

# **Planning Integration Team for Community Health (PITCH)**

Report to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors March 21, 2023

## **History of PITCH**

- 2006 – Dr. Richard Jackson presentation - Impact of Built Environment on Health.
- 2006 – Board directs staff from Department of Conservation and Development (DCD), Public Works Department (PWD), and Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) to convene and develop recommendations on the County’s approach to planning and developing the built environment.
- 2007 –DCD, PWD, and CCHS propose the formation of PITCH and make the following recommendations:
  - a) Evaluate the County’s Roadway Policies and Standards based on the ‘Complete Streets’ approach.
  - b) Evaluate methods and measures to implement the General Plan policies that emphasize compact, infill, and mixed use development and consider impacts on public health.
  - c) Identify and develop policies and implementation measures relating to public health that could lead to potential revisions in the County General Plan and County Ordinance Code.
  - d) Integrate the principles of public health in the master planning of parks and recreational facilities.
  - e) Improve coordination and planning with school districts in the siting of new schools to promote healthy communities.
- 2007 –Board accepts the recommendations, formally establishes PITCH, and affirms commitment to promoting public health principles in land-use planning and development. The Board directs PITCH to research grant funding.

## **PITCH Collaboration**

- PITCH members meet bi-monthly and regularly discuss activities and issues that may be of interest to the other departments.
- Knowledge, perspectives, and experiences unique to Engineering, Public Health, and Planning are shared. In 2022, the collaboration expanded to include transportation discussions that traditionally had been Public Works/DCD-only discussions.
- As a result of collaboration and sharing unique perspectives, superior strategies and approaches are developed and implemented.
- This report identifies a number of recent activities that the departments have conducted after discussion and collaboration at PITCH meetings.

## **Climate Action**

- The Sustainability Coordinator, who started in June 2016, is a resource to all County Departments.
- The Sustainability Committee of the Board of Supervisors meets bi-monthly and continues to receive reports on the ongoing update to the on the Climate Action Plan, happening in conjunction with the ongoing update to the General Plan. The Sustainability Committee also addresses implementation of the Climate Action Plan.
- The Sustainability Commission, a 17-member citizen advisory body, meets bi-monthly to advise the Board and County staff on successful implementation of the County’s Climate Action Plan, including how to realize equity and fairness across the County and how to better engage residents and businesses.
- DCD convenes a quarterly Sustainability Exchange for all local government staff who work

on these issues in the County

- Staff from DCD, Public Works, and Health support the work of the Interdepartmental Climate Action Task Force, which was created by the Board of Supervisors as part of the 2020 Climate Emergency Resolution and includes heads of all County departments and the County Administrator.
- Staff from DCD, Public Works, and Health also support the Green Government Group (G3) Champions, a network of volunteer County employees from many departments all focused on making Contra Costa County a cleaner, healthier place to live and work.

### **Complete Streets**

July 12, 2016 – The Board of Supervisors adopted a new Complete Streets Policy

- More Expansive, Specific, with Implementation Requirements
  - “...comprehensive, integrated transportation network that serves all categories of users...”
  - “All departments and agencies of Contra Costa...shall work towards making Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations...every relevant project, program, and practice...work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions...”
  - Collect Data
  - Evaluate Implementation
  - Establish Bicycle Advisory Committee
- PITCH will be assisting with the development and review of implementation policies and reporting to the Transportation, Water, and Infrastructure Committee on progress.

### **BART Outer C Line Access Study**

- DCD and CCHS participating in BART-led study of how users access 4 stations along BART Outer C Line
  - North Concord/Martinez
  - Pittsburg/Bay Point
  - Pittsburg City Center eBART
  - Antioch eBART
- Study assesses current vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access
- DCD and CCHS recommending strategies to improve access to stations

### **Bailey Road (Bay Point)**

- Reconfigure SR-4 westbound off-ramps
- Eliminate pedestrian tunnel
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian activity
- Project included funding for CCHS’s pedestrian safety campaign, focused around BART station

### **Grant Applications**

Studies, plans, and projects awarded grant funds to improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities:

#### **Active Transportation Program**

- Fred Jackson Way (North Richmond) - \$3,300,000 (Year?)
- Pacheco Boulevard (Pacheco) - \$619,000 (Year?)
- North Bailey Road Active Transportation Corridor (Bay Point) - \$6,159,000 (2021)
- Pacifica Avenue Safe Routes to School Project (Bay Point) - \$3,902,000 (2022)
- San Pablo Avenue Complete Streets/Bay Trail Gap Closure Project (Rodeo/Crockett) - \$10,517,000 (2022)

- Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan - \$340,000 (2018)
- Active Transportation Plan - \$350,000 (2019)

#### State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

- I-680/Treat Boulevard Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Project (Contra Costa Centre)- \$1,600,000 (2019)

#### Contra Costa Transportation Authority – Measure J Transportation for Livable Communities

- Iron Horse Corridor Active Transportation Study - \$350,000 (2017)

#### California Coastal Conservancy

- Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail Gap Closure Study (Crockett/Port Costa/Martinez)- \$133,000 (2019)

DCD has developed a tool for tracking opportunities through the federal Infrastructure and Investment Act and Inflation Reduction Act that support the County’s climate goals. These include, among other things, active transportation, energy efficient buildings, green infrastructure, and workforce development.

#### **North Richmond Urban Greening and Resiliency Plan**

- Plan for urban greening, resiliency, and green infrastructure, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The outline for this plan, as illustrated in the “Scoping Session Map for the North Richmond Urban Greening and Resiliency plan,” (see figure below), served as the basis for PWD’s County Watershed Program to collaborate with The Watershed Project (TWP) and Urban Tilth (UT) to create a project to manifest it. This County/NGO partnership resulted in the *North Richmond Watershed Connections Project (NRWC)*. The County with its partners, TWP and UT, then received close to \$1 million in a State Coastal Conservancy Urban Greening grant in late 2019. The NRWC knits together a suite of multi-benefit green infrastructure and urban greening projects, along with key watershed features into a 1.75 mile-long urban trail. This walkable and bike-friendly route showcases creative responses to the North Richmond community’s need for cleaner, greener, safer, and more walkable neighborhoods. The NRWC Project is composed of three sub-projects:

1. The **First Mile/Last Mile Greening** (Lead: PWD-TE): 37 street trees were planted to enhance the County’s Fred Jackson Way 1<sup>st</sup> mile/last mile project in October 2022.
2. **Fred Jackson Way Rain Garden** (Lead: UT) is the jewel of the NRWC and is adjacent to the Urban Tilth Farm. The recently completed rain garden and native vegetation pilot project were completed in December 2022 replacing existing roadside drainage ditches, and treating an estimated 3,110,400 gallons of urban runoff annually, removing trash and pollutants before it is discharged to San Pablo Creek.
3. **Clean and Green Adopt-a-Tree, Adopt-a-Block Cleanups and Watershed Connections Route**(lead: TWP). this component, initiated in the winter of 2022 will increase the urban canopy by planting 10 trees on public ROW 40 street trees on private property in collaboration with homeowners to improve watershed awareness, access and walkability with wayfinding, artwork, and interpretive elements along the Watershed Connections route.



- Aggregates, showcases, and coordinates existing and future non-profits and County department-led projects. The County is showcasing and coordinating with TWP, UT and the NRWC project discussed above, and is also collaborating with the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District in Bay Point and Rodeo for comparable urban greening and resiliency projects.
- PITCH members have participated in prospectus review and in follow-up grant funding applications: The Transportation Engineering Division of PWD, the County Health Services Department, and the County Watershed Program have cooperated on several grant applications, including for the NRWC project cited above, and for the Bay Point urban greening and green infrastructure project that was led by the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District in October 2022. Staff in these departments also cooperated with DCD Transportation staff in preparing a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Grant proposal, that is being submitted on March 10, 2023 for a Bay Point Enhanced Bicycle And Pedestrian Improvements project on Willow Pass Road that will likely include green infrastructure and urban greening components.
- Provides a model for similar NGO-driven Bay Point Watershed Connections Project that is being led by the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, with support and guidance from the County Watershed Program of the PWD. For its \$1.5 million grant proposal to DWR for a prop 1 DAC IRWM Grant, for Ambrose Park green infrastructure and urban greening plan.

### Sea Level Rise

Contra Costa County has participated in several sea level rise vulnerability assessments, including:

- the Contra Costa Adapting to Rising Tides regional study focused on the western and central portions of the County shoreline,
- East Contra Costa Adapting to Rising Tides study focused on the eastern portion of the County shoreline, and
- Delta Adapts Vulnerability Assessment, which focused on portions of Contra Costa County that are part of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region.

In 2022, the Board allocated a portion of Measure X funds to support planning work on sea level rise. DCD staff are developing a roadmap for how the County can address sea level rise.

### General Plan Update

In December 2017 the Board of Supervisors directed DCD to update the County General Plan and Zoning Code. The project, which was later expanded to include updating the County’s Climate Action Plan (see below), is called Envision Contra Costa 2040. By statute, the General Plan must

address topics such as land use, housing, transportation, parks and open space, environmental justice, climate change, and public safety. The Board's directive included instruction to weave the additional themes of community health, economic development, and sustainability throughout the new General Plan.

Substantive work on the General Plan Update began in 2018. DCD anticipates publishing the draft General Plan in the second half of 2023. The document includes over 800 goals, policies, and actions addressing the topics listed above and many more, as well as a variety of maps and other graphics. PITCH is comprised of staff who specialize in many disciplines, including land use and transportation planning, engineering, public health, sustainability, and green infrastructure, to name a few. PITCH has been instrumental in developing and refining the General Plan content.

### **Climate Action Plan Update**

The Climate Action Plan is being updated in conjunction with the General Plan. While this process is pending, staff have been tracking climate progress toward interim climate action work plans for 2021-2022 and 2023-2024. The updated CAP will identify policies and actions in several areas:

- Clean and Efficient Built Environment: Homes, workplaces, and businesses in Contra Costa County run on clean energy.
- No Waste Contra Costa: Contra Costa County generates no more solid waste than 2.2 pounds per person per day (PPD).
- Reduce Water Use and Increase Drought Resilience: Contra Costa County uses less water and communities are prepared for drought.
- Clean Transportation Network: Contra Costa County's transportation network provides safe and accessible options for walking, biking, and transit. If residents and workers are driving, they are in electric vehicles.
- Resilient Communities and Natural Infrastructure: Contra Costa County will increase resilience to climate hazards and foster community health.
- Climate Equity: The CAP will mitigate environmental factors leading to health disparities, promote safe and livable communities, and promote investments that improve neighborhood accessibility.
- Leadership: Contra Costa County is a model for how local government can take action on climate issues.

### **Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update**

On July 18, 2018, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board, whose members includes County Supervisors, adopted the latest version of the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (CBPP). The 2018 CBPP was developed by the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, whose members includes County staff, and with input from County staff. The 2018 CBPP identifies "Pedestrian Priority Areas," which are areas where more people are expected to be walking and where pedestrian safety issues are potentially more prevalent. The CBPP identifies a "countywide low-stress bikeway network," a system of bicycle facilities that are designed to serve bicycle riders of all ages and abilities. The CBPP includes an implementation section that discusses opportunities and challenges for encouraging walking and bicycling in the county, including bikeshare, vision zero, and pedestrian needs. The CBPP includes an updated list of best practices for developing pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

### **Response to Senate Bill (SB) 743: Vehicle Miles Traveled**

On June 23, 2020, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Contra Costa County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, which includes methodologies for County staff to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact, consistent with SB 743. The goal of SB 743 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and VMT, primarily through the encouragement of high-density infill development that is supported by multimodal infrastructure.

### **Active Transportation Plan**

On April 26, 2022, the Board of Supervisors accepted the Contra Costa County Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The ATP provides a vision for active transportation infrastructure along the County's arterial and collector roadway network to assist County departments in planning private developments, capital projects, and maintenance efforts. The ATP prioritizes active transportation investments, taking into account collision history, location in a disadvantaged community, accessibility to key destinations, and funding opportunities. The ultimate goal of the ATP is to induce mode shift and shift trips made by County residents and visitors from motor vehicles to active modes such as walking, biking and rolling (e.g. scooter), which will result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and more sustainable communities.

### **Vision Zero**

On March 1, 2022, the Board of Supervisors accepted the Contra Costa County Vision Zero Final Report, which demonstrates the County's commitment to Vision Zero: the elimination of severe injuries and fatalities resulting from traffic collisions on County roadways. This will be achieved with a multidisciplinary and holistic approach, including implementation of new projects, including new technologies, increased education and engagement, improved emergency response and post-crash care, and data collection and management. The report identified a High Injury Network for the County, roadways where a high number of traffic collisions resulting in severe injury and fatalities have occurred. The report identified ten priority projects to reduce collisions on roadways on the High Injury Network.

### **I-680/Treat Boulevard Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

On May 1, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved the I-680/Treat Boulevard Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The plan addresses barriers to walking and biking along Treat Boulevard in the vicinity of the Contra Costa Centre BART Station by developing design concepts that emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety on Treat Boulevard, ultimately selecting a design concept that emphasizes multimodal accessibility while maintaining optimal performance, redesigns key intersections to enhance pedestrian and bicycle crossings, and responds to agency, stakeholder, and public input on the plan.

### **Iron Horse Corridor Active Transportation Study**

On July 14, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved the Iron Horse Corridor Active Transportation Study, which analyzed potential multimodal enhancements along the Iron Horse Corridor within Contra Costa County, including intersection and access point improvements, connections to other existing and future trails, and accommodations for emerging technologies, such as e-bikes, e-scooters, and shared autonomous vehicles.

### **Future Activities**

PITCH proposes to continue to inform and advise the Board on health-related activities, such as:

- Sea Level Rise
- Green Infrastructure Planning
- General Plan Update
- Climate Action
- Continue to participate in the BART Access Study
- Monitor state policy efforts regarding School Siting

### **PITCH Moving Forward**

Sixteen Years of PITCH

- Evolving policy has now integrated PITCH concepts into normal practices.
- The ongoing challenges posed by climate change, including extreme weather events, rising waters, and related, require interdisciplinary solutions on which PITCH is well situated to work.