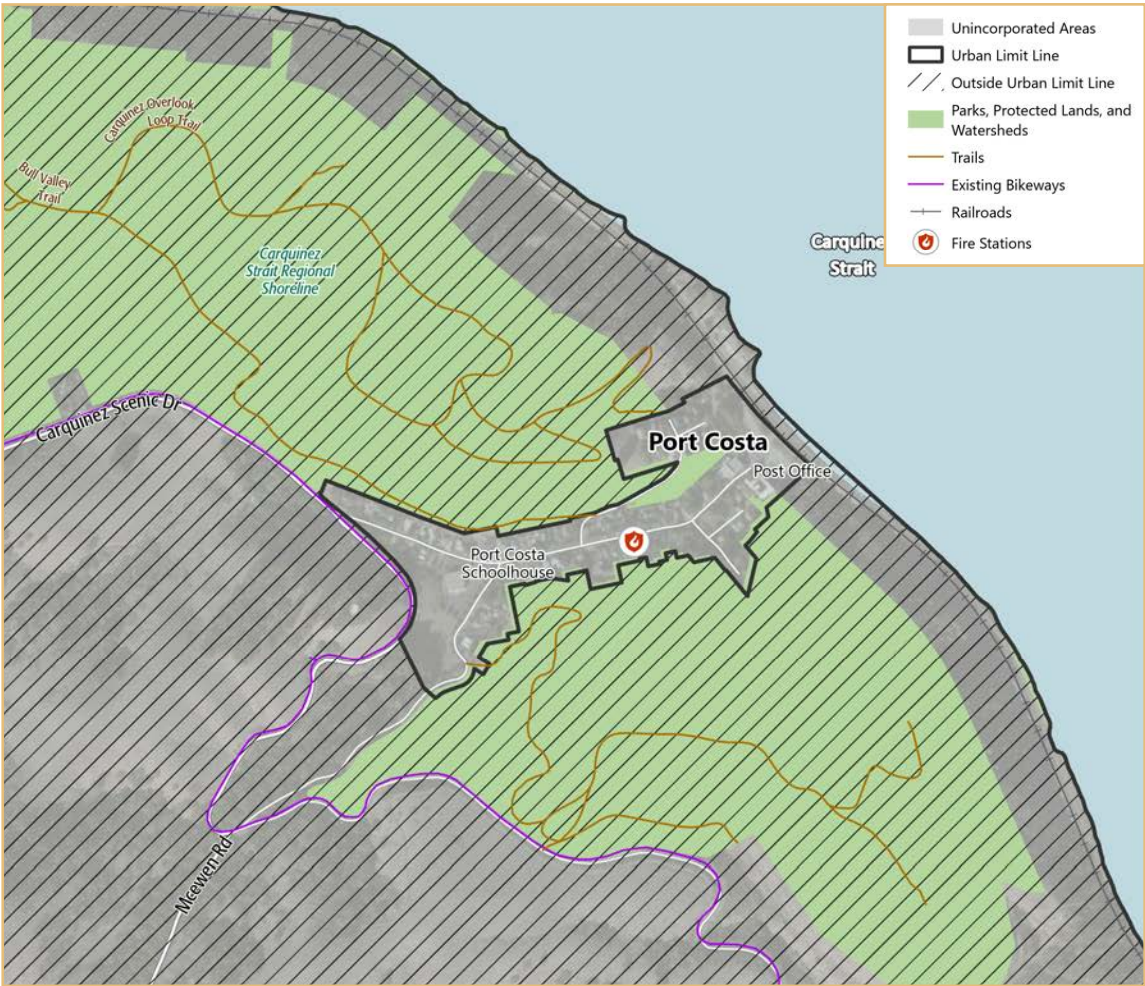


PORT COSTA - CONTEXT - 1

Situated among along the Carquinez Strait, Port Costa is a small town of approximately 250 people. Originally founded in 1879 as a deep-water shipping port, the community had an important role in the export of wheat and was a stop on the transcontinental railroad. Upon completion of a railroad bridge between Martinez and Benicia in 1930, Port Costa diminished in size and regional significance. The small community now prides itself on its rich heritage and natural surroundings, preserving a small historic downtown amidst rolling hills, trails, and ranches. The community is close-knit and enjoys a friendly, engaged dynamic.

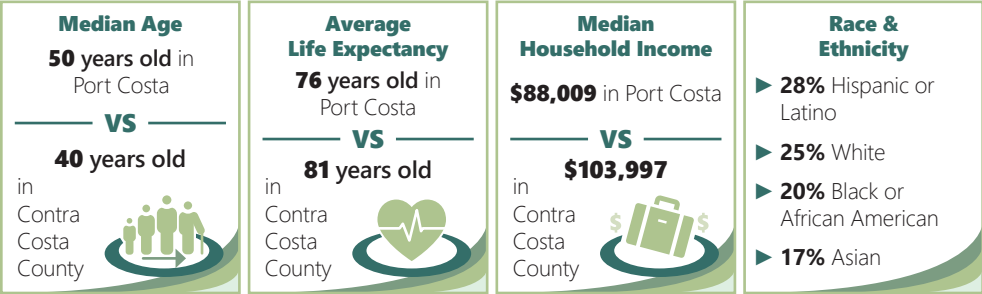
Port Costa is fairly isolated, with only two narrow, winding access roads. Carquinez Scenic Drive connects to Crockett and Interstate 80 to the west, and McEwen Road connects to Highway 4 to the south. The predominant land use is single-family housing, with a small downtown area consisting of a few businesses and a post office near the water and railroad. The railroad is in active use, which impedes public access to the waterfront, a major concern among residents. Residents are generally content to travel outside the community for daily goods and services, preferring to preserve the small-town charm of Port Costa, but there is some interest in modest business growth to sustain economic vitality.

Residents act as stewards of the historic assets in Port Costa. They are also passionate about protecting the surrounding open space and preserving a healthy watershed to ensure a sustainable future.



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

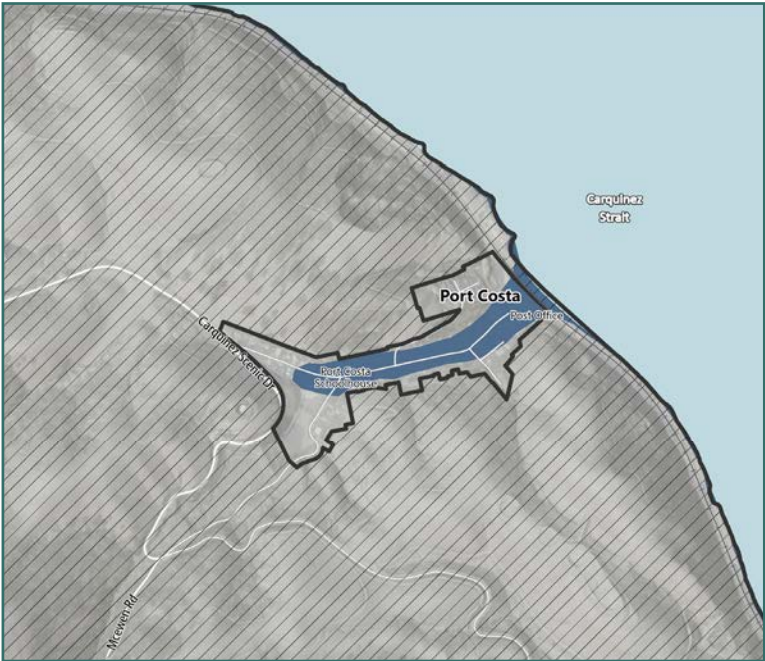
WHO LIVES IN PORT COSTA?



HAZARDS	
Coastal flooding	Landslides
Drought	Sea level rise
Extreme heat	Seismic hazards
Flooding	Severe storms
Human health hazards	Wildfire

MAJOR VULNERABILITIES	
Low-income households, households in poverty, and cost-burdened households are vulnerable to unhealthy living conditions or destruction of homes from coastal flooding, flooding, landslides, seismic hazards, severe storms, and wildfire.	
Persons with chronic illnesses and low-income households may have less financial stability to pay for medical costs or increased housing costs due to drought, extreme heat, flooding, human health hazards, and wildfire smoke.	
The entire built environment is vulnerable to coastal flooding, flooding, landslides, sea level rise, and wildfire, especially the residents and businesses along Canyon Lake Drive and Prospect Avenue.	
Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline Park and outdoor recreation that support the economy are vulnerable to coastal flooding, extreme heat, flooding, landslides, severe storms, and wildfire.	
The Union Pacific Railway, Port Costa Schoolhouse, and the US Post Office are vulnerable to coastal flooding, flooding, and sea level rise.	

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



FLOOD ZONES

Flood Hazard Areas

- 100-Year Flood Zone
- 500-Year Flood Zone
- Areas of Undetermined but Possible Flood Hazard
- Water
- Unincorporated Areas
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Railroads

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

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

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



WILDFIRE

Wildfire Severity Zones

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Unincorporated Areas
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Railroads

Source: CAL FIRE, 2024; Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.



PLANNED LAND USE

Land use designations for Port Costa are shown on Figure LU-1, General Plan Land Use Map, and defined in Table LU-1 in the Land Use Element. Most of the community is planned for continued residential use at a density consistent with existing development. The mixed-use area at the eastern end of Canyon Lake Drive serves to recognize the area's historic character of residences over street-level businesses, as well as to encourage and attract additional development that will complement existing businesses and take advantage of visual access to the waterfront. The lands surrounding the community are outside the Urban Limit Line and protected from intense development through Parks and Recreation, Resource Conservation, Agricultural Lands designations.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

1. Port Costa should be a resilient community that has planned for and is safe from sea-level rise, wildfire hazards, and the acute and long-term risks associated with nearby industrial uses.
2. The rich history and unique heritage of Port Costa and its residents should be celebrated and cultivated for future generations.
3. Port Costa should remain an affordable place to find a home.
4. Public facilities and amenities, including regional parkland, local parks and open spaces, and schools, should be preserved and enhanced. Open spaces should be inviting and clear of trash and debris.
5. Port Costa residents should enjoy convenient access to the shoreline.



POLICIES

1. Maintain Port Costa's unique character while supporting economic vitality, emergency preparedness and safety, and improvement of the housing stock.
2. Support continued development of Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline Park and regional trails, including a potential bike trail connection to Crockett.
3. Encourage development of small-scale specialty and neighborhood retail shops and discourage establishment of automobile-oriented uses.
4. Encourage preservation, sensitive rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of Port Costa's older buildings, particularly those identified in the Historic Resources Inventory. Recognize Port Costa's authentic character and historic buildings as assets and amenities to attract businesses, visitors, and local investment to the community.
5. Protect and preserve the scenic quality of the shoreline while encouraging water-oriented commercial and recreational activities that enhance Port Costa's identity as a waterfront community.

ACTIONS

1. Assist a community-led process to develop design guidelines that complement the County's Objective Design and Development Standards and are tailored to the unique setting, historic fabric, lot patterns, design character, and mix of uses in the community.
2. Update the Historic Resources Inventory to include Port Costa's historically significant buildings and sites.
3. Work with the State Lands Commission and Union Pacific Railroad to improve waterfront access, including lateral access along the shoreline itself, provide new amenities along the shoreline, and mitigate limitations on access from the railroad tracks.