

I Introduction

With a compact planning area of approximately three square miles and excellent access to the regional transportation network, San Pablo is a thriving community with a diverse population and relatively affordable housing costs compared to the wider Bay Area. However, as a largely built-out city with established small-lot, single-family neighborhoods and busy arterials lined with commercial uses, San Pablo has limited opportunities for multifamily infill development, and the city has been challenged in facilitating construction of above-moderate-income housing in recent years. In this context, the City has received grant funding from the State to undertake an update to its general plan and housing element to promote land use patterns and policies that will help to accelerate housing production. Specifically, the City is interested in developing and implementing strategies that promote higher density infill development, "missing middle" housing options, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in single-family areas. At the same time, while overall the general plan is serving the community well, a targeted update is needed to reflect changing conditions in the community and respond to emerging trends and new State law. As part of the project, a new environmental justice element of the general plan will be prepared, building on the award-winning Health Element from the 2030 General Plan.

This report documents current conditions and trends that will frame the choices for long-term physical development of the city. It includes maps and information on land uses, natural resources, civic and transportation infrastructure, socioeconomic characteristics, pollution burdens, and more based on existing conditions in San Pablo. The data and findings of this report inform planning decisions for the general plan and housing element update and are used to document existing conditions for environmental review.

Planning Area

REGIONAL SETTING

The City of San Pablo is situated within the western portion of Contra Costa County, inland from the eastern shore of San Pablo Bay, depicted in Figure 1-1. It is an enclave, largely surrounded by the City of Richmond and bordered by the unincorporated communities of North Richmond to the west, Rollingwood to the north, and El Sobrante to the east. Interstate 80 passes through the eastern portion of San Pablo in a north-south direction, and the city is conveniently located just minutes driving distance away from the Bay Area cultural centers of Berkeley, Oakland and San Francisco. Prominent geographic features in the area include the ridges of the Wildcat Canyon Park, which forms a backdrop to the city to the east, and the waters of San Pablo Bay to the northwest.

Regional Location

Figure I-1: Regional Location



-  City Limit
-  Interstate Highway
-  BART Rail
-  Urban Limit Line
-  San Pablo Avenue
-  Railroad
-  Urbanized Land
-  Major Road
-  Open Space




Map Date:
11/15/2023

SOURCE: City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2021

PLANNING BOUNDARIES

The planning area encompasses all incorporated and unincorporated territory that bears a relationship to the long-term planning of the jurisdiction, consistent with the requirements for the general plan pursuant to State law. This includes all incorporated land within the City limit and all land within the City's Sphere of Influence, as shown in Figure 1-2.

In total, the planning area consists of 1,894.9 acres (3.0 square miles) of both incorporated and unincorporated land. More specifically, the planning area extends north to the northern edge of the Bayview neighborhood touching Richmond Parkway, northeast into the Rollingwood residential area, east to the Hasford Heights neighborhood near San Pablo Dam Road, west towards Giant Road, and south to Costa Avenue and Glenn Avenue. The planning area has been defined with the intention of focusing future growth on land contiguous to the City and encouraging urban infill. Inclusion of unincorporated land within the planning area does not necessarily mean that the City is considering annexation.

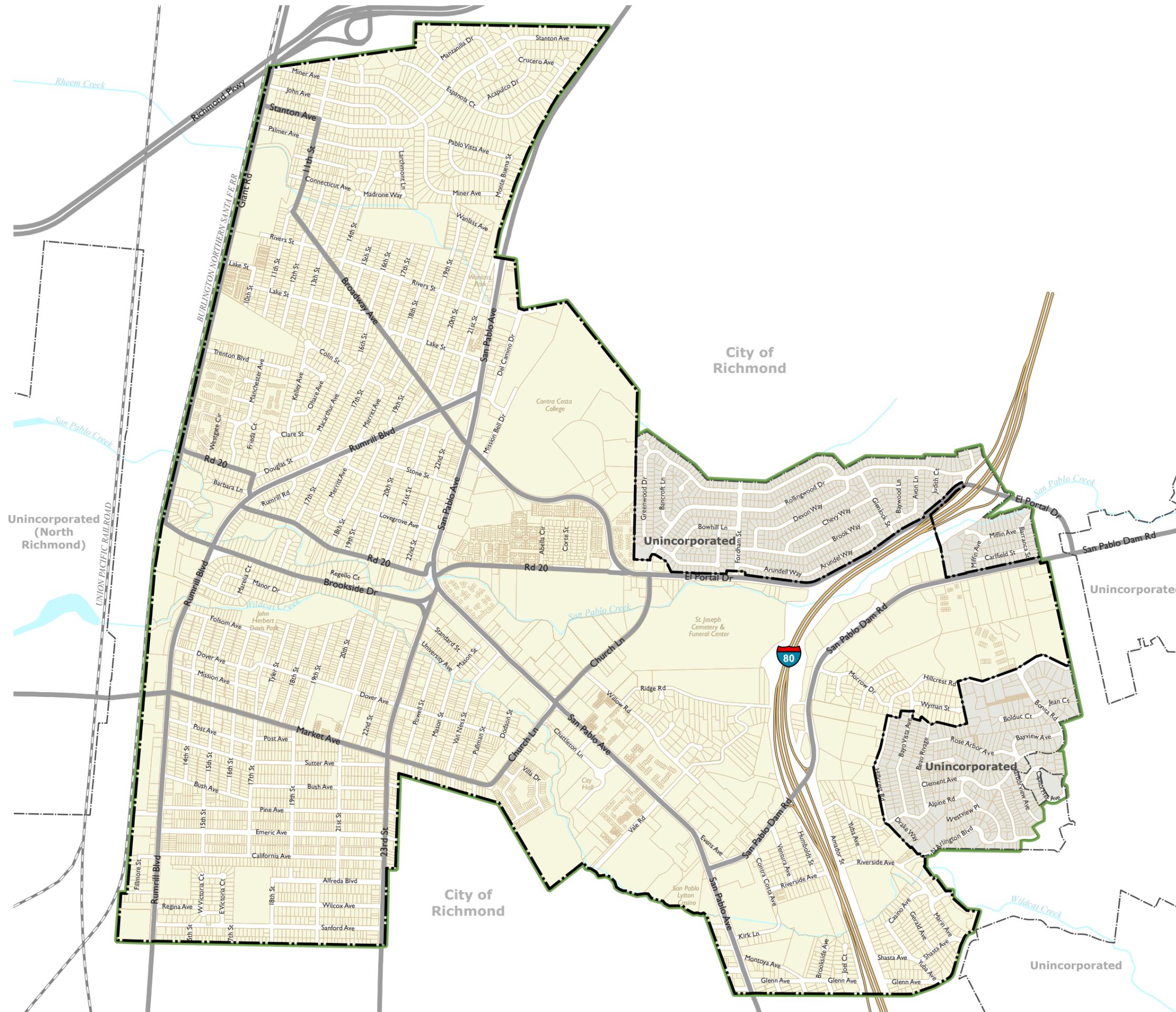
City Limits

The City of San Pablo exhibits the characteristics common in many of the central Bay Area cities: It is nearly fully developed with little or no land separating City limits from adjacent urban development. Within the City limit there are 1,667.3 acres (2.6 square miles) of land, including residential, commercial, and industrial developments, as well as public facilities, including parks and schools. The incorporated City limits represent about 88 percent of the land within the planning area.

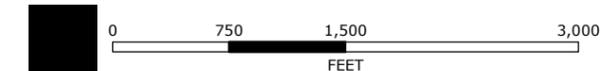
Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) is defined as the ultimate physical boundary and service area of the city, beyond which urban development will not be allowed except for public parks and recreational services. Outside of the City limits, San Pablo's SOI includes a total of 227.6 acres (0.4 square miles), or 12 percent of the total land located in the planning area. Land within the SOI is largely developed with urban and suburban uses today, with much of the unincorporated development situated in the hilly terrain to the east.

Figure I-2: Planning Area



- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- Unincorporated
- Major Highway
- Major Roads
- Railroads



SOURCE: City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2021

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Report Organization

This Existing Conditions Report Map Atlas is divided into eight chapters, organized by topical areas that mirror the elements of the General Plan. Analysis on each topic is communicated through text, tables, and maps. Key findings and planning implications are summarized at the end of each chapter. Chapters are as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** explains the General Plan’s purpose and process, describes the planning area and regional setting, and provides an overview of the atlas’ organization.
- **Chapter 2: Economic Development** provides information on demographics and jobs, noting impacts of key community changes and regional trends. This section also reviews the long-range plans for Contra Costa College.
- **Chapter 3: Land Use, Physical Design, and Growth Management** discusses existing land uses in the planning area, describes the existing General Plan and other planning efforts, examines urban form, and gives an overview of major development projects and potential opportunity areas.
- **Chapter 4: Circulation** discusses the planning area’s transportation infrastructure, including roadways, transit, railways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and planned transportation improvements. Includes discussion of vehicle miles travelled and new trends in mobility.
- **Chapter 5: Parks, Schools, and Public Facilities** describes key public services, including parks, recreational facilities, trails, emergency services, libraries, and schools.
- **Chapter 6: Open Space and Conservation** discusses historic, cultural, and open space resources in the planning area, including the Bay Area Ridge Trail and other regional trail system segments within San Pablo and its SOI.
- **Chapter 7: Environmental Justice and Public Health** discusses new requirements for environmental justice in the General Plan and reviews factors that contribute to environmental justice and public health outcomes, including physical and environmental determinants of health, such as pollution, walkability, internet access, and access to healthy food and healthcare services, as well as social determinants of health, such as poverty, housing, and educational attainment.
- **Chapter 8: Safety and Noise** provides information on natural and humanmade hazards in the planning area, as well as noise hazards.