

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**  
**2019 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**Submitted to**  
**Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors**  
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**Prepared by**  
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## **I. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE OF ANNUAL REPORT**

Purpose of this report is to comply with California Government Code section 65400(b)(1), which mandates that all cities and counties submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of their General Plan and progress in its implementation. A copy of this report will, as required under the statute, be provided to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The County will provide a separate report to HCD in fulfillment of a statutory requirement to report certain housing information, including the County's progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to maintenance, improvement, and development of housing, as defined in Government Code sections 65584 and 65583.

In compliance with Government Code Section 65400(b)(1), this General Plan Annual Progress Report covering calendar year 2019 has been prepared for the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors' consideration and acceptance. This report:

1. Summarizes the status of the Contra Costa County General Plan and describes steps taken to implement General Plan policies in 2019;
2. Provides a summary of General Plan Amendments (GPAs) adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2019;
3. Describes Housing Element implementation pursuant to Government Code sections 65584 and 65583(c)(3); and
4. Concludes with a discussion on goals, objectives, and work activities related to General Plan implementation for calendar years 2020 and 2021.

## **II. GENERAL PLAN STATUS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **A. GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND**

The Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) is a division of the planning agency for the unincorporated area of Contra Costa County and is responsible for proper preparation and administration of the County General Plan (County Ordinance Code section 26-2.808[1]). The Board of Supervisors adopted a comprehensive General Plan in January 1991 following an extensive public outreach and participation process initiated in 1986. This updated General Plan superseded the County's prior General Plan (and each of the previously adopted elements), and consolidated several area-specific General Plans into one comprehensive document.

The General Plan was re-adopted by the Board of Supervisors in July 1996 to consolidate General Plan Amendments approved between 1991 to 1995 and correct minor errors and omissions discovered in the original 1991 General Plan text. This reconsolidated General Plan covered the period from 1995 through 2010. The General Plan was re-adopted again in January 2005 to consolidate General Plan Amendments adopted between 1995 and 2004,

revise text and maps to reflect the 1999 incorporation of the City of Oakley (formerly an unincorporated community covered under the County General Plan), and incorporate the 2001 Housing Element update. The second County General Plan “reconsolidation” covers the period from 2005 through 2020.

Government Code section 65302 specifies the seven mandatory General Plan elements. Each mandatory element of the County General Plan was prepared or updated in compliance with the *State of California General Plan Guidelines* published by OPR. Local jurisdictions may also include optional elements as they see fit. The County General Plan includes two such elements. Table 1 indicates the status of each General Plan element, including the year it was originally adopted and the year it was most recently revised.

**TABLE 1: STATUS OF GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

Element	First Adopted	Last Revised
Land Use	1963	2005
Transportation/Circulation	1963	2005
Housing	1970	2014
Conservation	1973	2005
Open Space	1973	2005
Safety	1975	2005
Noise	1975	2005
Growth Management (optional)	1991	2005
Public Facilities/Services (optional)	1972	2005

**B. ADOPTED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2019**

Pursuant to Government Code section 65358(b), the County may amend the mandatory General Plan elements up to four times per calendar year. However, each amendment may include more than one change to the General Plan. DCD refers to amendments to the mandatory elements as “consolidated” because each may consolidate multiple changes in one action. The Board of Supervisors, acting in its capacity as the legislative body for the unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County, adopted two amendments to the County General Plan during calendar year 2019, which are summarized as follows:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Consolidated General Plan Amendment**

*AYM Center Avenue Project (County File GP#16-0007):* Amended the Land Use Element Map to to change the subject property’s land use designation from Office (OF) to Multiple-Family Residential Medium Density (MM) in support of an eight-unit townhouse development on a 0.49-acre site. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 7, 2019. Project initiated by the private sector.

▪ **2<sup>nd</sup> Consolidated General Plan Amendment**

*Habitat for Humanity Pacifica Landing Project (County File GP#18-0004):* Amended the Land Use Element map to change the subject property's land use designation from Single-Family Residential Medium Density (SM) to Multiple-Family Residential Medium Density (MM) in support of a 29-unit townhouse development on a 2.42-acre site. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 9, 2019. Project initiated by the private sector.

▪ **3<sup>rd</sup> Consolidated General Plan Amendment**

*Rodeo Senior Housing Successor Site (County File GP#18-0007):* Amended the Land Use Element map to change the subject property's land use designation from Commercial (CO) to Multiple-Family Residential Very High Special Density (MS) in support of a multi-family residential development for up to 90 units on a 0.98-acre site. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 9, 2019. Project initiated by the County's Housing Successor Agency.

**C. GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION INITIATED IN 2019**

All proposals to amend the General Plan, whether initiated by the private sector or the County, must be preliminarily reviewed by the Board of Supervisors before DCD may proceed with the full GPA process. The following proposals were preliminarily reviewed by the Board of Supervisors in 2019:

- *Solar Energy Facilities GPA (County File GP#19-0001):* A County-initiated amendment to the 2005-2020 General Plan to allow commercial/distribution-scale solar energy generating facilities in areas designated on the Land Use Element Map as Commercial (CO), Light Industry (LI), Heavy Industry (HI), and conditionally allow in Agricultural Lands (AL), and Public and Semi-Public (PS).
- *Pantages Trails Project GPA (County File GP#19-0002):* A private-sector request to amend the Land Use Element Map to redesignate ten parcels from Open Space (OS), Single-Family Residential High Density (SH) and Single-Family Residential Medium Density (SM) to OS, SH, Parks and Recreation (PR), and Public and Semi-Public (PS) to allow for 277 single-family residences and associated amenities.
- *The Field Semester Project GPA (County File: GP#19-0003):* A private-sector request to amend the Land Use Element Map to redesignate four parcels from Parks and Recreation (PR) and Open Space (OS) to Public and Semi-Public (PS) to allow for a private educational facility.
- *Saranap Area Policies GPA (County File: GP#19-0004):* A County-initiated amendment to the Land Use Element to add a new vision statement, new and amended policies, new implementation measures, and a new specific area map for the Saranap Area and Boulevard Way Mixed-Use Corridor sub-area.

#### **D. COMPLIANCE WITH OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH *GENERAL PLAN GUIDELINES* AND ASSOCIATED DIRECTIVES**

Government Code section 65400 requires jurisdictions to discuss the degree to which the adopted General Plan complies with the *General Plan Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* provide a definitive interpretation of State statutes and case law as they relate to the General Plan. Additionally, the *Guidelines* outline the general framework for preparation and revision of a General Plan, Attorney General Opinions, and the relationship of the General Plan to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The *Guidelines* are advisory in nature rather than prescriptive, and thereby preserve opportunities for a local jurisdiction to address contemporary planning topics in a locally appropriate manner.

OPR issued a comprehensive update to the *Guidelines* in August 2017. This new version includes topics and issues currently not addressed in the General Plan, such as climate change, environmental justice, and community health. The County will address these and other topics as part of the upcoming General Plan update (see discussion below).

In addition to the *General Plan Guidelines*, OPR has issued other advisories and guidance related to State planning law requirements for cities and counties. DCD has endeavored to incorporate these advisories into the County's planning process. For example, in November 2005 OPR issued a supplement to the *Guidelines* providing advisory guidance on the process for consultation with California Native American tribes during adoption or amendment of local General Plans or Specific Plans in order to protect Traditional Tribal Cultural Places (also known as SB 18 Tribal Consultation). DCD has established a protocol for SB 18 Tribal Consultation on General Plan Amendments and Specific Plans in accordance with the November 2005 guidance.

In December 2010 OPR provided guidance on amending circulation elements in response to AB 1358 (Leno), The California Complete Streets Act, which requires cities and counties to plan for development of multi-modal transportation networks. In 2008, the Board of Supervisors amended the Land Use, Transportation and Circulation, and Open Space Elements of the General Plan to include language supporting the Complete Streets philosophy. Then in July 2016 the Board adopted the *Complete Streets Policy of Contra Costa County*, which builds upon the 2008 amendments. Pursuant to AB 1358, Complete Streets/multi-modal transportation planning will be fully integrated into the Transportation and Circulation Element upon its next substantial revision, which is anticipated to occur in 2020 (see below).

OPR has also worked to improve communication and encourage collaboration between local governments and the United States military on land use planning and development issues in response to passage in 2002 of SB 1468 (Knight) and SB 1462 (Kuehl) in 2004. DCD has established a protocol to determine whether notification to the U.S. military is necessary if a project is located within 1,000 feet of a military installation or within special airspace as defined in the Public Resources Code section 21098. DCD uses the California Military Land Use Compatibility Analyst, which was prepared by the State Resources Agency in conjunction with OPR to help cities and counties find the location of military installations

and training facilities within their jurisdiction and to determine whether a project triggers notification to the U.S. military.

**III. HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTION AND PROGRESS IN MEETING THE COUNTY'S SHARE OF REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS**

The Board of Supervisors preliminarily approved the County General Plan Housing Element in 1970, approximately one year after State law established the element as one of the mandatory General Plan elements. The Housing Element was formally adopted by the Board in December 1980 following new mandates established in the mid-1970s, and has been updated several times as part of the mandated cycle of Housing Element updates adopted by the State Legislature beginning in 1985. The current Housing Element, which HCD certified on March 11, 2015, sets forth the County's housing goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures.

The attached tables (B and D) are from Contra Costa County's Annual Housing Element Progress Report for 2019. These tables contain detailed information pertaining to progress and implementation activities for the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element planning period, which began January 31, 2015, and ends in 2023.

**A. SHARE OF REGIONAL HOUSING NEED**

Table 2 summarizes the County's share of projected regional housing needs in the San Francisco Bay Area over the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element planning period.

**TABLE 2: SHARE OF REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS**

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)  
by Income Category for San Francisco Bay Area and Contra Costa County, 2015-2023

State Affordability - Income Category	SF Bay Area Total RHNA	Contra Costa County RHNA	
		Unincorporated + Cities	Unincorporated only
Very-Low Income	46,680	5,264	374
Low Income	28,940	3,086	218
Moderate Income	33,420	3,496	243
Above-Moderate Income	78,950	8,784	532
<b>TOTAL Housing Need</b>	<b>187,990</b>	<b>20,630</b>	<b>1,367</b>

The RHNA for the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle was adopted by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) in July 2013.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://abag.ca.gov>, *Regional Housing Need Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area: 2014-2022*

## B. HOUSING PRODUCTION

Table 3 provides a breakdown by income level of the County's housing production for 2019 along with a running total for the current Housing Element cycle.

**TABLE 3: UNIT COUNT - UNINCORPORATED COUNTY HOUSING PRODUCTION**

Income Level		RHNA by Income Level	Permits Issued in 2019 <sup>2</sup>	Total 5 <sup>th</sup> Cycle Permits Issued <sup>3</sup>	Total RHNA Remaining
Very-Low	Deed Restricted	374	0 (0.0%)	62 (16.5%)	311
	Non-Restricted		0 (0.0%)	1 (0.002%)	
Low	Deed Restricted	218	0 (0.0%)	174 (78.4%)	35
	Non-Restricted		1 (0.0%)	9 (4.1%)	
Moderate		243	4 (1.6%)	129 (53.1%)	114
Above-Moderate		532	214 (40.2%)	1,369 (257.3%)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,367</b>	<b>219 (16.0%)</b>	<b>1,744 (127.6%)</b>	<b>460</b>

The County issued 219 permits for new residential units in 2019, equaling 16 percent of the entire eight-year 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA. This represents a 67 percent decrease from the County's 2018 RHNA production. Through 2019, the fifth year of the eight-year cycle, the County has issued permits for 127.6 percent of its gross RHNA and has already doubled its share of above-moderate-income units since 2017. During 2019, the County issued one permit for units that would be affordable to very low- or low-income households (income at 51 to 80 percent of the area median income [AMI] for Contra Costa County). The County is now on pace to exceed its RHNA for all income categories except very-low. Fulfilling the very-low allocation requires issuance of 104 permits annually for the final three years the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle, whereas only 63 total permits have been issued over the first four years.

## C. BARRIERS TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVITY IN CALENDAR YEAR 2019

Market factors such as the high cost of land suitable for residential development and high construction costs continue to be the most significant constraints on development of affordable housing in Contra Costa County. The County attempts to counter these and other factors with 31 housing programs, which are identified in the General Plan Housing Element, aimed at rehabilitating existing housing stock, developing affordable rental housing, and expanding homeownership opportunities. The key funding sources the County utilizes include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in this column are for units permitted during 2019 relative to the RHNA for each income category.

<sup>3</sup> Percentages in this column are cumulative for units permitted during the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle relative to the RHNA for each income category.



Partnerships Act, Emergency Solutions Grant Funds, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), Mental Health Services Act, Housing Successor (former Redevelopment Set-Aside) Funds, bond financing, Mortgage Credit Certificates, low-income housing tax credits, and Section 8 Assistance.

Table D, attached, briefly outlines the housing programs contained in the Housing Element and describes their 2019 performance. Notable County actions include:

- The Housing Successor to the former Redevelopment Agency's Rodeo Senior Housing site (up to 90 senior affordable units) was granted approval of a General Plan Amendment to allow its development.
- Providing 42 Mortgage Credit Certificates worth \$3.02 million for first-time homebuyers.
- Issuing \$350,000 in CDBG funds for rehabilitation of 30 existing rental units in the City of Richmond which are affordable to, and occupied by, low-income families.
- Weatherizing 189 residential units (164 extremely-low income and 25 very-low income).
- Issued 58 building permits for Accessory Dwelling Units (formerly "second units").
- The updated Inclusionary Housing Ordinance became effective in February 2019. During this reporting period, a total of \$67,267.83 of in-lieu were collected.

A barrier to affordable housing also exists in the form of discrimination. Contra Costa County affirmatively furthers fair housing through the ongoing support of fair housing counseling, education, and outreach activities. In addition, all housing projects funded by the County are required to undertake broad marketing activities in a manner consistent with federal and State fair housing laws, including outreach to underserved populations. The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2010 and updated April 2017.

#### **IV. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND WORK ACTIVITIES RELATED TO GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FOR CALENDAR YEARS 2019 AND 2020**

##### **General Plan Update**

The planning period for the County General Plan extends through calendar year 2020. In December 2017, the Board of Supervisors directed DCD staff to prepare updates to the General Plan and Zoning Code for the Board's consideration. Among numerous content improvements, the updated General Plan will address economic development, community health, climate change, and environmental justice, which will be woven into the entire General Plan to fully implement SB 1000; include an entirely rewritten Transportation and Circulation Element to fully integrate SB 743 and Complete Streets; and be consistent with the most recent versions of numerous regional planning documents adopted since the General Plan was last updated, such as *Plan Bay Area 2040*, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's *2017 Clean Air Plan*, the Delta Protection Commission's updated *Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta*, and the *Contra Costa County Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The General Plan will also be reformatted entirely to improve usability. Work

on the General Plan update began in September 2019 and will extend through 2020. DCD staff anticipates presenting a draft Land Use Element map and draft community profiles in upcoming meetings, both of which highlight the extensive and ongoing outreach efforts and collaboration with the local communities.

List of Attachments (Tables taken from 2019 Housing Element Progress Report to HCD)

Table B: Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress

Table D: Program Implementation Status