

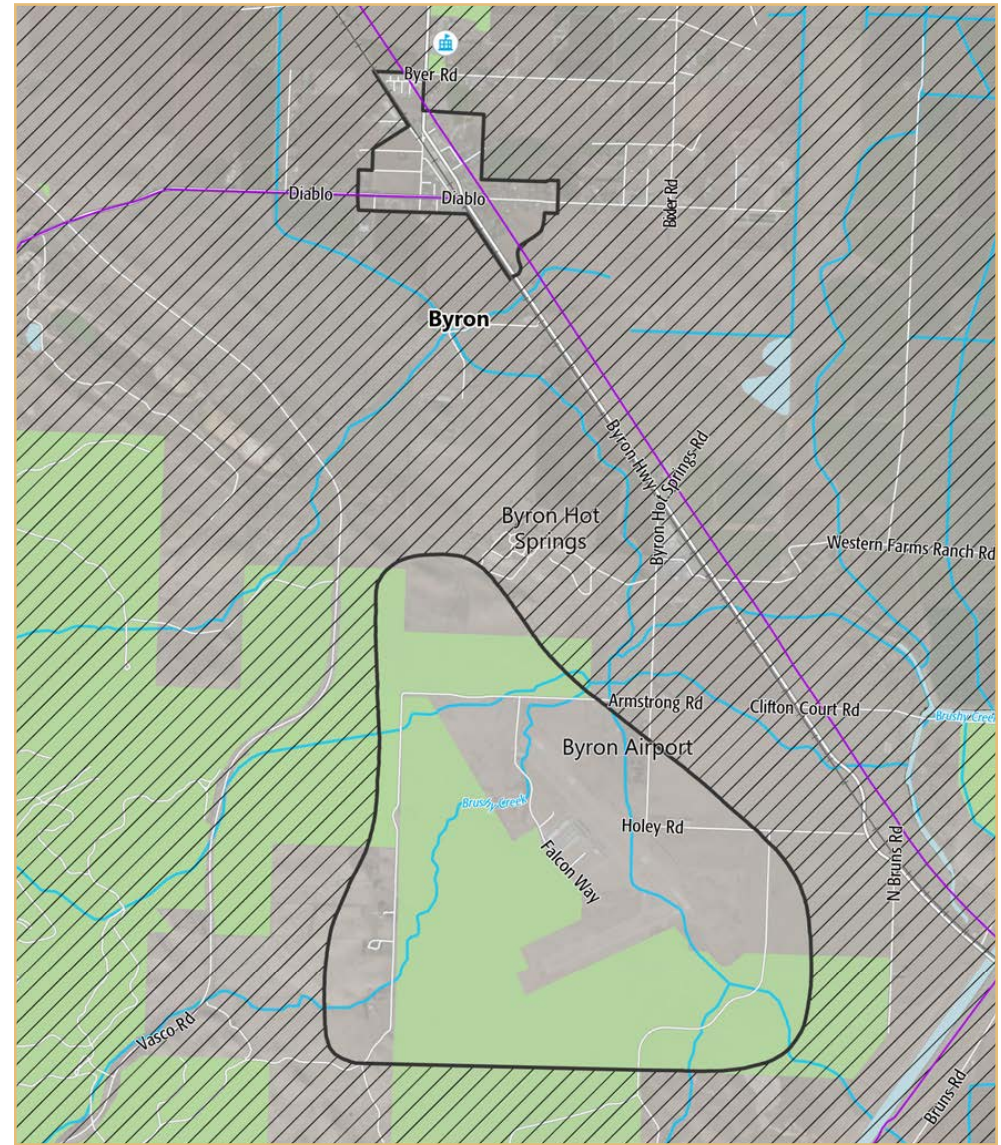
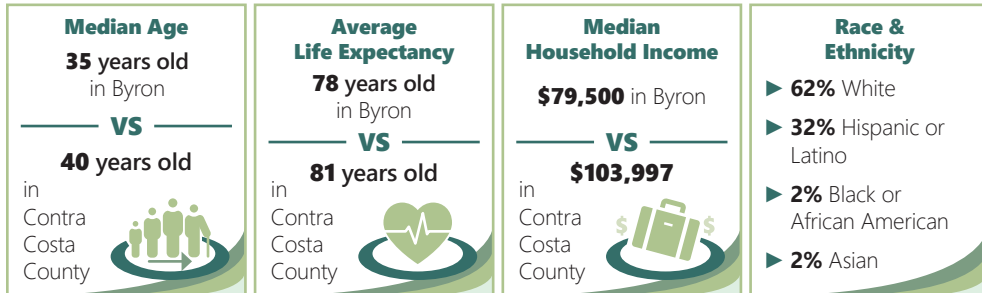
# BYRON - CONTEXT - 1

Located near the eastern edge of the county, Byron is an agricultural community that prides itself on its rural roots. The area's fertile soil supported its initial settlement as a farming center. In 1878, Byron was the site of a new Southern Pacific railroad line that allowed the community to quickly expand. Early Byron attracted visitors from across the nation to the renowned Byron Hot Springs. This resort featured warm mineral pools and luxury accommodations prior to its closure just prior to World War II. In 1994, the County opened Byron Airport, providing opportunities for general aviation and recreational flight operations.



Residents enjoy the area's respite from busy city life, preferring Byron's small-town nature, though some have indicated that increased noise is an issue. Businesses in Byron are generally concentrated in the downtown along Camino Diablo, Byron Highway, and Main Street. However, business development and retention has been challenging. The County's Urban Limit Line (ULL) prohibits intense development outside of Byron's core area, preserving this land for farming and open space. Residents identify the surrounding agricultural land as a part of their community, although a lack of trail connections prevents residents from accessing potential recreational benefits. While growth is constrained by the ULL, traffic through the community to nearby cities has continued to grow, impacting local roads and safety. Key roadway projects, like State Route 239 and the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector, may improve connections and accommodate increased traffic throughout the area. Community members in Byron are also concerned about housing affordability and homelessness.

## WHO LIVES IN BYRON?











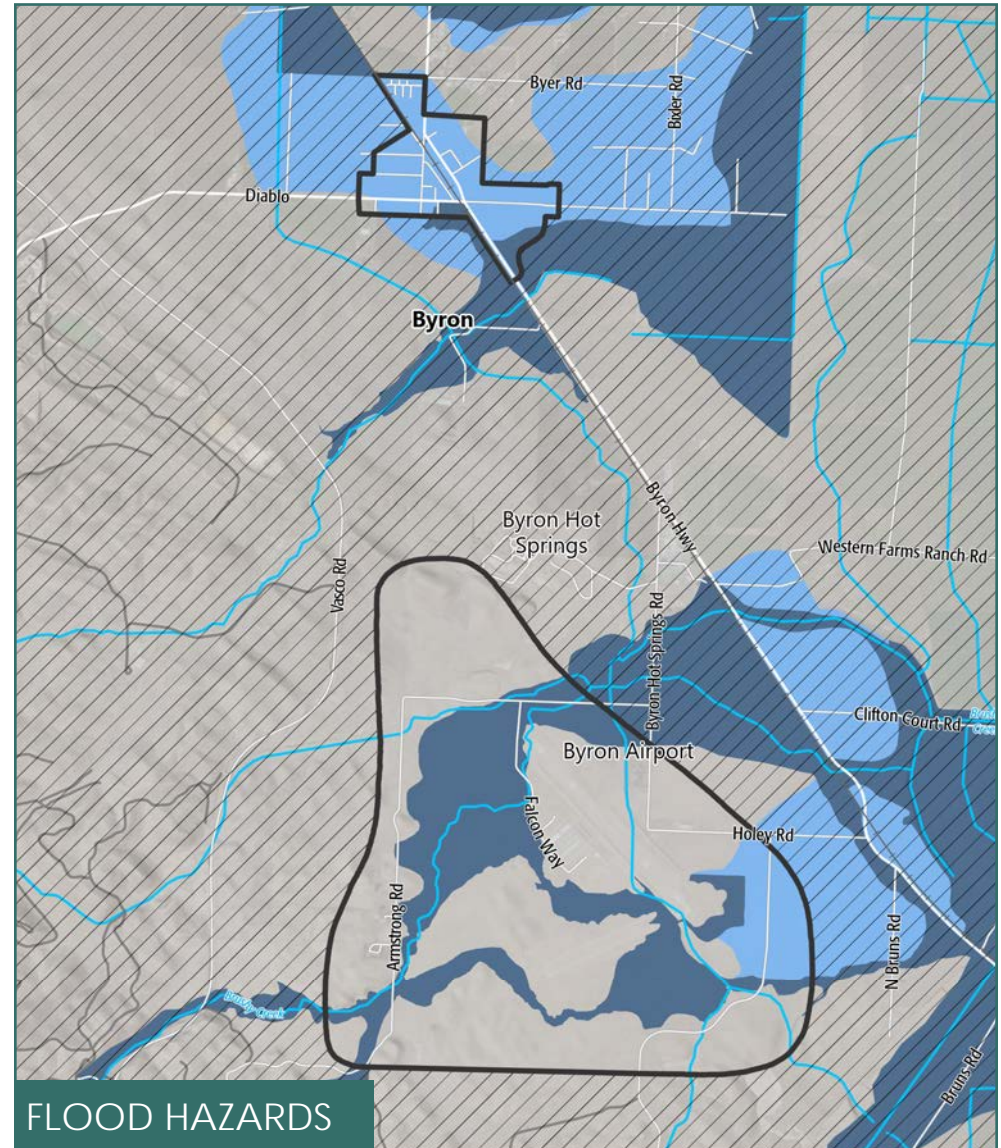
Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.



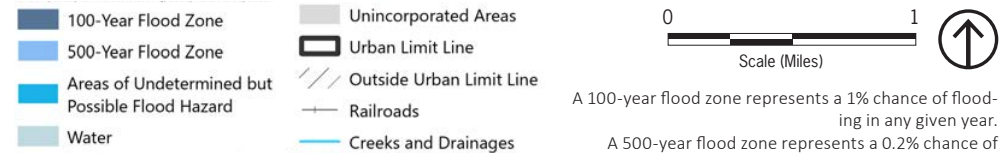


The information on this page presents a summary of hazards and vulnerabilities in Byron based on the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment; please see the [online Vulnerability Assessment](#) for a full description of these hazards and vulnerabilities.

HAZARDS	MAJOR VULNERABILITIES
 Agricultural pests and diseases	Outdoor workers are vulnerable to all hazards in Byron.
 Air quality	Byron Airport is vulnerable to coastal flooding, extreme heat, flooding, and severe storms.
 Coastal flooding	Byron Highway is vulnerable to coastal flooding, flooding, extreme heat, and severe storms.
 Drought	Agricultural operations are vulnerable to agricultural pests and diseases, coastal flooding, drought, extreme heat, flooding, and severe storms.
 Extreme heat	Water and wastewater services are vulnerable to coastal flooding, drought, and severe storms.
 Flooding	Energy delivery systems, such as high-voltage transmission lines, are vulnerable to extreme heat and severe storms.
 Human health hazards	
 Severe storms	



## FLOOD HAZARDS



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



## PLANNED LAND USE

Land use designations for Byron are shown on Figure LU-1, General Plan Land Use Map, and defined in Table LU-1 in the Land Use Element. Most of Main Street is designated Mixed-Use Low Density to promote development of vacant and underutilized lots, ideally with residences above street-level businesses that support residents and boost local tourism. Commercial and light industrial uses are allowed between Byron Highway's intersections with Holway Drive and Camino Diablo. Around the downtown area and commercial core, but within the ULL, residential uses will continue at a varying densities, as along with public and airport-related uses around the Byron Airport to the south. Beyond the ULL, agricultural, open space, recreation, and public uses will continue, along with potential development of renewable energy facilities.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

1. Byron's rural, small-town character should be preserved, in part by supporting amenities like the post office, saloon, schools, churches, and surrounding open spaces.
2. Byron's downtown should be re-energized by filling empty storefronts and providing more businesses and services that make the area a center of activity again.
3. Byron should attract regional tourists by fulfilling its potential as a historic, railroad, winery, and agricultural tourism destination, as well as through creative re-use of Byron Hot Springs.
4. Roadways should be safe for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Sidewalks and bike lanes should be added in central Byron. Safety improvements should be made along Byron Highway, the Highway 4 Bypass, Camino Diablo, and the Byer Road/Bixler Road corner.
5. Trucks should be directed around Byron to minimize safety and noise impacts to residents.
6. Regional travel should be improved through projects like the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector.
7. Housing growth should be deliberate, incremental, and supportive of the community's economic development goals.
8. Residents who lack housing should be treated with dignity and respect and have access to quality services. Vital, easy-to-access community programs related to homelessness, rehabilitation, education and training, youth, and elderly services should be available. Residents who are at risk of losing housing should be protected from displacement.
9. Redevelopment and development should align with the community's rural character.
10. Byron's residents should be able to enjoy hiking, biking, and equestrian access to regional parks through a connected trail network.

## POLICIES

1. Encourage commercial development that supports a full range of services for residents and is tailored to Byron's small-town character, ideally celebrating the historic and agricultural roots of the community.
2. Encourage creative, compatible residential and commercial development on vacant parcels within Byron's existing footprint.
3. Support efforts to organize community events downtown.
4. Maintain effective code enforcement and implement strategies to curb illegal dumping and littering.
5. Encourage reuse of the previously developed portion of the Byron Hot Springs property in a way that is compatible with operations at Byron Airport, rehabilitates historic buildings, attracts regional tourists, and is not growth inducing.
6. Support agriculture, including animal keeping and raising, as an important part of Byron's history and character.
7. Encourage CCTA to prioritize the completion of the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector.
8. Address traffic conflicts and safety concerns around U-Pick areas, including along Marsh Creek Road, Vasco Road, and Walnut Boulevard, with consideration given to agricultural equipment on roads.
9. Ensure that new development does not conflict with potential alignments for the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector and State Route 239 projects, as shown in Figure TR-4, Roadway Classifications, in the Transportation Element. Work with project applicants avoid placing permanent buildings and structures within the potential alignments.
10. Support community-led efforts to establish a community services district to provide basic services to Byron.

## ACTIONS

1. Work with local businesses and community groups to establish an economic development strategy for Byron that includes guidance for on-going coordination of economic development efforts in the community. As part of this process, create a unique branding identity for Byron to support agricultural tourism.
2. Adopt zoning regulations that provide more flexibility for downtown development, including relaxing parking requirements when street parking is available and expanding allowed uses to include light manufacturing for businesses that manufacture and sell products on-site.
3. Install sidewalks and bikeways with signage and crosswalks that connect downtown Byron to Byron Park and Saint Anne Church.
4. Install and maintain street trees in downtown Byron to support walkability and provide a more vibrant atmosphere.
5. Study the feasibility and need for traffic calming along Byron's major roadways.
6. Upon completion of the Vasco Road-Byron Highway Connector, designate a truck route to separate truck traffic from other modes of transportation, including around U-Pick agricultural areas, such as along Marsh Creek Road, Vasco Road, and Walnut Boulevard.
7. Work with local and regional stakeholders, such as East Bay Regional Park District, to develop a trails plan that provides local and regional trail connections for Byron, including trails that connect to local destinations like Byron Hot Springs and trails that provide regional connections to recreational and commute destinations. As part of the planning process, consider potential recreational re-use along railroad rights-of-way as well as strategies to effectively communicate trail information to the public.