

## Prospectus for a North Richmond Urban Greening and Resiliency Plan

*Draft scoping discussion, 3/29/16; prepared by John Steere, County Watershed Program*

### A. Why an Urban Greening and Resiliency Program/Plan for North Richmond?

N. Richmond (NR) has historically been one of the most economically-challenged communities and as result, is among the most “trash challenged” community in Contra Costa County with significant urban blight. It meets the definition of a “Disadvantaged Community” under the State of California. At the same time, there are numerous community groups working to improve the livability of NR. There is growing interest at both the grassroots and among Contra Costa County (County) officials in developing a comprehensive Cleaning, Urban Greening, and Resiliency Program in N. Richmond (*NR Greening Program/Project*). There are multiple purposes associated with undertaking a *NR Greening Program*, primary among them being:

- 1) Reduction of “illicit discharge” and dumping, as well as of litter levels; and the associated “blight” from unoccupied housing and vacant, unmaintained lots;
- 2) Developing green infrastructure (GI) storm water treatment facilities in NR’s residential and industrial sections, including vegetated swales, bio-retention basins, and tree “filterra” basins)
- 3) Improving or creating greenways (e.g. along San Pablo Creek) and other green corridors;
- 4) Enhanced walkability and bicycle-friendliness;
- 5) Establishing new and maintaining existing community and native plant gardens;
- 6) Providing Safe Routes to Schools (to Verde School, in particular);
- 7) Reducing the urban heat island effect, heat vulnerability, and improving community resiliency;
- 8) Reducing the level of air pollutants and greenhouse gases in N. Richmond particularly through urban greening activities (including street trees and native habitat restoration);
- 9) Furnishing other public health benefits as identified in the County’s *Climate Action Plan* (CAP, 2012; revised 2015);
- 10) Increasing the “resiliency” of North Richmond through many factors, among them enhanced social cohesion, community engagement, supporting local employment, and meeting basic needs;
- 11) Reducing the potential for public health impacts (e.g., increased cardiovascular and respiratory diseases) to vulnerable/low-income populations from extreme heat;
- 12) Planting Street trees and curbside planter boxes;
- 13) Increase creek health and the quality of fish habitat in Wildcat and San Pablo Creeks; and
- 14) Harnessing a community-based approach with which to implement a NR Greening Program.

Given this complexity of purposes and issues to be addressed in the NR Greening Program, defining an Urban Greening and Resiliency concept plan to provide a blueprint to implement these purposes in an integrated way is needed. Such a plan in itself could be regarded as an excellent pilot project for implementing the County Climate Action Plan’s “Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy” (see **CAP, Chapter 4**), as it would demonstrate in one community a model for defining and creating resiliency. Besides, most public grant funders and private foundations would prefer that a plan be in place before they give funding for implementation of a resiliency and urban greening/GI program.

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To ensure success in securing planning grants, the County is considering development of a concept plan of where priorities and opportunities exist for walkable/bike-able neighborhoods, for selecting which streetscapes to enhance through greening and focus on to reduce high trash levels, and identify opportunities to locate GI/LID, and Safe Routes to Schools in N. Richmond. To scope these, it was advised that County staff from several departments familiar with N. Richmond and representatives of selected community, regional and National Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) outline the concept plan in a collaborative “scoping” session or workshop. This workshop-p has been scheduled for March 30. Once planning grant(s) have been secured, the Project team would engage the wider community in planning workshop(s) or charrette(s) to help develop and identify the features of this preliminary N Richmond Greening/Resiliency concept plan.

**B. Roles and Responsibilities of County and NGOs in a NR Greening and Resiliency Plan/Program.**

Based on meetings with County Staff who participated in the Planning Integration Team (PITCH) on 1/24/16, and another with staff from John Gioia’s Office, the Watershed Project and the Community Wellness and Prevention Program of the County, and based on a review of the County’s Climate Action Plan for Unincorporated areas (2012; revised 2015), the following departments and divisions should be involved in shaping a *NR Greening Program*:

- *Department of Conservation and Development (Divisions: Transportation; Advanced Planning) (DCD)* in relation to implementation of the CAP strategies.
- *Contra Costa Public Health/Health Services Department (CHS) – Climate Change Task Force; plus Community Wellness and Prevention Program*, in co-administering a grant for carrying out a N Richmond Green Program/Plan in relation to enhancing community resiliency, public health benefits, and “Safe Routes to Schools,” along with the reduction of both the urban heat island effect and heat vulnerability.
- *Public Works Department* including *Transportation Engineering (TE)*, *County Watershed Program (CWP)*, and the *County Flood Control District (FCD)* in relation to enhancing walkability (TE), reduction of illegal dumping and of litter; developing GI/LID (CWP), and maintaining the channels of San Pablo and Wildcat Creeks (FCD).
- *Office of John Gioia* for coordination with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and to interface with community groups/members and funders.

Both the County and the NGOs working in N. Richmond are interested in a range of urban greening strategies in N. Richmond. The CWP is focused on trash removal and green infrastructure in N. Richmond, while the County’s Health Services – Community Wellness Program would be interested in street trees and planter boxes in relation to Safe Routes to Schools and for reducing urban heat island effects. NGOs working in N. Richmond are more focused on grassroots community building and projects including the following ongoing initiatives:

- 1) Three community gardens and an urban farm on Fred Jackson Way adjacent to San Pablo Creek on FCD property (led by *Urban Tilth*);
- 2) Greening Corps and Hot Spot (creek) cleanups (led by the *Watershed Project*); and
- 3) The “N Richmond Green Team Project,” involving the training of local stewards of creeks and streets to reduce trash and illicit dumping, sponsorship of Earth Day events in NR, and the establishment of two native habitat gardens’ that are being planted and maintained by resident children (led by *Neighborhood House of N. Richmond*).

**Model for Public/Nonprofit Partnering.** Given the multiple benefits of a NR Greening Plan/Program that overlaps with the missions and work plans of *Contra Costa Health Services – Community Wellness and Prevention Program*, the *Department of Conservation and Development*, and the *County Watershed Program (CWP)*, all should play an administrative or liaison/advisory role. It is currently suggested that the Wellness Program be the County’s lead administrator, with support roles coming from the Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) and CWP. Robert Rogers indicated that he is happy to encourage that CWP and Wellness Programs to work together and either *co-administer* the NR Greening Plan/Program or have one take the lead and the other support.

A potential organizational model for our initiative is the City of Richmond’s Street Tree Planting Program, which is a partnership of the City, Groundwork Richmond and Watershed Project. The NGOs secured the CalFIRE and Walkable Watershed Grants for it. The Watershed Project is implementing it, while Groundwork Richmond is the administrator. The City’s role is as liaison and consultant. Specifically, the Dept. of Recreation functioning as an advisor for community-based bioretention and swale installation and tree planting, as well as for planning and coordination purposes. In Richmond, NGOs are implementing block-by-block planting around the City and on the Richmond Greenway, using the City’s “Adopt a Spot” program to ensure maintenance of trees and GI by community organizations. Both Pogo Park and Unity Park (on the Richmond Greenway) are good examples of successful partnerships between NGOs and the City of Richmond to implement resiliency and greening initiatives around the City.

### **C. Planning Grant Priorities.**

Members of PITCH present at the NR Greening Program Team meeting of 2/3/16 concurred with using the model of Richmond’s identification and phasing in its urban greening program, and in particular, agreed with the approach they used of having specific NGOs administering and implementing foundation grants and the municipality functioning as an advisor and liaison. At the 2/24 meeting of

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PITCH, Michael Kent reaffirmed the availability and interest of CHS in supporting/co-sponsoring NGO-led grant proposals identified in the table (see pages 5 and 6 of this prospectus).

The most readily available grant would be from Walkable Watersheds (donor designated foundation), which is willing to fund a NR Urban Greening Plan, according to Juliana Gonzalez, Executive Director (ED) of the Watershed Project.

**NEXT STEPS:** Selected NGOs will apply for 4 to 5 planning grants from private foundations and the County has applied to one from the state, as identified below and that are further described and hyperlinked in the table that follows.

1. *Walkable Watersheds* – Lead: Juliana Gonzalez Watershed Project (WP); co-sponsored by CHS-Wellness Program; Note: Benefit of going through municipality is cash flow (fronting of costs and reimbursement) Juliana Gonzalez said that Walkable Watersheds would only fund implementation of a pilot project, as part of a planning type grant. [Deadline – Open]
2. *Chevron Modernization Funds: I(See #5)*; Lead: Robert Rogers Supervisor John Gioia’s Office. Robert delegated this task to John Steere to pursue; John found out from Chevron (Andrea Bailey) that these funds are being administered by the City of Richmond; they have been placed in an *Environmental Community and investment Agreement Grants Program*, as noted in Step 5, below. [Deadline May 2]
3. *Integrated Resource Recovery Fund (IRRF)*: similar to NR Mitigation Fund, but only for NR. Lead: Robert Rogers Supervisor John Gioia’s Office; Will Initiate communication to determine whether it can be applied to planning. [Deadline – Open]
4. *Prop 1 Storm Water Grant Program (SWGP) – Planning*. Leads: CWP and Clean Water Program (Tom Dalziel): Khalil Abusaba (AMEC) and the Clean Water Program submitted a proposal for a Countywide Stormwater Resources Management Plan, of which N. Richmond and its watersheds will be a planning sub-area) [Deadline – March 18]
5. *Environmental Community and investment Agreement (ECIA) Competitive Grants Program* for Richmond/N. Richmond; note that this is the program through which the *Chevron Modernization Funds* are being administered [Deadline: May 2, 2016]
6. *CA Office of Sustainable Water Solutions: Proposition 1 – Technical Assistance Grants* to provide assistance to small disadvantaged communities (DACs) with drinking, waste, and stormwater needs. [Deadline: June 30, 2016]

It is advised that proposals/grant applications for the *NR Greening Plan/Program* be submitted to several funders and using grant match sources that identified in the following section, “D. Ongoing Initiatives

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in N. Richmond that could be used as Matches for Grant Applications.” This will help ensure sufficient budget for developing an Urban Greening and Resiliency Plan (estimated at \$150–250,000; to be better ascertained following scoping of plan) and for match funding. It is suggested that proposals be differentiated as follows: **proposals to private foundations** where NGOs can take the lead, with co-sponsorship from the relevant County department/division (see table below) and **Federal/State grants**, where the County departments would take the lead

Note for seeking funds: The following table has several grant programs, including from Walkable Watersheds, National Wildlife Foundation, EPA, and CalFIRE, that all consider LID and GI and tree planting as having the same purpose: of damping storm water/flooding and water pollution prevention.

**N. Richmond Greening and Resiliency Program: Compilation of Potential Funding Sources,  
Proposed Priorities and their Leads (County Department and/or NGO)**

#	Source of Funding and commentary	Priority •/Type	Lead NGO/ Department	Driver(s)/ facilitator
1	<b>N. Richmond Mitigation Fund (NRMF)</b> ; RFP recently released; grant applications were due on Feb. 2. Next grant cycle in Summer 2016. The NRMF’s funding of varied greening initiatives in NR has historically been substantial but fragmented; NGOs working in NR are primary recipients. <i>Deadline: Feb. 2, 2016, 2017</i>	4 P/I**	Neighborhood House of N Richmond (NHNR)	NHNR: Carla Orozco; Supr. Gioia (staff)
2	<b>Richmond – ECIA Competitive Grant Program</b> is funded through the <u>Chevron Modernization Project Environmental and Community Investment Agreement (ECIA)</u> available to fund programs that to support community and youth. Grants will be awarded on an annual basis and awards will range from \$5,000 to \$75,000. Potential source of funding for urban forestry and safe routes to schools.. <a href="http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3250/Richmond-ECIA-Grants">http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3250/Richmond-ECIA-Grants</a> <i>Deadline: May 2, 2016</i>	4 P/I	Watershed Project (WP) and Supervisor Gioia’s Office	WP: Juliana Gonzalez Supr. Gioia : Robert Rogers
3	<b>“Walkable Watersheds”</b> for SF Bay Area, a foundation that is funding Richmond’s greening and walkability and will fund NR for a community-based pilot project, as part of a “concept plan” as this Foundation did for the City of Richmond. <a href="http://www.walkablewatershed.com/sanfranciscobay/">http://www.walkablewatershed.com/sanfranciscobay/</a> <i>Deadline: open</i>	4 P#/I	Watershed Project* (WP); Co. Health Services (CHS)	WP: Juliana Gonzalez CHS: Michael Kent

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4	<p><b>U.S. Endowment for Forestry &amp; Communities, Inc.; Healthy Watersheds Consortium Grant Program.</b> Whose purpose is to accelerate protection and enhancement of healthy watersheds.</p> <p><a href="http://www.usendowment.org/partnerships/hwcgrantprogram.html">http://www.usendowment.org/partnerships/hwcgrantprogram.html</a>  <i>Deadline: March 14 (Deadline Passed and no grant application filed)</i></p>	4 P/I	Watershed Project (WP); CHS	WP: Juliana Gonzalez;** CHS: Michael Kent
5	<p><b>Prop 1 Storm Water Grant Program (SWGPF) – Planning.</b> To prepare a SW Resources Plan (SWRP) for Wildcat Creek and San Pablo Creek watersheds, within which NR is located (would become part of Countywide GI Plan). Since NR is a Disadvantaged Community match requirements are 25% rather than 50% of grant request.</p> <p><a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/prop1/">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/prop1/</a>. <i>Deadline: March 18 Application submitted. (See also Prop 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program, #6 below)</i></p>	4 P	County Clean Water Program; County Watershed Program (CWP)	Clean Water Program: Tom Dalziel with Khalil Abusaba (AMEC – consultant)
6	<p><b>Prop 1 – Technical Assistance Funding Program</b> through the SWRCB is for small disadvantaged communities to improve their water quality/supply and stormwater needs, and contribute to more sustainable community governance and enhanced public awareness.</p> <p><a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1/tech_asst_funding.shtml">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1/tech_asst_funding.shtml</a> <i>Deadline: June 30</i></p>	4 P/I	American Rivers (AR) in cooperation with CWP and Supr. Gioia’s Office	AR: Sarah Beamish; CWP: John Steere; Gioia. Robert Rogers
7	<p><b>Integrated Resource Recovery Fund (IRRF).</b> Similar to the NRMF, negotiated with the NR Resource Recovery Station; only for N Richmond; is not fully in place yet. <i>Deadline: Unknown</i></p>	3 P?/I	Supervisor Gioia’s Office	Robert Rogers
8	<p><b>PG&amp;E (Tree) Funds;</b> could dovetail with similar efforts in the City of Richmond. <i>Deadline: Open</i></p>	3 I	Supervisor Gioia’s Office	Robert Rogers
9	<p><b>State Green House Gas Reduction Funds.</b> 25% of funds are targeted for “Disadvantaged Communities” like N. Richmond.</p> <p><a href="http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/summaryproceedsappropriations.pdf">http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/summaryproceedsappropriations.pdf</a>  <i>Deadline: Unknown</i></p>	3 I	Supervisor Gioia’s Office	Robert Rogers

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10	<b>Cal Fire Tree Planting Grants.</b> This program is meant to be used to assist communities throughout California advance their urban forestry efforts. The City of Richmond recently secured one. <a href="http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry">http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry</a> <i>Deadline: Unknown</i>	3 I	CHS and Watershed Project**	CHS: Michael Kent; WP: Juliana Gonzalez
11	<b>One Bay Area Plan Grants (OBAG).</b> For developing complete streets and supporting transit oriented development in “Priority Development Areas” (PDAs) of Plan Bay Area 2040 ( <a href="http://planbayarea.org/">http://planbayarea.org/</a> ), NR is a potential PDA under it. Fred Jackson Way 1 <sup>st</sup> Mile Connection Project is ongoing project; TE has applied for OBAG; DCD is considering proposal via “East Bay Corridors Initiative” application. <a href="http://mtc.ca.gov/our-work/invest-protect/focused-growth/one-bay-area-grants">http://mtc.ca.gov/our-work/invest-protect/focused-growth/one-bay-area-grants</a> . <i>Deadline: Unknown;</i> (applications will become available in the summer of 2016)	3 I	PWD- Transportation Engineering (TE) and DCD for PDA plnng./imple- mentation	TE: Mary Halle; DCD: Will Nelson (?)
12	<b>EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants</b> supports and empowers communities working on solutions to local environmental and public health issues. <a href="http://www3.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html">http://www3.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html</a> . Related to it is the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program	2 I	Watershed Project**/ CHS	Watershed Project**/ CHS: Michael Kent
13	<b>5 Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program</b> (National fish and Wildlife Fdn. for SW mgmt. and watershed protection and habitat restoration. <a href="http://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Pages/home.aspx">http://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Pages/home.aspx</a>	2 I	CWP or DCD	Watershed Project**/ CWP: John Steere
14	<b>Active Transportation Program (ATP)</b> US Department of Transportation). TE submitted an application last year for Fred Jackson Way First Mile Last Mile Walkability Project. Did not receive but will re-apply. Application becomes available in March <i>Deadline: June.</i> <a href="http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/atp/index.html">http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/atp/index.html</a>	2 I	TE	TE : Mary Halle
15	<b>S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation</b> has a commitment to identifying lasting solutions for <u>education</u> and the <u>environment</u> and will be spend downing the Foundation’s assets by 2020; they have a focus to support stewardship and environmental programs. <a href="http://www.sdbjrfoundation.org">http://www.sdbjrfoundation.org</a>	2 I	CHS- Wellness Program	Wellness Program: Sequoia Erasmus,

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#	Source of Funding and commentary	Priority •/Type	Lead NGO/ Department	Driver(s)/ facilitator
16	<p><b>US EPA – 2016 Environmental Education (EE) Grants Program.</b> Small grants to support locally-focused EE projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate EE practices. Proposals are due by April 8, 2016. Please refer to the following website for details: <a href="http://go.usa.gov/cytg">full announcement (http://go.usa.gov/cytg)</a>. Find background on the EE Grants Program and resources for applicants at: <a href="http://go.usa.gov/3u7Xw">http://go.usa.gov/3u7Xw</a></p>	3 I	CHS- Wellness Program/ CWP	Wellness Program: Sequoia Erasmus/ CWP: John Steere,

### Explanatory NOTES

\* *Priority:* 1 to 4: 1 = low; 2 = moderately low; 3 = moderately high; 4 = high

\*\* *Type:* P = Planning funding; I = Implementation funding; P/I = both; P# = Pilot Project as part of Planning.

At a 3/8/16 meeting between Juliana Gonzalez (TWP), Michael Kent, and John Steere) and suggested that we break the plan into several components and seek separate funding for each. John recommended, in light of this suggestion that the County/NGO team apply for 3 sets of planning grants that would be correspondent to the 3 components of the proposed Plan: 1) Green Infrastructure; 2) Urban Forestry; and 3) Community Resiliency/Public Health. He further suggested that we could use Bay Area Urban Greening/Green Plan-IT and the County's "Stormwater Resources Management Plan" (for which the County is currently applying for a Prop. 1 planning grant) as the source of funding for this component of the NRUG Plan, should the County be awarded it. He advised that we apply for a "Walkable Watersheds" grant for the Urban Forestry component, and use the ECIA grant for the *Community Resiliency/Public Health* component. TWP would apply for the latter grants, with the County's CHS (Michael Kent) being the liaison.

### D. Ongoing Initiatives in N. Richmond that could be used as Matches for Grant Applications.

Several County Departments are engaged in a number existing and ongoing projects/programs that can provide matches for grant funds based on financial matching and in-kind (staff time) matches. The following initiatives list can be drawn from for grant proposals, and provide sources of leveraging their coinciding or overlapping benefits.



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- 1) *Fred Jackson Way – 1st Mile/Last Mile Pedestrian connection Project.* Led by PWD– Transportation Engineering (TE); Project Manager (PM) is Mary Halle. Plans for improving walkability and transit access on this street have been prepared. TE applied for OBAG implementation funding (see #10 in table above and Active Transportation Program funding (US Dept. of Transportation) in 2015; grants were not awarded.
- 2) *Bay Area Urban Greening/Green Plan–IT Grant* which includes developing a schematic/conceptual Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan for N. Richmond as a pilot Project of this \$4 million grant; Grant recipients/leads: San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) and SF Estuary Partnership (SFEP) PM is Jennifer Krebs at SFEI; plus Josh Bradt at SFEP. Our CWP is working with City of Richmond and GIS departments from the County and City in coordinating the planning area in lower San Pablo Creek Watershed in NR.
- 3) *Wildcat and San Pablo Creek Restoration planning grant* from the State Coastal Conservancy of \$144,000 was recently awarded to Urban Tilth (PM is Adele Ho); Liaison is Mike Carlson of the Contra Costa County FCD)
- 4) *The N. Richmond Community Based Cleaning and Outreach Program*, which will contract with local NGO’s to hire residents to conduct regular “on land trash clean-ups” and educate neighbors to be stewards of their blocks. Program being led by the CWP; PM is John Steere, budget of \$300,000 for contracts to be carried out over three years. CWP has sent out RFPs. Three proposals received from NGOs that are under review; to be implemented by June 2016.
- 5) *“Love your Block”* a project of the City of Richmond in cooperation with the CWP (County) which involves street tree planting, community services, and cleanup. Match amount to be determined with the City of Richmond. PM is Rochelle Monk of the City of Richmond – City Manager's Office
- 6) *N. Richmond Green Team Project.* A two year cooperative effort funded by the NRMF to increase awareness among local residents about the value of watersheds and litter reduction and the importance of preventing illegal dumping/trash; community service projects include street and creek cleanups and two native habitat gardens in NR. Led by Neighborhood House of North Richmond; PM is Carla Orozco; co-sponsored by CWP (PM: John Steere)

**E. Forums for community and stakeholder input.**

It has been determined that a stakeholder “scoping” workshop for outlining the potential work plan will be held on March 30<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 3 pm at the Verde School Parents Room. Invitations were sent on March 10 to a list of NGO and agency/municipal representatives that were identified in Exhibit B. Of these, a total of 20 will be coming as shown in **Exhibit C**. John Steere, Michael Kent and Sequoia Erasmus will be coordinating this participatory scoping session. In addition, the following existing forums exist for input and debriefing following it:

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- *N Richmond Green Steering Council:* is an informal coordination forum for NGOs and County Service Providers in N. Richmond (DCD–Inspection/Code Enforcement, PWD–CWP; Sheriff’s Office, Supr. Gioia Office). Meets monthly, the first Wednesday from 9:30 to 10:15 am
- *N Richmond Municipal Advisory Council;* meets monthly at the NR Senior Center on the first Thursday of the month (5 to 7 pm)
- *Shields–Reid Council/Community Center;* provides a shared forum for residents from both incorporated and unincorporated N. Richmond.

G:\fldct\NPDES\C.10 Trash Reduction\Community-based Abatement\N Richmond Urban Greening (Multi Perspective–PITCH)\Scoping Workshop 3–30–16\ North Richmond Urban Greening and Resiliency Plan – Prospectus( for Scoping Session)