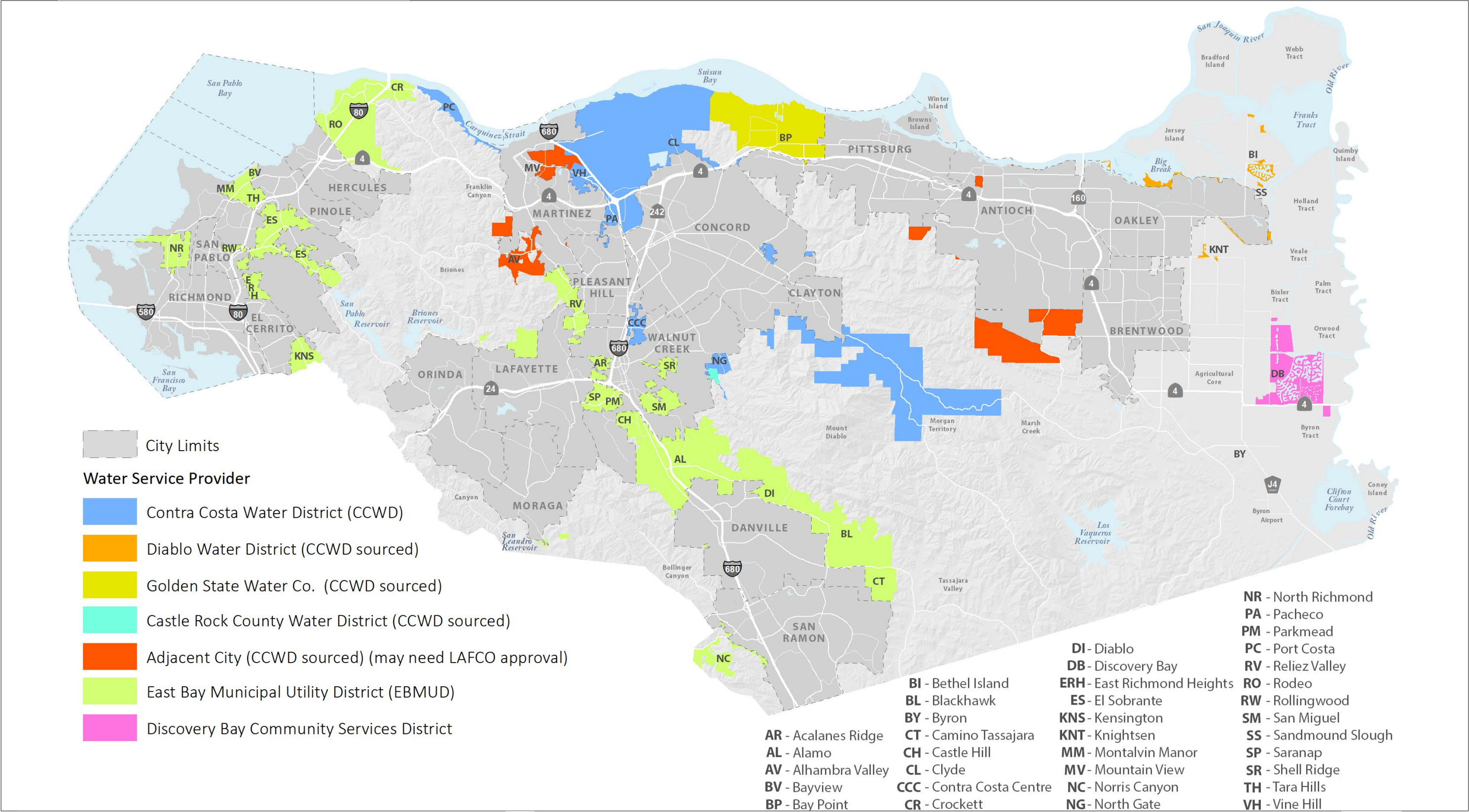
The primary source of water for residents and businesses within the county is surface water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Mokelumne River watershed. Some of the cities supplement their surface water supplies with local groundwater extraction, which typically is only 10 to 18 percent of the total supply. There are 14 water purveyors that provide water to residents and businesses within the county, as listed in Table 5.17-4; the water districts covering the unincorporated area are shown on Figure 5.17-2, *Water Service Districts*. The two major water providers are EBMUD and Contra Costa Water District (CCWD). Recycled water is also used by several cities and water agencies for landscape irrigation.

EBMUD's water supply is primarily from the Mokelumne River watershed in the Sierra Nevada. It is conveyed via reservoirs and aqueducts to the EBMUD service area, which includes most of Alameda County and the western portion of Contra Costa County. EBMUD's service area within the county includes the Lamorinda area, portions of Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill, and all of San Ramon Valley. EBMUD also supplements its water supply with Central Valley Project (CVP) surface water obtained from the US Bureau of Reclamation. The surface water is treated in one of six EBMUD water treatment plants before distribution to its customers.

In the 2020 UWMP, EBMUD projected a population increase of 79,000 between 2020 and 2040 for the portion of EBMUD's service area within Contra Costa County, which exceeds the horizon-year projection of the proposed General Plan that shows a population increase of 65,600 within the entire county by 2045.

CCWD is both a wholesale and retail water provider and provides both treated and untreated water to approximately 500,000 customers in the county. CCWD obtains its surface water from the CVP, and the Contra Costa Canal is a CVP facility. Wholesale untreated water is provided to the cities of Antioch, Pittsburg, and Martinez and Diablo Water District via the Contra Costa Canal. Untreated CVP water that is sold to Diablo Water District is treated at the Randall-Bold Water Treatment Plant, which is owned jointly with CCWD. CCWD also provides wholesale treated water to the cities of Brentwood, Antioch, and the Golden State Water Company (a private company serving Bay Point).

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS



Source: Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), 2023.



Figure 5.17-2
Water Service Districts

5. Environmental Analysis
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Retail untreated water is provided to major industrial customers, such as oil refineries, as well as irrigation customers. Additionally, CCWD provides retail treated water services to approximately 205,000 residents in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa and portions of Martinez, Pleasant Hill, and Walnut Creek.

CCWD stores the surface water in four reservoirs and operates three water treatment plants. CCWD also owns and operates a water distribution system to provide treated water to its retail customers within central Contra Costa County. CCWD does not use groundwater to meet any of its demands.

Two of the water purveyors, Byron Bethany Irrigation District and East Contra Costa Irrigation District, primarily provide agricultural irrigation water to customers within the county. Byron Bethany Irrigation District does not provide water for municipal use; however, East Contra Costa Irrigation District provides a limited amount of untreated water to ten rural customers within the county.

Four cities within the county (Antioch, Brentwood, Martinez, and Pittsburg) have their own water distribution systems and receive surface water from CCWD. Brentwood and Pittsburg also pump groundwater to supplement their surface water supplies. Antioch, Brentwood, and Pittsburg use recycled water within their cities for landscape irrigation.

Some rural areas of the county rely on groundwater extracted from private wells as the primary source of drinking water. The Contra Costa County Environmental Health Division is responsible for permitting new wells. If a community area is not within the service area of a water purveyor, well water is allowed if all setback requirements and appropriate testing are met, and the well permit is approved. Bacteriological and chemical testing are required after completion of the well to ensure that the water meets primary and secondary drinking water standards.

Table 5.17-4 Water Providers Serving Contra Costa County

Community	Water Purveyor	Water Sources	2045 Water Demand (AFY)	2045 Water Supply (AFY)	Surplus Water – Normal Year (AFY)
Cities					
Antioch	City of Antioch	SW from CCWD, RW	15,412	21,096	5,684
Brentwood	City of Brentwood	SW from CCWD, GW, RW	16,118	21,961	5,843
Martinez	City of Martinez	SW from CCWD	3,984	3,984	0
Pittsburg	City of Pittsburg	SW from CCWD, GW, RW	15,056	16,405	1,349
Water Districts					
Primarily agricultural customers in county	Byron Bethany Irrigation District	SW	No delivery of municipal water within Contra Costa County		
Rural Walnut Creek and surrounding area	Castle Rock County Water District	Untreated SW from CCWD	ND – only 55 rural service connections		
Retail and wholesale customers in county	CCWD	Untreated and treated SW from Delta, RW	175,900	184,400	8,500
Willow Mobile Home Park on Bethel Island	Community Service Area M-28	GW	Being phased out and will be annexed into CCWD and Diablo Water District service areas		
Northeast county, Oakley, Knightsen, Bethel Island	Diablo Water District	SW from CCWD, GW	4,580 ¹	5,395 ¹	815 ¹
Dublin and Dougherty Valley in San Ramon	Dublin San Ramon Services District	SW purchased from Zone 7 Water Agency, RW	17,078	17,078	0

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Table 5.17-4 Water Providers Serving Contra Costa County

Community	Water Purveyor	Water Sources	2045 Water Demand (AFY)	2045 Water Supply (AFY)	Surplus Water – Normal Year (AFY)
Alameda County and western Contra Costa County	EBMUD	SW from Mokelumne River watershed, RW	234,110	>234,110	Surplus not quantified
Agricultural customers – Brentwood, portions of Oakley and Antioch, Knightsen and unincorporated areas to the south of Brentwood	East Contra Costa Irrigation District	SW from Indian Slough on Old River	ND - only 10 non-agricultural customers that are provided with untreated water		
Bay Point	Golden State Water Company	SW purchased from CCWD, GW	1,899	1,899	0
Discovery Bay	Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District	GW	7,645	7,672	27
TOTAL					22,218

Source PlaceWorks 2023, various 2020 UWMPs.

AFY = acre-feet per year

ND = No Data

GW = Local Groundwater

SW = Surface Water

RW = Recycled Water

¹Numbers for year 2040, 2020 UWMP does not project beyond 2040

5.17.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- U-3 Require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- U-4 Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

5.17.2.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to water supply and distribution systems. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Land Use Element

- ***Policy LU-P5.1: Allow development only where requisite community services, facilities, and infrastructure can be provided.***

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- **Policy LU-P5.2:** Consider the potential locations of planned public infrastructure projects (e.g., transit lines, major roadway, drainage improvements) when evaluating land use applications and deny applications that would interfere with implementation of such projects.
- **Policy LU-P6.2:** Work collaboratively with cities and special districts (e.g., East Bay Regional Park District and utility providers) to address regional issues of mutual concern and coordinate on decisions and actions that affect residents of nearby unincorporated areas.

Conservation, Open Space, and Working Lands Element

- **COS-P7.1:** *Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available.*
- **COS-P7.2:** Partner with water and wastewater providers, GSAs, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide.
- **COS-P7.3:** *Consult applicable GSPs and local GSAs before making land use decisions that could impact groundwater resources.*
- **COS-P7.4:** *For projects in areas with a water service provider, require proof of adequate on-site groundwater during the development review process. In addition to requiring compliance with the County's well regulations related to water quality and flow rate, require documentation that the proposed project will not have a significant cumulative impact on the aquifer or negatively affect development that already relies on the same groundwater supply.*
- **COS-P7.5:** *Prohibit new development that would create or significantly aggravate groundwater overdraft conditions, land subsidence, or other "undesirable results," as defined in Section 354.26 of the California Water Code.*
- **COS-P7.6:** Support multipurpose water storage options that incorporate water supply, flood control, surface and groundwater storage, groundwater management, and ecosystem components.
- **COS-P7.7:** *Require landscaping for new development to be drought-tolerant, filter and retain runoff, and support flood management, and groundwater recharge.*
- **COS-P7.8:** Promote installation of drought-tolerant green infrastructure, including street trees in landscaped public areas.
- **COS-P7.9:** Support wastewater reclamation and reuse programs that maximize use of recycled water.
- **COS-A7.1:** Update County Ordinance Code Chapter 414-4, *Water Supply*, to be consistent with adopted GSPs.
- **COS-A7.2:** *For areas that are not covered by an adopted GSP, amend the County Ordinance Code to include sustainability indicators, defined by the SGMA, as a guide for development to maintain and protect the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies within the county.*
- **COS-A7.3:** Evaluate the feasibility and necessity of amending the County Ordinance Code to promote rainwater harvesting, installation of dual plumbing, and water reuse.
- **COS-A7.4:** Publish information on the DCD website about alternative sources of water for irrigation and other non-potable needs, such as greywater, rainwater, air conditioning condensation, and foundation drainage.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- **COS-P8.1:** Protect public water supplies by denying applications for projects that would introduce significant new pollution sources in groundwater basins and watersheds feeding major reservoirs, and support efforts to acquire and permanently protect reservoir watersheds.
- **COS-P8.5:** Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large-scale commercial and industrial facilities using wells and prohibit discharge of hazardous materials through injection wells.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **PFS-A1.3:** *Notify and request comments from utility service providers on development applications.*
- **PFS-A1.4:** Upon each update to the Housing Element, perform an analysis of infrastructure needs and deficiencies in DUCs and explore funding mechanisms that could make extension of needed services and facilities feasible.
- **PFS-P2.2:** Pursuant to SB 1000, as part of the County's annual budgeting process, prioritize investments in public facilities, infrastructure, and services that benefit Impacted Communities and respond to their needs, particularly those needs identified in their Community Profiles.
- **PFS-P2.3:** Coordinate with service providers (e.g., water, wastewater, transit, and recreation districts) and advocate for proper planning, maintenance, and implementation of services and infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery in Impacted Communities.
- **PFS-P3.1:** *Coordinate LAFCO, infrastructure and service providers, and cities to ensure infrastructure and services are reliable and provided in a cost-effective and equitable manner.*
- **PFS-P3.2:** *Require new development to pay its fair share of public improvement costs for infrastructure, facilities, maintenance, and services based on the proportionate cost of serving the project.*
- **PFS-P3.3:** *When new development cannot adequately be served by existing infrastructure and facilities or through the County's impact fee programs, require a public facilities financing plan that identifies the necessary public improvements and establishes an equitable plan to pay for and develop the required improvements.*
- **PFS-P3.4:** *When communities request levels of County services that exceed the countywide standard, require creation of (or annexation into) a County Service Area, community facilities district, or equivalent mechanism to fund the supplemental service costs. Allow exceptions for enhanced services in Impacted Communities if alternative funding sources can be identified.*
- **PFS-P3.5:** *When new development needs ongoing infrastructure maintenance that exceeds County standards or existing funding levels, require creation of or annexation to a County service area, community facilities district, benefit assessment district, or other special funding unit to pay for those maintenance activities.*
- **PFS-P3.6:** When adopting, amending, and imposing impact fees, community benefits agreements, and developer exactions, consider the effects of such fees and exactions upon individual project economics, housing supply, economic development, and the County's broad goals and objectives related to overall community development. If gap funding can be identified, consider fee reductions or exemptions for projects in Impacted Communities that are consistent with the community objectives identified in their Community Profile.
- **PFS-A3.1:** Implement an equitable and standardized approach to property tax sharing with cities during the annexation process.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- **PFS-A3.2:** Regularly update development impact fees to ensure new development pays its fair share of infrastructure and service costs.
- **PFS-P4.1:** Support the goal of regional self-sufficiency as part of new water system planning efforts, where all regions in the state are required to implement a variety of local water supply options and institute conservation and reuse programs to reduce reliance on exports from the Delta.
- **PFS-P4.2:** Encourage water service providers to require separate service connections and meters for recycled water use or where large quantities of water are used for special purposes, such as landscape irrigation.
- **PFS-P4.3:** Support the State Water Resources Control Board's efforts to eliminate small public water systems in new development. Allow such systems only for projects that cannot feasibly be connected to a public water system.
- **PFS-P4.4:** Partner with water service providers to ensure continuity of service and provide financial relief to Impacted Communities if prices rise during drought conditions.
- **PFS-P4.5:** Require new development to demonstrate the availability of a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound water delivery system with adequate capacity.
- **PFS-P4.7:** Support CCWD's planned Phase 2 Expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir.

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The proposed CAP provides reduction strategies to minimize GHG emissions through water conservation, water-efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. Strategies and actions that pertain to water supply and conservation are listed here:

Strategy DR-1: Reduce indoor and outdoor water use.

Strategy DR-1 Actions:

- Require new development to reduce potable water consumption through use of water-efficient devices and technology, drought-tolerant landscaping strategies, and recycled water, where available. (COS-P7.1)
- Require homes and businesses to install water-efficient fixtures at time of retrofit activities, in accordance with the California Building Standards Code.
- Continue to enforce the Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance and encourage the use of native and drought-tolerant landscaping for exempt residential and commercial landscapes through partnership with local and regional water agencies and other organizations.
- Partner with water and wastewater service providers, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, irrigation districts, and private well owners to increase participation in water conservation programs countywide. (COS-P7.2)
- Facilitate offering of BayREN water bill savings programs through eligible community water providers.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- Encourage the installation of graywater and rainwater catchment systems, particularly for new construction, as feasible for wastewater infrastructure. Reduce regulatory barriers for these systems and explore creating incentives for installing these systems in new and existing buildings.
- Identify opportunities for graywater use in public spaces and implement them as feasible.
- Promote the installation of composting toilets at appropriate County facilities in locations without wastewater service.

Strategy DR-2: Ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies.

Strategy DR-2 Actions:

- Encourage Contra Costa Health to work with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies to ensure that new well permit applications are in accordance with County ordinances and State construction standards and require a hydrogeological evaluation in areas with known water shortages to ensure that the sustainable yield goals can be met.
- Require new development to demonstrate the availability of a safe, sanitary, and environmentally sound water delivery and wastewater treatment systems with adequate capacity. (PFS-P4.5, PFS-P4.6)
- Discourage new development that may reasonably lead to groundwater overdraft, subsidence, or other negative impacts, or which may reasonably depend on the import of unsustainable quantities of water from outside the county.
- Require the use of permeable surfaces for new or reconstructed hardscaped areas.
- In coordination with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, expand opportunities for groundwater recharge.
- Work with water suppliers to expand recycled water systems as feasible, including considering additional treatment to allow for additional recycled water uses.

Strategy BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated county, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels.

Strategy BE-2 Action:

- Create a County policy or program to facilitate making existing residential and nonresidential buildings more energy-efficient and powered by carbon-free energy. (COS-A14.6)
- Require replacement and new water heaters and space heating and cooling systems to be electric if the building electric panel has sufficient capacity in accordance with BAAQMD Regulation 9, Rule 4, and Regulation 9, Rule 6. (COS-P14.10)
- Create a detailed roadmap to convert existing homes and businesses to use low- or zero-carbon appliances. The roadmap should include steps to support converting buildings to rely on low- or zero-carbon energy using an equitable framework that minimizes the risk of displacement or significant disruptions to existing tenants. (COS-A14.7)

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- Evaluate options for incentivizing and requiring additions and alterations to be energy efficient and to achieve the lowest feasible levels of GHG emissions, including upgrades to the building electric panel, as needed. (COS-P14.8)
- Ensure County-led and supported retrofit programs incentivize and prioritize conversion of buildings built before 1980 and emphasize assistance to owners of properties that are home to very low-, low-, and moderate- income residents and/or in Impacted Communities, as permitted by available funding. (COS-A14.9)
- Explore opportunities, in collaboration with partner agencies, to create new incentives or publicize existing ones to support updating existing buildings to achieve the lowest feasible levels of GHG emissions.
- Work to continue to obtain funding with partners such as BayREN and MCE to implement a program or programs to provide reduced-cost or free energy-efficiency and zero-carbon retrofits to local small businesses and households earning less than the area median income, in support of the Contra Costa County Asthma Initiative, Contra Costa County Weatherization Program, similar County programs, other nonprofit partners, and other health equity efforts for Impacted Communities. Support the use of low-emitting materials, including paints and carpeting, in retrofits to improve indoor air quality.
- In partnership with MCE and BayREN, continue to support voluntary home and business energy efficiency retrofits, including all-electric measures.
- Facilitate participation by homes and businesses in demand response programs.
- Continue to conduct energy and water tracking activities, audits, and upgrades of County facilities, including conversion of feasible County facilities to all-electric space and water heating.
- Advocate for modifications to the federal Weatherization Assistance Program that expand eligible measures to include whole building clean energy improvements, such as wall insulation, duct sealing, electric panel upgrades, electric heat pumps, and related measures. Advocate for an increase in the income eligibility limits for the Weatherization Assistance Program.
- Implement requirements for cool roofs and light-colored, nonreflective permeable paving materials as part of retrofit, repair, and replacement activities, using recycled materials or other materials with low embedded carbon as feasible and as established by the Building Standards Code.

5.17.2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.17-2: Water supply and delivery systems are adequate to meet project requirements. [Threshold U-3]

Proposed General Plan

Both EBMUD and CCWD, who are the largest water purveyors in the county, project population increases within the county that exceed the horizon-year projection of the proposed General Plan. In the EBMUD 2020 UWMP, a population increase of 79,000 is projected within the county's service area between 2020 and 2040, and the CCWD 2020 UWMP projects a population increase of 236,110 within its service area between 2020

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

and 2045. These numbers are much greater than the projected horizon-year population increase of 65,600 from the proposed General Plan.

CCWD states in the 2020 UWMP that they have sufficient supplies to meet water demands as both a wholesale and retail water provider for normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years through 2045. CCWD prepares an Annual Water Supply and Demand Assessment to identify potential shortages and recommend response actions, as appropriate. The District evaluates weather data, CVP allocation estimates, and demand projections to determine what demand management measures should be implemented. The 2020 UWMP also includes a Water Shortage Contingency Plan that would be implemented in the event of a drought and/or CVP water supply reductions.

CCWD is in the process of updating the 2015 Contra Costa Water District Treated Water Master Plan to evaluate its existing water distribution system as well as its pumping and storage capacity to address future needs. The updated report will also recommend and prioritize capital improvement programs to ensure that the system will meet future water demands. CCWD is evaluating an Industrial Recycled Water Project to deliver up to 3,400 AFY to major industrial customers. CCWD is also investigating long-term water transfer options to meet multiple-dry year shortfalls. And CCWD continues to implement its water conservation and rebate programs.

The EBMUD 2020 UWMP shows that water supplies will exceed the demand through 2050 for both normal and single dry years. However, in the third year of a drought, the demand would exceed the supply. Under these conditions, various measures would be implemented to ensure that all of EBMUD's customers have a reliable water supply. EBMUD prepares a preliminary Water Supply Availability and Deficiency report by March 1 of each year, evaluating the adequacy of that year's water supply. These reports inform decisions by EBMUD regarding whether to declare a water shortage emergency and implement a drought management plan, institute mandatory water use restrictions, and/or obtain supplemental water supplies. EBMUD has a comprehensive Drought Management Plan that is implemented under extended drought conditions.

In addition, EBMUD is working on implementing a number of programs and projects to improve the reliability of its water supply, including:

- Bayside Groundwater Project
- Groundwater banking and exchange program with eastern San Joaquin County
- Water transfer program with Placer County Water Agency, Yuba County Water Agency, and Sycamore Mutual Water Company
- Expansion of surface water storage facilities
- Bay Area Regional Desalination Project
- Bay Area Regional Reliability Project
- Expansion of its recycling water network and supplies

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

The other cities and water purveyors within the county also have 2020 UWMPs and water master plans that describe the upgrades and expansions of their water distribution and treatment systems to address future increases in population and climate change impacts. Each UWMP also contains a water shortage contingency plan to address potential shortages in future water supplies and implement demand reduction strategies.

In addition, the water purveyors in the UWMPs have assumed increases in their service populations that are higher than the projected horizon-year increase from the proposed General Plan. The projected growth for the proposed General Plan will be distributed throughout the county and within various service areas of the 14 water purveyors. Because the horizon-year growth projection for the proposed General Plan is less than the projected growth in the service areas of the water purveyors, no new water treatment facilities or water distribution systems beyond what is described in the UWMPs would be necessary. Also, compliance with the County's requirements for new construction and water-efficient landscaping, combined with implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and actions listed, would further reduce potential impacts, resulting in less than significant impacts with respect to the need for new and/or expanded water facilities.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP provides estimates of GHG emissions in the water and wastewater sectors and accounts for the increase in emissions with implementation of the proposed General Plan as both residential and employment populations increase. It also provides reduction strategies to minimize this increase in GHG emissions through water conservation, water-efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. The strategies and actions in the proposed CAP include measures to reduce indoor and outdoor water use, ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies, and implement water use audits at County facilities. Implementation of the proposed CAP would further reduce water demand as compared to the analysis provided. Therefore, the proposed CAP would not require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-2 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-2 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Impact 5.17-3: The proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. [Thresholds U-4]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed General Plan would result in 7,100 new single-family residences and 16,100 new multi-family residences, as well as 1.2 million square feet of commercial and office space and 5.0 million square feet of industrial space. The projected increase in population is much less than the projected population increases in the EBMUD and CCWD 2020 UWMPs.

The increase in water demand with implementation of the proposed General Plan is provided in Table 5.17-5. The water demand for the single-family and multi-family residential units was based on an indoor water demand of 55 gallons per capita per day (gpcd), which is the current requirement in the California Water Code for water purveyors to meet by 2023. It was assumed that there would be 2.83 people per household and that outdoor water use would be 33 percent of the total water demand for single-family homes and 14 percent of the total water demand for multi-family homes. This results in a total water demand of 223 gpd/du for single-family residences and 181 gpd/du for multi-family residences. For the commercial/office and industrial land use categories, the water demand factors were taken from CCWD's 2015 Treated Water Master Plan.

Table 5.17-5 Net Increase in Water Demand with Proposed General Plan				
Land Use	Number of Dwelling Units	Water Demand Factor (gpd/du)¹	Total Water Demand (gpd)	Total Water Demand (AFY)
Single-Family Residential	7,100	223	1,583,300	1,774
Multi-Family Residential	16,100	181	2,914,100	3,264
	Non-Residential Square Feet	Non-Residential Acres	Water Demand Factor (AF/ac/yr)²	Total Water Demand (AFY)
Commercial/Office	1,200,000	27.5	2.48	68
Industrial	5,000,000	115	0.10	11.5
TOTAL				5,117.5

Sources: PlaceWorks 2023, EBMUD 2020 UWMP, 2015 CCWD Treated Water Master Plan Update

¹ Water demand factors based on future indoor water demand of 55 gpcd, as per the California Water Code, assuming 2.83 people per household, and assuming outdoor water demand is 33% of the total water demand for single-family residences and 14% of the total water demand for multifamily residences, as per the EBMUD 2020 UWMP.

² Water demand factor for commercial and industrial uses from the 2015 CCWD Treated Water Master Plan.

The projected water demand increase with implementation of the proposed General Plan is estimated to be 5,118 AFY. In comparing the 2045 water supply to water demand from the various UWMPs, as shown in Table 5.17-4, there is a surplus of available water of 22,218 AFY. Therefore, the water purveyors would be able to accommodate the projected increase in water demand with implementation of the proposed General Plan. In addition, the projected growth would occur gradually between 2020 and 2045. Also, the growth within the county would be dispersed among the various water purveyors' service areas and therefore impacts to each water purveyor's water supplies would be minor.

Additionally, future development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would be required to implement the water-efficient requirements specified in the CALGreen and California Plumbing Codes and the MWELO requirements for water-efficient landscaping. Future projects that meet the criteria under California Water Code

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Section 10912 would be required to prepare a WSA that demonstrates that project water demands would not exceed water supplies. In addition, residential, commercial, and industrial water usage can be expected to decrease in the future as a result of the implementation of water conservation practices. In the case of a water shortage, each water purveyor would implement their Water Shortage Contingency Plan, as described in the 2020 UWMPs. Also, the proposed General Plan policies and actions presented in Section 5.17.2.3 would further reduce future water demands.

In summary, future development associated with the proposed General Plan would not result in a shortage of water supplies. In addition, compliance with the County's Code requirements for new construction and adherence to the proposed General Plan policies and actions will reduce future water demands, and impacts associated with water supply would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As discussed in Impact 5.15-2, the proposed CAP provides strategies to minimize increases in GHG emissions by implementing water conservation, water-efficient retrofits, water-wise landscaping, and graywater and recycled water programs. The strategies and actions also include measures to reduce indoor and outdoor water use, ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies, and implement water use audits at County facilities. Implementation of the proposed CAP would further reduce water demand as compared to the analysis provided. Therefore, the proposed CAP would not adversely affect water supplies and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-3 would be less than significant.

5.17.2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The area considered for cumulative impacts is all of Contra Costa County, including all the water purveyors and water treatment facilities that serve residents and businesses throughout the county. Future projects within the county would result in increases in water demand. However, the analysis provided in Impact 5.17-3 and summarized in Table 5.17-5 indicates that there are sufficient water supplies within the county's service area to serve all of its residents and businesses through 2045 with the projected growth under the proposed General Plan.

Projects that meet the SB 610 criteria, such as residential projects with more than 500 dwelling units, would be required to prepare WSAs. All new development under the proposed General Plan would be required to conserve water and implement water efficiency measures, as per the CALGreen Building Code and the MWEL irrigation requirements. Water supply deficits in dry years would be met by implementing the Water Shortage Contingency Plans of the water purveyors and other water conservation efforts. Existing regulations

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

would result in a reduction in per capita water use over time, which would ensure that cumulative impacts with respect to water service would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.17.2.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.2.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.17.2.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.3 Storm Drainage Systems

5.17.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

The regulatory framework for stormwater is described in detail in Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of this Draft EIR. The regulatory requirements that pertain solely to storm drain systems are repeated here.

Federal

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, all facilities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States are required to obtain an NPDES permit. Requirements for stormwater discharges are also regulated under this program. As previously described, the county is within the jurisdiction of two RWQCBs. The western half of the county is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2) and is subject to the waste discharge requirements of the recently revised Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (Order No. R2-2022-0018), which became effective on July 1, 2022. Although the eastern half of the county is within the boundaries of the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5), an agreement between Region 2 and Region 5 was enacted for consistency in permit compliance and the eastern portion of Contra Costa County is also under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB's MS4 permit (Central Valley RWQCB 2023).

Under Provision C.3 of the MS4 Permit, the permittees use their planning authorities to include appropriate source control, site design, and stormwater treatment measures in new development and redevelopment projects to address stormwater runoff pollutant discharges and prevent increases in runoff flows. This goal is accomplished primarily through the implementation of low impact development techniques.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

State

State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Permit

Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land must comply with the requirements of the SWRCB Construction General Permit (Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ), which was adopted in September 2022 and is effective as of September 1, 2023. Under the terms of the permit, applicants must file permit registration documents (PRD) with the SWRCB prior to the start of construction. The PRDs include a notice of intent, risk assessment, site map, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement. The PRDs are submitted electronically to the SWRCB via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System website.

Applicants must also demonstrate conformance with applicable BMPs and prepare a SWPPP containing a site map that shows the construction site perimeter, existing and proposed buildings, lots, roadways, stormwater collection, and discharge points, general topography both before and after construction, and drainage patterns across the project site. The SWPPP must list BMPs that would be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources. Additionally, the SWPPP must contain a weekly visual monitoring program and BMP inspections prior to, during, and after qualifying precipitation events. Water quality monitoring is also required with the schedule based on the risk level of the project site.

State Water Resources Control Board's Trash Amendments

On April 7, 2014, the SWQCB adopted an amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California to control trash. In addition, the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California added the section, Part 1: Trash Provisions. Together, they are collectively referred to as “the Trash Amendments.” The purpose of the Trash Amendments is to provide statewide consistency for the RWQCBs in their regulatory approach to protect aquatic life, protect public health beneficial uses, and reduce environmental issues associated with trash in State waters, while focusing limited resources on high trash-generating areas (SWRCB 2015).

The Trash Amendments apply to all Phase I and II permittees under the NPDES MS4 permits. Compliance with the Trash Amendments requires municipalities to install certified trash treatment control systems on all catch basins no later than December 2, 2030 (SWRCB 2023).

Local

Contra Costa County Clean Water Program

The Contra Costa Clean Water Program (CCCWP) is a consortium of Contra Costa County, 17 cities, two towns and the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. These are all agencies named as permittees in the San Francisco Bay RWQCB's MS4 permit. The CCCWP offices are in the County's Public Works Division and the CCCWP assists permittees by conducting some MS4-mandated activities on a countywide level, participating in funding for regional and statewide stormwater-related programs, and assisting in the preparation of annual reports to the RWQCB. The CCCWP also publishes the Stormwater C.3 Guidebook, which was revised in December 2022 for consistency with the latest MS4 permit. The Stormwater

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

C.3 Guidebook provides the requirements for new development and redevelopment projects that create or replace more than 2,500 square feet of impervious surface to implement site design measures, source control measures, and stormwater treatment measures, depending on the size and regulatory status of the project. The CCCWP website also provides an updated Stormwater Control Plan (SCP) template that is consistent with the Stormwater C.3 Guidebook, 8th Edition (CCCWP 2023).

Contra Costa County Flood Control and Conservation District

The mission of the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (FCD) is to reduce flood risk, promote stormwater quality, and restore and enhance natural resources for the communities throughout the county (FCD 2023a). The FCD carries out its responsibility by planning and constructing the major storm drainage facilities in Flood Control Zones (entire watershed areas) and in Drainage Areas (sub-watershed areas). The FCD uses Drainage Areas as the primary method of planning and implementing flood-control facilities. Funding of Drainage Area projects is primarily through development fees. Most of the major storm drain facilities within the county are owned by the FCD. The FCD website provides documents and guidance for determining design storm events, stormwater runoff amounts and volumes, and storm drain capacity evaluation for new development and development projects (FCD 2023b).

The Hydrology Section of the FCD collects, analyzes, and reports on rainfall and storm runoff data from a system of rain gauges and several stream flow meters. The Current Development Section reviews environmental reports and comments on the impacts of the proposed project to regional drainage and FCD facilities.

Contra Costa County Dewatering Permits

For new development in areas with shallow groundwater, construction dewatering may be required. Temporary dewatering wells are regulated under Section 414-4.801 of the Contra Costa County Well Ordinance. All dewatering wells shall be constructed and abandoned by a licensed C-57 water well contractor. Prior to construction of a dewatering well, a permit shall be obtained from Contra Costa County Environmental Health in accordance with the Contra Costa County Well Ordinance. The application, along with a fee submittal, must contain a dewatering well schematic, plot map showing setback distances from sources of contamination, the discharge location for the collected groundwater, and how long the wells will be active. Uncontaminated groundwater may be discharged to the sanitary sewer system subject to water quality testing, sewer capacity calculations, and requirements of the municipalities within the county.

Contra Costa County Design Standards

The construction of storm drain systems within the county shall conform to the County's General Drainage Design Standards for storm drain details and inlet design; the General Drainage – Flood Control Channels for rock slope protection and concrete “V” ditches; and the General Landscaping – Flood Control Channels for landscaping design and limits on creek and channel embankments (Contra Costa County Public Works 2023).

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Division 74 Building Code

Chapter 74-6, *Permits, Drainage and Streets*, provides drainage facility requirements and requires a drainage plan to be prepared for any building, structure, or improvement that requires a building permit and results in an impervious surface of 1,000 feet or more; involves grading or removal of vegetation of more than 10,000 square feet; is subject to local ponding; is in a special flood hazard area; or involves land disturbance or structure placement within 100 feet of the top bank of any watercourse.

Division 716 - Grading

Article 716-8.6, *Drainage*, under Title 7, *Building Regulations*, describes the general requirements for storm drain structures, systems, and facilities. All drainage facilities shall be designed to carry surface water to the nearest street, storm drain, or natural watercourse, as approved by the County Building Official. The article also contains criteria for site drainage, terrace drainage, overflow protection, and maintenance of the drainage facilities.

Division 914 - Drainage

Division 914, *Drainage*, under Title 9, *Subdivisions*, provides the requirements for drainage facilities that are in subdivisions. Section 914-2.010 establishes the required design capacities for major drainage facilities (four square miles or greater), secondary drainage facilities (between one and four square miles), and minor drainage facilities (less than one square mile). Chapter 914.4 pertains to natural watercourses, Chapter 914-6 provides design criteria for open channels and ditches, and Chapter 914-8 describes design criteria for closed conduits, piping, and storm drain inlets.

Division 1014 - Stormwater Management and Discharge Control

Division 1014, *Stormwater Management and Discharge Control*, provides the conditions and requirements for compliance with the County's MS4 permit issued by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB. The goal of this ordinance is to eliminate illicit discharges to the stormwater system, minimize increases in non-point source pollution, reduce stormwater runoff rates and volumes through stormwater management controls for new development, and promote no adverse impact policies as developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Contra Costa County Drainage Area Fee Ordinance

This ordinance is not codified in the Ordinance Code but is enacted by the County Board of Supervisors as the governing body of the FCD. It requires payment of Drainage Area fees before filing the final map for new subdivisions or prior to the issuance of a building permit on an existing lot. Fees are paid directly to the FCD or via cities per fee collection agreements. Fees are based on the cost of the proposed Drainage Area improvements and the expected increase in impervious surfaces created by the project. The purpose of the Drainage Area fees is to generate funds for the construction of storm drain infrastructure in a manner equitable to the land use's impact and to address current and future needs of the residents and businesses in the county. Developers can construct portions of the planned infrastructure as credit to their fee obligation as per the Drainage Area Credit and Reimbursement Policy.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Existing Conditions

The storm drain infrastructure and flood control facilities within the county are managed by the FCD. The FCD covers all of Contra Costa County, including its cities, and manages approximately 79 miles of channels, creeks, and other drainages and 30 detention basins and dams. Many municipalities within Contra Costa County also maintain their own storm drain systems and have developed storm drain master plans and green infrastructure plans. Detailed information regarding levees and flood control facilities is provided in Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.

The FCD was formed in 1951 and offers regional flood protection, primarily funded through property taxes and developer fees. There are several divisions within the FCD that are involved in various aspects of stormwater and floodplain management (FCD 2023c):

- Watershed Planning & Engineering
 - Identify and plan for long range flood protection solutions
 - Design and build regional drainage systems that encompass the county and cities
 - Establish and update developer fees for regional drainage systems
 - Collaborate with federal, State, and local partners on large flood control projects
- Watershed Program (unincorporated county)
 - Design and manage programs to reduce stormwater pollution from sources such as sediment, trash, pesticides, and hydrocarbons
 - Promote pollution prevention awareness
 - Support local non-profit creek groups
 - Promote community pride in the county's creeks
- Current Development
 - Review development applications and coordinate regional drainage systems in the county and cities
 - Manage developer-financed drainage systems
 - Issue drainage permits for work on Flood Control District property and County drainage systems
 - Respond to drainage complaints in the unincorporated county
- Maintenance
 - Maintain and repair Flood Control District channels, creeks, and detention basins
- Hydrology
 - Collect and analyze rainfall and stream flow data
 - Predict flood flows using computerized programs
 - Review flood flow studies

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- Floodplain Management (unincorporated county; FCD provides technical support to the County Floodplain Manager)
 - Ensure new development in flood prone areas meets FEMA standards
 - Participate in federal programs to reduce flood insurance premiums
 - Promote the creation and preservation of natural floodways

The county is divided into Flood Control Zones and smaller Drainage Areas. There are approximately 13 Flood Control Zones. The Flood Control Zones involve large, regional drainage infrastructure, which is typically built in partnership with federal or state agencies that provide partial funding, such as the US Army Corps of Engineers. Every resident within a Flood Control Zone pays a small portion of their annual property tax for the FCD to construct new projects and maintain existing infrastructure.

On a smaller scale, Contra Costa County is also divided into Drainage Areas. Within each drainage area, the County imposes a Drainage Area fee on new development to fund that development's share of improvements required to address drainage demands within the Drainage Area. This is a type of development impact fee. There are currently about 53 Drainage Areas for which fees are collected in the county, although the exact number may vary from year to year (FCD 2023d). Figure 5.17-3, *Regional Drainage Infrastructure*, shows the Flood Control Zones and Drainage Areas for Contra Costa County.

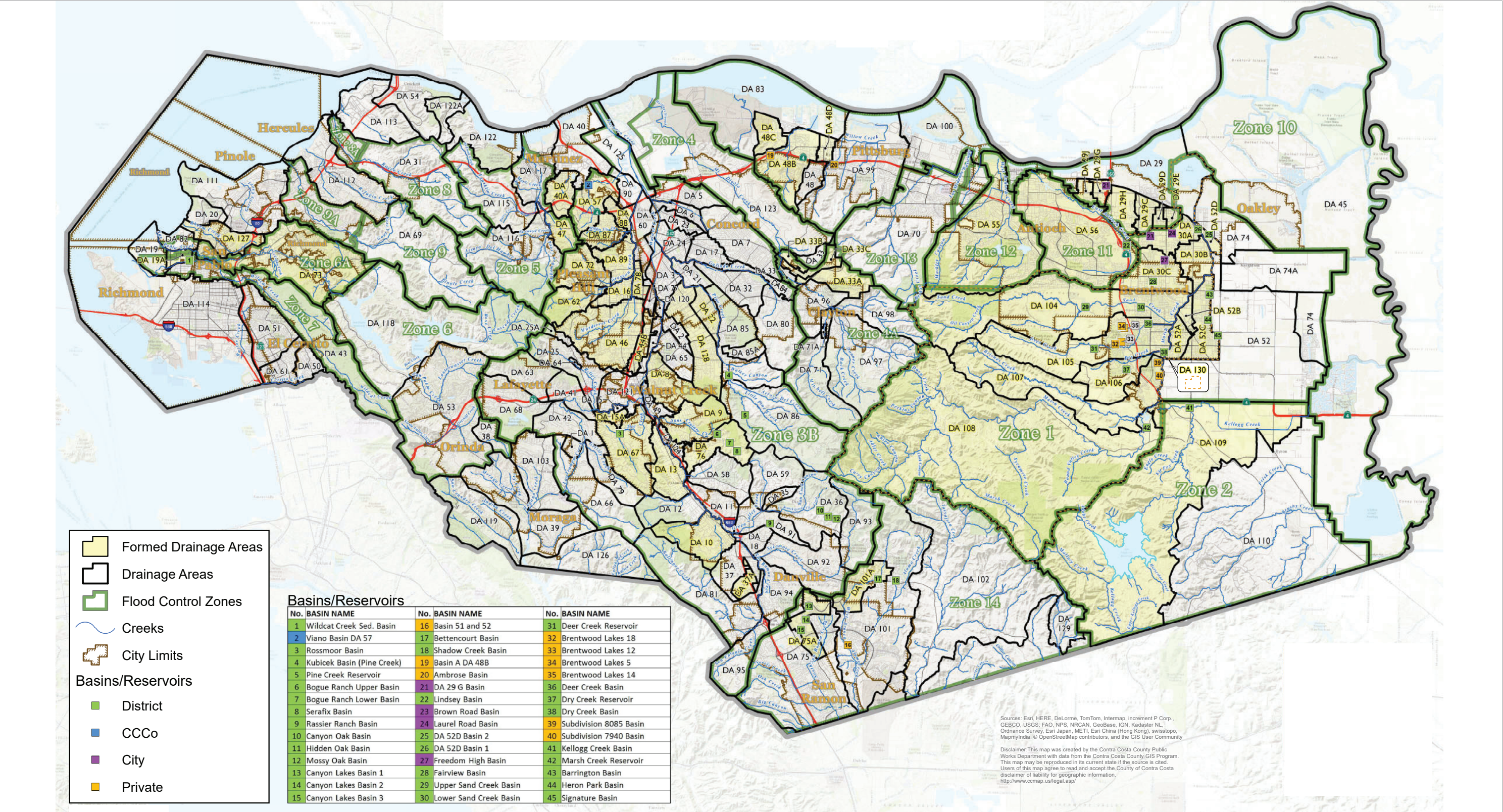
The FCD has prepared a 2021 Flood Control Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with a total of 29 projects and an investment of over \$56 million over the next seven years (FCD 2023d). The proposed projects include seismic assessments of reservoirs, levee rehabilitation, sediment removal from channels and creeks, sediment basin desilting, drainage plan updates, and storm drain infrastructure improvements.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This page intentionally left blank.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS



Source: Contra Costa County, 2015.



Figure 5.17-3
Regional Drainage Infrastructure

5. Environmental Analysis
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

5.17.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- U-5 Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

5.17.3.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to storm drainage systems. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **PFS-P5.1:** Support public and private efforts to improve protection against flooding, subsidence, and inundation, especially projects that achieve 200-year flood protection or better, factoring in anticipated sea-level rise, in areas of the county covered by the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan.
- ***PFS-P5.2:*** *Partner with responsible parties, public and private, to ensure ongoing funding exists for maintenance and rehabilitation of flood management facilities and structures (e.g., levees, pump stations, canals, channels, and dams), particularly those that do not meet adopted State or federal flood-protection standards.*
- **PFS-P5.3:** Allow for future height increases to private levees protecting inland areas from tidal flooding and sea-level rise by requiring rights-of-way and setbacks to be sufficiently wide on the levee's upland side and prohibiting new structures from being constructed on top of or immediately adjacent to the levee.
- **PFS-P5.4:** Support material stockpiling and equipment staging for emergency levee repair, especially in the western Delta.
- **PFS-P5.5:** Encourage new development to participate in programs that ensure ongoing maintenance of natural watercourses to maintain their flood carrying capacity and habitat values.
- ***PFS-P5.6:*** *When developing new or revised regional drainage and flood management plans, including plans to protect against sea-level rise, incorporate adequate setbacks and alternative drainage system improvements that provide aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits. Improvements should avoid structural modifications to watercourses and preserve riparian habitat and floodplains, and convert engineered drainage systems to more natural systems, when and where possible. In areas at risk of temporary or permanent inundation from sea-level rise, ensure that improvements can continue to provide adequate protection for the projected level of inundation by 2100 or the expected operational life of the project, whichever is later.*
- **PFS-P5.7:** Incorporate green infrastructure into new and retrofitted flood-control and streetscaping projects, including replacing existing asphalt and other hardscapes with green infrastructure, as feasible.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- **PFS-P5.8:** Encourage developers of properties along transit corridors and in commercial areas to combine their private stormwater treatment facilities with green infrastructure on the adjoining street frontage.
- **PFS-P5.9:** Encourage public participation in design processes for major flood control and sea-level-rise resiliency projects to ensure that these facilities are context-sensitive and provide multiple public benefits whenever possible.
- **PFS-A5.1:** *Identify existing developed areas where drainage maintenance issues exist and coordinate with each affected community to consider creating a benefit assessment district or similar local funding mechanism to pay for improvement and maintenance needs.*
- **PFS-A5.2:** Coordinate with responsible parties, public and private, to develop a flood management plan for the levee systems protecting the unincorporated county that:
 - (a) Identifies the entities responsible for operation and maintenance of the levees.
 - (b) Determines the anticipated flood levels in the adjacent waterways and the level of protection offered by the existing levees along the waterways.
 - (c) Establishes a long-term plan to upgrade the system as necessary to provide at least a 100-year level of flood protection, and 200-year level of flood protection where required.
 - (d) Considers the worst-case situations of high tides coupled with sea-level rise and storm-driven waves.
 - (e) Protects beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay and the Delta and their water.
 - (f) Prioritizes designs that foster riparian habitat while containing floodwaters, such as by using more natural materials, landforms, and vegetation, rather than concrete channels and other conventional flood-control infrastructure.
 - (g) Encourages multipurpose flood-management projects that, where feasible, incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat, and scenic values of waterways.
 - (h) Takes a holistic approach to flood-risk management so that new infrastructure does not simply transfer flooding impacts from one property or location to another.
 - (i) Considers flood and tidal impacts to existing brownfields, especially adjacent to shorelines.
 - (j) Includes provisions for updates to reflect future State or federally mandated levels of flood protection.
- **PFS-A5.3:** *Develop watershed management plans incorporating best management practices that slow, spread, and sink water runoff to flatten the hydrograph (i.e., water flow over time) where erosion is a concern, while also enhancing wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities where feasible.*
- **PFS-A5.4:** Establish programs for development projects alongside natural watercourses that ensure regular maintenance of the waterway, including debris removal, erosion control, and conservation and restoration of native species.
- **PFS-A5.5:** Coordinate with the Contra Costa County Mosquito and Vector Control District to identify and remedy areas with ongoing drainage problems to reduce disease risk from stagnant water.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The proposed CAP provides strategies to minimize increases in GHG emissions and has applicable actions related to water conservation and solid waste management strategies. However, there are no specific strategies or actions pertaining to stormwater infrastructure in the proposed CAP.

5.17.3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.17-4: Existing and/or proposed storm drainage systems are adequate to serve the drainage requirements of the proposed project. [Threshold U-5]

Proposed General Plan

New development, redevelopment, and changes in land uses under the proposed General Plan would result in an increase in impervious surfaces, which in turn could result in an increase in stormwater runoff, higher peak discharges to drainage channels, and the potential to cause nuisance flooding in areas without adequate drainage facilities. However, municipalities within the county have storm drain master plans, green infrastructure plans, and capital improvement programs that account for future development and expansion of the storm drain system, as needed. Also, the FCD has detailed Flood Control Zone and Drainage Area maps that are used to evaluate future development plans within each zone or area and determine if the existing storm drainage infrastructure is adequate to accommodate the proposed project. The schedule and costs for the construction of new drainage projects and maintenance of existing storm drain infrastructure is described in the CIP and is funded by property taxes and development impact fees in each Flood Control Zone or Drainage Area.

In addition, all future development that involves the disturbance of one acre or more of land would be subject to NPDES construction permit requirements, including preparation of a SWPPP, which includes BMPs to limit the discharge of sediment and non-stormwater discharges from the project site. Also, all regulated projects that create or replace 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface would be required to implement site design, source control, and stormwater treatment and runoff measures using specific numeric sizing criteria based on the volume and flow rate of stormwater that is generated. Each project undergoes review by County personnel to ensure that the regulatory requirements for temporary on-site stormwater runoff retention have been met. New projects are also subject to storm drainage impact fees, which are used to fund new storm drain infrastructure within the county.

With the implementation of these provisions for future development, there would not be significant increases in stormwater runoff that would exceed the existing and planned future capacity of the storm drain infrastructure beyond what is already accounted for in the CIPs of the municipalities within the county and the FCD. The construction of new stormwater facilities through the CIP and storm drain impact fees, implementation of BMPs and on-site stormwater control measures, and preparation of the required documents and review by the County would serve to minimize any potential impacts associated with stormwater.

Also, as described previously, the Public Facilities and Services Element of the proposed General Plan contains policies and actions that consider impacts to storm drain infrastructure and would minimize potential adverse impacts on stormwater discharge. Compliance with and implementation of these proposed General Plan

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

policies and actions that ensure adequate infrastructure, combined with the regulatory provisions in the MS4 permit that limit runoff from new development, would further ensure that the implementation of the proposed General Plan would not result in significant increases in runoff and would therefore not contribute to the construction of new storm drain facilities or expansion of existing facilities that would cause significant environmental impacts. In addition, the County would continue to repair, rehabilitate, and upgrade the storm drain system through implementation of the CIP program funded through the property taxes and developer impact fees. Therefore, impacts with respect to stormwater infrastructure would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a strategic plan focused on GHG emissions reduction, including through strategies and actions that reduce emissions in the water and wastewater sectors. However, there are no sections in the proposed CAP that specifically address stormwater other than strategies to increase park space, tree plantings, and vegetation, which would reduce the volume of stormwater runoff. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP, would not require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-4 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-4 would be less than significant.

5.17.3.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The analysis of cumulative storm drain impacts considers future development within the watersheds that encompass all of Contra Costa County. Cumulative projects could result in an incremental increase in impervious surfaces that could increase stormwater runoff and impact existing storm drain facilities. However, all cumulative projects would be required to comply with City and County ordinances and the MS4 permit, while projects within the unincorporated county would also be subject to proposed General Plan policies actions, which would minimize stormwater runoff.

Development within the county would require conformance with State and County policies that would reduce hydrology and infrastructure construction impacts to less than significant levels. Any new development in the unincorporated county would be subject to proposed General Plan policies and actions and County ordinances, design guidelines, and other applicable County requirements that reduce impacts related to hydrology and stormwater drainage facilities. More specifically, potential changes related to stormwater flows, drainage, impervious surfaces, and flooding would be minimized by the implementation of stormwater control measures, retention, infiltration, and low-impact-development measures and review by the FCD to integrate measures to reduce potential stormwater drainage and flooding impacts.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

The water quality regulations implemented by the SWRCB and the San Francisco Bay RWQCB take a basin-wide approach and consider water quality impairment in a regional context. For example, the NPDES Construction Permit ties receiving water limitations and basin plan objectives to terms and conditions of the permit, and the MS4 Permit also applies to Contra Costa County to manage stormwater systems and be collectively protective of water quality. For these reasons, impacts from future development within the county related to stormwater infrastructure construction are not cumulatively considerable.

In combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, projected development and redevelopment associated with the proposed General Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to stormwater infrastructure.

5.17.3.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.3.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.17.3.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.4 Solid Waste

5.17.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 addresses the large volumes of municipal and industrial solid waste generated nationwide. The RCRA gives the USEPA the authority to control hazardous waste from “cradle to grave.” This includes the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. The RCRA also sets forth a framework for the management of nonhazardous solid wastes.

The 1984 Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments focus on waste minimization and phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste as well as corrective action for releases. Most of the compliance monitoring responsibility is delegated to the states and local authorities (USEPA 2023).

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

State

California Integrated Waste Management Act

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Public Resources Code Sections 42900–42927), also known as AB 939, established an integrated waste management system that focused on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 required all California cities and counties to reduce the volume of waste deposited in landfills by 50 percent by the year 2000. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates. Actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions within the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act also requires each California city and county to prepare, adopt, and submit to the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE) that demonstrates how the jurisdiction will meet the act's mandated diversion goals. Each jurisdiction's SRRE must include specific components, as defined in Public Resources Code Sections 41003 and 41303, and include a program for management of solid waste that is consistent with the following hierarchy: (1) source reduction, (2) recycling and composting, and (3) environmentally safe transformation and land disposal. Each jurisdiction must also prepare and submit a Household Hazardous Waste Element and a Non-disposal Facility Element, which describes transfer stations and diversion facilities. Counties must also submit a Countywide Siting Element that describes areas that may be used for developing new disposal facilities and strategies to determine how excess solid waste will be handled if the landfills within the jurisdiction do not have the capacity for a 15-year disposal period (CalRecycle 2023a).

Mandatory Commercial Recycling Act (AB 341)

AB 341 (Chapter 476) increased the statewide waste diversion goal to 75 percent by 2020, and mandates recycling for businesses producing four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week or multi-family residential dwellings of five or more units. AB 341 is designed to reduce GHG emissions in the state by 5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. In Contra Costa County, composting and recycling services are provided by Republic Services.

Mandatory Organics Recycling Act (AB 1826)

AB 1826, which was enacted in 2014, mandates organic waste recycling for businesses and multi-family dwellings with five or more units. Starting January 1, 2020, all generators of 2 cubic yards or more of garbage, recycling, and compost combined per week must recycle organic waste. Organic waste includes food scraps, food-soiled paper waste, yard trimmings, and landscape materials. Organic waste can be recycled through composting, mulching, and anaerobic digestion which produces renewable energy and fuel. In addition to recycling food scraps, donating surplus food to local food banks can be part of the AB 1826 compliance effort. Multi-family dwellings do not need to have food-waste recycling on-site but must recycle yard and landscape materials. Republic Services offers these services to businesses and residences within the county to comply with the requirements of AB 1826.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

California Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Act (Senate Bill 1383)

SB 1383 focuses on the elimination of methane gas created by organic materials in landfills and set targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the statewide disposal of organic waste by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. Organic waste makes up half of what Californians send to landfills. SB 1383 requires all businesses and residents to divert organic materials (including food waste, yard waste, and soiled paper products) from the landfill. The regulation took effect on January 1, 2022, and will require that organics collection service be provided to all residents and businesses. Also, an edible food recovery program must be established by 2025 with the goal of recovering edible food for human consumption (CalRecycle 2023b).

California Single Use Foodware Act (AB 1276)

AB 1276 was enacted in 2021 and requires all retail food facilities and food delivery services to provide single-use foodware items on request only. This law was established to reduce the amount of waste generated by single-use items and to encourage consumers to choose reusables. Single-use items include utensils, condiment cups and packages, straws, and stirrers, including those made from bioplastics, compostable plastic, bamboo, and paper. As of June 1, 2022, all cities and counties must authorize an enforcement agency to issue violations for infractions.

California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act requires development projects to set aside areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials. The Act required CalRecycle to develop a model ordinance for adoption by any local agency relating to adequate areas for collection and loading of recyclable materials as part of development projects. Local agencies are required to adopt the model, or an ordinance of their own, governing adequate areas in development projects for collection and loading of recyclable materials.

CALGreen Building Code

The latest 2022 CALGreen Code became effective on January 1, 2023. Section 5.408, *Construction Waste Reduction Disposal and Recycling*, mandates that, in the absence of a more stringent local ordinance, a minimum of 65 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris must be recycled or salvaged. The Code requires applicants to prepare and submit a Construction Waste Management Plan, which is submitted to the County's Department of Conservation and Development for approval in the unincorporated areas of the county. A Supplemental Land Clearing Debris and Universal Waste Report is also required for non-residential projects (CCCD, 2023a).

Local

Contra Costa County Solid Waste and Recycling

The Solid Waste and Recycling Section within the Department of Conservation and Development oversees the collection of garbage, recycling, and organics in portions of the unincorporated county and implements programs to reduce solid waste disposal and promote reuse and recycling in accordance with the Integrated Waste Management Act and other applicable State laws (CCCD 2023b). The programs provided by the Solid Waste and Recycling Section include composting and gardening workshops, environmental action programs for schools, and resources to establish recycling market development zones. The County, in conjunction with

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

the City of Richmond, also established a North Richmond Waste & Recovery Mitigation Fee to help defray annual costs associated with the collection and disposal of illegally dumped waste within North Richmond and the surrounding area.

Contra Costa County Environmental Health

Contra Costa County Environmental Health is certified by the California Integrated Waste Management Board as the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) for solid waste in Contra Costa County (Contra Costa County Environmental Health 2023b). The LEA is responsible for ensuring that all solid waste disposal facilities and medical waste generators within the county comply with applicable local, State, and federal codes and regulations. This includes inspections and monitoring of transfer stations, composting facilities, and landfills, both active and closed.

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Division 418 - Refuse

Under Division 418, *Refuse*, of Title 4, *Health and Safety*, there are various chapters that apply to solid waste and refuse. Chapter 418-2, *Solid Waste Collection and Transportation*, provides the protocol and permits required to collect and transport solid waste within the county. Chapter 418-4, *Disposal Sites*, is also known as the Refuse Disposal Site Ordinance and provides the permits, procedures, fees, and inspection requirements for establishing and maintaining a refuse disposal site in the county. Chapter 418-5, *Franchises for Solid Waste Facilities*, addresses the requirements and agreements for the franchises that manage and operate solid waste disposal facilities and/or transfer stations. Chapter 418-6, *Mandatory Subscription*, states that every resident or business within the county must subscribe to a waste collection and disposal service. Chapter 418-7, *Franchises for Solid Waste Collection, Disposal, and/or Recycling Service*, specifies the requirements and agreement contracts between public agencies and the solid waste collection/recycling franchises.

Chapter 418-10, *Recycling Requirements for Landfill Disposal*, requires local agencies to comply with the Integrated Waste Management Act by developing and implementing recycling and source reduction programs, and emphasize programs for resource recovery of plastic waste. A local agency's recycling program shall be reviewed and recertified by the Board at least once every five years. Chapter 418-12, *Food Establishment Litter*, requires the owner or operator of a food establishment to be responsible for cleaning up litter, trash, or garbage originating from the food establishment within 400 feet of the boundaries of the premises. Chapter 418-16, *Safe Drug Disposal*, requires producers of pharmaceutical drugs to implement a safe drug disposal stewardship plan that provides free accessible disposal options for residents of the county, which could include drop off kiosks, mail back services, and/or take back events.

Chapter 418-18, *Environmentally Friendly Food Packaging*, prohibits polystyrene food service ware to be provided to any person by a retail food establishment or food vendor as of May 2020. The lease or rental of any County facility shall require the use of environmentally friendly food service ware, which is defined as single-use disposable containers or other products made from recyclable materials. Chapter 418-20, *Organic Waste Disposal Reduction*, regulates the handling of organic waste that is not within the jurisdictional boundaries of sanitary districts, community service districts, and public utility districts for the purpose of implementing the SB 1383 regulations. Organic waste generators must subscribe to an organic waste collection service or self-haul organic

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

waste to a high diversion organic waste processing facility. Commercial edible food generators must have a contract or written agreement with at least one food recovery organization or food recovery service and keep records of the amount of edible food collected and transported each month.

Chapter 74-4.006 – Amendments to the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code

The latest 2022 CALGreen Code is amended in Chapter 74-4.006, *Amendments to the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code*. The mandatory provisions of the CALGreen Code require that at least 65 percent by weight of construction and demolition debris be recycled, reused, or otherwise diverted from landfill disposal. Chapter 74-4.006 states that this mandatory requirement also applies to existing residential projects that increase the building area by 5,000 square feet or more, alter the existing structures by 5,000 square feet or more, or require a demolition permit. Exceptions apply to excavated soil and land-clearing debris. A construction waste management plan must be submitted to the County prior to issuance of building permits. Also, a final report containing supporting documentation of the quantity of each material type diverted or disposed must be submitted to the County prior to the final inspection.

Existing Conditions

Solid Waste Collection

In Contra Costa County, franchises approved by the County are mainly responsible for solid waste collection and disposal, and County government is responsible for planning, administration, and facility approval. The County, Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), and certain special districts enter into franchise agreements with private waste haulers to provide collection services. The County oversees solid waste management for about half of the unincorporated population, which is currently serviced by several franchise agreements.

Republic Services currently provides curbside trash collection, recycling, and organic waste collection for most of Contra Costa County. Republic Services of West Contra Costa County operates under the JPA of RecycleMore/West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority. Members of the JPA are El Cerrito, Richmond, San Pablo, Pinole, Hercules, and unincorporated areas in western Contra Costa County. Republic Services RecycleSmart provides services to central Contra Costa County, including the cities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Diablo, Danville, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, and Walnut Creek, under the auspices of the Central Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority. Republic Services of Unincorporated Contra Costa County serves the areas of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Canyon, Clyde, Morgan Territory, Pacheco, and unincorporated Concord and Pleasant Hill.

The eastern portion of Contra Costa County is primarily served by Mount Diablo Resource Recovery, which serves Bay Point, Bethel Island, Brentwood, Knightsen, Concord, Discovery Bay, Marsh Creek, Oakley, Pittsburg, and other unincorporated areas. San Ramon and the surrounding area is served by Alameda County Industries of San Ramon. A map of the waste collection service areas is provided as Figure 5.17-4, *Waste Collection Service Areas*.

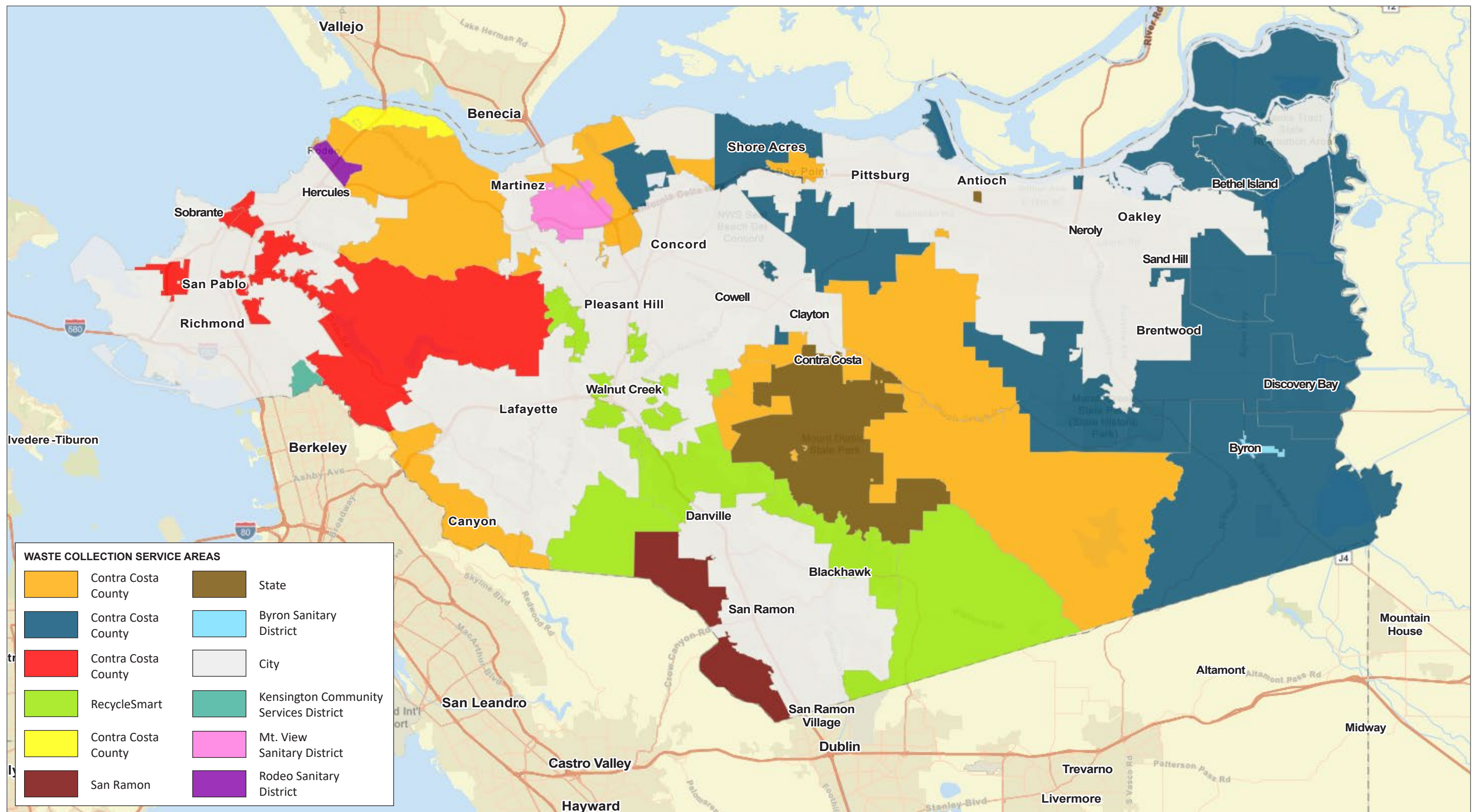
5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Landfills and Transfer Stations

There are six transfer stations and two landfills in Contra Costa County, as shown on Figure 5.17-5, *Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Facilities*. There also are ten composting facilities, three land application facilities, and one inert debris (construction and demolition material) crushing and grinding operation within the county. A list of the various facilities is provided in Table 5.17-6, *Active Solid Waste Facilities in Contra Costa County*.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

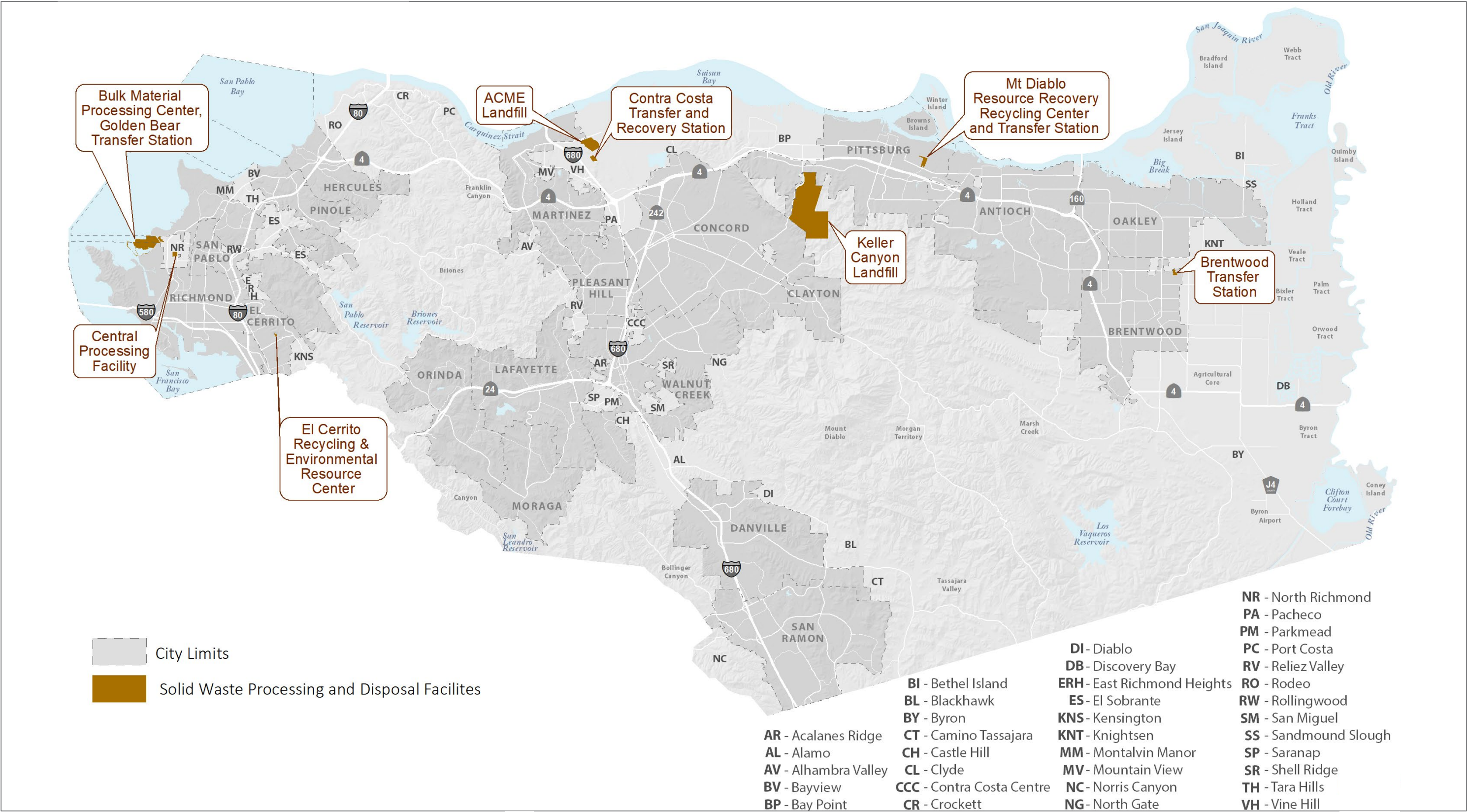


Source: Contra Costa County, 2022.



Figure 5.17-4
Waste Collection Service Areas

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS



Source: Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), 2023.



Figure 5.17-5
Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Facilities

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Curbside waste and recycling materials collected by garbage trucks are typically delivered to one of the six transfer stations within the county where the waste is temporarily stored, sorted, and/or processed. Workers at these transfer stations separate items that aren't accepted at local landfills, such as batteries and other hazardous items, and recyclables and green waste from the municipal solid waste. The remaining solid waste that is bound for the landfill is then transferred into larger vehicles and delivered to the appropriate landfill. The transfer stations also serve as a drop-off center for local residents to take bulk items or recyclables.

Table 5.17-6 Active Solid Waste Facilities in Contra Costa County

SWIS Number	Site Name	Category
07-AA-0062	Byron Crushing & Grinding Services	Composting
07-AC-0044	CCW Wood Chipping / Grinding	Composting
07-AA-0072	Pacific Wood Recycling	Composting
07-AA-0064	Bryon Crushing & Grinding Services	Inert Debris Processing
07-AA-0068	Brentwood Transfer Station	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0044	West CC Sanitary Landfill Composting Facility	Composting
07-AA-0061	Green Waste Recycle Yard – Chipping and Grinding Op.	Composting
07-AA-0067	EcoMulch	Composting
07-AA-0059	Fahy Tree Service – Chipping and Grinding Operation	Composting
07-AA-0027	Contra Costa Transfer Station and Recovery	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0037	Byron Hot Springs Landspreading	Land Application
07-AC-0042	US Steel-Posco Industries Waste Mgmt Unit II	Disposal - private
07-AA-0038	Souza Ranch Landspreading Facility	Land Application
07-AA-0054	Airport Ranch Sludge Spreading	Land Application
07-AA-0069	Expert Tree Services	Composting
07-AA-0002	Acme Landfill	Disposal
07-AA-0032	Keller Canyon Landfill	Disposal
07-AC-0043	Recycling Center & Transfer Station	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0034	Central Processing Facility	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0056	Golden Bear Waste Recycling Center	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0066	Oliveira Enterprises, Inc.	Composting
07-AA-0063	El Cerrito Recycling Center	Transfer/Processing
07-AA-0070	Atlas Tree Service, Inc.	Composting

Source: CalRecycle 2023

In 2019, solid waste generated within Contra Costa County, including various municipalities and waste management agencies, was delivered to 25 landfills in the Bay Area for a total disposal rate of 794,519 tons (CalRecycle 2023c). However, 85 percent of the solid waste was delivered to Keller Canyon Landfill. Less than two percent of the total waste tonnage was shipped to Acme Landfill.

The Keller Canyon Landfill is at 901 Bailey Road in unincorporated Contra Costa County near Pittsburg and Bay Point. It is owned and operated by Republic Services and has been in operation since 1992. The landfill is permitted to receive up to 3,500 tons of waste per day, has a remaining capacity of approximately 63 million cubic yards, and is estimated to close by 2050 (CalRecycle 2023d). The landfill has a remaining capacity of more than 15 years as required by AB 939. Detailed information regarding Keller Canyon Landfill is provided in Table 5.17-7, *Keller Canyon Landfill*.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Table 5.17-7 Keller Canyon Landfill

Landfill Location and Name	Maximum Permitted Throughput, tons/day	Average Disposal, tons/day	Residual Disposal Capacity, tons/day	Remaining Capacity, cubic yards	Estimated Closing Year
Keller Canyon Landfill 901 Bailey Road Bay Point, CA 94565	3,500	2,591	909	63,408,410	2050

Source: CalRecycle, 2023.

Table 5.17-7 shows that an average of 2,591 tons/day was accepted by Keller Canyon Landfill in 2022, with the majority of the solid waste originating in Contra Costa County. With a permitted capacity of 3,500 tons/day, the residual disposal capacity is currently 909 tons/day. However, the landfill has recently applied for a modification of its permit to increase the current maximum daily tonnage limit to 4,900 tons/day.

Solid Waste Diversion and Recycling

Compliance with AB 939 is measured by comparing the CalRecycle target disposal rates for residents and employees to actual disposal rates. There are different target disposal rates for the various cities and JPAs within the county. However, the CalRecycle target disposal rates for unincorporated Contra Costa County are 3.9 pounds per day (ppd) for residents and 20.1 ppd for employees. The actual disposal rates in 2021 were 2.2 ppd for residents and 11.7 ppd for employees (CalRecycle, 2023e). Therefore, the solid waste diversion goals for the county have been met.

Illegal Dumping

Another issue related to solid waste in Contra Costa County is illegal dumping, which has immediate and long-term adverse effects on health and safety, community assets, community pride, economic development, and natural habitats. Illegal dumping hot spots are widespread throughout the county, occurring on rural roads and agricultural land, in suburban neighborhoods, and in urban environments, affecting many communities regardless of socio-economic status. In 2018, the County formed an interdepartmental team and began implementing strategies to combat illegal dumping as part of the Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative. Strategies are grouped into four categories: educate, prevent, clean up, and enforce. The efforts include a public outreach campaign to educate residents about dumping, street signs placed near dumping zones with information on how to report dumping activity, removal of abandoned recreation vehicles, and dedicated law enforcement to investigate dumping crimes.

5.17.4.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- U-6 Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

- U-7 Not comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

5.17.4.1 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to solid waste disposal systems. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **PFS-P7.1:** *Coordinate with private solid waste collection and disposal companies, cities, and other appropriate agencies to plan solid waste management facilities that are safe, effective, and efficient.*
- **PFS-P7.2:** *Coordinate with other jurisdictions to ensure that solid waste management, including solid waste resource recovery (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle, compost, and waste-to-energy), is carried out in accordance with the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan and meets strict environmental standards.*
- **PFS-P7.3:** Strive to provide equivalent solid waste collection services and rates across each unincorporated community under County franchise control.
- **PFS-P7.4:** *Ensure that new development complies with the requirements of the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan.*
- **PFS-P7.5:** *Require new residential and commercial uses to provide adequate space for trash, recycling, and organics collection, as well as edible food recovery when applicable.*
- **PFS-P7.6:** Encourage new technologies for organics processing consistent with SB 1383, the Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Reduction Strategy of 2016.
- **PFS-P7.7:** Support expansion of recycling programs and efforts to locate convenient, accessible recycling centers in Impacted Communities.
- **PFS-P7.8:** Consistently use multiprong approach (i.e., educate, prevent, clean up, enforce) to combat illegal dumping.
- **PFS-P7.9:** Prohibit new landfills in ecologically sensitive areas, and require that new landfills be located, designed, and operated to avoid adverse impacts to surrounding land uses, including by limiting the area of landfill activities; limiting hours of operation; providing safe and appropriate transportation routes; maintaining site security; identifying associated off-site feeder transfer stations; grading to blend the landfill disturbance area with surrounding topography; covering refuse daily; and mitigating noise, odor, litter, and visual impacts.
- **PFS-P7.10:** Require that new landfills provide the following:
 - (a) An appropriate leachate collection and recovery system.
 - (b) An approved erosion-control and drainage plan
 - (c) Geotechnical studies, including stability analysis, to determine the most appropriate engineering design.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- (d) A habitat enhancement plan that provides for at least a 3:1 replacement for lost significant habitat.
- **PFS-P7.11:** Require new landfills to be designed and operated so that upon decommissioning they can be repurposed for other uses, such as renewable energy facilities, recycling and organics recovery operations, outdoor recreation facilities, and open space.
- **PFS-P7.12:** Require that new and expanded landfill operations significantly reduce GHG emissions to meet or exceed to the extent feasible State targets, and work toward carbon-neutral landfills.
- **PFS-P7.13:** *Extend the life of landfills by continually striving to:*
 - (a) *Reduce the amount of solid waste generated.*
 - (b) *Reuse and recycle as much solid waste as possible.*
 - (c) *Utilize the energy and nutrient value of soil waste (i.e., waste to energy and composting).*
 - (d) *Properly dispose of remaining soil waste.*
- **PFS-P7.14:** Discourage direct public access to landfills and instead direct the public to transfer stations. Base the need for new or expanded transfer stations on economics, the need to mitigate traffic impacts, and the need to inspect refuse for hazardous materials and recyclables.
- **PFS-P7.15:** *Ensure transfer stations provide adequate capacity to accommodate recovery of recyclables and organic materials and encourage organics processing.*
- **PFS-P7.16:** *Include a condition of approval in land use permits for solid waste facilities requiring review for compliance with permit conditions every three to five years.*
- **PFS-A7.1:** Study the potential benefits of combining the County's solid waste collection franchise agreements, or adjusting the boundaries of franchise service areas, to improve efficiency and consistency.
- **PFS-A7.2:** Streamline the permitting process for composting, organics processing, and repair/reuse facilities.
- **PFS-A7.3:** Partner with community organizations and solid waste franchise collection haulers to maximize participation in community clean-up days and residential on-call garbage pick-ups in Impacted Communities. Encourage community participation by holding these events in conjunction with other community events whenever possible.
- **PFS-A7.4:** Work with other counties, cities, and community members to establish public/private partnerships to combat illegal dumping.
- **PFS-A7.5:** Install signage and increase education, monitoring, enforcement, and rapid cleanup to discourage illegal dumping, especially in Impacted Communities and rural areas.
- **PFS-A7.6:** Use the County's legislative platform process and partner with other public agencies throughout the state to propose and support legislation to combat illegal dumping.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

The following proposed CAP strategies and actions are related to solid waste collection, disposal, recycling, and reuse.

Strategy NW-1: Increase composting of organic waste.

Strategy NW-1 Actions:

- Ensure, through franchise agreements and other relationships with waste haulers, a source-separated organics collection service for all residential and commercial customers in County-controlled collection franchise areas.
- Require that new and expanded landfill operations significantly reduce GHG emissions to meet or exceed State targets to the extent feasible, and work toward carbon-neutral landfills. (PFS-7.12)
- Work with wastewater providers to explore the use of organic waste as feedstock for anaerobic digesters to produce biogas that can generate electricity or fuel.
- Require local restaurants, grocery stores, and other edible food generators that handle large quantities of food to partner with food rescue organizations to divert edible food that would be otherwise disposed in landfills for distribution to those in need, in accordance with SB 1383.
- Collaborate with edible food recovery programs and the Community Wellness & Prevention Program to decrease food waste and address hunger.
- Procure compost or other products made from recovered organic waste in accordance with the County's Recovered Organic Waste Product and Recycled Paper Procurement Policy.

Strategy NW-2: Reduce waste from County operations.

Strategy NW-2 Actions:

- Establish a source-separated organics collection service at all County-owned facilities that includes recovering food waste (scraps) and food-soiled paper.
- Implement three-stream recycling (trash, recycling, and organic waste) at all County-owned facilities.
- Establish requirements for source-separated organics collection and three-stream recycling as conditions in lease agreements for County offices.
- Conduct waste audits of County facilities, including assessing the volume and composition of all waste streams, to identify challenges with waste activities and develop educational or operational changes to address issues and reduce waste generation.
- Obtain material for capital projects from local and low-carbon sources to the greatest extent feasible, including allocating additional funds to allow for such materials, and integrate appropriate standards into the County's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) policy.
- Continue to reduce paper use in County operations. Procure recycled paper and janitorial supplies in accordance with the Recovered Organic Waste Product and Recycled Paper Procurement Policy.
- Continue engagement with TRUE zero-waste certification for County projects.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- Enact Bay-friendly landscaping practices at County facilities. Develop County policies and practices for Bay-friendly landscaping.
- Explore opportunities to reuse wood from County tree maintenance activities as an alternative to chipping.
- Encourage medical facilities and medical waste recycling companies to upgrade facilities to increase the amount of medical waste recycled or reprocessed.
- Explore the feasibility of transitioning to reusable products in the health sector, where appropriate, and procuring products certified as green or low carbon.

Strategy NW-3: Increase community-wide recycling and waste minimization programs.

Strategy NW-3 Actions:

- Create a source-reduction program in partnership with regional agencies to promote rethinking, refusing, reducing, reusing, and regenerating of materials.
- Improve educational efforts to promote better waste sorting among community members.
- Work with waste haulers to expand the types of materials accepted by recycling programs as economic conditions allow.
- Work with waste haulers to continue availability of curbside pickup recycling services.
- Evaluate the feasibility of banning single-use plastics or establishing additional restrictions beyond those created by SB 54.
- Encourage the use of reusable items over disposable materials.
- Promote the Contra Costa County Recycling Market Development Zone low-interest loan program to incentivize the development of businesses that use recycled materials.

5.17.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.17-5: Existing and/or proposed facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated solid waste. [Threshold U-6]

Proposed General Plan

With implementation of the proposed General Plan, the population is anticipated to increase by 65,600 residents and approximately 9,400 jobs are projected to be generated. As shown in Table 5.17-8, *Increase in Solid Waste Generation Rates*, this projected growth would result in an increase in solid waste of approximately 127 tons/day or 46,355 tons/year. These numbers are conservative because with continued recycling and waste reduction programs implemented by the County, cities, and JPAs, the waste generation rates would be reduced over time.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Table 5.17-8 Increase in Solid Waste Generation Rates

Category	Increase in Residents or Jobs	Solid Waste Generation Rate (ppd)	Increase in Solid Waste (tons/day)	Increase in Solid Waste (tons/year)
Residents	65,600	2.2	72	26,280
Jobs	9,400	11.7	55	20,075
Total			127	46,355

Sources: CalRecycle, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Conservatively assuming that all of the solid waste generated in the county is transported to Keller Canyon Landfill, an increase of 127 tons/day with the implementation of the proposed General Plan would be about 14 percent of the current residual capacity of the landfill. In addition, the landfill is in the process of increasing its permitted daily disposal capacity to 4,900 tons/day. Even without the increase in capacity, the solid waste generated from the proposed General Plan would be easily accommodated by this landfill. This estimate also assumes that all of the generated waste is landfilled, whereas the majority of the waste generated in the county is diverted from landfill disposal by recycling and composting. The results in Table 5.17-8 show that the proposed General Plan would not generate solid waste in excess of the capacity of the landfills that serve the county.

In addition, all new development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would require compliance with Division 4.4 of the 2022 CALGreen Building Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from residential and nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. New development and redevelopment would also need to comply with the requirements of AB 341 that mandate recycling for commercial and multifamily residential land uses. Therefore, solid waste facilities would be able to accommodate project-generated solid waste, and impacts would be less than significant. Also, the Public Services and Facilities Element of the proposed General Plan contains policies and actions that are intended to reduce solid waste generation and increase recycling efforts, which in turn would minimize potential impacts on the solid waste infrastructure and landfill capacities.

With continued compliance with the applicable regulations, leading to increased recycling and waste diversion, and adherence to the proposed General Plan policies and actions, anticipated rates of solid waste disposal would be less than significant with respect to permitted landfill capacity. In addition, the County, as well as the cities and JPAs within the county boundaries, are well below the CalRecycle target disposal rates and meet the regulatory requirements of AB 939. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan would not generate solid waste in excess of the capacity of the landfills, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals, and the impact is less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP focuses on GHG emissions reduction, including by reducing waste generation, increasing composting, and expanding community waste minimization programs. This also includes reducing the amount of packaging used in food service and retail projects. Additional strategies to achieve waste reduction goals and increase recycling and organic waste collections are provided in the proposed CAP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed CAP would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals, and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-5 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-5 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.17-6: The proposed project would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. [Threshold U-7]

Proposed General Plan

All of the solid waste collection and transport franchises within the county comply with all State requirements to reduce the volume of solid waste through recycling and organic waste diversion. Unincorporated Contra Costa County's per capita disposal rates of 2.2 ppd per resident and 11.7 ppd per employee are well below CalRecycle targets of 3.9 ppd for residents and 20.1 ppd for employees. In addition, all potential future development pursuant to the proposed General Plan would comply with Division 4.4, *Material Conservation and Resource Efficiency*, of the CALGreen Building Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse.

Potential future development would also comply with AB 341, which mandates recycling for commercial and multi-family residential land uses as well as schools and school districts. Additionally, potential future businesses pursuant to the proposed General Plan that generate organic waste in amounts over a certain threshold would be mandated to recycle organic matter in accordance with AB 1826. Therefore, the County and its solid waste collection providers would comply with all applicable federal, State, and local solid waste regulations, and impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As described under Impact Discussion 5.17-5, the proposed CAP provides many strategies to achieve waste reduction goals and increase recycling and organic waste collection. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and implementation of the proposed CAP would have less than significant impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-6 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-6 would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

5.17.4.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative setting for solid waste includes all existing, planned, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in all of Contra Costa County, including the EIR Study Area and incorporated parts of the county. Implementation of the proposed General Plan is estimated to result in an increase of 65,600 residents and 9,400 jobs. As evaluated in Impact 5.17-5, this would result in an increase in solid waste generation of approximately 127 tons/day. This is well within the permitted residual capacity of Keller Canyon Landfill. In addition, some of the waste generated by residents and businesses in the county could be transported to 25 other landfills within the Bay Area. And this estimate does not consider the reduction in landfilled waste in the future as recycling and organic waste diversion rates increase.

In addition, new development within Contra Costa County would comply with Division 4.4 of the 2022 CALGreen Building Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from residential and nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. This would also reduce the volume of solid waste transported to the landfills. The trend of increasing diversion rates is expected to increase in the future. Also, Keller Canyon Landfill, which receives most of the solid waste generated in Contra Costa County, is in the process of expanding its daily permitted disposal rate by 40 percent from 3,500 tons/day to 4,900 tons/day. Continued compliance with the applicable regulations and an increase in recycling and landfill diversion rates would ensure that solid waste cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.4.4 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.4.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.17.4.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.5 Energy Infrastructure

Impacts associated with electricity and natural gas infrastructure are addressed in Section 5.6, *Energy*, of this Draft EIR. Therefore, this section only discusses telecommunications infrastructure and associated potential impacts with implementation of the proposed project.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

5.17.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regulatory Background

Federal

Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996

The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 was enacted to promote competition and reduce regulation in order to secure lower prices and higher quality of services for American consumers and encourage the rapid deployment of new telecommunications technologies. It removed barriers for entry into the market, deregulated cable television service, allowed local telephone companies to provide cable television service, required v-chips in new televisions to allow parents to block access to objectionable programming, and increased the number of television stations a single company may own.

Federal Communications Commission

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US territories. The FCC is an independent US government agency overseen by Congress and is the primary authority for communications law, regulation, and technological innovation. The FCC's rules and regulations are found in Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

State

Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006

The Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006 created a new State franchise process that was designed to speed up new infrastructure investment and promote competition for broadband and video services in California. The Act designated the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to issue the State video franchises and facilitate market entry for new companies to compete against existing cable and satellite video companies. The new competition is expected to drive down prices for video services and provide very fast internet services to customers. Cities and counties have the jurisdiction to enforce video customer service rules.

California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates telecommunication utilities and services, protects customers, and assures all Californians have access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. Recently, the CPUC expanded the California Lifeline Program to provide discounts on both home phone and cell phone services to low-income households. In addition, the CPUC approved a pilot program that leverages the federal Affordable Connectivity Program to offer both wireline broadband services and wireless broadband services to low-income Californians (CPUC 2023).

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

Division 58 – Cable Systems

Division 58, *Cable Systems*, under Title 5, *General Welfare and Business Regulations*, promotes competition in the cable industry, facilitates the development of cable infrastructure, minimizes aesthetic impacts and damage to public property, provides for the payment of reasonable compensation for the commercial use of public property, and establishes customer service standards. The Board of Supervisors may grant one or more non-exclusive revocable franchises to establish, construct, operate, and maintain cable systems within the county. All applicants for a new franchise must submit an application, along with preliminary engineering plans, specifications, a network map of the facilities, and an application fee. The cable operator must also make available one or more dedicated channels for purposes of public, educational, and governmental access.

Division 59 – Video Services

Division 58, *Video Services*, is adopted pursuant to the authority granted in the Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006. The provisions of the Code establish a fee to support public, educational, and governmental channel facilities for franchises that provide video services within the county.

Chapter 88-24 – Wireless Telecommunication Facilities

Chapter 88-24, *Wireless Telecommunication Facilities*, under Division 88, *Special Land Uses*, establishes criteria for the location and design of wireless telecommunication facilities in the county, consistent with State and federal requirements. The purpose of the Code is to 1) enable wireless telecommunication service providers to serve the current and future needs of the county's residents, businesses, and local governments; 2) avoid adverse visual and aesthetic impacts of wireless telecommunication facilities by regulating the location and design of the facilities; 3) and encourage the collocation of wireless telecommunication facilities whenever feasible. Article 88-24.4 provides the criteria for facility location, design, and operation of the telecommunication facilities and Article 88-24.6 outlines the permit and fee requirements.

Chapter 96-10 – Underground Utilities

Chapter 96-10, *Underground Utilities*, is found under Division 96, *Improvements*, and requires all utility distribution facilities, including but not limited to electric, communication and cable television lines within any residential or commercial subdivision to be placed underground, except for equipment appurtenant to underground utilities, such as surface-mounted transformers or metal poles supporting streetlights.

Existing Conditions

Telecommunications services include wireless internet, cell phone and land line telephone, cable television, and satellite television. There are numerous telecommunication and internet providers that serve the county. Telephone and television providers include AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile, Xfinity, Dish, DirectTV, and others. Internet providers include AT&T, Astound Broadband, CalDSL, HugesNet, Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon, Viasat,

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

and others. Multiple choices give Contra Costa County residents and businesses a variety of options when choosing telecommunication providers.

The wireless networks consist of fiber-optic cables that connect major internet hubs over long distances. The networks can be expanded by using small cell facilities, which are small antennae placed on existing utility poles or streetlights along with small pole-mounted radios and other accessory equipment. In this manner, the fiber-optic network can be easily expanded to meet the demand for wireless services. The current infrastructure is sufficient to serve existing and future customers in the county. The County will continue to require franchises to underground utility service connections for new development and underground existing overhead lines, when justifiable.

5.17.5.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- U-8 Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded telecommunications facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

5.17.5.3 PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to telecommunications systems. Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **PFS-P1.4:** Encourage, and whenever possible require, co-location and undergrounding of new utility infrastructure, such as transmission and distribution lines, fiber-optic cables, and pipelines, in existing rights-of-way to minimize visual, operational, and environmental impacts on the community.
- **PFS-A2.6:** Pursue public-private partnerships that will improve access to reliable, fast internet and make digital resources available in Impacted Communities at affordable prices.
- **PFS-P3.1:** Coordinate LAFCO, infrastructure and service providers, and cities to ensure infrastructure and services are reliable and provided in a cost-effective and equitable manner.

Proposed CAP Strategies and Actions

There are no specific strategies or actions regarding telecommunication systems in the proposed CAP. However, there are numerous strategies and actions related to the use of alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind, and the electrification of new housing and commercial buildings with the goal of reducing energy use and converting to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels. Details are provided in Section 5.6, *Energy*, of this Draft EIR.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

5.17.5.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact 5.17-7: Existing telecommunication facilities are adequate to meet project requirements. [Threshold U-8]

Proposed General Plan

As discussed in Section 5.17.5.1, *Environmental Setting*, there are multiple telecommunication providers in Contra Costa County, including internet services, wireless services, cable television, and satellite television. All new franchises and existing franchises that are up for renewal will be required to follow the regulations and procedures specified by the CPUC and the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code for cable systems, video systems, and wireless telecommunications systems. Also, the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code requires the undergrounding of communication and cable television lines within any residential or commercial subdivision to minimize potential aesthetic and visual impacts.

Each telecommunication provider also prepares long-range plans to accommodate projected growth in their service areas. Future expansion or construction projects would be required to comply with the requirements of the FCC, CPUC, and Contra Costa County Ordinance Code prior to approvals. Therefore, with adherence to the policies of the proposed General Plan and the federal, State, and local regulatory requirements, the proposed General Plan is not expected to require or result in new or expanded telecommunication facilities beyond those already planned, and the impact is less than significant.

Proposed CAP

Because the proposed CAP focuses on the reduction of GHG emissions and telecommunication systems are not associated with these emissions, there are no specific provisions in the proposed CAP regarding telecommunication facilities. However, the implementation of the proposed CAP would not have an adverse impact on telecommunications systems and therefore the impact is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.17-7 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.17-7 would be less than significant.

5.17.5.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The area considered for cumulative impacts is the service areas of the telecommunications providers within all of Contra Costa County. The telecommunication providers that serve the county have the capability to serve future increases in population within their service areas without significant changes to the existing infrastructure. In addition, the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would ensure compliance with federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances, thereby avoiding the need for new or expanded facilities beyond what is already planned for future growth. Therefore, the proposed project would

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to telecommunication facilities and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.5.6 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, all impacts would be less than significant.

5.17.5.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.17.5.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

5.17.6 References

- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). 2023a. Website. Accessed June 2023. <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/lgcentral/enforcement/>
- . 2023b. SB 1383 Education and Outreach Services. Accessed June 2023. <https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/education/>
- . 2023c. Jurisdictional Disposal and Alternative Daily Cover by Facility. <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DisposalReporting/Destination/DisposalByFacility>. Accessed June 10, 2023.
- . 2023d. SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details. <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/4407?siteID=228> accessed June 10, 2023.
- . 2023e. Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Summary. Accessed June 10, 2023. <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DiversionProgram/JurisdictionDiversionPost2006>
- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), 2023. CPUC Advances Broadband Affordability and Access in California. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/news-and-updates/all-news/cpuc-advances-broadband-affordability-and-access-in-california-2023> accessed June 10, 2023.
- Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD). 2010. Collection System Master Plan Update.
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), 2023. Email correspondence with Elizabeth Lee, Unit Chief, Sacramento Office – Municipal Storm Water Permitting Unit with Dr. Cathleen Fitzgerald, Senior Engineer, PlaceWorks on June 6, 2023.
- Contra Costa, County of. 2005. Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020, Public Facilities/Services Element https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30917/Ch7-Public-Facilities_Services-Element?bidId=
- Contra Costa Environmental Health Division. 2023a. Land Use Program, <https://cchealth.org/eh/land-use/> accessed June 9, 2023.
- . 2023b. Solid Waste Program, <https://cchealth.org/eh/solid-waste/> accessed June 9, 2023.
- Contra Costa County Clean Water Program (CCCWP). 2023. Stormwater C.3 Guidebook, <https://www.cccleanwater.org/development-infrastructure/development/stormwater-c-3-guidebook>.
- Contra Costa County Conservation and Development (CCCD). 2023a. CalGreen/ Construction & Demolition (C&D) Debris Recovery Program. Accessed June 2023. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4746/CalGreen-Construction-Demolition-Debris->

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- _____. 2023b Recycling and Waste Reduction. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/8094/Recycling-and-Waste-Reduction>. Accessed June 9, 2023.
- Contra Costa County Water and Wastewater Agencies Combined Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study (2nd Round). <https://todb.ca.gov/files/29fd8aa91/LAFCO+MSR+.pdf>
- Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (FCD), 2023a. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/5743/Flood-Control-District>
- _____. 2023b. Frequently Asked Questions for Developers and Engineers. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1870/Developers-and-Engineers-FAQs-PDF?bidId=>
- _____. 2023c. Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District Brochure. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/756/CCCFlood-brochure-8front-PDF?bidId=>
- _____. 2023d. Drainage Fee Schedule, Updated January 1, 2023. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/77413/DA-Fee-Sched-Internal-01-01-23>
- Contra Costa County Public Works Department, 2023. County Standard Plans, <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/342/County-Standard-Plans>
- Contra Costa County Water Agency (CCCWA). 2023, May 12 (accessed). Contra Costa County Water Agency. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/5403/Contra-Costa-County-Water-Agency>
- Contra Costa Solid Waste & Recycling (SWR). 2022, October 6 (accessed). SB1383: Organic Waste and Edible Food Recovery. <https://www.cccrecycle.org/224/SB1383-Organic-Waste-and-Edible-Food-Rec>
- Contra Costa Water District (CCWD). 2021, June. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. <https://www.ccwater.com/DocumentCenter/View/9851/2020-Urban-Water-Management-Plan-PDF>
- Contra Costa Water District. 2015. Contra Costa Water District Treated Water Master Plan.
- East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). 2021. Urban Water Management Plan 2020. <https://www.ebmud.com/water/about-your-water/water-supply/urban-water-management-plan>
- East County Water Management Association. 2019. East Contra Costa County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. Update 2019.
- San Francisco Bay Area (SFBA). 2019. San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. <https://www.ccwater.com/DocumentCenter/View/8741/Bay-Area-IRWM-Plan-2019-Update-PDF>.

5. Environmental Analysis UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2023. Water Quality Control Policy for Recycled Water. Accessed May 2023.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/recycled_water/policy.html

_____. 2015. Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Ocean Waters of California to Control Trash and Part 1 Trash Provisions of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California.

_____. 2023.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/trash_implementation.html. Accessed June 6, 2023.

Story Map Series. 2022a. Website. Accessed July 2022. Vulnerability Assessment.

<https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=869e23fd058d48dbb1e514ef15841831>

_____. 2022b. Website. Accessed July 2022. Contra Costa Briefing Book.

<https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=fc2415bbdacb409baf0f19fe802a81f3>

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2022. Website. Accessed June 9, 2023.

<http://www.epa.gov>.

5. Environmental Analysis

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis

5.18 WILDFIRE

This section describes the regulatory framework and existing conditions of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Study Area and evaluates the potential wildfire impacts from adopting and implementing the proposed project. A summary of the relevant regulatory framework and existing conditions is followed by a discussion of potential impacts and cumulative impacts related to implementation of the proposed project. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix G threshold related to wildfire in Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Threshold H-7) is discussed and analyzed in this section.

5.18.1 Environmental Setting

5.18.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Federal

National Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy

The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Department of Defense own and manage land within the EIR Study Area. In the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009 (FLAME Act), Congress mandated the development of a National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy for all lands within the United States. Wildfire management on these lands is guided by the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, which has three primary goals (US Department of Interior and US Department of Agriculture 2014):

1. Resilient landscapes
2. Fire adapted communities
3. Safe and effective wildfire response

The three goals enable the land managers to manage vegetation and fuels; protect homes, communities, and other values at risk; manage human-caused ignitions; and effectively and efficiently response to wildfires. California is part of the Western Regional Strategy Committee, chartered to support and facilitate the implementation of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy.

National Fire Protection Association Standards

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes, standards, recommended practices, and guides are developed through a consensus standards development process approved by the American National Standards Institute. NFPA standards are recommended (advisory) guidelines for fire protection that are referenced in the California Fire Code, which is adopted by Contra Costa County every three years. Specific standards applicable wildland fire hazards include, but are not limited to:

- **NFPA 1141**, Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Wildlands
- **NFPA 1142**, Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting
- **NFPA 1143**, Wildland Fire Management

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- **NFPA 1144**, Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire
- **NFPA 1710**, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations

State

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is dedicated to the fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's wildlands. CAL FIRE provides fire assessment and firefighting services for lands within State Responsibility Areas (SRA), conducts educational and training programs, provides fire planning guidance and mapping, and reviews general plan safety elements to ensure compliance with State fire safety requirements.

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is a government-appointed approval body within CAL FIRE. It is responsible for developing the general forest policy of the State, for determining the guidance policies of CAL FIRE and for representing the State's interest in federal forestland in California. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection also promulgates regulations and approves general plan safety elements that are adopted by local governments for compliance with State statutes.

The California Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the mission of CAL FIRE by focusing on fire prevention. These responsibilities include regulating buildings in which people live, congregate, or are confined; controlling substances and products which may, in and of themselves, or by their misuse, cause injuries, death and destruction by fire; providing statewide direction for fire prevention within wildland areas; regulating hazardous liquid pipelines; developing and renewing regulations and building standards; and providing training and education in fire protection methods and responsibilities. These are accomplished through major programs including engineering, education, enforcement, and support from the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. For jurisdictions within SRAs or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), the Land Use Planning Program division of the Office of State Fire Marshal reviews safety elements during the update process to ensure consistency with California Government Code, Section 65302(g)(3).

Together, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, Office of State Fire Marshal, and CAL FIRE protect and enhance the forest resources of all wildland areas of California that are not under federal jurisdiction.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Responsibility Areas

CAL FIRE designates FHSZs as authorized under California Government Code Sections 51175 et seq. CAL FIRE considers many factors when designating fire severity zones, including fire history, existing and potential vegetation fuel, flame length, blowing embers, terrain, and weather patterns for the area. CAL FIRE designates FHSZs within three types of areas depending on what level of government is financially responsible for fire protection:

- **LRA** – Local Responsibility Area: incorporated communities are financially responsible for wildfire protection. There is one severity zone in the LRA, which is the Very High FHSZ.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- SRA – State Responsibility Area: CAL FIRE and contracted counties are financially responsible for wildfire protection. There are three hazard zones in SRAs: moderate, high, and very high.
- FRA – Federal Responsibility Area: federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Department of the Interior are responsible for wildfire protection.

In 2022, the Office of the State Fire Marshal began the process of adopting updated FHSZ maps. On January 31, 2024, the State adopted the updated FHSZ maps for SRAs, and they will become effective on April 1, 2024. The previously approved FHSZ maps, which were adopted in November 2007, were used in this analysis because they were the best available information at the time of preparation. The newly-approved FHSZ maps will be included in the General Plan prior to adoption.¹

2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California

CAL FIRE produced the 2018 *Strategic Fire Plan for California*, which contains goals, objectives, and policies to prepare for and mitigate the effects of fire on California's natural and built environments (California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection 2018). The 2018 *Strategic Fire Plan for California* focuses on fire prevention and suppression activities to protect lives, property, and ecosystems, in addition to providing natural resource management to maintain State forests as a resilient carbon sink to meet California's climate change goals. A key component of the 2018 *Strategic Fire Plan for California* is the collaboration between communities to ensure fire suppression and natural resource management is successful (California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection 2018).

2021 California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan

The Governor's Forest Management Task Force developed the *California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan*, which is a framework for establishing healthy and resilience forests that can withstand and adapt to wildfire, drought, and climate change. This Plan accelerates efforts to restore the health and resilience of California's forests, grasslands, and natural places; improves the fire safety of communities; and sustains the economic vitality of rural forested areas. CAL FIRE, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, intends to scale-up forest thinning and prescribed fire; integrate climate adaptation into the statewide network of regional forest and community fire resilience plans; improve the electricity grid resilience, and promote sustainable land use.

State Responsibility Area and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Fire Safe Regulations

California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2, *SRA/VHFHSZ Fire Safe Regulations*, establishes minimum wildfire protection standards for construction and development within the SRA and Very High FHSZ and requires CAL FIRE to review development proposals and enact recommendations that serve as conditions of approval in these zones. These standards include basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures; signing and building numbering; private water supply

¹ Please see the Office of the State Fire Marshal's webpage to view the updated FHSZ SRA maps: <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/wildfire-preparedness/fire-hazard-severity-zones/>

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

resources for emergency fire use; and vegetation modification. These regulations apply to all residential, commercial, and industrial buildings within the SRA; the siting of new mobile homes; all tentative and parcel maps; and applications for building permits approved before 1991 where these standards were not proposed. The Fire Safe Regulations also include a minimum setback of 30 feet for all buildings from property lines and/or the center of a road. Section 1273.08, *Dead-End Roads*, of these standards provide regulations for the maximum lengths of single access roadways requiring the following:

- Parcels zoned for less than one acre: 800 feet
- Parcels zoned for 1 acre to 4.99 acres: 1,320 feet
- Parcels zoned for 5 acres to 19.99 acres: 2,640 feet
- Parcels zoned for 20 acres or larger: 5,280 feet

Fire Safe Regulations, Section 1299.03, *Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structure Requirements*, provides defensible space requirements for areas within 30 feet of a structure (Zone 1) and between 30 and 100 feet from a structure (Zone 2). In Zone 1, all dead and dying plants are required to be removed and any flammable vegetation that could catch fire must be removed. In Zone 2, horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees must be created and maintained.

Public Resources Code Section 4291

Public Resources Code Section 4291, *Mountainous, Forest-, Brush- and Grass-Covered Lands*, is intended for any person who owns, lease, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, shrub-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material, regardless of whether the property is within an SRA or Very High FHSZ. This section requires defensible space to be maintained within 100 feet from each side of a structure. An ember-resistant zone is also required within five feet of a structure and more intense fuel reduction between five and 30 feet of a structure.

California Building Standards Code

The California Buildings Standards Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24) provides 12 different codes for construction and buildings in California. This Code is updated every three years, with the most recent version effective January 1, 2023. Contra Costa County regularly adopts the most recent version of the California Building Standards Code, with modifications, into the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Title 7, *Building Regulations*.

Building Standards

The California Building Code (CBC), Part 2 of 24 California Code of Regulations, identifies building design standards, including those for fire safety. It is effective statewide, but a local jurisdiction may adopt more restrictive standards based on local conditions under specific amendment rules prescribed by the State Building Standards Commission. Residential buildings are plan checked by local city and county building officials for compliance with the CBC and any applicable local edits. Typical fire safety requirements of the CBC include the installation of sprinklers in buildings and other facilities; the establishment of fire-resistance standards for

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction in high FHSZs; requirements for smoke-detection systems; exiting requirements; and the clearance of debris.

Materials and Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure

Chapter 7A of the CBC, *Materials and Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure*, prescribes building materials and construction methods for new buildings in a FHSZ or Wildland Interface Fire Area. Chapter 7A contains requirements for roofing; attic ventilation; exterior walls; exterior windows and glazing; exterior doors; decking; protection of underfloor, appendages, and floor projections; and ancillary structures. Other requirements include vegetation management compliance, as prescribed in California Fire Code Section 4906 and Public Resources Code 4291.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code incorporates, by adoption, the International Fire Code of the International Code Council, with California amendments. This is the official Fire Code for the State and all political subdivisions. It is found in California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 9; like the CBC, the California Fire Code is effective statewide, but a local jurisdiction may adopt more restrictive standards based on local conditions. The California Fire Code is a model code that regulates minimum fire safety regulations for new and existing buildings; facilities; storage; processes, including emergency planning and preparedness; fire service features; fire protection systems; hazardous materials; fire flow requirements; and fire hydrant locations and distribution. Typical fire safety requirements include installation of sprinklers in all buildings; the establishment of fire resistance standards for fire doors, building materials, and particular types of construction; and the clearance of debris and vegetation within a prescribed distance from occupied structures in wildfire hazard areas.

Wildland-Urban Interface Areas

Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code, *Requirements for Wildland Urban Interface Fire Areas*, applies to any geographical area identified as a FHSZ by CAL FIRE. This section defines FHSZs and connects to the SRA Fire Safe Regulation requirements for defensible space, as well as parallels requirements for wildfire protection in building construction and hazardous vegetation fuel management in other sections of the California Code of Regulations and the Public Resources Code.

Fire Risk Reduction Community

A Fire Risk Reduction Community is a Board of Forestry and Fire Protection designation for local agencies in the SRA or Very High FHSZ that meet the Board-defined best practices for local fire planning. The requirements for this designation are found in California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 1, Article 3, *Fire Risk Reduction Community List*. Two non-city or -county agencies in Contra Costa County, East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD) and East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), are on the Fire Risk Reduction Community List. Non-city or -county agencies must meet at least two of the following criteria to obtain this designation:

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- Identify wildfire as a high-priority hazard in a local, tribal or multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan updated within the last five years, or as a low- or medium-priority hazard with the inclusion of one or more mitigation actions.
- Adopt a community wildfire protection plan, critical infrastructure protection plan, evacuation plan, integrated resource management plan including a fire management plan, or similar plan addressing fire protection within the local agency's jurisdiction within the last five years.
- Sponsor, coordinate, or actively engage with a community disaster preparedness council or group, including but not limited to a Firewise USA community or a fire safe council, with events or meetings at least quarterly.
- Adopt a plan within the last five years or implement an ongoing program to conduct a hazardous fuels reduction project or projects, including but not limited to California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) projects, forest management and fuels reduction plans (FMRFP), program timberland environmental impact reports (PTEIR), prescribed or cultural burns, and community fuels reduction workdays.
- Adopt a plan within the last five years or implement an ongoing program to conduct public outreach and education about water conservation, wildfire prevention, vegetation management and fuels reduction, home hardening, evacuation preparedness, defensible space, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) pertaining to fire, fire risk reduction, or similar topics.
- Adopt a special benefit assessment or tax measure or fee that addresses wildfire risk reduction.

Both EBMUD and EBRPD have adopted Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP) with wildfire as a high priority, and a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) has been developed and adopted for Contra Costa County, which both districts serve.

California Public Utilities Commission

In 2007, wildfires in southern California were ignited by overhead utility power lines and aerial communication facilities near power lines. In response, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) began considering and adopting regulations to protect the public from fire hazards posed by overhead power lines and nearby aerial communication facilities. The CPUC published a fire threat map—under Rulemaking 15-05-006, following procedures in Decision 17-01-009, revised by Decision 17-06-024—that adopted a work plan for the development of a utility high fire-threat district where enhanced fire safety regulations in Decision 17-12-024 apply (CPUC 2022a). The fire regulations require electrical utilities to (CPUC 2022b):

- Prioritize the correction of safety hazards.
- Correct nonimmediate fire risks in “Tier 2” (elevated fire threat) areas in the CPUC high fire-threat district within 12 months, and in “Tier 3” (extreme fire threat) areas within 6 months.
- Maintain increased clearances between vegetation and power lines in the high fire-threat district.
- Maintain stricter wire-to-wire clearances for new and reconstructed facilities in Tier 3 areas.
- Conduct annual inspections of overhead distribution facilities in rural areas of Tier 2 and Tier 3 areas.
- Prepare a fire prevention plan annually if overhead facilities exist in the high fire-threat district.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

California Government Code

California Government Code Section 65302(g) and Section 65302.15 require that safety elements be reviewed and revised as needed with the revision of a housing element or LHMP, but no less than every eight years, to ensure the goals, policies, actions, mapping, and background content are consistent with State regulations and reflect the best available information for wildfire risks, climate adaptation and resiliency, and emergency evacuation routes for certain residential areas. Communities with LHMP updates after January 1, 2022, must also ensure their safety elements or LHMPs include an assessment of evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability as well as evacuation locations under a range of emergency scenarios.

For wildfire and evacuation purposes, a safety element must:

- Identify wildfire hazards with the latest fire severity zone maps from the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, U.S. Geological Survey, and other sources.
- Consider guidance given by the Office of Planning and Research's Fire Hazard Planning document.
- Demonstrate that the jurisdiction or contract agency and associated codes satisfactorily address adequate water supply, egress requirements, vegetation management, street signage, land use policies, and other criteria to protect from wildfires.
- Establish in the safety element (and other elements that must be consistent with it) a set of comprehensive goals, policies, and feasible implementation measures for protection of the community from unreasonable risks of wildfire.
- Identify evacuation-constrained residential parcels in hazard-prone areas.

Governor's Office of Planning and Research Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research published the Fire Hazard Technical Advisory in 2015 and revised it in 2022 as a planning guide for addressing fire hazards, reducing risk, and increasing resilience across California's diverse communities and landscapes. The Fire Hazard Technical Advisory provides a range of goals, policies, and programs for fire hazard prevention and mitigation, disaster preparedness, and emergency response and recovery. The 2022 update includes specific land use strategies to reduce fire risk to buildings, infrastructure, and communities.

Local

Contra Costa County Ordinance Code

The Contra Costa County Ordinance Code includes various directives to minimize adverse impacts associated with wildfires in the county. The County Ordinance Code is organized by Title, Division, and Chapter. Most provisions related to wildfire and evacuation are included in Title 7, *Building Regulations*. Title 7 includes the adoption of the California Building Code and California Fire Code, which have specific provisions for reducing wildfire hazards in existing and new developments. The 2022 versions of these Codes were adopted, with modifications, into Title 7 of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to reduce the loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of disasters. The Contra Costa County LHMP, most recently updated in 2018 in accordance with the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), provides an assessment of natural hazards in the county and a set of short-term mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to people and property from these hazards. In the context of a LHMP, mitigation is an action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from hazards, including wildfire.

Mitigation actions for the unincorporated county related to wildfire in Volume II, Chapter 1 of the LHMP include supporting the retrofit or relocation of structures in high hazard areas; maintaining and developing the existing countywide Community Warning System (CWS) by identifying and implementing new technology as it becomes available; enhancing and improving County Ordinance Code language and enforcement; and better informing residents of comprehensive mitigation strategies for all hazards of concern.

The LHMP must be reviewed and approved by FEMA every 5 years to maintain eligibility for disaster relief funding. As part of this process, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services reviews all LHMPs in accordance with DMA 2000 regulations and coordinates with local jurisdictions to ensure compliance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide.

Contra Costa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Contra Costa County CWPP, developed by the Diablo Fire Safe Council in conjunction with the Contra Costa County Fire Chiefs Association, Hills Emergency Forum, and Stakeholder Committee Members, identifies and prioritizes fuel reduction opportunities throughout the county, addresses structural ignitability, and promotes collaboration with stakeholders. The Contra Costa County CWPP has been developed based on the priority goals and objectives identified by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act and by local collaborators. The priority actions of the Plan include collaborative partnerships for public communications, evacuation planning and communication, hazardous fuel load management balanced with biological resource protection, defensible space programs, and home hardening. The strategies in the Plan are implemented in cooperation with the fire districts and the Diablo Fire Safe Council in Contra Costa County.

Contra Costa County Emergency Operations Plan

The Contra Costa County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), adopted in June 2015, provides planned response actions for emergency events throughout the county. The EOP establishes the emergency management organization required to respond to significant emergencies and disasters, identifies the roles and responsibilities required to protect Contra Costa County community members, and establishes the operational concepts for different emergencies, the Emergency Operations Center, and recovery processes. The EOP includes Supplemental Elements that provide direction for specific emergency processes such as warning, integrating people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, public information, population protection, and training and exercises.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

5.18.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Contra Costa County contains a variety of land use patterns, but approximately 65 percent is preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses through the existing General Plan land use map. Development that could occur under the proposed project would be in a variety of communities with a variety of settings, including unincorporated pockets in dense urban areas like North Richmond as well as rural agricultural towns like Byron. As a result, the wildfire and evacuation setting will differ by community.

Wildfire Background

The term “wildfire” refers to fires that usually result from the ignition of dry grass, brush, or timber. Historically, wildfires commonly occurred in areas that are characterized by steep or heavily vegetated areas, which make suppression of the fire difficult. More recently, wildfires have been encroaching into more urban areas within the wildland-urban interface (WUI), threatening homes, businesses, and essential infrastructure. While wildfires play an important role in the ecology of many natural habitats, as urban development moves into areas susceptible to wildfire hazards, risks to human safety and property increase.

Types of Wildfires

There are three basic types of wildfires (Natural Resources Canada 2018):

- **Crown fires** burn trees to their tops and are the most intense and dangerous wildland fires.
- **Surface fires** burn surface litter and duff and are known for being the easiest fires to extinguish and to cause the least damage. Brush and small trees enable surface fires to reach treetops, and so are referred to as *ladder fuels*.
- **Underground fires** occur underground in deep accumulations of dead vegetation. These fires move very slowly and can be difficult to extinguish due to limited access.

Wildfires burn in many types of vegetation—forest, woodland, scrub, chaparral, and grassland. Many species of native California plants are adapted to fire and habitats such as chaparral shrubs and conifer forests can recover from fire. For example, some species of chaparral plants, such as ceanothus, require intense heat for germination and therefore have flammable resins on leaves and roots that can quickly sprout up in burned areas (National Park Service 2018). Between 2010 and 2017, wildfires in California burned a total of about 265,000 acres of forest land, 207,000 acres of scrub vegetation, 99,000 acres of grassland, 18,000 acres of desert vegetation, and 14,000 acres of other vegetation types (State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection 2018). Wildfires have been observed to be more frequent and growing in intensity the past several years, with 4,304,379 acres burning in 2020, 2,568,948 acres 2021, 15,291 acres in 2022, and 6,709 acres to date in 2023 (CAL FIRE 2022).

Wildfire Causes

Although the term *wildfire* suggests natural origins, a 2017 study that evaluated 1.5 million wildfires in the United States between 1992 and 2012 found that humans were responsible for igniting 84 percent of wildfires, accounting for 44 percent of acreage burned (Bach 2017). The three most common types of human-caused

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

wildfires are debris burning (e.g., burning logging slash, farm fields, and trash); arson; and equipment use (Pacific Biodiversity Institute 2007). Power lines can also ignite wildfires through downed lines, vegetation contact, conductors that collide, and equipment failures (Texas Wildfire Mitigation Project). CAL FIRE determined that between 2017 and 2021, 1,344 fires and 639,437 acres have been burned due to electrical power and distribution lines (CAL FIRE 2018 and 2021). Lightning is the most common cause of nature-induced wildfire (Bach 2017).

An analysis of U.S. Forest Service wildfire data from 1986 to 1996 determined that 95 percent of human-caused wildfires and 90 percent of all wildfires were within 0.5 miles of a road, and that about 61 percent of all wildfires and 55 percent of human-caused wildfires occurred within approximately 650 feet (200 meters) of a road. The study concluded that the increase in human-caused ignition greatly outweighs the benefits of increased access for firefighters (Pacific Biodiversity Institute 2007).

There are three primary methods of wildfire spread:

- **Embers.** Embers are the most prolific cause of home ignition, at a rate of two out of every three homes destroyed. Embers are glowing or burning pieces of vegetation or construction debris that are lofted during a wildfire and can move up to a mile ahead of a wildfire, especially during high winds. These small embers or sparks may fall on the vegetation near a home (e.g., on dry leaves, needles, or twigs on the roof) and subsequently ignite the home. Embers can travel several miles during high wind events, such as the Diablo Winds, placing a potential risk to all structures without fire-resistant landscaping and construction within a mile of the fire (CAL FIRE 2019).
- **Direct Flame Contact.** Direct flame contact refers to the transfer of heat by direct flame exposure. Direct contact will heat the building materials of the home, and if the time and intensity of exposure is severe enough, windows will break, and materials will ignite.
- **Radiant Heat.** A house can catch fire from the heat that is transferred to it from nearby burning objects, even in the absence of direct flames or embers. By creating defensible space around homes, the risk from radiant heat is significantly reduced.

Secondary Effects of Wildfires

After a high intensity wildfire is suppressed, the burn scar is typically bare of its vegetative cover, which had supported the hillsides and steeper slopes. As a result, rainstorms increase the possibility of severe landslides and debris flows in these areas. The intense heat from the fire can also cause a chemical reaction in the soil that makes it less porous, causing water to run off during precipitation events, which can lead to flooding downstream.

In addition to damaging natural environments, wildfires can injure and cause fatalities of residents and firefighters, as well as damage or destroy structures and personal property. Wildfires also deplete water reserves, down power lines, disrupt communication services, and block evacuation routes, which can isolate communities. Wildfires can also indirectly cause flooding if flood control facilities become inadequate to handle increases in storm runoff, sediment, and debris that are likely to be generated from burn scars. Regionally, smoke from

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

wildfires can create poor air quality that can last for days or weeks depending on the scale of the wildfire and wind patterns.

Wildfire in Contra Costa County

The geography, weather patterns, and vegetation in the East Bay area provide ideal conditions for recurring wildfires. As recent wildfire activity revealed, several areas of Contra Costa County face some level of threat from wildland fire. As shown in Figure 5.18-1, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*, FHSZs are in western Contra Costa County along the mountain range from Norris Canyon to Crockett, and central and eastern Contra Costa County from Mount Diablo to Byron and the Alameda County border to Bay Point. CAL FIRE and local jurisdictions have designated these FHSZs as moderate, high, and very high. Western Contra Costa County has zones designated primarily as high and very high. Central and eastern Contra Costa County have zones designated very high and high near Mount Diablo, and then transitioning to moderate going east towards Byron and south towards Alameda County.

The EIR Study Area contains 163,524 acres of land mapped within CAL FIRE's high or very high FHSZs (CAL FIRE 2021). According to the County's LHMP, 16,557 acres of land within a FHSZ is developed with residential uses, which houses approximately 7 percent of the population in the county (Contra Costa 2018). An additional 2,176 acres of undeveloped land in the county designated for residential uses is within a FHSZ (Contra Costa 2018). Developed and undeveloped properties within these portions of the county are vulnerable to wildfire risks due to their proximity to forested lands and land adapted to periodic wildfire events. These areas also face increased barriers for emergency access and response because a majority of this land is on hilly terrain. New and existing development would need to effectively manage vegetative fuel loads and maintain adequate fuel modification zones to reduce wildfire potential and spread.

Figure 5.18-2, *Wildland-Urban Interface Areas*, shows the WUI areas in the EIR Study Area. WUI areas occur when urban development is intermixed with wildland vegetation, or when pockets of wildland vegetation occur inside developed areas. The WUI is subdivided into the intermix zone (i.e., where houses and wildland vegetation directly mingle), the interface zone (i.e., housing adjacent to wildland vegetation, but not mingled with it), and the influence zone (i.e., areas of wildfire-susceptible vegetation surrounding the others). The interface and intermix zones are the areas of highest risk for wildfires affecting developed areas. Unlike wildfire in wildland areas, fires that occur within WUI areas are more likely to damage or destroy buildings and infrastructure that support populations, the economy, and key services within the county. Some of the WUI areas in the EIR Study Area have few access roads, which poses challenges for evacuation and for emergency responders to fight fires and help residents in these areas.

Wildfire History

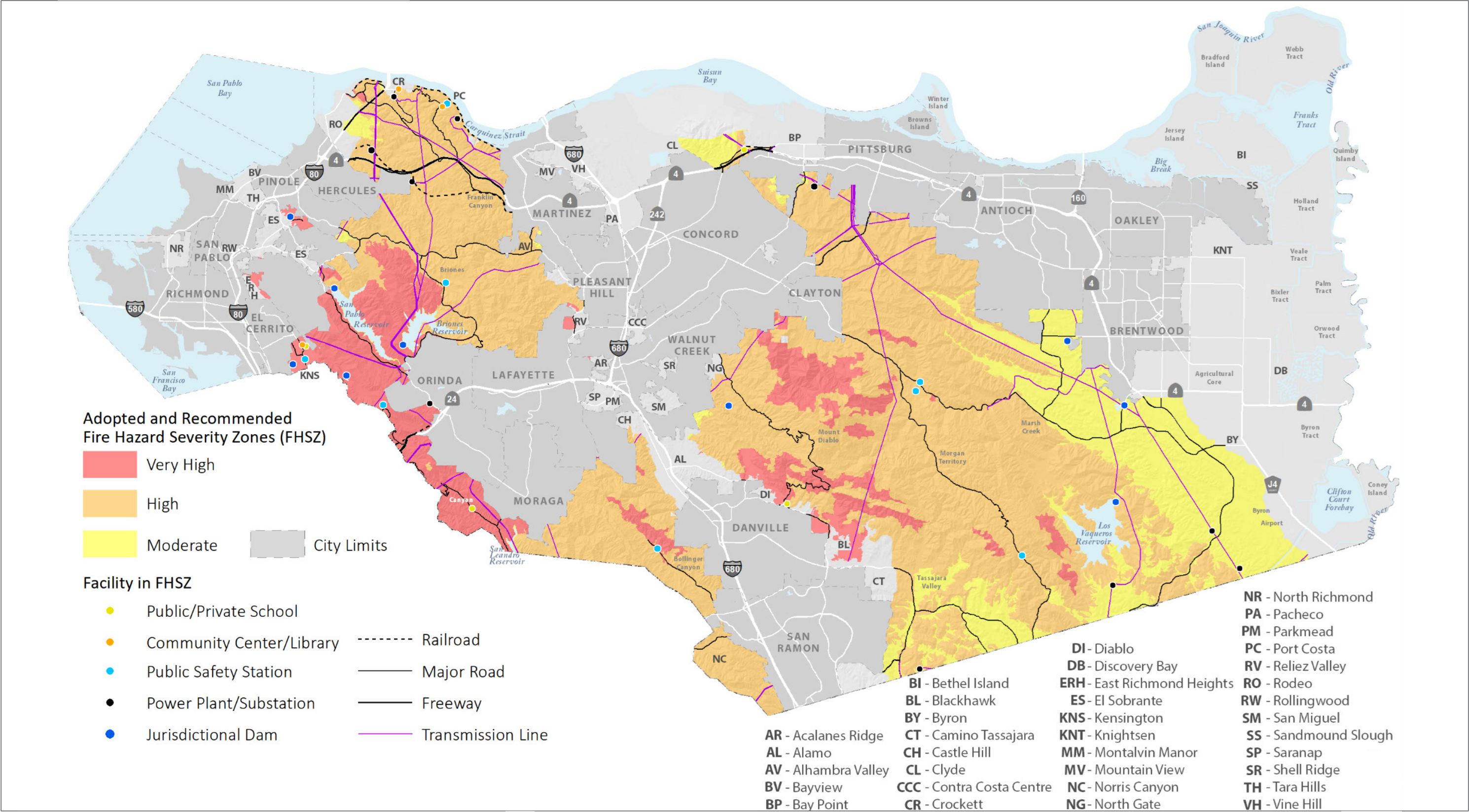
CAL FIRE maintains a list of historic fires throughout the state. According to CAL FIRE, Contra Costa County has experienced several medium to large wildfires in throughout the county and in the WUI. Table 5.18-1, *Historic Wildfire Perimeters in Contra Costa County 2010-2021*, lists historic wildfire incidents greater than 100 acres that have occurred within the county from 2010 to 2021. Figure 5.18-3, *Historic Wildfire Perimeters*, shows the historic wildfire perimeters for all fires that have burned in Contra Costa County between 1880 and 2022.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

The Santa Clara Unit (SCU) Complex Fire, which started on August 18, 2020, is by far the largest fire to burn in Contra Costa County in recent years. The fire burned approximately 396,824 acres across Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced Counties and lasted 44 days. It consisted of three zones: the Deer Zone in Contra Costa County; the Canyon Zone in Alameda, Santa Clara, and parts of Stanislaus Counties; and the Calaveras zone in parts of Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Merced Counties. The SCU Complex Fire was one of several fire complexes burning during August and September 2020 in California. The fire destroyed 222 structures, damaged 26 structures, and injured 6 people; no fatalities were recorded. As of the summer of 2022, this fire was the fourth largest wildfire in California's modern history.

WILDFIRE

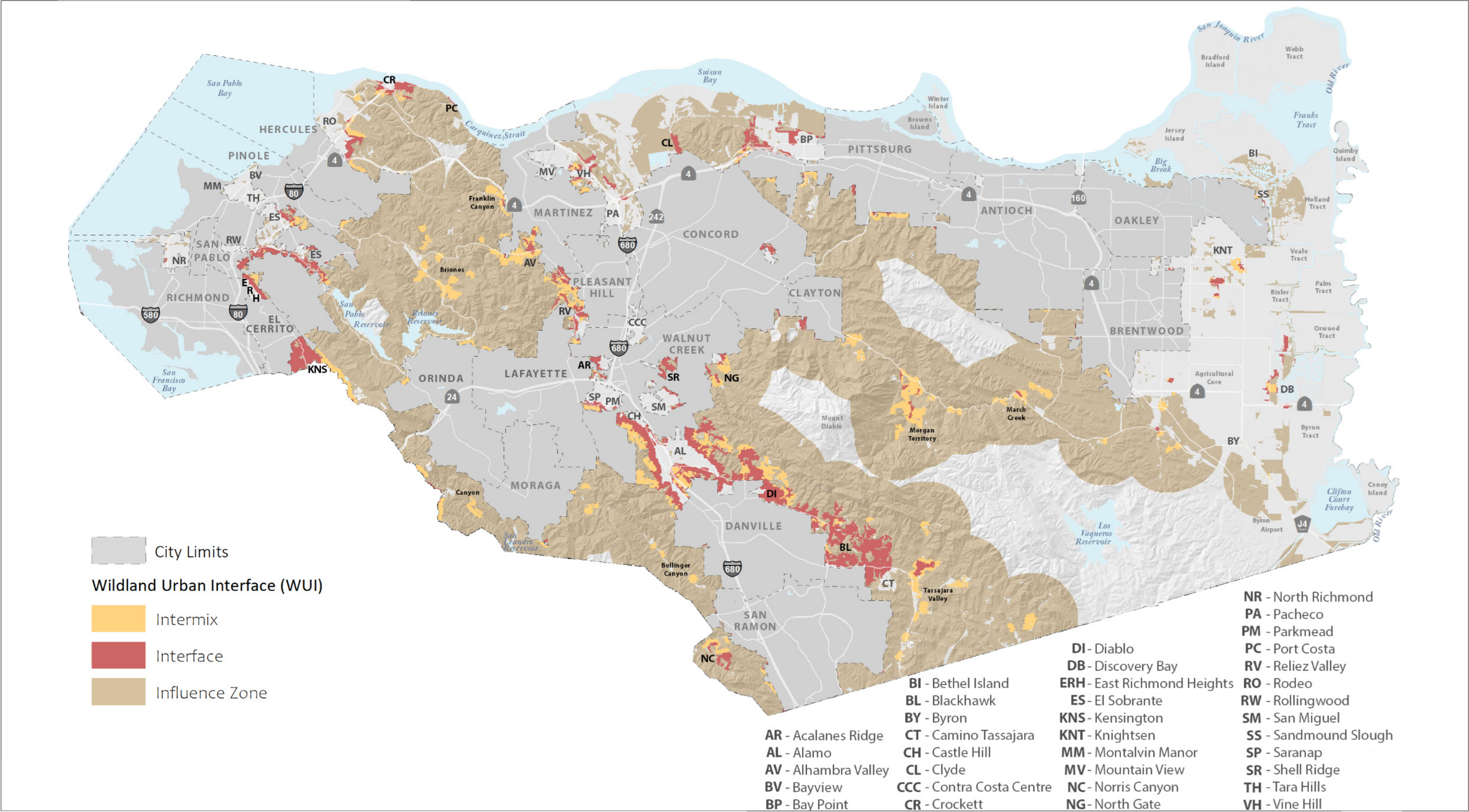


Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)'s Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP), 'Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA' (State Responsibility Area) (map adopted 2007); 'Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA' (Local Responsibility Area) (map Recommend 2009).



Figure 5.18-1
Fire Hazard Severity Zones

WILDFIRE

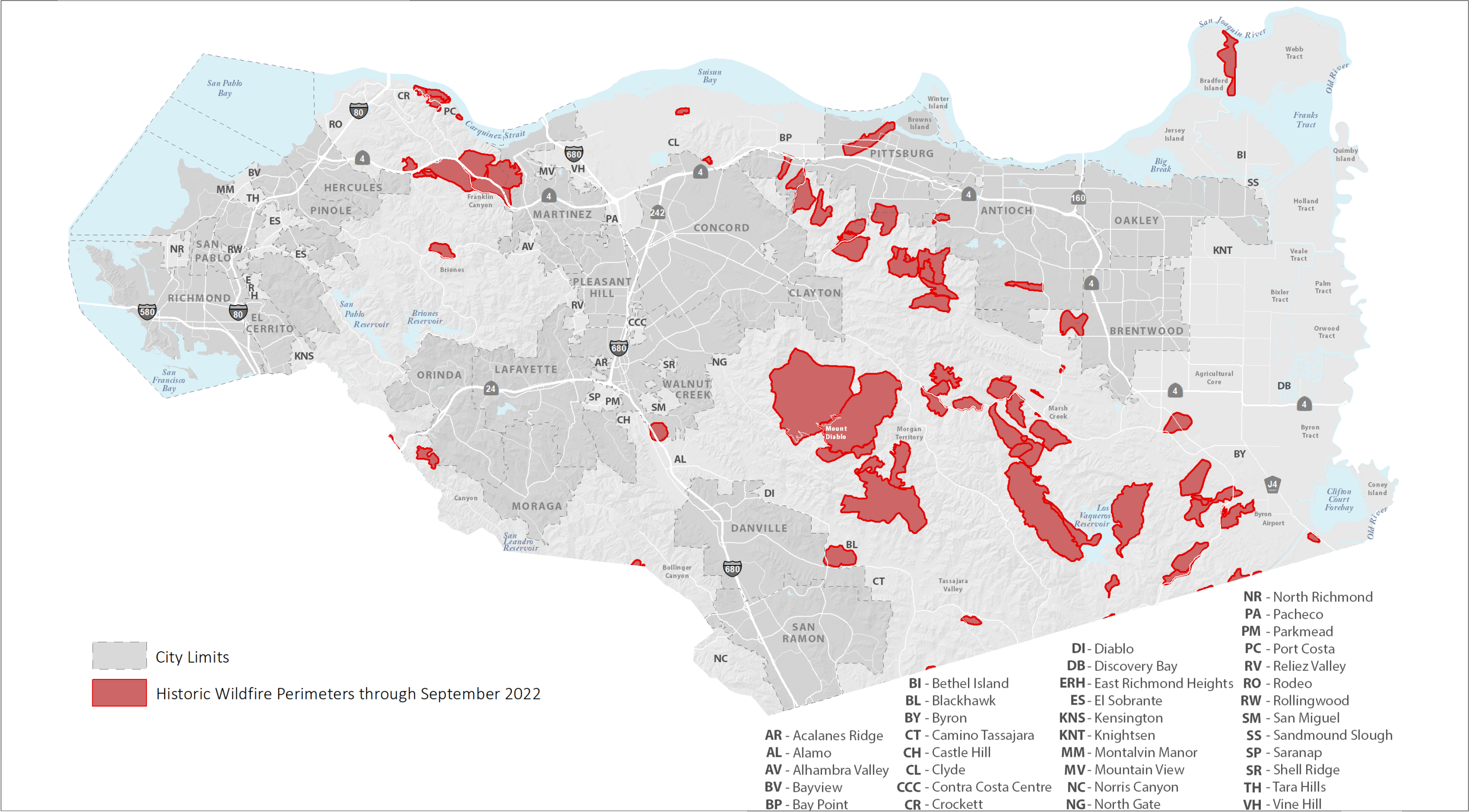


Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)'s Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP).



Figure 5.18-2
Wildland-Urban Interface Areas

WILDFIRE



Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)'s Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP).



Figure 5.18-3
Historic Wildfire Parameters

5. Environmental Analysis
WILDFIRE

This page intentionally left blank.

5. Environmental Analysis WILDFIRE

Table 5.18-1 Historic Wildfire Perimeters in Contra Costa County 2010-2021

Date	Fire Name	Size (Acres)
June 11, 2010	Vista Fire	186
July 2, 2010	Bradford Fire	510
August 24-26, 2010	Curry Fire	375
December 1-2, 2011	Collier Fire	198
July 1, 2013	Kirker Fire	492
July 1, 2013	Concord Fire	274
September 8-14, 2013	Morgan Fire	3,111
June 24-25, 2015	Loma Fire	533
July 30, 2015	Vasco Fire	195
July 25-August 3, 2018	Marsh Fire	247
August 1-8, 2019	Marsh 3 Fire	340
August 1-8, 2019	Marsh 5 Fire	227
August 1-8, 2019	Marsh 6 Fire	174
August 15-September 10, 2020	Santa Clara Unit Complex Fire	396,824
July 11, 2021	Diablo Fire	128

Source: Contra Costa 2018; California Fire, Incident Database

Wildfire frequency can be assessed through review of the percent of a given area that has been historically burned in wildfire events. Table 5.18-2, *Record of Fire Affecting Contra Costa County*, includes a summary of CAL FIRE records of fires over the 130 years from 1878 to 2015. Approximately 13 percent of the mapped FHSZs in the county have burned during that time period.

Table 5.18-2 Record of Fire Affecting Contra Costa County

Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ)	Total Area in Zone (Acres)	Area Burned, 1878 – 2015	
		Acres	Percentage of Total
Moderate FHSZ	44,309	3,016	6.8
High FHSZ	130,589	17,847	13.7
Very High FHSZ	42,225	6,459	15.3
Total	217,123	27,322	12.6

Source: Contra Costa 2018.

Factors Influencing Wildfire

Several factors influence wildfire conditions and facilitate the spread of wildfires, including topography, fuels, weather conditions, and climate change. Human actions are also the leading cause of wildfires in California, increasing the risk of wildfire devastating natural lands and communities. This section describes these five factors in the context of Contra Costa County.

Weather

The climate in Contra Costa County is generally referred to as “Mediterranean” with hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Warm summers and cold winters with rainfall are common throughout the county, with snowfall rarely occurring at the higher elevations around Mount Diablo. Rainfall throughout the county occurs during the winter months due to storm fronts that move in from the Pacific Ocean. Precipitation ranges from an annual average of 23 inches near Richmond, 13 inches near Antioch, and 24 inches near the slopes of Mount

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Diablo (Contra Costa 2018). Because the summer months are generally hot and dry, the risk of wildfires has historically been greatest in summer and fall. Relative humidity is also an important fire-related weather factor. As humidity levels drop, the dry air causes vegetation moisture levels to decrease, thereby increasing the likelihood that plant material will readily ignite and burn; the risk of wildfire increases when lightning strikes occur during dry periods.

Wind is a primary weather factor of wildfire behavior. Diablo Winds, which are warm easterly winds that flow over the Diablo Mountain range, have had reported speeds of up to 100 miles per hour in the East Bay Hills. As wind speeds increase, the rate of fire spread, intensity, and ember spread potential also increases. Gusty and erratic wind conditions can cause a wildfire to spread irregularly, making it difficult to predict its path and effectively deploy fire suppression forces. Winds from the northeast in the summer and fall compound the severity of fire conditions, as well as lower relative humidity, creating red flag conditions. Northeast winds are especially dangerous because they are accompanied by low humidity, which can dry out trees and other fuel that may also be weakened by the winds. This can increase wildfire conditions in the area. Wind shifts can also occur suddenly due to temperature changes and interactions with steep slopes or hillsides, causing fires to spread unpredictably. Fall has historically been one of the most dangerous times for wildfire risk, as periods of very high temperatures, low humidity, and strong wind increases cause red flag warnings and extreme fire danger.

Fuel

Many portions of Contra Costa County are covered by natural vegetation, which provides fuels such as grass, brush, and woodlands for wildfires. Each type of vegetation contributes to fire hazard severity to varying degrees. The qualities of vegetation which directly influence fire risk include fuel type and size, loading, arrangement, chemical composition, and dead and live fuel moisture, which contributes to the flammability characteristics of the vegetation (Contra Costa 2018).

The lower elevations of Contra Costa County are covered in grass and brush fuel types, which react quickly to changes in weather such as low humidity or high wind speeds. Fires in these areas can spread quickly in gusty wind conditions. Higher elevations on hillside and mountainsides are dominated by brush and woodland vegetation, which is likely to burn in later summer fires due to low fuel moisture. These fires can be difficult to control, especially on steep slopes and during high wind events.

Topography

Steep terrain or slope play a key role in the rate and direction in which wildfires spread since fires will normally burn much faster uphill. When the gradient of a slope doubles, the rate of spread of a fire will also likely double. Contra Costa County varies in topography from steep, rugged topography along the Diablo Mountain Range to low-lying inland valleys in central Contra Costa County and shorelines along the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Human Actions

Most wildfires are ignited by human action, the result of direct acts of arson, carelessness, or accidents. Many fires originate in populated areas along roads and around homes and are often the result of the careless disposal of cigarettes, mowing of dead grass, electricity equipment malfunction, use of equipment, or burning of debris. Recreation areas with increased human activity that are in high or very high fire hazard areas also increase the potential for wildfires to occur.

Climate Change

Climate change is likely to increase annual average temperatures countywide from a historical 71.1 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), to 75.8 °F by 2050 and 79 °F by 2100 (Cal-Adapt 2022a). This will likely create warmer temperatures earlier and later in the year. Precipitation levels are projected to increase slightly over the course of the century, changing from a historical annual average of 19 inches per year, to an annual average of 21 inches by 2050 and an annual average of 23.2 inches by 2099 (Cal-Adapt 2022a). Variations in precipitation patterns will also lead to an increase in frequency and intensity of heavy precipitation events, as well as prolonged periods of drought. The combination of extreme heat and droughts can cause soils and vegetation to dry out, creating more fuel for wildfires. These factors are expected to increase wildfire conditions, creating a risk of more frequent and intense wildfires. Because wildfires burn trees and other vegetation that help stabilize a hillside and absorb water, more areas burned by fire may also lead to an increase in landslides and floods. Historically, an average of 2,890 acres burned annually in the county (Cal-Adapt 2022b). Figure 5.18-3 shows historic wildfire perimeters in the county. Wildfires are projected to increase to an annual average in the county of 2,920 acres burned annually by 2050 and decrease to an annual average of 2,696 acres burned annually by 2100 (Cal-Adapt 2022b).

Fire Protection Resources

Fire protection services within the EIR Study Area are provided by six fire protection districts, as shown on Figure 5.15-1, *Fire Protection District Boundaries in Contra Costa County*, in Section 5.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, including the following:

- Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
- San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District
- Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District
- Kensington Fire Protection District
- Crockett-Carquinez Fire Protection District
- Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District

Each fire protection district has also signed the Contra Costa County Fire Chief's Mutual Aid Plan to receive aid and provide fire protection services when an emergency strains the capabilities of just one agency. Section 5.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, of this Draft EIR provides additional details about fire protection resources and services in Contra Costa County.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Evacuation and Access

Evacuation routes are designated roadways that allow for many people to quickly leave an area due to a potential or imminent disaster. These routes should have a sufficient capacity to accommodate the needs of the community, be safely and easily accessible, and allow people to travel far enough away to be safe from any emergency conditions.

Primary evacuation routes throughout Contra Costa County include interstates and state routes that traverse the county, as shown in Figure 5.9-4, *Evacuation Routes*, in Section 5.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, of this Draft EIR. These include, but are not limited to, Interstate (I-0 80, I-580, I-680, State Route (SR-) 24, SR-4, SR-242, and SR-160. During emergencies, the Contra Costa Sheriff's Office and the fire protection districts coordinate the use of Zone Haven, an internet-based evacuation mapping application that uses zones to provide evacuation warnings and orders. This system is used in both the cities and unincorporated areas of the county. This application allows for quick and transparent evacuation decision-making that speeds up the evacuation notification process.

5.18.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs and the project would:

- W-1 Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- W-2 Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.
- W-3 Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.
- W-4 Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.
- H-7 Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

5.18.3 Programs, Plans, and Policies

5.18.3.1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions from the proposed General Plan are applicable to wildfire hazards. *Italicized goals, policies, and actions reduce environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.*

5. Environmental Analysis WILDFIRE

Public Facilities and Services Element

- **Policy PFS-P6.1:** Require new development to support effective law enforcement and fire protection by providing a safe and accessible public realm for all.
- **Policy PFS-P6.3:** During the discretionary review process for projects with potential to increase demand on fire protection services, consult with the applicable fire district to identify any upgrades to fire protection facilities, infrastructure, and equipment needed to reduce fire risk and improve emergency response.

Health and Safety Element

- **Policy HS-P4.3:** Discourage new below-market-rate housing in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the Wildland-Urban Interface, and Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. If below-market-rate housing must be constructed within these zones, require it to be hardened or make use of nature-based solutions to ensure it remains habitable to the greatest extent possible.
 - **Policy HS-P4.6:** In hazard-prone areas, such as slopes exceeding 15 percent, mapped floodplains, High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones, allow for decreased residential density, including below the minimum density requirement for the applicable land use designation, as the severity of risk increases.
- **Goal HS-7:** Minimized injury, loss of life, and damage to property from wildfire hazards.
- **Policy HS-P7.1:** Deny applications for new residential subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and discourage residential subdivisions in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
 - **Policy HS-P7.2:** Require any construction of buildings or infrastructure within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA or in the WUI, as shown on Figures HS-10 and HS-11, to incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the State Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulation for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply.
 - **Policy HS-P7.3:** Require new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA (as shown on Figure HS-10) or in the WUI (as shown on Figure HS-11), and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints (as shown on Figure HS-21), to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and approve the traffic control plan prior to issuance of building permits.
 - **Policy HS-P7.4:** Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA and projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA, as shown in Figure HS-10, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Work with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. The fire protection plan shall include measures for fire-resistant construction materials and modifying fuel loading, as well as a plan to maintain that protection over time. The fire protection plan shall include:
 - a) A risk analysis
 - b) Fire response capabilities
 - c) Defensible space requirements
 - d) Fire safety requirements for infrastructure
 - e) Building ignition resistance

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- f) Mitigation measures and design for non-conforming fuel modification*
 - g) Wildfire education*
 - h) Maintenance and limitations*
 - i) A plan for emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation*
- **Policy HS-P7.5:** Work with property owners within mapped High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the LRA or SRA or in the WUI areas to establish and maintain fire breaks and defensible space, vegetation clearance, emergency access roads, water supply and fire flow, signage, and firefighting infrastructure that meets current adopted State, County, or community fire safety standards.
 - **Policy HS-P7.6:** Promote installation of smoke detectors at the time of sale or lease agreement, and maintenance of smoke detectors in existing residences and commercial facilities that were constructed prior to the requirement for their installation.
 - **Policy HS-P7.7:** Work with water service providers and fire protection districts to safeguard the long-term integrity of water supplies to meet firefighting needs and ensure that new and existing developments in high fire risk areas have suitable water delivery infrastructure.
 - **Policy HS-P7.8:** *Construct critical facilities, such as Office of Emergency Services facilities and other uses on the County's designated critical facilities list, with fire-resistant materials, defensible space, and fire-resistant landscaping that allows them to maintain structural integrity and ensure functional operation to the greatest extent feasible. Avoid locating these facilities in high fire risk areas to the extent possible.*
 - **Policy HS-P7.9:** Coordinate with energy service providers to underground power lines, especially in the WUI and High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
 - **Policy HS-P7.10:** Work with energy service providers to ensure an adequate power supply to vulnerable populations during planned power shutoffs.
 - **Policy HS-P7.11:** Facilitate post-fire recovery by supporting efforts to stabilize slopes, control erosion, and replant with native species.
 - **Action HS-A7.1:** Collaborate with local fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to update and implement the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Contra Costa County.
 - **Action HS-A7.2:** Support local fire protection agencies with efforts to seek funding for development and implementation of a continuous vegetation management program in fire hazard severity zones and WUI areas.
 - **Action HS-A7.3:** Update countywide fire hazard severity zone and WUI mapping as new data becomes available from the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.
 - **Action HS-A7.4:** Following a large fire, evaluate the feasibility and resilience of redevelopment, and consider changes to building or development standards to improve resilience.
 - **Action HS-A7.5:** Collaborate with local and regional fire safe councils, CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit, and other fire protection agencies to develop a fire safe education program to provide information about State fuel modification, defensible space, access, water, signage, and other fire safe regulations.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- **Action HS-A7.6:** Pursue grants and other funding mechanisms to retrofit ventilation systems at County buildings to provide refuge for residents during periods of unhealthy air quality caused by excessive wildfire smoke.
- **Goal HS-12:** Communities and local economies that continue to function during all hazards and have coordinated and effective response and recovery procedures.
 - **Policy HS-P12.1:** Continue implementing the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors and certified by FEMA and is incorporated into this Health and Safety Element.
 - **Policy HS-P12.2:** Locate facilities and uses on the County's designated critical facilities list outside of identified hazard areas whenever possible, accounting for how climate change may increase frequency and intensity of hazards. If critical facilities must be in hazard areas, ensure these facilities and their access routes are protected from the hazard risks inherent to each location.
 - **Policy HS-P12.3:** Coordinate with cities, school districts, recreation and park districts, and community-based organizations to ensure adequate emergency shelters, community resilience centers, and alternate care sites are available when natural disasters and other highly hazardous conditions, such as industrial accidents, occur.
 - **Action HS-A12.1:** Update the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan* as necessary to remain compliant with State and federal laws and reflect changing climate conditions.
 - **Action HS-A12.2:** Incorporate the assessments and projections for future emergency service needs from the most recent Municipal Services Reviews into updates of the *Contra Costa County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
 - **Action HS-A12.3:** At least once every eight years, evaluate the effectiveness of and update the public safety, preparedness, and hazard mitigation policies in this Health and Safety Element, with consideration given to changing climate conditions.
 - **Action HS-A12.5:** Identify and map existing community facilities, such as libraries, gymnasiums, community centers, and auditoriums, that can serve as community resilience centers and support people with access and functional needs during hazard events. Work with the owners of these facilities to identify and implement upgrades, prioritizing facilities in Impacted Communities.
 - **Action HS-A12.8:** *Install backup power and water resources at critical County facilities, emergency shelters, community resilience centers, and cooling centers.*
 - **Action HS-A12.12:** Continue providing CERT training programs and encourage the Contra Costa CERT Coalition to provide updated training on hazards and related risks identified in the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment or the best-available climate science data.
 - **Policy HS-P13.1:** *Except for infill sites, require new development in High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, the WUI, and 100-year or 200-year floodplains to have access to at least two emergency evacuation routes, and encourage the same for existing development.*
 - **Policy HS-P13.2:** Coordinate with transit agencies and community service and faith-based organizations to assist with evacuation efforts and ensure that evacuation services are made available

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

to vulnerable people, including those with limited English proficiency or limited access to transportation, communication, and other lifeline resources and services.

- **Action HS-A13.1:** Partner with cities and public protection agencies to delineate evacuation routes, identifying their capacity, safety, and viability under different hazard scenarios, as well as emergency vehicle routes for disaster response, and where possible, alternate routes where congestion or road failure might reasonably be expected to occur. Update as new information and technologies become available.
- **Action HS-A13.2:** *At least once every five years, update maps identifying neighborhoods with only one emergency evacuation route.*
- **Action HS-A13.3:** *Coordinate with local fire districts to develop and maintain minimum roadway, ingress, and egress standards for evacuation of residential areas in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.*
- **Action HS-A13.4:** Develop an evacuation education program to help inform community members about the Contra Costa County Community Warning System and recommended approaches to evacuation.

5.18.3.2 PROPOSED CAP UPDATE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following strategies and actions in the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) are applicable to wildfire hazards.

Strategy NI-2: Protect against and adapt to increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfire events:

Strategy NI-2 Actions:

- Prohibit new residential subdivisions in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and discourage residential subdivisions in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. (HS-P7.1)
- Require any construction of buildings or infrastructure within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, or in the Wildland-Urban Interface, to incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the applicable State Fire Safe Regulations and Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply. (HS-P7.2)
- Require subdivisions in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, or projects requiring a land use permit in the High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Local or State Responsibility Areas, to complete a site-specific fire protection plan. Collaborate with the appropriate fire protection district to review and revise the fire protection plans. (HS-P7.3)
- Work with property owners in mapped High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or in the Wildland-Urban Interface to establish and maintain fire breaks and defensible space, vegetation clearance, and firefighting infrastructure. (HS-P7.4)
- Support undergrounding of utility lines, especially in the Wildland-Urban Interface and Fire Hazard Severity Zones. (HS-P7.8)
- Review indoor air filtration standards and consider whether filtration requirements can and should be strengthened for projects permitted by the County.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- Work with community organizations to help Impacted Communities have access to financing and other resources to reduce the fire risk on their property, prepare for wildfire events, and allow for a safe and speedy recovery.

Strategy NI-3: Establish and maintain community resilience hubs.

Strategy NI-3 Actions:

- Pursue funding to develop a resilience hub master plan that identifies existing community facilities that can serve as resilience hubs and support affected populations during hazard events. This process should start with an assessment of community needs. Such facilities should be distributed equitably throughout the county, with an emphasis on easy access for Impacted Communities. Where appropriate facilities do not exist, develop plans to create new resilience hubs.
- Pursue funding to implement the resilience hub master plan, including retrofitting selected facilities to function as resilience hubs. These retrofits should involve adding solar panels, battery backup systems, water resources, supplies to meet basic community and emergency medical needs, and other needs as identified by the resilience hub master plan.
- Create a virtual resilience hub that connects County resources to communities through virtual community networks to provide detailed, up-to-date information about preparing for natural disasters, public safety notifications and alerts, space for virtual gathering and information-sharing, and other appropriate uses. Materials shall be accessible in multiple languages.
- Coordinate resilience hub activities with planning efforts around public safety power shutoffs and wildfire smoke resiliency.

Strategy NI-6: Protect the community against additional hazards created or exacerbated by climate change.

Strategy NI-6 Actions:

- Discourage new below-market-rate housing in High and Very High Wildfire Hazard Severity zones, the Wildland-Urban Interface, and Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones. If below-market-rate housing must be constructed within these zones, require it to be hardened or make use of nature-based solutions to remain habitable to the greatest extent possible. (HS-P3.4)
- Treat susceptibility to hazards and threats to human health and life as primary considerations when reviewing all development proposals and changes to land uses.
- Partner with community-based organizations to provide information to community members about how to prepare for projected climate change hazards.
- Promote, and develop as necessary, available funding sources to create incentives for residents and businesses to prepare for natural disasters, particularly members of Impacted Communities.
- Consider projected impacts of climate change when siting, designing, and identifying the construction and maintenance costs of capital projects.
- Actively promote and expand participation in local and regional community emergency preparedness and response programs.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

- Support and fund efforts to enhance ongoing community and cross-sector engagement in community-level resilience and cohesion. Support non-government organizations to actively engage in developing a network of community-level actions that enhance resiliency.

5.18.4 Environmental Impacts

Impact 5.18-1: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs and a single-access roadway or in an Evacuation-Constrained Area could substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. [Threshold W-1]

Proposed General Plan

Adopted emergency response plans and emergency evacuation plans include those discussed in Section 5.18.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, including the Contra Costa County EOP. The proposed project would result in a significant impact if it would substantially impair the implementation of the EOP.

Any potential development under the proposed General Plan would be required to integrate the County EOP as necessary to continue its facilitation in evacuation for the people in wildfire prone areas. Development under the proposed project would not result in substantial changes to the circulation patterns or emergency access routes in the county that would conflict with or require changes to the EOP. Additionally, future development within the SRA, WUI, or Very High FHSZs would be required to comply with the SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations, the California Building Code, the California Fire Code, and the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, which have maximum requirements for lengths of single access roads, minimum widths of roadways, and vegetation fuel management around roadways. Furthermore, to ensure emergency services in the county are not impaired by future development, all future development projects would be reviewed and approved by the applicable fire protection district prior to project approval. In addition, several proposed General Plan policies and actions promote or require enforcement of the Fire Safety Code requirements, including Policy HS-P7.4, which would require projects in High or Very FHSZs to implement a site-specific fire protection plan.

Additionally, Policy HS-P7.3, which requires new development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA or SRA or in the WUI, and on a residential parcel with evacuation constraints, to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that construction equipment or activities do not block roadways or interfere with evacuation plans during the construction period, would ensure that temporary roadway impairments or evacuation plan impacts are addressed within traffic control plans. With the implementation of this policy, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

The proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improve climate resiliency and adaptation. As such, all strategies and actions within the proposed CAP inherently support the implementation of emergency responder and evacuation plans, while some directly address County efforts for emergency planning. For example, Strategy NI-3 and its accompanying actions direct

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

the County to establish and maintain community resilience hubs with microgrids, education, training opportunities, and other community-focused resources, in line with the policies and actions included under proposed Health and Safety Element Goal HS-12. The proposed CAP also includes Strategy NI-2, which specifically addresses adaptation efforts for wildfire events and reflects the policies and actions included under Goal HS-7. The proposed CAP directly supports and directs compliance with adopted emergency response and evacuation plans, and therefore would have no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.18-1 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.18-1 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.18-2: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. [Threshold W-2]

Proposed General Plan

As discussed in Section 5.18.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, Contra Costa County is prone to Diablo Winds that are erratic in movement and have high speeds. These winds are often accompanied by low humidity and can shift suddenly due to temperature changes and interactions with steep slopes. This creates dangerous conditions by drying out vegetation and enabling wildfire to spread more quickly. Implementation of the proposed General Plan would not change or affect wind patterns in the county, but wildfires and wildfire smoke hazards could be spread by prevailing or Diablo Winds.

Section 5.18.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, describes plans, policies, regulations, and procedures that help to reduce wildfire risks. The 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, 2021 California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, Fire Risk Reduction Community designation for EBRPD and EBMUD, Contra Costa County LHMP, and Contra Costa County CWPP, in addition to the proposed General Plan, are intended to reduce wildfire hazards and respond to these hazards on a statewide and regional scale. In addition, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District provides air quality alerts, advisories, and provides resources for an interactive online map to view current air quality conditions in the region. However, future development under the proposed General Plan in wildfire prone areas could exacerbate wildfire risks by adding more residents to wildfire prone areas, thereby exposing people in the county and surrounding jurisdictions to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire. A wildfire combined with Diablo Winds could expose residents in the county to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Slope Impacts

As discussed in Section 5.18.1.2, the topography in the EIR Study Area varies between steeply sloped mountains to flat valleys and shorelines. Construction of future development projects may require grading and site preparation activities that could change the slope of a single parcel or site. Potential future development under the proposed General Plan could increase development density in both flat and steeper areas of the county. However, proposed Health and Safety Element Policy HS-P4.6 directs the County to allow for decreased residential density below the minimum density requirement in hazard-prone areas, including those with slopes that exceed 15 percent.

All potential future residential development within the EIR Study Area would be required to comply with the CBC, SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations, and Contra Costa County Ordinance Code grading requirements, which include standards to minimize the ignition and spread of wildfire due to slopes. Furthermore, the proposed Health Safety Element includes several policies and actions that would address potentially significant impacts with regard to development within FHSZs. For example, Policy HS-P7.1 would require denial of applications for new residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs and discourage residential subdivisions in High FHSZs. Other potential housing types including below-market-rate housing are discouraged in the WUI and FHSZ areas per Policy HS-P4.3. All development in the WUI or High and Very FHSZs must incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the State Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulation for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply, as stated in Policy HS-P7.2. Policy HS-P7.4 outlines the requirements for fire protection plans that must be implemented for subdivisions and projects requiring a land use permit in High and Very High FHSZs. The proposed Health and Safety Element includes several other policies and actions under Goal HS-7, as shown in Section 5.18.3, *Proposed General Plan Goals, Policies and Actions*, that would improve fire safety in the county.

However, due to vegetation and slope, wildfires and associated smoke could potentially travel up a slope. Therefore, even with existing and proposed regulatory requirements, potential future development under the proposed General Plan could expose people to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire or pollutant concentrations due to slope.

Vegetation Impacts

Other factors, such as vegetation, have the potential to exacerbate wildfire risks. The grassland, brush, and woodland areas throughout the county are easily ignited, especially during summer and fall when temperatures are high, relative humidity is low, and wind speeds can be high. During these conditions, woodlands and brush vegetation can dry out, particularly in areas with unirrigated vegetation, becoming extremely flammable and increasing wildfire risks. As described in Section 5.18.1.1, the Contra Costa County LHMP and CWPP contain several vegetation management and fuel reduction projects to reduce the uncontrolled spread of wildfire due to vegetation. Additionally, all potential future development within wildfire-prone areas in the EIR Study Area would be required to comply with SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations, Public Resources Code Section 4291, and the California Fire Code. These regulations have specific requirements for new development to create defensible space and extensive fuel reduction within 100 feet of a structure, an ember resistant zone

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

within five feet of a structure, and the overall maintenance of properties to reduce the risk of uncontrolled fires or the spread of fires to other properties. However, even with existing regulatory requirements, potential future development under the proposed General Plan could expose people to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire or pollutant concentrations due to other factors such as vegetation.

With adherence to these building practices and wildfire management requirements, development associated with the proposed project would reduce the potential for exacerbating wildfire risks. However, due to the programmatic nature of this analysis, the unknown details, and potential impacts of specific future potential development projects under the proposed project, and the possibility of potential future development being in wildfire-prone areas, impacts would be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

As previously noted, the proposed CAP would primarily result in beneficial impacts with regard to climate change-related hazards, including wildfire risk and exposure. In addition to including a suite of strategies that would reduce GHG emissions and thereby potentially reduce wildfire impacts related to increasing temperatures and changing climate patterns, the proposed CAP's Chapter 5, *Climate Adaptation Strategy*, specifically addresses and outlines strategies related to improving the resiliency of the county's population and resources and protecting future development from wildfire hazards. Many of these strategies and actions reiterate policies and actions included within the proposed Health and Safety Element, including the actions under Strategy NI-2, like prohibiting new residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs, limiting development in High FHSZs, and requiring fire-safe designs and materials in addition to preparing, maintaining, and regularly implementing a fire protection plan for development in Very High FHSZs, the WUI, or a SRA. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no environmental impact on wildfire exposure.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.18-2 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

As discussed previously, implementation of the proposed General Plan could increase population, buildings, and infrastructure in wildfire-prone areas. The proposed General Plan contains policies that require new development and redevelopment projects to create and maintain defensible space and fire-safe vegetation around structures and roadways, and support enforcement of fire-safe standards and creation of fuel breaks. Certain types of new development would also be required to prepare Fire Protection Plans. These policies provide the best wildfire hazard reduction measures available. However, the only way to fully avoid the wildfire impact from implementation of the proposed General Plan is to disallow development in areas in Very High and High FHSZs and the WUI. Doing so could constitute a "taking" of private property based on US Supreme Court interpretation. It would also conflict with the County's responsibility to meet other obligations, including to increase the number and type of housing available in the county, as discussed in the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update EIR (SCH #2022070481). The County must promote residential development, as required by State housing law, within its adopted growth boundaries, some of which extend into fire hazard areas.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

The proposed General Plan land use map and ULL focus future housing and other potential development outside of fire hazard areas. The proposed General Plan also limits future development potential across much of the rural parts of the county where hazards are greatest by increasing the minimum lot size in agricultural areas from 5 acres to at least 10 acres. In addition, as described previously, the proposed General Plan includes policies to mitigate potential wildfire hazards. However, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level by prohibiting development in Very High and High FHSZs and the WUI could constitute a taking under the US Constitution, and is therefore considered infeasible and inconsistent with County planning goals and objectives. This approach is considered and rejected, and there are no feasible mitigation measures. Additionally, impacts related to exacerbating the risk of pollutant concentrations from wildfire and the uncontrolled spread of wildfire would be reduced, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Due to potential unknown impacts from future development under the proposed General Plan, impacts at the programmatic level would remain significant and unavoidable. This conclusion does not preclude a finding of less-than-significant impacts at the project level.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.18-2 would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 5.18-3: Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities), but it would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. [Threshold W-3]

Proposed General Plan

Development under the proposed General Plan would result in additional infrastructure, such as roadways, transmission lines, and other utilities, in order to serve new residential development. Fuel breaks and emergency water sources would also be required to comply with State and local development regulations. These types of improvements would involve temporary construction and result in changes to the existing built environment. The installation and operation of new aboveground power transmission lines would create a higher risk of exacerbating wildfire risks compared to other infrastructure. However, the CPUC requires maintenance of vegetation around power lines, strict wire-to-wire clearances, annual inspections of aboveground power lines, and the preparation of fire prevent plans for aboveground power lines in high fire-threat districts. These measures would reduce the wildfire risks associated with the installation and maintenance of power lines.

Any residential development in the wildfire-prone parts of the EIR Study Area would also be required to comply with building and design standards in the CBC and California Fire Code, which include provisions for fire-resistant building materials, the clearance of debris, and fire safety requirements during demolition and construction activities. Public Resources Code Section 4291 also requires that vegetation around buildings or structures maintain defensible space within 100 feet of a structure and an ember resistant zone within five feet of a structure. Additionally, SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations would prevent structures from being placed within 30 feet of a roadway, reducing the potential for new roadways to exacerbate wildfire risks. These measures, along with policies and actions in the proposed General Plan Health and Safety Element and

5. Environmental Analysis WILDFIRE

Public Facilities and Services Element for constructing homes with fire-resistant materials, landscaping with irrigated or fire-resistant materials, and requiring review by fire protection agencies for adequate water supplies, road design, and building design would minimize wildfire risks associated with the installation and maintenance of infrastructure.

Such infrastructure and maintenance activities would also be required to comply with the adopted State regulations, County Ordinance Code standards, and the proposed General Plan policies and actions to mitigate the impact of infrastructure on the environment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As noted in the discussions of Impacts 5.18-1 and 5.18-2, the proposed CAP is a policy document that among other efforts, contains strategies aimed at improving wildfire safety and resilience in the EIR Study Area. This includes an action under Strategy NI-2 that directs the County to support the undergrounding of utility lines in the WUI and FHSZs, similar to Policy HS-P7.9 in the proposed Health and Safety Element. While the proposed CAP would not directly result in new development that could exacerbate fire risk, strategies and actions included in the proposed CAP could result in the construction of physical improvements and infrastructure in the county designed to help meet the emissions targets in the CAP. However, under Policy HS-P7.8 of the proposed Health and Safety Element, construction of critical facilities in high fire risk areas would be discouraged. Additionally, all future construction associated with the proposed CAP would be subject to the applicable federal, State, and local regulations outlined in this section.

Overall, adoption of the proposed CAP would primarily result in beneficial impacts with regard to wildlife risks from proposed infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have less than significant impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.18-3 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.18-3 would be less than significant.

Impact 5.18-4: The project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. [Threshold W-4]

Proposed General Plan

Wildfires on hillsides can create secondary hazards in the form of flooding and landslides. Wildfires on steep slopes can burn the vegetation that stabilizes the slope and create hydrophobic conditions that prevent the ground from absorbing water. This can lead to landslides, debris flows, and flooding.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

As discussed in Section 5.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, Contra Costa County contains lands within the 100-year and 500-year floodplain. As shown in Figure 5.10-3, floodplains are primarily along creeks, canals, shorelines, and low-lying lands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Many flood-prone areas are not, however, in High or Very High FHSZs or WUI areas.

As discussed in Section 5.7, *Geology and Soils*, landslide-prone areas are throughout the county, with many of the moderate to high landslide potential areas coinciding with High or Very High FHSZs. Many of the high landslide potential areas are on the steep slopes of the Diablo Mountain Range, creating overlapping landslide-prone areas in the steep mountain ranges. This overlap may cause areas outside of a landslide susceptible zone to be affected by runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainages changes following a wildfire.

Potential future development under the proposed General Plan could contribute to post-fire slope instability or drainage changes upstream. However, as discussed previously, proposed Health and Safety Element Policy HS-P7.1 would require denial of applications for new residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs and Policy HS-P4.3 discourages locating below market-rate housing development inside of mapped hazard zones as identified in the Health and Safety Element; however, this does not prevent other types of residential development from being in mapped hazard zones. Additionally, all new development in the county is required to comply with State and local regulations, such as the CBC, California Fire Code, and County Ordinance Code, which have provisions to reduce downslope or downstream landslides and flooding. For example, Section 1803 of the CBC requires a geotechnical investigation that must assess existing landslide susceptibility on a project site. Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Title 7, Article 716, *Grading*, requires a grading permit issued by a building inspector to control excavating, grading, and earthwork construction, including fills or embankments and related work, ultimately minimizing slope instability. Furthermore, as discussed in Impact Discussion 5.18-2, all potential future development within wildfire-prone areas in the EIR Study Area would be required to comply with SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations, Public Resources Code Section 4291, and the California Fire Code. These regulations would ensure fire-resilient structures and properties, and therefore would reduce the potential for post-wildfire flooding or landslides downstream or downslope.

New development complying with State and local regulations would not expose people or structures to downslope landslides or downstream flooding due to post-fire hazards. Furthermore, as identified in Impact Discussions 5.18-1 and 5.18-2, development under the proposed project must also comply with the County EOP, LHMP, and CWPP. All future development, regardless of the location, is required to comply with adopted local, regional, and State plans and regulations addressing wildfire prevention, which would minimize risks of post-fire hazards. As such, compliance with these policies and regulatory requirements would ensure impacts from post-fire instability would be less than significant.

Proposed CAP

As discussed previously, the proposed CAP is a policy document that provides strategies to reduce GHG emissions and improve climate resiliency and adaptation. The intent of proposed CAP is therefore to reduce risks associated with climate change and is not expected to result in significant impacts with regard to landslide and flooding impacts associated with post-fire instability. The proposed CAP contains several strategies and actions that align with the guidance of the proposed General Plan and other applicable State and local

5. Environmental Analysis WILDFIRE

regulations, including Strategy NI-6, which provides actions to reduce impacts from other climate-related hazards, including drought, flooding, landslides, and severe weather. The proposed CAP would therefore result in no impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.18-4 would result in less-than-significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.18-4 would result in less-than-significant impacts.

Impact 5.18-5: Development in designated High or Very FHSZs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger. [Threshold H-7]

Proposed General Plan

As shown in Figure 5.18-1, the EIR Study Area includes land mapped within High and Very FHSZs, which are concentrated in areas with high slopes. Including the Briones Hills and Diablo Range. While much of this land is outside of the County's Urban Limit Line (ULL), limiting development potential, approximately 15,913 acres of land within the ULL are classified as a High FHSZ, and approximately 2,764 acres of land within the ULL are classified as a Very High FHSZ. However, approximately 7,420 acres of this land within the ULL that is in the High FHSZ or Very High FHSZ is designated as Public and Semi-Public, Parks and Recreation, and Resource Conservation under the proposed General Plan. This land is largely owned by public agencies who intend to conserve the land. Additionally, some of this land within FHSZs has already been developed under the existing General Plan that will be replaced by the proposed General Plan.

As discussed in Impact 5.18-2, the county is subject to strong easterly winds, also known as Diablo Winds, in the fall. These winds have high speeds and can shift suddenly, and they are often accompanied by low humidity. They create dangerous conditions for starting and spreading wildfires during the drier months of the year, and they also spread wildfire smoke hazards, as can prevailing winds. Future development under the proposed General Plan could exacerbate wildfire risks by adding people to wildfire-prone areas in the EIR Study Area and exposing people to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire. A wildfire combined with Diablo Winds could expose residents in the area to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. In addition, the topography in wildfire-prone areas of the county is steeply sloped. Construction of future development projects and activities under the proposed General Plan in these areas may require grading and site preparation activities that could change the slope of a single parcel or site. Other factors, such as vegetation, have the potential to exacerbate wildfire risks. The grassland and woodland areas of inland valleys in central Contra Costa are easily ignited, especially during late summer and fall when temperatures and winds are high and relative humidity is low. During these conditions, woodland vegetation can dry out, particularly in areas with unirrigated vegetation, becoming extremely flammable and increasing wildfire risks.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Though all urban development would occur within the ULL, outside the majority of the most wildfire-prone and inaccessible areas, the proposed General Plan land use map would continue to allow residential and commercial development in FHSZs where topography is steeper and evacuation access is limited per Figure 5.9-4. However, the proposed Health and Safety Element includes several policies and actions that would address potentially significant impacts from development within FHSZs. For example, Policy HS-P7.1 would require denial of applications for new residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs and discourage residential subdivisions in High FHSZs. Other potential housing types including below-market-rate housing are discouraged in the WUI and FHSZ areas per Policy HS-P4.3. All development in the WUI or High and Very FHSZs must incorporate fire-safe design features that meet the State Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulation for road ingress and egress, fire equipment access, and adequate water supply, as stated in Policy HS-P7.2. Policy HS-P7.3 outlines the requirements for fire protection plans that must be implemented for subdivisions and projects requiring a land use permit in High and Very High FHSZs. The proposed Health and Safety Element includes several other policies and actions under Goal HS-7 that would improve fire safety in the county.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan land use plan would reduce the capacity for residential development on agricultural lands, including land within FHSZs and the WUI, by requiring at least a 10-acre minimum lot size, an increase from the 5-acre minimum lot size required by the existing General Plan. This change would further reduce the number of people and structures that would be exposed to wildfire under the proposed General Plan when compared to the existing General Plan.

Even with existing regulatory requirements and proposed General Plan goals, policies, actions, and land use changes, implementation of the proposed project could increase population, buildings, and infrastructure in wildfire-prone areas beyond those that exist today. The introduction of additional humans (through new development and redevelopment) and human activities (including the use of construction equipment) to fire-prone areas inherently exacerbates existing fire hazards. Though proposed General Plan goals, policies, actions, and land use changes and mandatory State wildfire hazard reduction measures reduce risks in wildfire-prone areas, they would not reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. Due to the programmatic nature of this analysis, the unknown details and potential impacts of specific future potential development projects under the proposed project, and the potential for future development to be in wildfire-prone areas, out of an abundance of caution impacts are considered to be potentially significant.

Proposed CAP

As previously noted, the proposed CAP would primarily result in beneficial impacts with regard to climate change-related hazards. Including wildfire risk and exposure. In addition to including a suite of strategies that would reduce GHG emissions and thereby potentially reduce wildfire impacts related to increasing temperature and changing climate patterns, the proposed CAP's Chapter 5, *Climate Adaptation Strategy*, specifically addresses and outlines strategies related to improving the resiliency of the county's population and resources and protecting future development from wildfire hazards. Many of these strategies and actions reiterate and add detail to the policies and actions included within the proposed Health and Safety Element, including the actions under Strategy NI-2, like prohibiting new residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs, limiting development in High FHSZs, and requiring fire-safe designs and materials in addition to preparing, maintaining, and regularly

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

implementing a fire protection plan for development in any Very High FHSZs, the WUI, or a State Responsibility Area. Therefore, the proposed CAP would have no significant impact on wildfire exposure.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Impact 5.9-5 would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

There are no feasible mitigation measures. Existing federal, State, and local regulations, in addition to the policies, strategies, and actions in the proposed General Plan and proposed CAP cover the best available wildfire hazards reduction measures for new development and redevelopment in the county. Adherence to these regulations and policies would reduce significant impacts associated with wildfire hazard exposure to the extent possible, outside of prohibiting all development in High to Very High FHSZs and WUI areas (as discussed further in the discussion of Impact 5.18-2).

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Impact 5.18-5 would remain significant and unavoidable.

5.18.5 Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project would result in new development within the SRA, High and Very High FHSZs, and WUI. To protect this development, the County requires that future development adhere to State and local regulations. With adherence to these building practices and wildfire management requirements, development associated with the proposed project would reduce wildfire risk to the extent possible. However, because development would be allowed to occur within these hazard areas, which would increase the exposure of people and structures to wildfire hazards, impacts would be cumulatively significant.

5.18.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

After implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, some impacts would be less than significant: Impact 5.18.1, 5.18-3, and Impact 5.18-4.

Without mitigation, these impacts would be **potentially significant**:

- **Impact 5.18-2:** Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.
- **Impact 5.18-5:** Development in designated High or Very FHSZs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger.

5.18.7 Mitigation Measures

Impacts 5.18-2 and 5.18-5

There are no feasible mitigation measures.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

5.18.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts 5.18-2 and 5.18-5

While the CBC, California Fire Code, SRA and Very High FHSZ Fire Safe Regulations, Public Resources Code, County LHMP, proposed General Plan policies and actions, and County Ordinance Code would reduce impacts, the only way to fully avoid the wildfire impacts from implementation of the proposed project is to not allow development in areas within Very High FHSZs and WUI areas. However, doing so is not feasible or practical as the County has a responsibility to provide land for new development and enacting an outright ban on new development in these areas could amount to a regulatory taking. Due to the potential unknown impacts from future development under the proposed project, impacts at the programmatic level would remain significant and unavoidable.

5. Environmental Analysis WILDFIRE

5.18.9 References

- Balch, Jennifer; Bradley, Bethany; Abatzoglou, John, et. Al. 2017, March 14. Human-Started Wildfires Expand the Fire Niche Across the United States. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS): Volume 114 No. 11, <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/114/11/2946.full.pdf>, accessed on August 17, 2022.
- Cal-Adapt, 2022a. “Annual Averages.” <https://cal-adapt.org/tools/annual-averages/>, accessed August 18, 2022.
- . 2022b. “Wildfire.” <https://cal-adapt.org/tools/wildfire/>, accessed on August 18, 2022.
- CAL FIRE. 2022. “Stats and Events.” <https://www.fire.ca.gov/stats-events/>, accessed on August 17, 2022.
- . 2019. “Know The Law For Defensible Space And Hardening Your Home.” <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/more/fire-safety-laws/#:~:text=By%20following%20the%20law%2C%20you,mile%20away%20from%20a%20wildfire,> accessed August 17, 2022.
- . 2018 to 2021. “Stats and Events.” <https://www.fire.ca.gov/stats-events/>, accessed on August 17, 2022.
- . 2021, July 30. California Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ)- Map Image Layer.
- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). <https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/firemap/>, accessed August 17, 2022a.
- California Public Utilities Commission, press release: CPUC Adopts New Fire-Safety Regulations, <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M201/K352/201352402.PDF>, accessed August 17b, 2022.
- California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2018. *2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California*, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/5590/2018-strategic-fire-plan-approved-08_22_18.pdf, accessed on August 16, 2022.
- Contra Costa, County. 2018, January. *Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan*. <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/48893/Contra-Costa-County-Draft-Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-Volume-1-January-31-2018?bidId=>.
- Natural Resources Canada. 2018. Fire Behavior, <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/fire-insects-disturbances/fire/13145>, accessed on August 17, 2022.
- National Park Service. 2018. “Wildland Fire in Chaparral: California and Southwestern United States.” <https://www.nps.gov/articles/wildland-fire-in-chaparral.htm>, accessed on August 17, 2022.

5. Environmental Analysis

WILDFIRE

Pacific Biodiversity Institute. 2007. Roads and Wildfires,
http://www.pacificbio.org/publications/wildfire_studies/Roads_And_Wildfires_2007.pdf, accessed
on August 17, 2022.

U.S Department of the Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2014. *The National Strategy: The Final
Phase of Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy*.
[https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/documents/strategy/strategy/CSPPhaseIIINationalStrategyA
pr2014.pdf](https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/documents/strategy/strategy/CSPPhaseIIINationalStrategyApr2014.pdf).

Texas Wildfire Mitigation Project. 2018. How Do Power Lines Cause Wildfires?
<https://wildfiremitigation.tees.tamus.edu/faqs/how-power-lines-cause-wildfires>, accessed on August
17, 2022.

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

As stated in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14 Section 15126, Consideration and Discussion of Environmental Impacts, all phases of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment: planning, acquisition, development, and operation. The subjects listed below shall be discussed as directed in CCR Sections 15126.2, Consideration and Discussion of Significant Environmental Impacts; 15126.4, Consideration and Discussion of Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize Significant Effects; and 15126.6, Consideration and Discussion of Alternatives to the Proposed Project. This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must address all of the following subjects listed in CCR Title 14 Section 15126:

(a) Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project. An EIR is a crucial document that outlines the significant environmental impacts of a proposed project. The lead agency should focus on changes in existing physical conditions in the affected area at the time of preparation or when the environmental analysis begins. The EIR should identify and describe the project's direct and indirect effects, considering both short-term and long-term effects. It should include specifics of the area, resources involved, physical changes, ecological systems, population distribution, human use, health and safety problems, and other aspects of the resource base. The EIR should also analyze any potential environmental effects the project might cause or risk exacerbating by bringing development and people into the affected area (CCR, Title 14, Section 15126.2(a)). These items are covered in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR, which examines the environmental setting of the proposed project, analyzes its effects and the significance of its impacts, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or avoid impacts.

(b) Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided if the Proposed Project is Implemented. The EIR should describe any significant impacts, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described (CCR, Title 14, Section 15126.2(c)). These effects are discussed in Section 6.1, *Significant Unavoidable and Adverse Impacts*.

(c) Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would be Involved in the Proposed Project Should it be Implemented. Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified (CCR, Title 14, Section 15126.2(d)). These changes are discussed in Section 6.2, *Significant Irreversible Changes*.

(d) Growth-Inducing Impact of the Proposed Project. The EIR should discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects that would remove obstacles to population growth (e.g., a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might allow for more construction in service areas). It also includes projects that would increase the population such that they would tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. The EIR should also discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment (CCR, Title 14, Section 15126.2(e)). These impacts are discussed in Section 6.3, *Growth Inducement*.

(e) Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize the Significant Effects. The full requirements for mitigation measures under CEQA are listed in CCR Section 15126.4. Refer to Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, for a summary table of mitigation measures and Sections 5.1 through 5.18 for further detail regarding mitigation measures considered in this EIR.

(f) Alternatives to the Proposed Project. The full requirements for Alternatives to the Proposed Project under CEQA are listed in CCR Section 15126.6. Refer to Chapter 7, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, for a discussion of project alternatives.

This chapter of the Draft EIR describes the significant unavoidable environmental impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, and growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project. The following discussion addresses these issues as they relate to the implementation of the proposed project.

6.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE AND ADVERSE IMPACTS

At the end of Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, is a table that summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and levels of significance before and after mitigation. Mitigation measures would reduce the level of impact, but the following impacts would remain significant, unavoidable, and adverse after mitigation measures are applied:

Agricultural and Forestry Resources

- **Impact 5.2-1:** The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use.
- **Impact 5.2-4:** The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

Air Quality

- **Impact 5.3-2:** Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards.
- **Impact 5.3-3:** Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS.
- **Impact 5.3-5:** Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Cultural and Tribal Resources

- **Impact 5.5-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.

Mineral Resources

- **Impact 5.12-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

Noise

- **Impact 5.13-1:** Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project.
- **Impact 5.13-2:** Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards.

Transportation

- **Impact 5.16-2:** Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).

Wildfire

- **Impact 5.18-2:** Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

- **Impact 5.18-5:** Development in designated High or Very FHZSs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to discuss the extent to which the proposed project would commit nonrenewable resources to uses that future generations would probably be unable to reverse. The three CEQA-required categories of irreversible changes are discussed herein.

6.2.1 Changes in Land Use That Commit Future Generations

As described in detail in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR, the proposed General Plan is updating its land use map to align with current land uses, focusing on mixed-use development and higher density housing within community cores, where infrastructure and services are readily available. In addition, during public outreach for the proposed project, residents of several unincorporated communities expressed a desire for new development, redevelopment, and more economic activity and accessibility. Once future development under the proposed project occurs, it would not be feasible or desirable to return the developed land to its existing (pre-project) condition. Therefore, there is potential that some of the development allowed under the proposed project would most likely lead to irreversible changes in land use.

6.2.2 Irreversible Damage from Environmental Accidents

Irreversible changes to the physical environment could occur from accidental release of hazardous materials associated with development activities allowed by the proposed General Plan; however, compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations and the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would reduce this potential impact to a less-than-significant level. Irreversible damage therefore is not expected to result from adoption and implementation of the proposed project.

6.2.3 Large Commitment of Nonrenewable Resources

The proposed project would promote mixed-use development near transportation facilities and employment centers and implement energy and water conservation requirements related to existing and new development, thereby minimizing consumption of non-renewable resources to the extent practicable. However, development allowed by the proposed project would irretrievably commit nonrenewable resources for the construction of buildings, infrastructure, and roadway improvements. Future development under the proposed project also represents a long-term commitment to the consumption of fossil fuels such as natural gas and gasoline. Increased energy demands would be used for the construction, lighting, heating, and cooling of residences and transportation of people within, to, and from the EIR Study Area. However, as shown in Section 5.6, *Energy*, and Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, of this Draft EIR, several regulatory measures and proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions encourage energy and water conservation, alternative energy use, waste reduction, alternatives to automotive transportation, and green building. Future development under the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable building and design requirements, including those outlined in Title 24 relating to energy conservation. In compliance with

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

CALGreen, the State's Green Building Standards Code, future development would be required to reduce water consumption by 20 percent, divert 50 percent of construction waste from landfills, and use low pollutant-emitting materials. Therefore, while construction and operation of future development would involve the use of nonrenewable resources, compliance with applicable standards and regulations and implementation of proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would minimize impacts.

In addition, the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update establishes new actions the County would take to reduce GHG emissions from energy production and use in the built environment, transportation, waste, water, and wastewater sectors. Implementation of the CAP would reduce the use of nonrenewable resources and increase the use of renewable sources to the maximum extent practicable. Therefore, the proposed project would not represent a large commitment of nonrenewable resources in comparison to a business-as-usual situation.

6.3 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

Section 15126.2(e) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Typical growth-inducing factors might be the extension of urban services or transportation infrastructure to a previously unserved or under-served area, or the removal of major barriers to development.

This section evaluates the proposed project's potential to create such growth inducements. As CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) requires, "[it] must not be assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment." In other words, growth inducement in and of itself does not indicate a significant impact; rather, the evaluation should consider whether the growth inducement would cause significant adverse environmental impacts.

Growth-inducing impacts fall into two general categories: direct or indirect. Direct growth-inducing impacts would occur if the project results in increased population due to the development of housing which add new residents, or commercial/industrial uses which would add new employees. Indirect, or secondary growth-inducing impacts would occur if a project removes barriers to growth, such as by adding infrastructure and public services in areas that currently lack these services.

6.3.1 Direct Impacts

The proposed project includes two plan-level documents that do not propose any specific development; however, implementation of the proposed project would induce growth by increasing the development potential in the EIR Study Area, as shown in Table 3-2, *2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projections*, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*. As shown in Table 3-2, the 2045 forecast for the EIR Study Area is approximately 65,600 total new residents, 23,200 new housing units, 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space, and 5 million square feet of industrial space. State law requires jurisdictions to promote the production of housing to meet their fair share of regional housing needs as determined by ABAG. By definition, the proposed General Plan would provide a framework for development in the unincorporated county, thereby facilitating planned

6. Unavoidable Impacts, Irreversible Changes, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

growth, as discussed in Section 5.14, *Population and Housing*. The environmental impacts of this anticipated growth under the proposed General Plan are discussed in Sections 5.1 through 5.18. In addition, the proposed General Plan and CAP would result in regional benefits by promoting growth that encourages less automobile dependence, which could have associated air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits.

6.3.2 Indirect Impacts

The proposed project could be considered growth-inducing because it includes policies and actions that encourage new growth within the EIR Study Area. Such development would occur within the Urban Limit Line, where infrastructure is already in place. Meanwhile, growth would be required to comply with the County's General Plan, zoning regulations, and standards for public services and utilities. Secondary effects associated with this growth do not represent a new significant environmental impact that has not already been addressed in the individual resource sections of this EIR. Additionally, population and employment growth would occur incrementally over approximately 20 years and would be consistent with the regional planning objectives established for the Bay Area.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 Purpose and Scope

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) include a discussion of reasonable project alternatives that would “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]). As required by CEQA, this chapter identifies and evaluates potential alternatives to the proposed project.

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines explains the foundation and legal requirements for the alternatives analysis in an EIR. Key provisions are:

- “[T]he discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.” (15126.6[b])
- “The specific alternative of ‘no project’ shall also be evaluated along with its impact.” (15126.6[e][1])
- “The no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. If the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” (15126.6[e][2])
- “The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a ‘rule of reason’ that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.” (15126.6[f])
- “Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries..., and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent).” (15126.6[g][1]).
- “Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR.” (15126.6[g][2][A])
- “An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative.” (15126.6[g][3])

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

For each development alternative, this analysis:

- Describes the alternative
- Analyzes the impact of the alternative as compared to the proposed project
- Identifies the impacts of the project that would be avoided or lessened by the alternative
- Assesses whether the alternative would meet most of the basic project objectives
- Evaluates the comparative merits of the alternative and the project

According to Section 15126.6(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, “[i]f an alternative would cause...significant effects in addition those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.”

7.1.2 Project Objectives

As described in Section 3.5, *Project Objectives*, of Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the following objectives have been established for the proposed project and will aid decision makers in their review of the project, the project alternatives, and associated environmental impacts.

- Extend the General Plan planning horizon to year 2045 and establish a legally adequate General Plan and Climate Action Plan (CAP) that meet State requirements through a community-based planning process.
- Through the updates to the land use map, align the map with existing uses that already exist on the ground today, while also focusing more mixed-use development and higher density housing within community cores, where infrastructure and services are available.
- Provide planning guidance at a community scale, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all policy approach throughout the county.
- Create a modern and visionary policy document intended to address the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century, including the following:
 - **Environmental Justice.** Reduce the unique or compounded health risks in communities that experience the highest levels of pollution and negative health outcomes, such as asthma and low birth weight babies, and the greatest social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty and housing instability.
 - **Community Health.** Provide opportunities for community members to live healthy lifestyles, including by improving peoples’ ability to walk or bike between destinations, providing multi-modal transportation connections, creating opportunities for social interaction, and promoting access to outdoor recreation, healthy food, and medical facilities. Reduce exposure of all community members to pollutants that can adversely affect their health.
 - **Economic Development.** Develop the county’s workforce and attract and support sustainable businesses and industries that provide living-wage jobs, invest in hiring from the local workforce, and engage with communities. Promote innovation, build the tax base, and allow residents to work in the county where they live by improving the existing jobs-housing imbalance. In particular, locate jobs closer to Impacted Communities to support economic empowerment and reduced commute costs for Impacted Community members.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

- **Sustainability.** Conserve resources, improve resiliency (especially to the impacts of climate change), protect the environment, reduce pollution, and enhance overall quality of life.

7.1.3 Summary of Significant Impacts Reduced to Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

Air Quality

- **Impact 5.3-4:** Construction activities associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Biological Resources

- **Impact 5.4-4:** Implementation of the proposed project could interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources

- **Impact 5.5-2:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.
- **Impact 5.5-4:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or determined to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c).

Geology and Soils

- **Impact 5.7-5:** Development under the proposed project could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature.

Noise

- **Impact 5.13-3:** Individual construction developments for future projects may expose sensitive uses to excessive levels of groundborne vibration.

7.1.4 Summary of Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Agricultural and Forestry Resources

- **Impact 5.2-1:** The proposed project could convert approximately 13,816 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use.
- **Impact 5.2-4:** The proposed project would result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Air Quality

- **Impact 5.3-2:** Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards.
- **Impact 5.3-3:** Development under the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State AAQS.
- **Impact 5.3-5:** Operational-phase emissions associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and cumulatively contribute to elevated health risk in the Air Basin.

Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources

- **Impact 5.5-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.

Mineral Resources

- **Impact 5.12-1:** Implementation of the proposed project could result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

Noise

- **Impact 5.13-1:** Construction activities would result in temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the proposed project.
- **Impact 5.13-2:** Project implementation would generate a substantial traffic noise increase on local roadways and could locate sensitive receptors near rail in areas that exceed established noise standards.

Transportation

- **Impact 5.16-2:** Implementation of the proposed project would conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).

Wildfire

- **Impact 5.18-2:** Development under the proposed project in or near SRAs or lands classified as Very High FHSZs could exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.
- **Impact 5.18-5:** Development in designated High or Very FHSZs could expose structures and/or residences to fire danger.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED DURING THE SCOPING/PROJECT PLANNING PROCESS

The following is a discussion of the land use alternatives considered during the scoping and planning process and the reasons why they were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIR.

7.2.1 Alternative Development Areas

CEQA requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on alternatives to the project or its location that can avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project. The key question and first step in the analysis is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126[5][B][1]). Given the nature of the proposed project (adoption of a General Plan and CAP for the entire unincorporated county), it is not possible to consider an offsite alternative. For this reason, an offsite alternative was considered infeasible pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) and was rejected as a feasible project alternative.

7.2.2 Reduced Density/Intensity Alternative

A reduced density/intensity alternative that would result in the development of fewer residences and commercial and industrial square footage would theoretically reduce traffic and thereby reduce community impacts such as air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, traffic, noise, and demand for utilities and public services. However, such an alternative would not achieve or would only partially achieve the project objectives of accommodating growth in the county, including the objective to increase density within the existing community cores and provide more employment opportunities within the county. Additionally, because the proposed General Plan would implement the land use changes needed to meet the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for its 2023-2031 6th Cycle Housing Element, this alternative conflicts with the goals of the adopted Housing Element and State housing law. Moreover, the proposed General Plan provides additional housing capacity that can be used to meet future RHNAs for the County beyond the 6th Cycle. This Alternative could result in the need for the County to redesignate and rezone additional land to be able to meet future RHNAs. As a reduced development density conflicts with regional plans to increase housing, and would not meet the project objectives, this option was not evaluated in the EIR.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.2.3 Reduction of Warehousing Uses Near Impacted Communities Alternative

This alternative would prohibit warehousing uses with heavy-duty trucks (as discussed in Section 5.3, *Air Quality*) within 1,000 feet of an Impacted Community.¹ As discussed in Section 5.3, development allowed by the proposed project could result in new sources of toxic air contaminants (TAC) or fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) near existing or planned sensitive receptors, resulting in significant and unavoidable impacts to cumulative health risk in the Bay Area. Under Mitigation Measure AQ-4, new industrial or warehousing development projects that either 1) have the potential to generate 100 or more diesel truck trips per day or have 40 or more trucks with operating diesel-powered transport refrigeration units, and 2) are within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use or Impacted Community must submit a health risk assessment to the County for review and approval. However, since emissions associated with these facilities cannot be determined or modeled until specific development projects are proposed, the potential impacts cannot be determined.

As shown in Table 3-2, *2045 Horizon-Year Growth Projections*, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR, the proposed project could result in development of approximately 5 million square feet of new industrial uses within the proposed General Plan's horizon year of 2045. Of these 5 million square feet, approximately 4 million square feet are within 1,000 feet of Impacted Communities. Approximately 3 million square feet of this projected square footage would result from approved and pending projects, 1.8 million square feet of which are within 1,000 feet of Impacted Communities. Therefore, while this Alternative would result in a reduction of industrial uses within proximity to Impacted Communities, reducing the associated health risk impacts, it would not prevent the development of the projects that have been approved by the County or are pending approval. As such, warehousing uses with heavy-duty trucks could still be developed within 1,000 feet of Impacted Communities.

The proposed General Plan includes policy guidance that addresses impacts from heavy-duty trucks, including Policy HS-P1.8, which requires industrial projects over 25,000 square feet to be near zero-emission (NZE) operations, including from the associated fleet, by providing ZE vehicle-capable parking for all anticipated truck traffic to prevent idling and off-site queuing, providing electrified loading docks with receptacles allowing plug-in of refrigerated trucks, using heavy-duty trucks that are model year 2014 or later and expediting a transition to ZE trucks, and using a clean fleet of delivery vehicles. In addition, Policy SC-P1.6 directs the County to pursue community benefits agreements (CBAs) for projects negatively affecting an Impacted Community. The CBAs would address the community's expressed needs, with the primary objective to mitigate project impacts to the greatest extent possible, including by exceeding the mitigation requirements of CEQA. This policy also directs the County to secure community benefits that exceed the inherent project benefits and support the community's objectives, especially as identified in the Community Profiles found in the Stronger Communities Element. Furthermore, future warehousing projects would be subject to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, which require an analysis of consistency of the proposed project with applicable Community Emission Reduction Plans (CERPs) and local Environmental Justice policies. In

¹ "Impacted Communities" refers to census tracts in the unincorporated county that are disproportionately burdened by pollution. As discussed further in Section 5.3, *Air Quality*, this designation has been applied to census tracts that score at or above the 72nd percentile for various pollution and population indicators in the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's CalEnviroScreen program.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

addition, the County established a moratorium on new or expanded warehousing uses in the North Richmond area, an Impacted Community, pursuant to Ordinance 2023-19, adopted in 2023.

Meanwhile, this Alternative would not meet an important objective of the project to locate jobs closer to Impacted Communities to support economic empowerment and reduced commute costs for Impacted Community members, while also reducing VMT. Given that a substantial amount of warehousing development would still be constructed near Impacted Communities and any proposed warehousing in this area would be subject to the health risk assessment and good neighbor policies described above, and because this Alternative would not meet a key project objective, this Alternative is rejected from further consideration.

7.3 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Based on the criteria listed above, the following Alternatives have been determined to represent a reasonable range of alternatives which have the potential to feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but may avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. These alternatives are analyzed in detail in this section:

- No Project/Existing Plans
- Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas (TPAs)
- No Urban Development within High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ)
- Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined

An EIR must identify an “environmentally superior” Alternative. If the No Project Alternative is identified as environmentally superior, the EIR is then required to identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the others evaluated. Each alternative’s environmental impacts are compared to the proposed project and determined to be environmentally superior, neutral, or inferior.

7.3.1 No Project/Existing Plans Alternative

The No Project Alternative is required to discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published and evaluate what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project is not approved (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6[e]). Pursuant to CEQA, this Alternative is also based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. Therefore, the No Project/Existing Plans (Existing General Plan and CAP) Alternative assumes that the proposed project would not be adopted, and the development intensity assumed in the existing General Plan would be followed. Additionally, all new goals, policies, strategies, and actions under the proposed General Plan and CAP would not be adopted.

The proposed project would not significantly expand the footprint of development potential beyond the capacity identified in the No Project Alternative. Most changes under the proposed project involve increased density/intensity within community cores and as such, footprint-related impacts (e.g., biological resources and cultural resources) under this Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The proposed project would result in an increase in population and housing units, as well as employment and commercial and industrial

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

square footage; therefore, this Alternative would result in a reduction in intensity-related impacts. For example, this Alternative would generate fewer auto trips, traffic noise would be less, and impacts on services and utilities would be less.

Additionally, this Alternative would prevent the adoption and implementation of the new policies, strategies, and actions under the proposed General Plan and CAP that would reduce impacts associated with development in the county. For example, Policy HS-P7.1 in the proposed Health and Safety Element would prohibit approval of residential subdivisions in Very High FHSZs, which would reduce impacts associated with wildfire hazards when compared to the policy guidance under the existing General Plan. Policies and actions in the proposed Land Use and Transportation Elements, in addition to the strategies and actions provided in the proposed CAP, incorporate numerous vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and GHG-reducing measures that would likely lead to increased use of alternative modes of transportation and other types of reductions in VMT and GHGs. When compared to this Alternative, the proposed project would increase densities in community cores, resulting in further reductions in VMT. The full analysis of this alternative for each topical resource issue is shown in Table 7-1, *No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis*.

Table 7-1 No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Aesthetics	<p>Like the proposed project, the No Project/Existing Plans Alternative would allow for additional development in the EIR Study Area, though development would occur pursuant to the existing land use plan and General Plan goals, policies, and actions. As such, the Alternative would introduce new sources of light and glare, impact scenic resources, and alter the appearance of the unincorporated county. Development under this Alternative and the proposed project would both be subject to Urban Limit Line (ULL) restrictions, applicable provisions in the County Ordinance Code that protect scenic resources and visual quality, and California Green Building Code (CALGreen) standards for light and glare. However, development under this Alternative would not be subject to the new policies and actions in the proposed General Plan that strengthen or increase protections or aesthetic resources, as discussed in Section 5.1, <i>Aesthetics</i>.</p> <p>Therefore, this Alternative would result in slightly <i>increased</i> impacts with regard to aesthetics, though impacts would remain less than significant.</p>
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<p>Like the proposed project, the existing land use plan allows urban development on Important Farmland and forestland in the EIR Study Area. However, when compared to the existing land use plan, the proposed land use plan has increased density and intensity of community cores which could reduce pressure to develop urban uses on important farmland or forestland outside of the urban cores. Furthermore, the proposed project would reduce the allowed density within the Agricultural Lands designation from 1 unit per 5 acres under the existing General Plan to 1 unit per 10 acres under the proposed project. These components of the proposed project could result in less development on important farmland and forestland.</p> <p>Therefore, this Alternative could result in slightly <i>increased</i> impacts with regard to agricultural and forestry resources.</p>
Air Quality	<p>Air quality impacts associated with construction would be similar to the proposed project under this Alternative since development under the existing General Plan would also be subject to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)'s <i>CEQA Air Quality Guidelines</i> for assessing and mitigating impacts in addition to complying with applicable BAAQMD rules. As described in Table 5.3-11, <i>Scenario 2. Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Forecast Compared to the Future No Project Conditions</i>, in Section 5.3, <i>Air Quality</i>, development anticipated under the proposed project would result in an increase in operational emissions at the 2045 horizon year when compared the development anticipated under the existing General Plan at the 2045 horizon year, largely due to the increased development intensity under the proposed General Plan. As such, this Alternative would result in fewer air pollutant emissions than the proposed project.</p>

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-1 No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
	<p>The proposed project would also have significant health risk impacts associated with increases in manufacturing and warehousing uses in the county. This Alternative also allows these uses under the existing land use plan and would be expected to have similarly significant impacts. The proposed project would include new policies and actions that aim to address health impacts from hazardous and polluting uses on vulnerable communities. As discussed in Section 5.3, several measures in the Stronger Communities Element and Health and Safety Element increase requirements for industrial projects to reduce emissions, above existing requirements in the existing General Plan. However, the effect of these measures on future operational emissions has not been quantified.</p> <p>Therefore, although the proposed project would include new policies and actions that would reduce health impacts from hazardous and polluting uses, regional operational emissions under the existing General Plan would be less than the proposed project (as demonstrated in Table 5.3-11 in Section 5.3, <i>Air Quality</i>), resulting in an overall <i>lesser</i> impact on air quality, though impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.</p>
Biological Resources	<p>Impacts to biological resources would be similar under this Alternative when compared to the proposed project. Development under the proposed project would largely continue to occur in areas where it is currently permitted under the existing General Plan and development under both scenarios would be subject to existing federal, State, and local regulations governing the protection of biological resources. Impacts to sensitive species, jurisdictional waters, riparian habitat, and tree protection would be less than significant under this Alternative and the proposed project; however, the proposed project would introduce new requirements and protections for these resources through the policies and actions in the proposed General Plan (see Section 5.4, <i>Biological Resources</i>). Additionally, impacts to wildlife migration corridors would be significant without mitigation under the proposed project, and this Alternative could have significant impacts as well.</p> <p>Therefore, this Alternative would result in slightly <i>increased</i> impacts with regard to biological resources and impacts to wildlife migration corridors could be significant without mitigation.</p>
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	<p>As discussed in Section 5.5, <i>Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources</i>, there are existing prehistoric, architectural, historical, and archaeological resources in the EIR Study Area that could be adversely affected by new demolition, inappropriate building modification, or incompatible new construction. Development in the EIR Study Area would continue to occur under this Alternative, resulting in potentially significant impacts to historic and archaeological resources, similar to the proposed project. Like the proposed project, this Alternative would be subject to the same federal, State, and local regulations to reduce adverse effects to cultural resources, such as those in the Public Resources Code, California Health and Safety Code, and the California Code of Regulations.</p> <p>The proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that provide additional protections for these resources (see Section 5.5), including measures that were incorporated based on consultation with a local Native American tribe. However, impacts would be significant under both scenarios and impacts to historic resources would be significant and unavoidable. This Alternative would have slightly <i>increased</i> impacts on cultural and tribal cultural resources.</p>
Energy	<p>Energy consumption is expected to decrease between the 2020 baseline conditions analyzed in this EIR and the 2045 horizon year. This is largely due to State-level regulations that require decreasing use of fossil fuels including the CALGreen standards and SB 100 which requires utility companies to transition to 100 percent renewable sources. The proposed CAP and supporting measures in the proposed General Plan aim to increase use of renewable energy sources in order to meet stricter GHG emissions reductions targets. The strategies and actions that would meet these targets are not incorporated within the existing General Plan or CAP and therefore energy impacts under this Alternative would be <i>increased</i>.</p>
Geology and Soils	<p>Future development under both the proposed project and this Alternative would be subject to the same federal, State, and local regulations that address and prevent hazards associated with geology, soils, and seismicity. As such, this Alternative would have similar impacts with respect to geological hazards. Impacts to paleontological resources would also be similar since both scenarios would allow development within largely the same areas. Therefore, geological and soil impacts would be the <i>same</i> between the proposed project and this Alternative.</p>

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-1 No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<p>Development under this Alternative would be subject to the same State regulations as the proposed project that would reduce emissions of future development, as discussed in Section 5.8, <i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i>. As noted in Section 5.8, without additional local GHG reduction strategies, the County would not achieve consistency with the State's GHG reduction goals. However, implementation of the proposed CAP reduction strategies reduces emissions below the identified target. Additionally, policies and actions within the proposed General Plan would further reduce mobile-source and energy emissions. This Alternative would not adopt these new strategies and measures and would keep the existing CAP and General Plan.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed project would be expected to result in reduced GHG reductions when compared to this Alternative, though it is unknown whether this Alternative would exceed the State's emissions reduction targets. Impacts regarding GHG emissions would be <i>increased</i> under this Alternative.</p>
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	<p>Development under this Alternative would be required to comply with all federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials, like the proposed project. Because development would largely occur within the same areas under both scenarios, impacts would be similar. However, the proposed project includes several new policies and actions that strengthen or increase protections against hazards in the EIR Study Area. For example, Policy COS-P7.3 requires new development in wildlife hazard and evacuation-constrained areas to prepare a traffic control plan to ensure that impacts to emergency evacuation are reduced to less than significant. Such requirements are not included in the existing General Plan, and therefore, this Alternative would result in <i>increased</i> impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials.</p>
Hydrology and Water Quality	<p>Like the proposed project, development under this Alternative would connect to existing drainage systems already in place and would be subject to the same existing federal, State, and local regulations relating to hydrology and water quality. Compliance with existing regulations would minimize pre- and post-construction impacts to water quality as future development occurs under both the proposed project and this Alternative. The proposed project includes new and modified goals, policies, and actions related to hydrology and water quality to further minimize impacts. These additional hydrology and water quality-related protections would not be implemented under this Alternative.</p> <p>In consideration of the new measures that would be implemented under the proposed General Plan, impacts to hydrology and water quality under this Alternative would be slightly <i>increased</i>.</p>
Land Use and Planning	<p>Development under this Alternative would be required to comply with applicable land use regulations that were adopted for the purpose of minimizing environmental impacts, like the proposed project. Among these regulations and plans are the county's Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and the Association of Bay Area Government's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy, Plan Bay Area. However, when compared to the existing General Plan, the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions were developed in accordance with the updated guidance in the more recent iterations of Plan Bay Area and provide better consistency with the Plan's goals. For example, the GHG and VMT-reducing measures included throughout the proposed General Plan and CAP are better aligned with the regional plan's targets for reducing emissions and VMT. Therefore, impacts under this Alternative would be <i>increased</i> when compared to the proposed project.</p>
Mineral Resources	<p>Development under this Alternative would occur in largely similar locations as the proposed project, which includes development in important mineral resource zones and in areas overlying gas and oil deposits. Therefore, impacts under this Alternative would continue to be significant and unavoidable and would be <i>similar</i> to the proposed project.</p>
Noise	<p>Development under the proposed project would have significant and unavoidable impacts with regard to traffic and construction noise; impacts related to vibration would be mitigated to less than significant. Development under this Alternative would have similar impacts with respect to noise and vibration since development in the EIR Study Area would also increase under this Alternative, leading to similar levels of construction noise and increased traffic on roadways, contributing to increased traffic noise. However, this Alternative would result in lesser overall development in the unincorporated county when compared to the proposed project. Development under both scenarios would be subject to the applicable provisions of the County Ordinance Code governing noise impacts. However, the proposed General Plan contains new and modified goals, policies, and actions that would help to decrease noise impacts from future development (see Section 5.13, <i>Noise</i>). While this Alternative would not adopt these new measures, it would generate overall less development; therefore, it is considered to have a <i>similar</i> impact to the proposed project.</p>

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-1 No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Population and Housing	<p>The proposed project would result in a larger amount of development than the existing General Plan, resulting in increased population, jobs, and housing production. As described in Section 5.14, <i>Population and Housing</i>, while the proposed project would exceed the ABAG Plan Bay Area growth projections, this impact would not be significant since the proposed General Plan is a policy document that plans and accommodates additional growth in the EIR Study Area. Although the existing General Plan would result in less growth, it would not be consistent with the regional planning efforts coordinated through Plan Bay Area, as discussed above. Both scenarios would also have less than significant impacts with respect to displacement and would comply with anti-displacement policies in the adopted Housing Element.</p> <p>Since this Alternative would result in less growth but would be less consistent with the regional plan, impacts would be <i>similar</i> when compared to the proposed project.</p>
Public Services and Recreation	<p>This Alternative would generate less growth in the county when compared to the proposed project, resulting in comparatively less demand on public services and recreation facilities. However, development would continue to occur under this Alternative and would be subject to the same development impact fees as development under the proposed project that would be used to fund these services. Therefore, impacts under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.</p>
Transportation	<p>Like the proposed project, this Alternative would be subject to the same federal, State, and local standards to ensure that future development does not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, and that development provides adequate emergency access. As described in Section 5.16, <i>Transportation</i>, the VMT per service population of the proposed project would exceed the threshold of 85 percent countywide total VMT per service population for the county. While the VMT for development anticipated under the existing General Plan has not been calculated, it is expected that VMT would continue to increase similar to the proposed project. The proposed project would encourage and require additional site-specific VMT-reducing measures such as physical improvements, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and ongoing operational or incentive programs that have not been accounted for within the VMT analysis. Other land use and transportation measures in the proposed General Plan and CAP would further reduce VMT under the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed land use plan focuses on increasing density in community cores, which would further contribute to VMT reductions.</p> <p>Since this Alternative would not introduce these additional measures and would not increase land use densities in community cores, impacts to transportation would be <i>increased</i> relative to the proposed project.</p>
Utilities and Service Systems	<p>Demand and consumption trends generally demonstrate that advances in recycling and solid waste reduction requirements, water-efficient regulations in building and landscaping, and stricter stormwater retention requirements would reduce utility and service systems demands and result in more efficient use of utilities compared to existing conditions. These trends would continue under both the proposed project and this Alternative. Much like the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would connect to existing systems already in place and would be subject to the same existing federal, State, and local regulations related to utility usage. This Alternative would result in a lesser scale of development, however, which would entail less water use and solid waste production. However, the proposed project includes new and modified goals, policies, and actions related to utilities to further minimize impacts, including policies to ensure increased coordination with water suppliers and water supply planning efforts.</p> <p>Therefore, balancing the lesser scale of development under this Alternative with the new and modified measures under the proposed project, impacts with respect to utilities and service systems would be <i>similar</i> under this Alternative.</p>
Wildfire	<p>Development under this Alternative would continue to allow development in designated wildfire hazard areas, exacerbating wildfire risks. Although the goals, policies, and actions identified in the proposed General Plan provide the best wildfire hazard reduction measures available, impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant if development is allowed within these areas. Prohibiting new development in these portions of the EIR Study Area could be considered a regulatory taking. While this Alternative would result in a lesser scale of development, this development would not be focused in the community core areas of the EIR Study Area, like the proposed project. Additionally, it would not adopt the new and modified goals, policies, or actions of the proposed General Plan, and development would still occur in the VHFHSZ and/or the Wildland-Urban Interface</p>

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-1 No Project/Existing Plans Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
	(WUI). Furthermore, it would retain a smaller minimum lot size requirement in agricultural areas than the proposed General Plan, increasing the development capacity in some wildfire hazard areas. Therefore, implementation of this Alternative would have <i>increased</i> impacts when compared to the proposed project.

While this Alternative would reduce overall intensity of development when compared to the proposed project, it would not adopt the new or modified goals, policies, and actions under the proposed General Plan and CAP and is not likely to reduce any of the identified significant impacts to a less-than-significant level. This Alternative would not meet any of the proposed project's objectives.

It must be noted that the State of California regularly enacts legislation requiring cities and counties to amend their general plans to address specific issues and include new content. A primary objective of the proposed project is to incorporate these requirements into a new General Plan. The No Project/Existing Plans Alternative is not a viable alternative because it fails in this regard.

7.3.2 Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas

As discussed in Section 5.16, *Transportation*, the EIR Study Area includes two Transit Priority Areas (TPAs), as defined by California Public Resource Code, Section 21099, along a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) line. This includes one in Contra Costa Centre and one in Bay Point/Pittsburg. Senate Bill (SB) 743 (2013) (see Section 5.16) declared that aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a TPA shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment. SB 743 also provides streamlining opportunities for projects in TPAs under the assumption that development in these areas would result in less overall environmental impacts. This Alternative proposes a policy to increase the minimum allowed density of all new development and redevelopment within these two TPAs, which include all potential development sites within a half-mile of the BART stations in Contra Costa Centre and Bay Point. Under this Alternative, all projects within these boundaries would be required to achieve at least 90 percent of their sites' maximum allowed density.

As noted in Chapter 3, Section 3.7.5, *Estimate Buildout*, the planning horizon projections developed for the proposed General Plan and analyzed in the EIR assume that 75 percent of the maximum allowed density will be built in the Residential Very Low, Low, and Low-Medium Density designations. In the remaining residential designations, the EIR assumes that 80 percent of the maximum allowed density will be built. As such, this Alternative evaluates the potential impacts of requiring a higher minimum density in the TPAs that extends beyond the development potential assumed in this EIR.

As shown in Table 7-2, *Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project*, this Alternative would result in 23,400 new housing units, 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space, and 5 million square feet of new industrial space, overall contributing 66,300 new residents within the unincorporated county by 2045. When compared to the proposed project's development projections, this Alternative would result in 200 additional new housing units while commercial and industrial space would remain the same. These growth estimates are based on an assumption that sites that are currently vacant or underutilized would develop.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Because many of the sites within the TPA are already developed, the growth projection is relatively modest. While more redevelopment could occur and result in higher growth, such redevelopment is speculative and not included in the estimate.

Table 7-2 Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project

	Growth Under Proposed Project	Growth Under Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative	Difference between Alternative and Proposed Project
Housing Units	23,200	23,400	200
Residents ¹	65,600	66,300	700
Commercial Space (square feet)	1.2 million	1.2 million	0
Industrial Space (square feet)	5 million	5 million	0

¹ Based on an assumption of 2.83 persons per household, as reported in: State of California, Department of Finance, 2020. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State.
Source: PlaceWorks 2023.

This Alternative results in similar impacts to the proposed project since the same version of the proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions and CAP strategies and actions would also be adopted and implemented, with the exception of the policy specified in this Alternative. Additionally, this Alternative would not increase any allowable densities designated under the proposed General Plan, but instead would ensure that all development in TPAs maximizes its potential allowed density. As such, this Alternative would result in no new footprint-related impacts, including those related to biological resources, cultural and tribal resources, and geology and soils, since all potential sites for development would not change between this Alternative and the proposed project. Since this Alternative would ensure higher densities near high-quality transit, impacts related to reductions in automobile use, which include air quality, GHG, VMT, and noise impacts, would potentially decrease when compared to the proposed project. The full analysis of the environmental resource topics is provided in Table 7-3, *Increased Density Near TPAs Environmental Analysis*.

Table 7-3 Increased Density Near TPAs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Aesthetics	This Alternative would develop the same land use plan as the proposed project, with the exception of the increased density near TPAs. Under SB 743, aesthetic impacts of infill projects within a TPA are considered less than significant. Therefore, development under this Alternative would have no additional impact to aesthetics resulting from factors associated with increased density (e.g. taller and more clustered buildings). Aesthetic impacts under this Alternative would be the same as the proposed project.
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	The above identified TPAs in the EIR Study Area do not contain agricultural or forestry resources. This Alternative would continue to have significant and unavoidable impacts on agricultural and forestry resources since development would be allowed in areas that contain these resources and no additional impacts would occur. Impacts under this Alternative would be the same as the proposed project.
Air Quality	Air quality impacts under the proposed project are considered significant and unavoidable since operational emissions would exceed both regional and localized emissions thresholds. Impacts would continue to be significant and unavoidable under this Alternative since a similar level of development would occur. However, this Alternative's increases in density could contribute to additional air quality impacts including the exposure of additional receptors to pollutants and increased emissions associated with increased population and development. The density increases under this Alternative are intended to increase access to high quality transit and urban amenities which are actions that generally decrease use of vehicles in favor of Alternative modes of transportation, resulting in less vehicle emissions. As a result, this increase in density would not be expected to increase the primary source of operational air quality emissions, vehicle emissions, and can be assumed to result in no net increase in regional operational emissions. This could

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-3 Increased Density Near TPAs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
	further result in less emissions as this Alternative could offset demand in other areas of the county. This Alternative would not affect emissions associated with industrial uses since it concerns density on residential sites, so impacts would remain the same for localized air pollutant emissions. Overall, impacts under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Biological Resources	This Alternative would increase densities in areas that are largely devoid of biological resources. Additionally, development on the sites where these density minimums would be implemented could still be developed under the proposed project. This Alternative would therefore not result in any additional impacts to biological resources in this regard. Impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	Similar to biological resources, this Alternative would not allow development outside of areas where it not be permitted under the proposed project but would instead allow denser development on some sites. Cultural resource impacts would neither decrease nor increase with additional density so impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Energy	Energy consumption under this Alternative could be slightly increased when compared to the proposed project since this Alternative would require density minimums on sites in TPAs, thereby potentially increasing the size and scale of development on these sites when compared to the proposed project. However, this Alternative would result in a reduction in transportation fuel use associated with reductions in VMT. Therefore, energy impacts would be <i>slightly decreased</i> under this Alternative.
Geology and Soils	The density increases proposed under this Alternative would not affect geology and soil impacts. Geologic hazards and paleontological resource impacts would be addressed through site-specific evaluation and increased density and the same impacts identified in Section 5.7 would continue to apply to development under this Alternative. Impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	As described above, the potential density increases under this Alternative are assumed to result in less vehicle-related emissions due to the benefits of increasing density in community cores and near transit. As a result, impacts related to GHG emissions under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	This Alternative would have no effect on hazards and hazardous materials beyond those identified for the proposed project. The density increases under this Alternative are not located near the county's airports or in evacuation constrained areas and development would continue to be subject to the same regulations that would mitigate impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials. Impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Hydrology and Water Quality	Development under this Alternative would be allowed in the same locations as the proposed project and the increases in density would not incur a greater impact on hydrology and water quality. Impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Land Use and Planning	This Alternative would potentially result in higher density within transit-accessible areas which would be better aligned with the goals of Plan Bay Area when compared to the proposed project. Therefore, this Alternative would have a <i>lesser</i> impact on land use and planning when compared to the proposed project.
Mineral Resources	Development under this Alternative would be allowed in the same locations as the proposed project, and the locations in which density would be increased are not within mineral resource zones. Furthermore, increasing density would have no effect on access to mineral resources. Therefore, impacts would be the same as the proposed project.
Noise	This Alternative would increase density in specific areas of the county and is expected to result in equal or less VMT impacts due to the increases in transit access. This could result in slightly lesser impacts to traffic noise. Other impacts to noise would be similar to the proposed project. Noise impacts under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than under the proposed project, but would not be reduced to less-than significant levels.
Population and Housing	The Alternative would result in a potential increase in population when compared to the proposed project. As described above, the analysis of the proposed project assumes that 75 to 80 percent of the maximum densities of sites included in the buildout calculations would be developed and this Alternative would require development of a minimum of 90 percent the maximum density in the TPAs. As such, this could have slightly <i>increased</i> impacts when compared to the proposed project. However, impacts would remain less significant.
Public Services and Recreation	Since this Alternative would result in an increase in population when compared to the proposed project, demand for services would increase as well resulting in <i>increased</i> impacts when compared to the proposed project. However, impacts would remain less significant.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-3 Increased Density Near TPAs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Transportation	This Alternative is assumed to result in lesser or equal impacts to VMT when compared to the proposed project since it would increase density in community cores and in proximity to high-quality transit. It is unknown whether this would decrease impacts to less than significant for VMT but it would align with the intent of the proposed General Plan and CAP and implement the applicable policies related to VMT reductions through land use. At the programmatic level, impacts are assumed to remain significant and unavoidable, though this Alternative would result in <i>lesser</i> impacts when compared to the proposed project.
Utilities and Service Systems	This Alternative is assumed to result in an increase in population when compared to the proposed project. Impacts to water supply and solid waste are assumed to increase in turn. Like the proposed project, development under this Alternative would be required to comply with regulations that would reduce these impacts. Impacts to utilities and service systems would remain less than significant under this Alternative but would be slightly <i>increased</i> .
Wildfire	This Alternative would increase density near TPAs, but this is not land within wildfire hazard areas so impacts would remain the same as under the proposed project. This Alternative would still allow development within wildfire hazard areas so impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

This Alternative would meet all project objectives to the same extent as the proposed project. As described, this Alternative would reduce some environmental impacts. However, this Alternative would not likely reduce any identified significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project to less than significant.

7.3.3 No Urban Development within High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Alternative

This Alternative would prohibit new urban development (i.e., housing, commercial, and industrial space) within High or Very High FHSZs, as designated by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). As discussed in Section 5.18, *Wildfire*, the EIR Study Area contains 163,524 acres of land mapped within CAL FIRE's High or Very High FHSZs. Approximately 18,677 acres of this land is within the County's Urban Limit Line (ULL), although approximately 7,420 acres of this land is designated as Public and Semi-Public, Parks and Recreation, and Resource Conservation under the proposed General Plan, and largely owned by public agencies who intend to conserve the land. Nevertheless, urban development under the proposed General Plan could occur in FHSZs. These areas are subject to increased risk of wildfire hazards and as concluded in Section 5.18, impacts associated with wildfire hazard risk would be significant and unavoidable under the proposed project.

This Alternative would ensure that no urban development under the proposed General Plan would occur within High or Very High FHSZ, thereby reducing Impact 5.18-2 and Impact 5.18-5 to less than significant. However, as noted in Section 5.18, the Office of the State Fire Marshal/CAL FIRE's ongoing updates to the FHSZ maps will result in new FHSZ boundaries. These updates will be adopted within the planning horizon of the proposed project. These revisions may result in either expansion or contraction of the boundaries and as such, portions of the EIR Study Area that are not within a FHSZ at the time of publishing this EIR may be remapped and included as FHSZs and vice versa. If the County Board of Supervisors decides to adopt this Alternative, then it would be prudent for the Board to provide clear direction regarding future changes to the land use map (i.e., whether it should be amended whenever the State Fire Marshal/CAL FIRE updates the FHSZ maps) to effectively implement the Alternative.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Other changes to project impacts associated with this Alternative would largely be associated with the reduction of available sites for urban development within the county. As shown in Table 7-4, *No Urban Development with a Fire Hazard Severity Zone Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project*, this Alternative would result in 19,500 new housing units, 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space, and 4.8 million square feet of new industrial space, overall contributing 55,200 new residents within the unincorporated county by 2045. When compared to the proposed project's development projections, this Alternative would result in 3,700 fewer new housing units, 6,400 fewer square feet of new commercial space, and 177,300 fewer new square feet of new industrial space.

Table 7-4 No Urban Development in High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project

	Growth Under Proposed Project	Growth Under No Urban Development in High or Very High FHSZ Alternative	Difference between Alternative and Proposed Project
Housing Units	23,200	19,500	-3,700
Residents ¹	65,600	55,200	-10,400
Commercial Space (square feet)	1.2 million	1.2 million	-6,400
Industrial Space (square feet)	5 million	4.8 million	-177,300

¹ Based on an assumption of 2.83 persons per household, as reported in: State of California, Department of Finance, 2020. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State.
Source: PlaceWorks 2023.

Due to this reduction in development potential within a significant portion of the county, all potential environmental impacts would be reduced under this Alternative when compared to the proposed project, except for impacts related to land use and planning that would not change compared to the proposed project. However, because development will occur in other areas of the county, no other potentially significant impacts, with the exception of Impact 5.18-2 and Impact 5.18-5, would be reduced to less than significant. The full analysis of the environmental resource topics is provided in Table 7-5, *No Urban Development in FHSZs Environmental Analysis*.

Table 7-5 No Urban Development in FHSZs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Aesthetics	This Alternative would result in less overall development within the EIR Study Area, resulting in fewer sources of light and glare. Prohibiting new urban development in some areas would limit the possibilities of future development obstructing views of the County's scenic resources, including ridgelines identified in Figure 5.1-1, though impacts are reduced to less than significant under the proposed project due to the proposed General Plan policies and actions protecting scenic resources in the Conservation, Open Space, and Working Land Element. Overall, this Alternative would result in <i>lesser</i> impacts to aesthetics when compared to the proposed project.
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	The areas of the EIR Study Area that would be prohibited from additional urban development under this Alternative include some land that would be potentially converted from agricultural and forestry uses under the proposed land use plan, as discussed in Section 5.2. As such, this Alternative reduces the amount of land that could be converted, resulting in <i>lesser</i> impacts to agricultural and forestry resources. However, this Alternative would not completely eliminate all areas of potential conversion; therefore, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.
Air Quality	This Alternative would result in less overall development in the EIR Study Area. Therefore, in addition to fewer construction emissions from less development, operational air quality emissions associated with vehicle travel would also decrease under this Alternative. Health risk impacts associated with industrial development would also decrease due to the decrease in 177,300 square feet of industrial space anticipated under this Alternative. Overall, impacts to air quality would be <i>lesser</i> under this Alternative.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-5 No Urban Development in FHSZs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Biological Resources	This Alternative would result in less overall development in the EIR Study Area, which would reduce the potential for new development to impact biological resources. This Alternative would still require mitigation to reduce impacts to less than significant since it would not prohibit all development in areas where wildlife migration corridors exist. However, impacts to biological resources would <i>less</i> when compared to the proposed project.
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	This Alternative would reduce potential impacts to undiscovered archaeological resources, human remains, and tribal cultural resources since less overall development would occur within the EIR Study Area, which reduces the potential number of resources that can be uncovered during development. Additionally, since known and unknown historic resources exist within FHSZs, this Alternative would limit potential impacts on historic resources in these areas. However, impacts to historic resources would not be completely eliminated. Overall, impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Energy	Energy consumption under this Alternative would be decreased since overall development would decrease, reducing short-term construction energy demands and long-term operational energy demands from development and associated transportation. Impacts to energy under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Geology and Soils	This Alternative would result in less development in the EIR Study Area, including in areas with mapped geologic hazards, resulting in fewer people exposed to these hazards. Additionally, similar to cultural resources, this Alternative would result in reduced impacts to paleontological resources. Overall, this Alternative would have lesser impacts regarding geology and soils when compared to the proposed project.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Because this Alternative would result in less overall development, GHG emissions from on-road transportation, building energy consumption, solid waste, off-road equipment, and water and wastewater use would also decrease. Impacts with respect to GHG emissions would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	This Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, where there is sometimes limited evacuation access, thereby reducing impacts related to emergency and evacuation access. Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to the proposed project since this Alternative would not limit development near airports or known active hazardous materials sites; these impacts would continue to be less than significant through compliance with existing regulations. Overall, impacts to hazards and hazardous materials would be <i>lesser</i> under this Alternative.
Hydrology and Water Quality	This Alternative would result in less overall development than the proposed project, thereby resulting in less potential impact to hydrology and water quality. Impacts with respect to flooding hazards would also be reduced since some flood hazard areas coincide with the land that would be prohibited from additional urban development under this Alternative. Overall, impacts to water quality and hydrology would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Land Use and Planning	As discussed in Section 5.11, the proposed project is consistent with applicable land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact, largely due to policy guidance that supports these plans, plus a land use map that maintains the primarily agricultural, natural resource, recreation, and public service uses in the Primary Zone of the Delta. This Alternative would maintain the proposed policy guidance and would not allow new urban uses within the Primary Zone. Therefore, impacts with respect to land use and planning would be the same under this Alternative.
Mineral Resources	This Alternative would prohibit additional urban/incompatible development in some areas of the EIR Study Area that contain mapped mineral resources. As a result, impacts to mineral resources would decrease. However, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable since this Alternative would not completely eliminate all development in mineral resource areas. Overall, impacts to mineral resources would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Noise	This Alternative would result in less overall development in the EIR Study Area, thereby reducing noise and vibration impacts associated with construction and traffic. Impacts are expected to remain significant and unavoidable for construction and traffic since the scale of noise impacts cannot be determined at this level and strategies for reducing such impacts would need to be considered on a project-specific basis in order to reduce impacts to less than significant. However, impacts to noise and vibration would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-5 No Urban Development in FHSZs Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Population and Housing	This Alternative would result in less growth in the EIR Study Area when compared to the proposed project. Therefore, the development anticipated under this Alternative would be closer aligned with the population, housing, and employment growth forecasts in Plan Bay Area 2040. While CEQA defines this impact as “unplanned” growth and both the proposed project and this Alternative would result in planned growth since they involve the adoption of planning documents, impacts under this Alternative would be considered <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Public Services and Recreation	Since this Alternative would result in a decrease in population when compared to the proposed project, demand for services would decrease as well. In addition, the population would be reduced in areas that could have increased fire response needs due to increased fire hazards. Therefore, impacts under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Transportation	This Alternative would result in less overall development within the EIR Study Area, which would reduce VMT. However, VMT impacts would not be reduced to less than significant due to the uncertainty of implementing specific VMT-reducing measures across all future development, like the proposed project. Additionally, this Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, where there is sometimes limited evacuation access, thereby reducing impacts related to emergency responder access. Overall, impacts to transportation would be <i>decreased</i> when compared to the proposed project.
Utilities and Service Systems	This Alternative would result in less overall development, which would result in a commensurate reduction in utility and service systems impacts associated with less water use, less wastewater disposal, and less solid waste production. Impacts would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Wildfire	This Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, which would reduce impacts from significant and unavoidable to less than significant for wildfire impacts. As discussed in Section 5.18, wildfire impacts are considered significant and unavoidable if urban development is permitted in these areas. Policy guidance in the proposed General Plan would reduce impacts by prohibiting new subdivisions in Very High FHSZs, limiting subdivisions in High FHSZs, and requiring all new development within High and Very High FHSZs, WUI areas, and State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) to prepare and maintain a fire protection plan, but would continue to allow other types of development. This Alternative would ensure that fire hazard risks for new development are <i>reduced to less than significant</i> .

This Alternative is largely consistent with the intent and goals of the proposed Health and Safety Element and proposed CAP. Both proposed documents include a policy or action that would curtail new residential subdivisions within High and Very High FHSZs, as well as a policy or action that would require all new development within High and Very High FHSZs, WUI areas, and SRAs to prepare and maintain a fire protection plan. However, this Alternative would slightly reduce the number of sites available to the County to meet its 6th Cycle Housing Element RHNA. In addition, new urban development within communities with large overlaps of High and Very High FHSZ lands would be prohibited, thereby limiting opportunities for economic development in these communities.

7.3.4 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative

This Alternative would combine the two proposed actions in the “Increased Density Near Transit Priority Areas” and “No Urban Development within a High or Very High FHSZ” Alternatives. As such, this Alternative would involve requiring residential development within the county’s two TPAs to achieve at least 90 percent of the sites’ maximum allowed density in addition to prohibiting new urban development within High and Very High FHSZs. This Alternative would have the benefit of increasing density near transit, thereby reducing VMT and related impacts, in addition to reducing wildfire impacts to less than significant.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

As shown in Table 7-6, *Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project*, this Alternative would result in 19,700 new housing units, 1.2 million square feet of new commercial space, and 4.8 million square feet of new industrial space, overall contributing 55,800 new residents within the county by 2045. When compared to the proposed project's development projections, this Alternative would result in 3,500 fewer new housing units, 6,400 fewer square feet of new commercial space, and 177,300 fewer new square feet of new industrial space.

Table 7-6 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative Comparison to Proposed Project

	Growth Under Proposed Project	Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative	Difference between Alternative and Proposed Project
Housing Units	23,200	19,700	-3,500
Residents ¹	65,600	55,800	-9,800
Commercial Space (square feet)	1.2 million	1.2 million	-6,400
Industrial Space (square feet)	5 million	4.8 million	-177,300

¹ Based on an assumption of 2.83 persons per household, as reported in: State of California, Department of Finance, 2020. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State.
Source: PlaceWorks 2023.

The full analysis of the environmental resource topics is provided in Table 7-7, *Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Environmental Analysis*.

Table 7-7 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Aesthetics	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in less overall development within the EIR Study Area, resulting in less sources of light and glare and less impacts associated with obstruction of scenic ridgelines. Like the TPA Alternative, no additional impacts would occur from increasing density in the TPAs since aesthetic impacts are considered less than significant for all development in these areas. Overall, this Alternative would result in <i>lesser</i> impacts to aesthetics when compared to the proposed project.
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Like the FHSZ Alternative, the areas of the EIR Study Area that would be prohibited from additional urban development under this Alternative include some land that would be potentially converted from agricultural and forestry uses under the proposed land use plan. As such, this Alternative potentially reduces the amount of land converted, resulting in <i>lesser</i> impacts to agricultural and forestry resources, but would not reduce impacts to less than significant. The TPA portion of the combined Alternative would have no effect on these resources.
Air Quality	Both portions of this Alternative would result in less impacts to air quality associated with decreased vehicle use, as described in Tables 7-3 and 7-5. Impacts to air quality would be <i>reduced</i> under this Alternative.
Biological Resources	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would reduce impacts to biological resources since it would result in less overall development. The TPA portion of the combined Alternative would have no effect on these resources. Impacts would remain less than significant with mitigation incorporated and would be <i>reduced</i> under this Alternative.
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	Like the FHSZ Alternative, impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources would be reduced due to the reduced amount of development. The density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative would have no additional impact on these resources. Impacts to historic resources would remain significant and unavoidable but would be <i>reduced</i> under this Alternative.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-7 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
Energy	Like the FHSZ Alternative, energy consumption associated with construction and operation of buildings and structures under this Alternative would be decreased since overall development would decrease. Transportation fuel consumption associated with VMT would also decrease with less development overall, as well as from increasing density in areas with access to high quality transit. Impacts to energy under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Geology and Soils	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in less overall development in the EIR Study Area, including in areas with mapped geologic hazards, resulting in fewer people exposed to these hazards. Additionally, similar to cultural resources, this Alternative would result in less impacts to paleontological resources. The density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative would have no additional impact on these resources. Overall, this Alternative would have <i>lesser</i> impacts regarding geology and soils when compared to the proposed project.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in a decrease in GHG emissions associated with on-road transportation, building energy consumption, solid waste, off-road equipment, and water and wastewater due to the reduced amount of development overall. Additionally, the density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative would further reduce GHG emissions. Impacts with respect to GHG emissions would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, where there is sometimes limited evacuation access, thereby reducing impacts related to emergency and evacuation access. Impacts associated with hazardous materials would be similar to the proposed project since this Alternative would not limit development near airports or known active hazardous materials sites; these impacts would continue to be less than significant through compliance with existing regulations. The density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative are not located near the county's airports or in evacuation constrained areas and development would continue to be subject to the same regulations that would mitigate impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials. Overall, impacts to hazards and hazardous materials would be <i>lesser</i> under this Alternative.
Hydrology and Water Quality	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in less overall development than the proposed project, thereby resulting in less potential impact to hydrology and water quality. Impacts with respect to flooding hazards would also be reduced since some flood hazard areas coincide with the land that would be prohibited from additional urban development under this Alternative. The density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative would have no additional impact on hydrology and water quality. Overall, impacts to water quality and hydrology would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Land Use and Planning	This Alternative would maintain the proposed policy guidance that supports applicable land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact, and it would not allow new urban uses within the Primary Zone of the Delta. Meanwhile, it would increase the potential amount of housing developed in TPAs, which is better aligned with the goals in Plan Bay Area when compared to the proposed project. Therefore, this Alternative would have a <i>lesser</i> impact on land use and planning when compared to the proposed project.
Mineral Resources	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would prohibit additional urban/incompatible development in some areas of the EIR Study Area that contain mapped mineral resources. As a result, impacts to mineral resources would decrease. However, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable since this Alternative would not completely eliminate all development in mineral resource areas. The density increases under the TPA portion of this Alternative would have no additional impact on mineral resources. Impacts to mineral resources would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Noise	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in less overall development in the EIR Study Area, thereby reducing noise and vibration impacts associated with construction and traffic. Additionally, the TPA portion of this Alternative is expected to result in fewer vehicle trips, and therefore, less roadway noise. Impacts are expected to remain significant and unavoidable, but <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Population and Housing	This Alternative would result in less growth in the EIR Study Area when compared to the proposed project. Therefore, the development anticipated under this Alternative would be closer aligned with the population, housing, and employment growth forecasts in Plan Bay Area 2040. While CEQA defines this impact as "unplanned" growth and both the proposed project and this Alternative would result in planned growth since

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-7 Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Environmental Analysis

Topic	Environmental Analysis
	they involve the adoption of planning documents, impacts under this Alternative would be considered <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Public Services and Recreation	Since this Alternative would result in a decrease in population when compared to the proposed project, demand for services would decrease as well. In addition, the population would be reduced in areas that could have increased fire response needs due to increased fire hazards. Therefore, impacts under this Alternative would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Transportation	Like the FHSZ Alternative, this Alternative would result in less overall development within the EIR Study Area, which would reduce VMT. VMT impacts are also expected to reduce due to the increases in density near transit as part of the TPA portion of this Alternative. However, VMT impacts would not be reduced to less than significant due to the uncertainty of implementing specific VMT-reducing measures across all future development, like the proposed project. Additionally, this Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, where there is sometimes limited evacuation access, thereby reducing impacts related to emergency responder access. Overall, impacts to transportation would be <i>decreased</i> when compared to the proposed project.
Utilities and Service Systems	This Alternative would result in less overall development, which would result in a commensurate reduction in utility and service systems impacts associated with less water use, less wastewater disposal, and less solid waste production. Impacts would be <i>less</i> than the proposed project.
Wildfire	This Alternative would prohibit additional urban development in High and Very High FHSZs, which would reduce impacts from significant and unavoidable to less than significant for wildfire impacts. As discussed in Section 5.18, wildfire impacts are considered significant and unavoidable if urban development is permitted in these areas. This Alternative would ensure that fire hazard risks for new development are <i>reduced to less than significant</i> .

This Alternative would meet most of the objectives of the proposed project. It would focus more housing development within the community cores and would adopt the proposed General Plan and CAP, like the proposed project, with the exceptions of density increases in the TPAs and prohibiting new urban development within High and Very High FHSZs. Like the FHSZ Alternative analyzed in Section 7.3.3, this Alternative would however decrease the overall development capacity of the county, resulting in less economic opportunities for the communities affected by this prohibition of new urban development. This Alternative would reduce the most impacts and meets the most project objectives when compared to the other alternatives. Therefore, this Alternative is considered the “environmentally superior alternative.”

7.4 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires a lead agency to identify the “environmentally superior alternative” and, in cases where the “No Project” Alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed project, the environmentally superior development alternative must be identified. The Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative has been identified as the “environmentally superior alternative” to the proposed project. Table 7-8, *Comparison of Project Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, compares the environmental determination of the proposed project with the project alternatives.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-8 Comparison of Project Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Topic	Project Environmental Determination	No Project/ Existing Plans Alternative	Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative	No Urban Development within High or Very High FHSZ Alternative	Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative
Aesthetics	LS	-	=	+	+
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	SU	-	=	+	+
Air Quality	SU	+	+	+	+
Biological Resources	SU	-	=	+	+
Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	SU	-	=	+	+
Energy	LS	-	+	+	+
Geology and Soils	LSM	=	=	+	+
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LS	-	+	+	+
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	SU	-	=	+	+
Hydrology and Water Quality	LS	-	=	+	+
Land Use and Planning	LS	-	+	=	-
Mineral Resources	LSM	=	=	+	+
Noise	SU	=	+	+	+
Population and Housing	LS	=	-	+	+
Public Services and Recreation	LS	+	-	+	+
Transportation	SU	-	+	+	+
Utilities and Service Systems	LS	=	-	+	+
Wildfire	SU	-	=	+	+

Note: The symbols in the table indicate the following: No Impact (NI), Less Than Significant (LS), Less Than Significant with Mitigation (LSM), Significant and Unavoidable (SU); Similar Impacts (=), Less Severe Impacts (+), More Severe Impacts (-)

In addition to lessening significant impacts, an alternative must also attempt to meet most of the project objectives. Table 7-9, *Comparison of Alternatives to Project Objectives*, compares each of the alternatives to the project objectives.

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 7-9 Comparison of Alternatives to Project Objectives

Objective	No Project/ Existing Plans Alternative	Increased Density Near TPAs Alternative	No Urban Development within High or Very High FHSZ Alternative	Increased TPA Density and No Urban FHSZ Development Combined Alternative
Extend the General Plan planning horizon to year 2045 and establish a legally adequate General Plan and Climate Action Plan (CAP) that meet State requirements through a community-based planning process.	Does Not Meet Objective	Meets Objective	Meets Objective	Meets Objective
Through the updates to the land use map, align the map with existing uses that already exist on the ground today, while also focusing more mixed-use development and higher density housing within community cores, where infrastructure and services are available.	Does Not Meet Objective	Meets Objective to Greater Extent	Meets Objective to Lesser Extent	Meets Objective
Provide planning guidance at a community scale, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all policy approach throughout the county.	Does Not Meet Objective	Meets Objective	Meets Objective	Meets Objective
<p>Create a modern and visionary policy document intended to address the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Justice. Reduce the unique or compounded health risks in communities that experience the highest levels of pollution and negative health outcomes, such as asthma and low birth weight babies, and the greatest social and economic disadvantages, such as poverty and housing instability. • Community Health. Provide opportunities for community members to live healthy lifestyles, including by improving peoples' ability to walk or bike between destinations, providing multi-modal transportation connections, creating opportunities for social interaction, and promoting access to outdoor recreation, healthy food, and medical facilities. Reduce exposure of all community members to pollutants that can adversely affect their health. • Economic Development. Develop the county's workforce and attract and support sustainable businesses and industries that provide living-wage jobs, invest in hiring from the local workforce, and engage with communities. Promote innovation, build the tax base, and allow residents to work in the county where they live by improving the existing jobs-housing imbalance. In particular, locate jobs closer to Impacted Communities to support economic empowerment and reduced commute costs for Impacted Community members. • Sustainability. Conserve resources, improve resiliency (especially to the impacts of climate change), protect the environment, reduce pollution, and enhance overall quality of life. 	Does Not Meet Objective	Meets Objective	Meets Objective to Lesser Extent	Meets Objective to Lesser Extent

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

This page intentionally left blank.

8. Organizations Consulted and Qualifications of Preparers

ORGANIZATIONS

Contra Costa County

Department of Conservation and Development

Native American Tribes

Confederated Villages of Lisjan

QUALIFICATIONS OF PREPARERS

PLACEWORKS

Mark Teague, AICP
Principal

- BA, Political Science, California State University, Stanislaus

Nicole Vermillion
Principal

- BA, Environmental Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz
- BS, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Master of Urban & Regional Planning, University of California, Irvine

Tanya Sundberg
Associate Principal

- Master of Environmental Planning, University of California, Berkeley
- BA, Human Ecology, College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor ME

Steve Bush, PE
Senior Engineer II

- BS, Chemical Engineering, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Master of Science, Chemical Engineering, University of California, Los Angeles

8. Organizations Consulted and Qualifications of Preparers

Tony Chung, PhD, INCE-USA

Associate Principal, Noise, Vibration & Acoustics

- BS, Mechanical Engineering, National Tsing-Hua University
- Master of Science, Mechanical Engineering, University of Mississippi
- PhD, Mechanical Engineering, University of California, Los Angeles

Abdul Khan

Project Planner

- BA, Urban Studies, University of California, Irvine

Lexie Zimny

Project Planner

- BS, Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning, Sustainable Environmental Design, University of California, Davis

Jessica Mendoza

Project Planner

- BS, Environmental Science and Management, University of California, Davis

Emily Parks

Project Planner

- BS, Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Master of Science, Environmental & Ocean Sciences, University of California, San Diego

Cary Nakama

Graphics Specialist

- AA, Computer Graphic Design, Platt College of Computer Graphic Design
- BA, Business Administration: Data Processing and Marketing, California State University, Long Beach

CONTRIBUTING EIR CONSULTANTS

- ICF Consulting, Inc.
- Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc.
- Fehr & Peers