

# 8 COMMUNITY HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The natural, physical, and social environment in which we live profoundly influences community health and quality of life. San Pablo has long recognized the link between planning and public health. The City was one of the first in the State to develop a Health Element for its General Plan, embracing the opportunity to bring health-related perspective to long-range planning with a broader definition of community wellbeing. This Community Health and Environmental Justice Element builds on the framework of the Health Element with a focus on actions the City can take to promote public health, provide protection from environmental hazards, and enrich the quality of life for all residents of San Pablo.

The Element sets forth guiding and implementing policies to improve the environmental and social conditions for health, particularly pertaining to transportation and physical activity; food access and equity; access to services and planning for people first; investments in health neighborhoods; crime reduction and perceived safety; and civic engagement and community participation.

## **8.1 Planning and Public Health**

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Modern city planning and public health practices emerged to protect communities from epidemic disease in rapidly growing and industrializing cities. But as the major epidemics subsided, the disciplines took separate paths: planning practice looked to improve quality of life through provision of housing, jobs, and tighter regulation of the built environment (such as separating

“incompatible uses”), while public health practice focused on disease treatment, education, and individual behavior as critical determinants of health outcomes. However, as an increasing number of Americans suffer and die from chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and asthma, the interrelationship between the built environment and health has appeared at the top of community and research agendas. Today, research correlates community design and environmental characteristics with physical activity levels, diet, pollution-related illnesses, unintentional injury rates, violent crime, and other health conditions. Increasingly, the effects of climate change on community health is also a focus of public policy, particularly as low income residents and communities of color are disproportionately affected.

This renewed focus on city planning and public health is fundamentally concerned with addressing the full range of factors affecting health — not only those which are related to the actions of individuals, such as health behaviors and lifestyle choices, but also factors such as income, education, employment and working conditions, access to health services, nutrition, and the quality of physical environments. The overarching idea for this General Plan is to put people, and their health, first and foremost so that all community members are empowered to reach their potential.



## 8.2 Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities

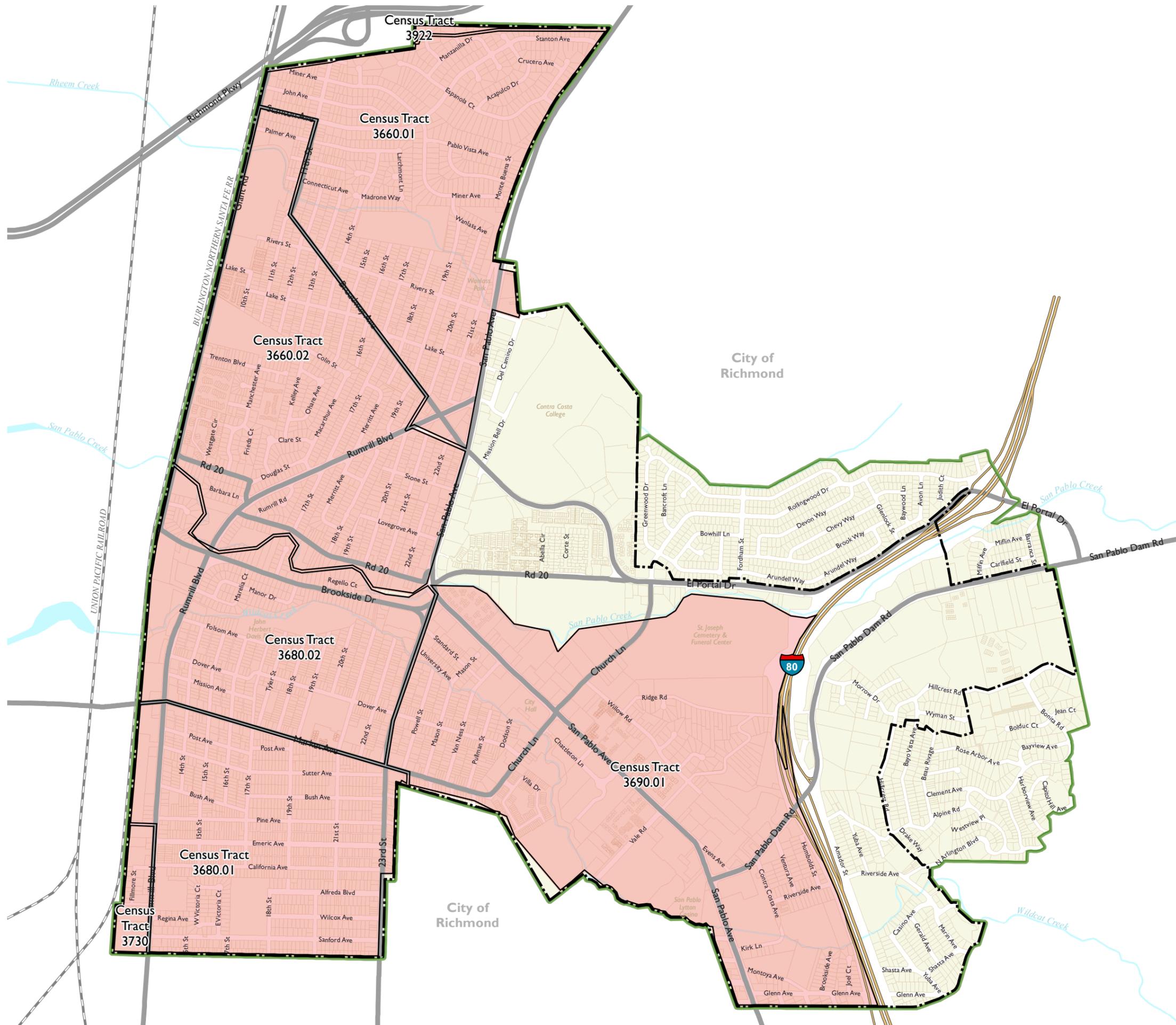
Throughout California and beyond, low-income communities and communities of color have historically experienced discrimination, negligence, and political and economic disempowerment. As a result, these groups struggle today with a disproportionate burden of pollution and health impacts, as well as disproportionate social and economic disadvantages such as poverty or housing instability. This situation is considered environmental injustice, and it contributes to health disparities (e.g., disproportionate rates of asthma, lead poisoning, and obesity) among populations of different races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic status. Environmental justice aims to deter, reduce, and eliminate the pollution burdens for populations and communities experiencing the adverse effects of that pollution, so that the unique or compounded health risks of the pollution are not disproportionately borne by disadvantaged communities.

### What Is Environmental Justice?

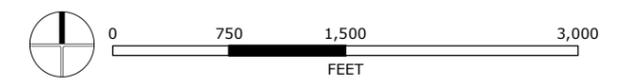
At its core, environmental justice is an affirmation that all people are entitled to live, work, and play in a clean and healthy environment regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, nationality, culture, or income

Under California law (SB 1000, The Planning for Healthy Communities Act), the General Plan must address environmental justice with policies for issues that affect disadvantaged communities (DACs) – areas within the city that experience disproportionate levels of pollution, socioeconomic stress, historic disinvestment, and adverse health outcomes. The responsibility for identifying DACs lies with the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). CalEPA has developed CalEnviroScreen, a methodology that helps identify areas that are most affected by many sources of pollution and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution’s effects. CalEnviroScreen uses data on 21 indicators of pollution, environmental quality, and socioeconomic and public health conditions, which are categorized into two main groups of indicators: pollution burden and population characteristics. An overall CalEnviroScreen score is calculated for each of the state’s 8,000 census tracts based on their pollution burden and population characteristics scores. Census tracts are then scored and ranked based on publicly available data from a variety of federal, State, regional, and local sources. The scores are mapped so that different communities can be compared; an area with a high score is one that experiences a much higher burden than areas with low scores. Under SB 535, a DAC is defined as an area scoring in the top 25 percent (75th – 100th percentile) of all California census tracts for pollution burden and socioeconomic factors as measured in CalEnviroScreen. As shown on Figure 8-1, seven of the 10 Census tracts wholly or partially within San Pablo are designated as DACs. These tracts experience an elevated level of pollution exposure relative to the statewide average median, and their socio-demographic profile means the residents are more susceptible to adverse health outcomes. The DAC designation means the City is eligible for State funding to support projects that can improve community conditions and quality of life for the residents. Overall, socio-demographic factors contribute more toward the DAC designation than pollution exposure in San Pablo. Among planning area Census tracts, the median CalEnviroScreen percentile rank for pollution burden is 60.6, while the median percentile rank for population characteristics sensitivity is 84.9, indicating that, while certain pollution exposure factors are at play in some neighborhoods, public health measures that target factors that specifically benefit sensitive populations may be the most impactful in contributing to positive environmental justice outcomes.

Figure 8-1: DACs in San Pablo



- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Highway
- Major Roads
- Railroads
- Disadvantaged Community



SOURCE: CalEPA, 2022; City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2022  
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In particular, factors at play in San Pablo include the prevalence of diseases such as asthma and cardiovascular disease, linguistic isolation, and socioeconomic characteristics such as poverty and low educational attainment. While DACs experience the highest combined cumulative burden from pollution and population sensitivity characteristics, other Census tracts in the planning area also experience relatively high levels of pollution exposure in comparison to the statewide average median or have higher concentrations of vulnerable residents, even though they may not be classified as DACs. Additionally, some issues, such as cleanup sites and hazardous waste facilities are more localized and should be addressed with targeted measures as needed, whether located in DACs or not.

### **8.3 Community Health Profile**

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In Contra Costa County and the state, the most common causes of death are Chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, and Alzheimer’s disease, as shown on Table 8.1, which summarizes causes of death as reported by the California Department of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics in comparison those to California, the United States, and the Healthy People 2030 national objectives. Rows highlighted in orange in the table indicate areas where Contra Costa underperforms relative to national objectives, including: cancers, diabetes, drug-induced deaths, suicide, chronic liver disease, homicide, and female breast cancer. Rows highlighted in yellow indicate areas where Contra Costa County is close to the national objective including drug-induced deaths and motor vehicle traffic deaths. Contra Costa County surpasses the national objective for lung cancer, firearm-related deaths, and suicide, as shown in rows highlighted in green.

**Table 8.1: Contra Costa County Mortality Statistics 2020**

<i>Health Status Indicator</i>	<i>Contra Costa Deaths Number</i>	<i>Contra Costa Death Rate</i>	<i>Statewide Death Rate</i>	<i>National Death Rate</i>	<i>2030 National Objective</i>
All Causes	8801	757.9	814.9	1,027	a
All Cancers	1854	159.7	130.3	182.8	122.7
Coronary Heart Disease	1540	132.6	144.0	211.5	71.1
Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke)	642	55.3	45.6	48.6	33.4
Lung Cancer*	347	24.8	22.4	41.3	25.1
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	343	29.5	32.9	36.4	a
Alzheimer's Disease	643	55.4	47.8	40.7	a
Accidents (Unintentional Injuries)	491	42.3	46.8	61	a
Diabetes	299	25.7	29.7	31	13.7
Colorectal (Colon) Cancer*	84	13.6	11.8	16.1	8.9
Influenza/Pneumonia	115	9.9	15.5	13	a
Female Breast Cancer*	141	18.5	18.4	25.3	15.3
Firearm-related Deaths	98	8.5	8.5	14.3	10.7
Drug-induced Deaths	251	21.8	21.8	29.4	20.7
Suicide	108	9.3	10.6	14	12.8
Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	133	11.5	15.7	15.7	10.9
Homicide	73	6.3	6.0	7.5	5.5
Prostate Cancer*	116	20.0	19.7	9.9	16.9
Motor Vehicle Traffic Deaths	120	10.4	9.5	12.4	10.1

**Kaiser Health Needs Assessment Key Findings**

Making use of local data and input from the community, Kaiser Permanente regularly conducts Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) that provide insights into how social drivers of health — including financial opportunity, income and employment, housing, food, and transportation — affect communities. Key findings from the 2022 CHNA for the Kaiser Foundation Hospital Richmond Service area, which includes Crockett, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Hercules, Pinole, Richmond, Rodeo, and San Pablo, are summarized in Table 8-2.

**Table 8-2: Kaiser Permanente Community Health Needs Assessment for Richmond Service Area - Key Findings**

<i>Healthy Transportation and Physical Activity</i>	The rate of adult obesity in the service area is 24 percent, lower than the statewide average of 27 percent. However, there are notable ethnic disparities, with Black (36 percent) and Hispanic (30 percent) residents more experiencing higher rates than Asian (10 percent) and White 21 percent) residents. Notably, youth obesity is higher in the service area (23 percent) compared to the state average (20 percent) and a significantly smaller proportion of service area children/youth walk or bike to school (19 percent), compared to the state average (14 percent). Several contributing factors were identified, including a lack of safe public spaces and community centers where residents can recreate and exercise; lack of time to exercise as well as the expense of gym memberships and sports or exercise programs; concerns about air quality leading some residents to voluntarily limit physical activity; and long commutes and off-peak working hours requiring the use of a car.
<i>Healthy Food Access and Equity</i>	Access to healthy food is a major barrier to healthy eating, and 16 percent of the service area population does not live near a large grocery store or supermarket, in contrast to 13 percent in the rest of California. The cost of healthy food in comparison to processed foods and "fast food" is also a contributing factor, particularly for low income residents, as is convenience. Youth interviewed also expressed concern for the potential contamination of the water supply near oil refineries, citing a preference for sugar-sweetened beverages instead of water, which can contribute to obesity and tooth decay.
<i>Access to Services and Care</i>	Health care access and delivery are high priorities in the service areas, with availability, high cost, lack of insurance coverage, and lack of cultural competence on the part of providers cited as key barriers to receiving quality care. Many conditions that could otherwise be controlled through preventive care and proper management are left untreated. Data indicates that the rate of Federally Qualified Health Centers is 16 percent lower than the state average, and that significantly higher shares of Hispanic (20 percent) and Pacific Islander (24 percent) residents are uninsured than White residents (7 percent) in the service area. Immigrants may also be ineligible for Medi-Cal due to their immigration status, or fearful of being deported if they should access services for which they are eligible.
<i>Crime Reduction and Perceptions of Safety</i>	Crime in a neighborhood causes fear, stress, and mental health issues. Victims of violence also have a higher risk of depression, substance use, anxiety, reproductive health problems, and suicidal behavior, and those exposed to violence show a greater propensity to violent behavior themselves. In the service area, the rate of violent crime is 720.3 cases reported per 100,000 residents, compared to the state average of 402.7 per 100,000 residents. Domestic violence against women and youth bullying, particularly for Black, Native American, and Hispanic youth, are also issues of concern in the community. Data indicates that the rate of unintended injuries and deaths is better than the state average in the service area, but Black residents die in motor vehicle crashes at a disproportionately higher rate.

Source: <https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/content/dam/internet/kp/comms/import/uploads/2019/09/Richmond-CHNA-2019.pdf>

### Poverty, Educational Attainment, and Health

Even as California enjoys among the longest life expectancy in the nation, economic disparities are evident. Residents of the highest-income census tracts in the state live more than 10 years longer than the lowest-income census tracts, and the gap grew significant during the Covid-19 pandemic. Differences in other health outcomes, including rate of injury and illness are also found between different groups of people. Causes of health disparities are numerous and complex, and social inequalities, such as poverty and discrimination, contributes in that they lead to greater stress levels, exposure to unhealthy physical and social environments, and less access to high-quality goods and services. San Pablo residents living in poverty are less able to afford basic food, shelter, and health care. These residents are more likely to be under additional stresses associated with paying bills, arranging for childcare, working multiple jobs, working in dangerous jobs, and experiencing fear of losing one’s job. These San Pablo families are also less likely to own cars, own homes, or to have access to educational and recreational opportunities and access to health care. Each of these environmental factors is related to higher rates of injury, illness, and/or death.

In 2021, San Pablo had the second largest proportion of residents living in poverty of all cities in Contra Costa County, at 12.4 percent. Richmond was the highest, with over 13 percent of residents living in poverty, while county-wide the average was 8.2 percent. Table 8-3 provides more detail.

**Table 8-3: Residents Living in Poverty, 2021**

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Percent in Poverty</i>	<i>Number in Poverty</i>
San Pablo	12.4%	3,918
Richmond	13.4%	15,408
Pittsburg	10.3%	7,716
Concord	9.1%	11,380
Antioch	10.3%	11,722
Martinez	6.1%	2,224
Walnut Creek	5.4%	3,755
<i>Contra Costa County</i>	8.2%	94,523

Note: The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family’s total income is less than the family’s threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps) For example, in 2021 this poverty threshold ranged from \$14,097 for a single individual under 65 to \$27,479 for a family of four and \$44,585 for a family of eight.

Census data show that throughout the country, the lowest income communities are also those with the highest proportions of people without a high school diploma. This could mean a number of things: low-income communities may have poorer quality educational systems and lack access to basic resources that would improve student performance; poverty may place greater pressure on students to leave school early in order to earn money; and low quality and incomplete education may make it harder to find well-paying employment, increasing the likelihood that these students grow up and continue to live in poverty. A high poverty rate may also relate to the fact that many residents are foreign-born and may have limited English-language skills, limiting their access to higher paying jobs. A correlation between poverty and educational attainment likely exists for San Pablo where, in 2021, 27.6 percent of the population 25 years of age or older lacked a high school diploma. This was a higher proportion than any other city in Contra Costa County, the County overall, and California overall. (See Table 8-4).

**Table 8-4: Educational Attainment for Selected Jurisdictions, 2021**

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Population 25 Years +</i>	<i>No High School Diploma</i>	<i>High School Diploma</i>	<i>Some College</i>	<i>College Graduate</i>	<i>Graduate School +</i>
San Pablo	19,918	27.6%	28.3%	20.8%	20.2%	3.0%
Richmond	79,667	20.6%	20.6%	19.3%	27.5%	12.0%
Pittsburg	50,599	20.7%	26.2%	23.2%	24.8%	5.1%
Concord	89,902	11.2%	19.7%	23.5%	34.1%	11.6%
Antioch	76,450	13.6%	27.4%	26.3%	26.7%	6.0%
Martinez	26,976	3.9%	16.6%	24.1%	40.4%	15.0%
Walnut Creek	55,029	2.6%	7.9%	13.5%	44.9%	31.1%
Contra Costa County	805,020	10.3%	17.5%	19.9%	35.4%	16.9%
California	26,797,070	15.8%	20.4%	20.5%	29.9%	13.4%

Note: "College Graduate" includes Associate's and Bachelor's degrees.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501

**Table 8-5 Health Indicators**

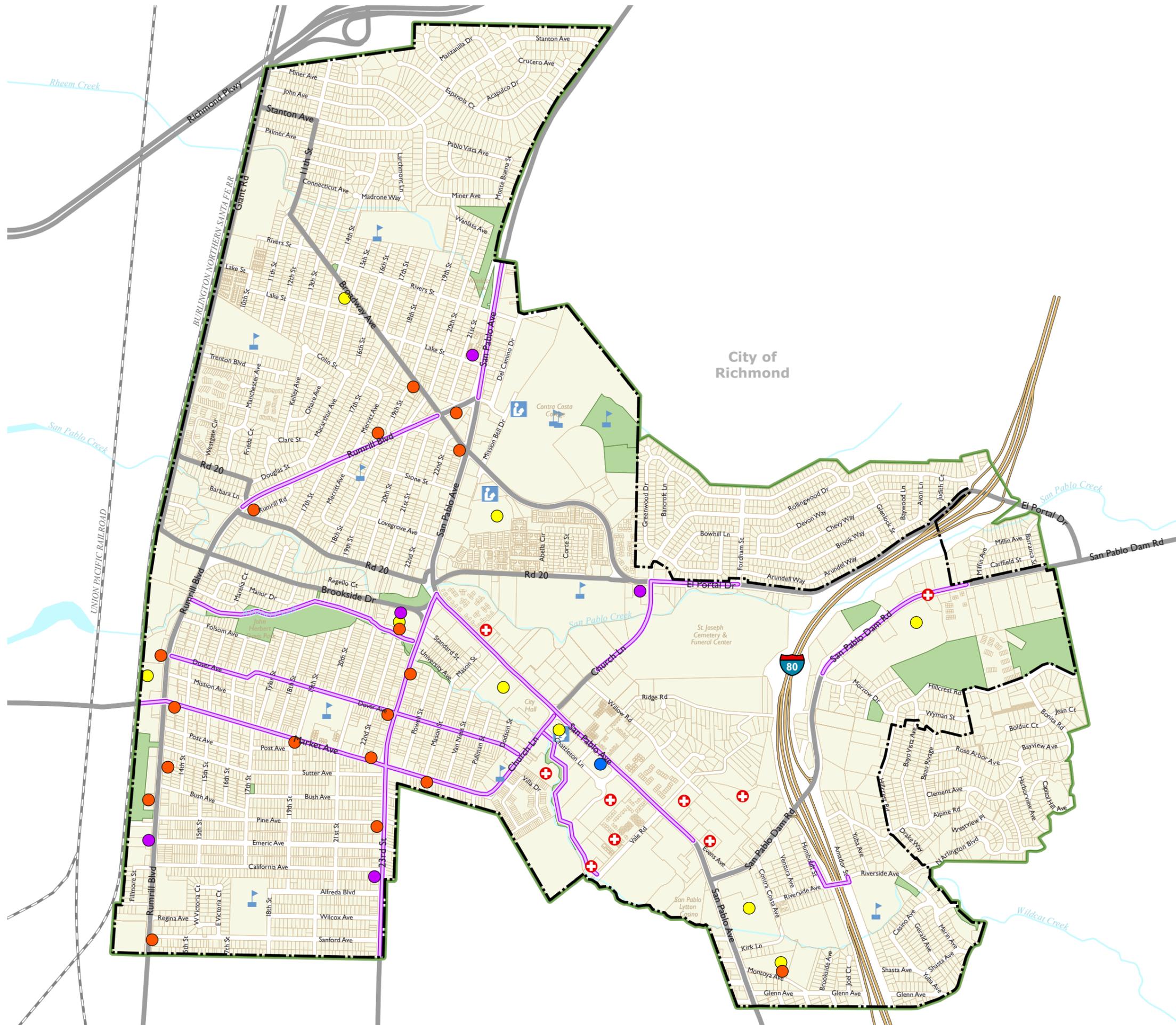
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Desired Outcome</i>
<i>General</i>	
Proportion of population in poverty	Reduce
Proportion of population with a high school diploma	Increase
Rates of obesity and overweight among adults and children	Reduce
<i>Healthy Transportation and Physical Activity</i>	
Population within 1/4 mile of parks, schools, transit	Increase
Traffic accident rates, pedestrian and bicycle victims	Increase
<i>Healthy Food Access</i>	
Population within 1/4 mile of supermarket or grocery store	Increase
Population within 1/4 mile of fast food only	Reduce
<i>Resilience to Urban Heat</i>	
Citywide tree canopy coverage	Increase
Awareness of and access to community cooling centers	Increase
<i>Crime Reduction and Perceptions of Safety</i>	
Violent crime rates	Reduce
Streets, parks, and public places with adequate lighting	Increase

**HEALTH INDICATORS**

Health indicators will help the City measure future progress toward health goals against baseline conditions in San Pablo today. These indicators do not encompass all possible health conditions that may be monitored in San Pablo, but rather focus on a smaller set with more direct relevance to the General Plan. These indicators are “mappable” or already measured by the County and reflected in the health data reported in preceding tables. Figure 8-2 illustrates some of the health planning factors for which mapped data exist.

The following sections focus on the key priorities for community health and environmental justice in San Pablo. Each section begins with a brief description of the connection between the health element key theme and desired community health outcomes, followed by guiding and implementing policies designed to achieve the key theme. When applicable, each section closes with a cross-reference table indicating which policies in other elements also support the key theme and desired health outcomes.

Figure 8-2: Health Factors



-  City Limits
-  Sphere of Influence
-  Major Highway
-  Major Roads
-  Railroads
-  Grocery Store
-  Market
-  Corner Store
-  Drug Store
-  School
-  Library
-  Healthcare Facility
-  Existing Bike Route
-  Park



SOURCE: USDHHS, 2021; ESRI, 2019; Supermarket/Internet search, 2021; City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2021

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## 8.4 Healthy Transportation and Physical Activity

Getting regular exercise can help reduce the risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes, as well as cardiovascular disease, some cancers, and other physical issues. The General Plan strives to bring healthy physical activity into daily routines by making recreation facilities more accessible—dispersing them throughout the community and making programs affordable to low-income residents. It also focuses on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements that decrease the need for car travel, particularly for day-to-day activities. Transportation and physical activity are related to health in a number of ways, for example:

- High-speed, unobstructed, and wide multi-lane roads are dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists. Crash rates increase exponentially with street width, especially since drivers move faster on wider roads. Slowing traffic from 40 to 20 miles per hour can reduce a pedestrian’s chance of being killed, if hit, from 85 percent to just 5 percent.
- When community design accommodates and integrates pedestrians and bicyclists, there are higher rates of walking and biking. And for each half mile walked per day, people are about 5 percent less likely to be obese (controlling for age, education, gender, and ethnicity).
- Almost one-third of Americans who commute to work via public transit meet their daily requirements for physical activity (30 or more minutes a day) by walking



### GUIDING POLICY

*CHEJ-G-1 Ensure that all San Pablo residents have access to a variety of transportation and physical activity options that enhance health and that work for diverse lifestyles, incomes, and abilities.*

*CHEJ-G-2 Achieve more walkable, livable, neighborhoods by expanding the multimodal transportation system and creating a safe, pedestrian-oriented environment.*

*CHEJ-G-3 Work to achieve additional opportunities for access to parks and open space as well as recreational amenities that can enhance the health of all San Pablo residents.*



*CHEJ-G-4 Pursue policies to promote additional street tree planting along San Pablo roads and other greening opportunities that can improve health and create a healthier, cleaner environment.*

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**CHEJ-I-1** Implement street design features that facilitate walking and biking in both new and established areas. Require a minimum standard of these features for all new developments.

**CHEJ-I-2** Improve signage directing residents and visitors to public parks and recreational facilities from all parts of the community. Integrate parks signage with bikeway and pedestrian-oriented signage system throughout San Pablo.

**CHEJ-I-3** Improve the conditions for youth walking and bicycling in the areas surrounding schools by working with the Contra Costa Health Services and the school district to implement the Safe Routes to School program and the projects identified in the 2022 Master Plan and future updates. Participate in the necessary assessments and prioritize identified Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements in annual transportation improvements budgets.

**CHEJ-I-4** The City should act as a model to other large employers by selecting and implementing a suite of transportation demand management (TDM) programs designed to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and overall vehicle emissions generated by trips that start or end in San Pablo. Programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Installation of showers, lockers, and secure bicycle parking facilities in City-owned buildings;
- Designation of preferred parking spaces for carpools, carshare programs, and clean fuel vehicles;
- Provision of additional Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations; and
- Provision of transit benefits that reduce direct employee public transportation costs.

- CHEJ-I-5 Link park facility improvement priorities to a ranking system keyed to public health and recreational goals, and establish an incentive system to encourage additional land dedication and park development beyond the minimum City requirements. Incentives should target priority areas for parks development and may include density bonuses or increased building height at appropriate locations.

*Unlike traditional capital improvements programs, a*



Parks meet not only the physical, but also the social needs of the community.

*performance-based priority system establishes a ranking scale that measures each component (e.g. pool, court, bench, or trail) of its system against the scale related to public health. For example, it might be a one-to-three scale in which one is below expectations, two indicates that the component can meet its intended function for a given period of time, and three means that it exceeds expectations. An existing ranking tool that can be consulted is the Trust for Public Land's ParkScore. Work with interested community members and organizations to plan and develop an exercise circuit that takes advantage of existing parks, creeks, and other pedestrian infrastructure. The course should be clearly marked, and contain simple stations and diagrams for self-guided training.*

- CHEJ-I-6 Collaborate with the school district to update joint use agreements to enhance communitywide access to pools and sports/recreational facilities. (See also joint-use policy PSCU-I-8 in Parks, Schools, Community Facilities & Utilities Element.)

CHEJ-I-7 Encourage and support efforts by schools to develop new and improved curricula about the importance of exercise and good nutrition. Ongoing efforts include the City's Childhood Obesity Prevention program which offers annual grants for efforts to reduce childhood obesity, including education. These are reviewed and awarded by the Childhood Obesity Prevention Grant Program and Advisory Group (COPAG).

CHEJ-I-8 Coordinate with local businesses, organizations, Contra Costa College, and the school district to support a year-round calendar of community events that promote healthy lifestyles, food choices, and healthy work environments. Events may include health and fitness challenges, bike-to-work days, and sponsored after school events. Events should be geared toward families and youth, and contain components of physical activity, healthy food, arts, and music. *(See also ED-I-18 which suggests using community events as business marketing opportunities.)*

CHEJ-I-9 Explore opportunities to bring businesses to San Pablo which encourage fitness, such as gyms, yoga and dance studios, martial arts studios, and rock-climbing facilities. Encourage businesses or non-profit organizations to offer indoor recreational facilities and programs compatible with existing commercial structures.

*These facilities and programs will help expand physical activity opportunities which are integrated into the existing city fabric. (See also PSCU-I-11 on possible funding for a sports complex, including indoor facilities.)*



**Other Policies that Address Healthy Transportation and Physical Activity**

<i>Element</i>	<i>Health-Relevant Implementing Policies</i>
Land Use & Physical Design	LU-I-19 (pedestrian oriented design)
Growth Management	GME-I-8 (balanced regional transportation to reduce impacts)
Circulation	C-I-1 (complete streets) C-I-3 (public ROW safety improvements) C-I-5 (implement traffic calming) C-I-14 (comprehensive bicycle system) C-I-16 (employer-provided bicycle facilities) C-I-18 (funding for bicycle master plan) C-I-19 (bicycle route striping) C-I-20 (link to Bay Trail) C-I-21 (connected pedestrian system) C-I-23 (ADA compliance) C-I-25 (maintain safe and efficient transit service) C-I-26 (improved bus stops and shelters)
Parks, Schools, Community Facilities & Utilities	PSCU-I-1 (parks standard) PSCU-I-3 (develop and upgrade facilities) PSCU-I-4 (fair share contributions) PSCU-I-6 (mini parks) PSCU-I-7 (park security lighting) PSCU-I-8 (joint-use policy) PSCU-I-9 (citizen participation in parks maintenance) PSCU-I-11 (sports complex)
Open Space & Conservation	OSC-I-1 (dedicate land for recreational OS) OSC-I-10 (creek improvements incl. active use)

**8.5 Healthy Food Access and Equity**

Lacking access to healthy food can lead to higher risks of obesity and diabetes, make it difficult to focus at school or work, and create additional economic stresses on at-risk households. Being able to access food that is affordable and nutritious within a reasonable distance of home contributes to community health and quality of life. The food environment is also correlated to health outcomes, given that:

- Residents in communities with a more “imbalanced food environment” (where fast food and corner stores are more convenient and prevalent than grocery stores) have more health problems and higher mortality than residents of areas with a higher proportion of grocery stores, when other factors are held constant.

- The presence of a supermarket in a neighborhood is linked to higher fruit and vegetable consumption and a reduced prevalence of overweight and obesity. In low-income neighborhoods, each additional supermarket has been found to increase residents' likelihood of meeting nutritional guidelines by one-third.
- In 2021, 10.2 percent of all U.S. households and 12.5 percent of households with children were "food insecure" at least some time during the year, including 3.8 percent of households that had very low food security. This is compared to about 9.3 percent of San Pablo residents aged 18 and older experiencing food insecurity, which is higher than the County rate of 3.9 percent. 12.5 percent of U.S. residents relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2021, while 15.2 percent of San Pablo households received CalFresh (federally known as SNAP) benefits in 2021 according to ACS 5-year estimates.

Figure 8-2 shows the location of grocery stores and food markets in the planning area. As shown, San Pablo is well supplied with groceries and food markets along its corridors, but the fully developed single-family residential areas may be outside of the walking area of these markets. According to the Food Access Research Atlas (2019), neighborhoods in the northwestern part of the city are considered "low-income and low-access" at a half-mile range, meaning a significant share of residents are considered low income and live more than a half-mile from the nearest supermarket. While food deserts indicate a lack of access to healthy food, food security indicates whether people have the economic means to purchase it on a regular basis. According to 2018 California Health Interview Survey data, 9.3 percent of San Pablo residents aged 18 and older are considered to be low-income food insecure, a higher share than in the county or the state as a whole. The City of San Pablo supports community members experiencing hunger, such as through a partnership with the West Contra Costa County Unified School District (WCCCUSD) that offered weekly pickups of five-day supply boxes of breakfast, lunch, snacks and supper at San Pablo

Library throughout 2021 and 2022. This partnership also provides free after-school meals—such as a sandwich or wrap, vegetable, and milk—on weekdays at the San Pablo Public Library for kids and teens ages 18 and under. Inexpensive food staples are also available at Joe's Cafe, a grocery store and coffee shop with outdoor seating that opened in December 2018 at the San Pablo

Public Library. The store aims to serve the community with fresh, affordable produce and coffee, including those participating in federal nutrition programs such as SNAP and WIC.

## GUIDING POLICY

*CHEJ-G-5 Create a healthy, balanced, functional, and equitable food system for the entire San Pablo community, by:*

- Reducing barriers and increasing access to locally-grown fruits and vegetables;
- Increasing communitywide knowledge of healthy food choices and behaviors; and
- Encouraging San Pablo schools to take part in, and benefit from, healthy food initiatives.

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

*CHEJ-I-10 Continue to provide regulatory and process incentives for locating healthy food grocery stores within and easily accessible to neighborhoods and to increase communitywide healthy food access. Approaches may include:*

- Provide expedited processing of development applications and building permits for healthy food grocery store development;
- Leverage City staff time and San Pablo Economic Development Corporation (EDC) assistance to help potential new healthy food grocers consolidate parcels and/or make necessary improvements;
- Encourage larger healthy food grocers to offer shuttle service and home delivery to residents with limited mobility; and

*Healthy food grocers will be encouraged to stock organic foods, and City policy will focus on increasing access to affordable healthy foods for all community members regardless of income, and organic foods may be, but are not always, affordable.*

*CHEJ-I-11 Consider the establishment of a Health Commission to advise the City Council on issues relating to health and wellness, such as the promotion of physical fitness, access to healthy food, and identifying areas in need of*



health services. The Commission will also help assess the effectiveness of City health policies and programs and act as an optional point of contact between the City, residents, and local health care providers.

*The composition, duties, and powers of the Health Commission will be determined by the City Council. This new commission would work with the City Council's Community Services Standing Committee and the Childhood Obesity Prevention Advisory Group to establish policies and implement programs.*

CHEJ-I-12 Work to increase community awareness of and participation in existing federal food assistance programs, such as the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program and the CalFresh Program (California's name for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly food stamps). Approaches can include, but are not limited to:

- Providing information in City newsletters and on the City's website and maintaining handouts at City Hall; and
- Explaining to merchants the incentive to registering to accept WIC and CalFresh payments (immediate expansion of market of potential customers).

CHEJ-I-13 Explore opportunities to expand the reach of food distribution programs for low income residents, such as the Senior Food Bank Program. Strategies may include the following:

- Exploring cost-effective options such as promoting the use of volunteers at food banks;
- Permitting extended hours at distribution points;
- Facilitating the siting of new distribution points;
- Helping to facilitate informal food distribution efforts in the community; and
- Supporting the efforts of public agencies and community organizations



CHEJ-I-14 Develop and implement a healthy food purchasing and vending policy for City facilities and operations that commits to selecting healthy, well-balanced meals and snacks for City-sponsored activities, meetings, and facilities.

CHEJ-I-15 Seek ways to partner with regional Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) as an alternative source of fresh and healthy fruits and vegetables for San Pablo residents, particularly those with limited mobility, limited income, or those furthest from existing grocery stores.

*CSA boxes can be delivered directly to homes or to places of employment, they can be shared by neighbors (larger boxes being a better value for money), and they can be set up to serve low income families in particular by registering with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to accept CalFresh (SNAP) payments.*

CHEJ-I-16 Continue to offer community garden plots, garden boxes, and healthy food educational programming in City parks and seek to expand San Pablo's community garden eco-system through partnerships with West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD), Contra Costa College and Contra Costa County.

CHEJ-I-17 Help schools make the healthy food connection by working cooperatively with the school district and Contra Costa Health Services to:

- Establish higher nutrition standards for school breakfast and lunch menus;

- Work to incorporate culturally-sensitive options (vegetarian, kosher, halal) into available meal plans;
- Remove unhealthy food and drinks from vending machines on school property;
- Establish appropriate sites and programs for school gardens, to be used in curricula, after-school activities, and as a source of fresh produce for school meal plans; and
- Coordinate a “Farm to School” program that connects local farms to San Pablo schools and supplies the balance of fresh produce beyond what is available from the school gardens and the district’s lunch program.

*Farm to School programs connect schools with local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting California’s farmers.*

CHEJ-I-18 Support home gardening efforts by ensuring that zoning does not prevent or restrict the use of front or back residential yards as vegetable gardens and provide residents with technical assistance opportunities in the form of online and library resources and workshops on gardening basics and cooking easy, healthy meals with fresh produce.

CHEJ-I-19 Participate in the countywide edible food recovery program pursuant to SB 1383, intended to reduce organic waste in the community and divert consumable food to those in need by collecting and redistributing unused food from commercial edible food generators such as grocery stores, supermarkets, big box stores, restaurants, corporate kitchens, and food wholesalers and distributors.

## **8.6 Access to Services and Planning for People First**

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Access to childcare and healthcare provides essential support services that enable individuals and families to lead healthier, more economically stable lives. Access to affordable childcare allows parents, especially single parents or those from low-income households, to enter or remain in the workforce, while childcare programs can provide children with a supportive environment for learning and development, setting them up for success in school and beyond. Access to healthcare services such as vaccinations, screenings, and regular check-ups can prevent illnesses or detect health issues early, reducing the likelihood of costly medical emergencies down the line. Particularly as low-income individuals experience higher levels of chronic physical and mental health conditions, access to care ensures they can manage these conditions effectively, improving their quality of life and reducing healthcare costs over time.

The perspective taken here is less about infrastructure and more about programming for the people in San Pablo—looking at community members’ daily activities and needs and proposing policies and actions to meet these needs. While certain communitywide facilities and services are addressed in other elements of the General Plan, this section highlights policies related to the collection and use of health-related data, the provision of medical services and facilities in particular, the coordination and provision of youth programs and resources outside of school.

An important focus for San Pablo is on youth development programs and services. These programs can have a stabilizing effect on the lives of young people, providing a healthy outlet for their creativity and energy and a refuge for at-risk youth. Youth-focused programs are also demonstrated to build discipline, self-esteem, and leadership qualities, and studies have shown that children with serious behavioral disorders might fare better at school and act out less if they get exercise during the day.

## GUIDING POLICY

*CHEJ-G-6 Promote health equity in San Pablo, including equal access to health facilities, goods, services, and economic and educational opportunities, helping to ensure wellbeing for residents of all ages, abilities, and incomes.*

*CHEJ-G-7 Create complete neighborhoods with access to a range of day-to-day goods and services within walking distance, including medical facilities, community services, youth programs, and employment opportunities, and to increase the sense of social cohesion among residents.*

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**CHEJ-I-20** Collaborate with Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) to monitor and maintain data related to San Pablo health outcomes and risk factors, and to use these data to inform new County and City programs to serve the San Pablo community.

*CCHS specializes in health research and program planning and routinely pursues state and federal support for local health initiatives. Close coordination and collaboration with the CCHS on these issues will both improve CCHS local data and knowledge, as well as San Pablo community access to existing and future county programs and resources.*

**CHEJ-I-21** Seek opportunities to partner with public and private entities to provide community services that support families and meet the diverse needs of community members of all ages, backgrounds, and interests.

**CHEJ-I-22** Identify regulatory and process incentives to encourage the development of reasonably priced, high-quality childcare and older adult care facilities and services in a variety of settings, including in residential neighborhoods and near work sites.

**CHEJ-I-23** Whenever feasible, co-locate City facilities with other public facilities (schools, post offices, hospitals/clinics) so that multiple services may be delivered from a single location.

- CHEJ-I-24 Explore the feasibility of a program of health clinics or workshops, run by medical service providers or Contra Costa Health Services, but hosted in local neighborhood facilities such as schools, parks, or even businesses or parking lots.

*A rotating program could be advertised in multiple languages, in the local host facility and online, to encourage participation from households living nearby who may not be able to travel to County offices or the hospital for programming. The programs could cover health basics such as developing healthy family meal plans, understanding childhood illnesses and treatments, creative tricks to keep kids active, smoking cessation programs, diabetes prevention and treatment, and other subjects.*

- CHEJ-I-25 Use economic development efforts to recruit medical services to San Pablo, including dentists, pediatricians, family physicians, and clinics that provide drug and alcohol treatment and counseling.

- CHEJ-I-26 Evaluate and make changes to the project review and permitting process to encourage and facilitate incorporation of universal, lifecycle design principles in new residential development, allowing community members to stay in their homes and neighborhoods longer, increasing community cohesion.

*Lifecycle design allows people to live in the same house, and stay in the same community, even as they age and their physical abilities change. A life cycle house includes fixed accessible features (wider doors and halls, open floor spaces, clear traffic patterns, etc.), what many people understand to be “universal design” principles. Lifecycle housing also provides for adaptable features, such as wall reinforcement for later installation of grab bars, or removable base cabinets for future knee space, to accommodate wheelchairs.*

- CHEJ-I-27 Continue to encourage new businesses to give local residents preference in hiring decisions and develop incentives to support this effort.

CHEJ-I-28 Involve young people – particularly from disadvantaged communities – in the planning and implementation of youth-centered events that develop confidence and leadership skills while also building community connections. Coordinate with the City’s Youth Commission for outreach.

Other Policies that Address Access to Services and People First

<i>Element</i>	<i>Health-Relevant Implementing Policies</i>
Economic Development	ED-I-6 (Employment Development Roundtable) ED-I-8 (local internship/apprenticeship programs)
Land Use & Physical Design	LU-I-15 (develop new public spaces) LU-I-17 (senior housing access to services and transit) LU-I-32 (designate land for medical/dental/eldercare)
Parks, Schools, Community Facilities & Utilities	PSCU-I-10 (community center) PSCU-I-12 (equal access to facilities and services) PSCU-I-13 (support arts and cultural activities) PSCU-I-17 (expand and improve library services) PSCU-I-19 (high quality health care and equal access) PSCU-I-21 (safe, affordable, quality elder care and childcare) PSCU-I-22 (better infrastructure in underserved neighborhoods)



## 8.7 Healthy Neighborhood Planning and Investment Prioritization

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San Pablo is a city of livable neighborhoods with a vibrant cultural life. San Pablo neighborhoods offer some of the most affordable housing prices in the Bay Area and easy access to job centers like Oakland and San Francisco; however, lower property values mean less tax revenue available to fund public investments and as a result San Pablo residents enjoy fewer public amenities and services than some other Contra Costa communities. An important focus for San Pablo is on neighborhood planning strategies that can help build social cohesion, improve community health, and attract investment to further improve quality of life. Recognizing that safe and sanitary homes are the basic building blocks of healthy neighborhoods, policies in this section focus on actions to increase the range of housing options, encourage homeownership, and promote the preservation and rehabilitation of existing homes. These policies complement the goals, policies, and programs in the Housing Element.

### GUIDING POLICY

- CHEJ-G-8 Promote place-based community revitalization strategies that improve the quality of life in San Pablo neighborhoods.*
- CHEJ-G-9 Provide safe and sanitary housing for residents of all ages, abilities, and income levels.*
- CHEJ-G-10 Increase public and private sector investment so as to benefit disadvantaged communities in San Pablo.*

### IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- CHEJ-I-29 Promote a range of residential densities throughout the community to encourage a mix of housing types in varying price ranges and rents.*
- CHEJ-I-30 Promote mixed-income development and the inclusion of affordable housing units throughout the city.*

- CHEJ-I-31 Expand opportunities for homeownership including through first-time homebuyer assistance programs and by publicizing the availability of limited-equity cooperatives and location-efficient mortgages.
- CHEJ-I-32 Use publicly available data on displacement to identify at-risk neighborhoods and target programs and resources to prevent homelessness.
- CHEJ-I-33 Promote the preservation, maintenance, and improvement of property and the rehabilitation of substandard housing conditions through code enforcement to mitigate or eliminate deterioration and blight conditions, and to help encourage new development and reinvestment.
- CHEJ-I-34 Work with existing business owners to promote the improvement and maintenance of facades of commercial uses.
- CHEJ-I-35 Leverage available grant funding and target investments in public infrastructure, recreational facilities and programming, and air pollution control so as to benefit disadvantaged communities in San Pablo.
- CHEJ-I-36 Require the use of Tier 4 construction equipment for multifamily residential and mixed use projects that would involve construction activities lasting two months or longer within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors. Construction equipment fitted with Level 3 Diesel Particulate Filters and/or alternative fuel construction equipment that would substantially reduce harmful exhaust gases for diesel powered equipment may be permitted to satisfy this requirement. If construction equipment not meeting these standards is proposed, the project applicant shall perform a construction health risk assessment (HRA) and identify measures to ensure compliance with applicable BAAQMD thresholds.
- CHEJ-I-37 Prepare a Corridor Plan for Rumrill Boulevard to improve environmental conditions, economic opportunities, and housing choices along a segment of the corridor that runs between Brookside and Costa, designated as a Priority Development Area (PDA).

## 8.8 Resilience to Urban Heat

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Properties of the built environment including building materials, lack of greenery, and limited shade can increase the temperature of cities relative to rural surroundings – a phenomena known as the urban heat island effect. This is because surfaces such as pavement absorb and retain heat, many urban land uses such as transportation and industrial activities generate heat, and urban environments may have limited tree canopy that provides shade to reduce heat. Based on a combination of these factors, certain parts of San Pablo may be prone to becoming localized urban heat islands where the temperature is substantially hotter than other areas of the City. Given that the average annual maximum temperature in San Pablo is projected to rise as much as 7.1 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) with as many as 18 extreme heat days per year by the end of the century, the livability of outdoor environments within urban heat islands will be significantly impacted. This is especially true for populations vulnerable to heat-related illnesses such as older adults, young children, individuals with certain medical conditions, and outdoor workers. Households that lack air conditioning are also at risk, many of which may be low-income or renter households. Furthermore, increasing frequency and severity of high heat events could increase reliance on air conditioning, which can increase energy cost burdens on low-income households.

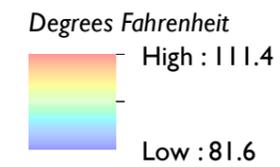


Figure 8-3 shows the five-year average (2018-2022) daytime land surface temperature of a day in August, representing a peak summer day in San Pablo, and highlights the areas where temperatures are hottest (in red) compared to those that are coolest (in blue) in the City. Figure 8-4 shows tree canopy coverage in San Pablo, which ranges between zero (no tree canopy) to 69 percent and is primarily located in the eastern portion of the City surrounding St. Joseph Cemetery and along San Pablo Creek. Tree canopy is also a climate equity issue because lower-income neighborhoods and communities of color that have experienced historical disinvestment tend to have less tree canopy and therefore less shade, making them more susceptible to the effects of extreme heat.

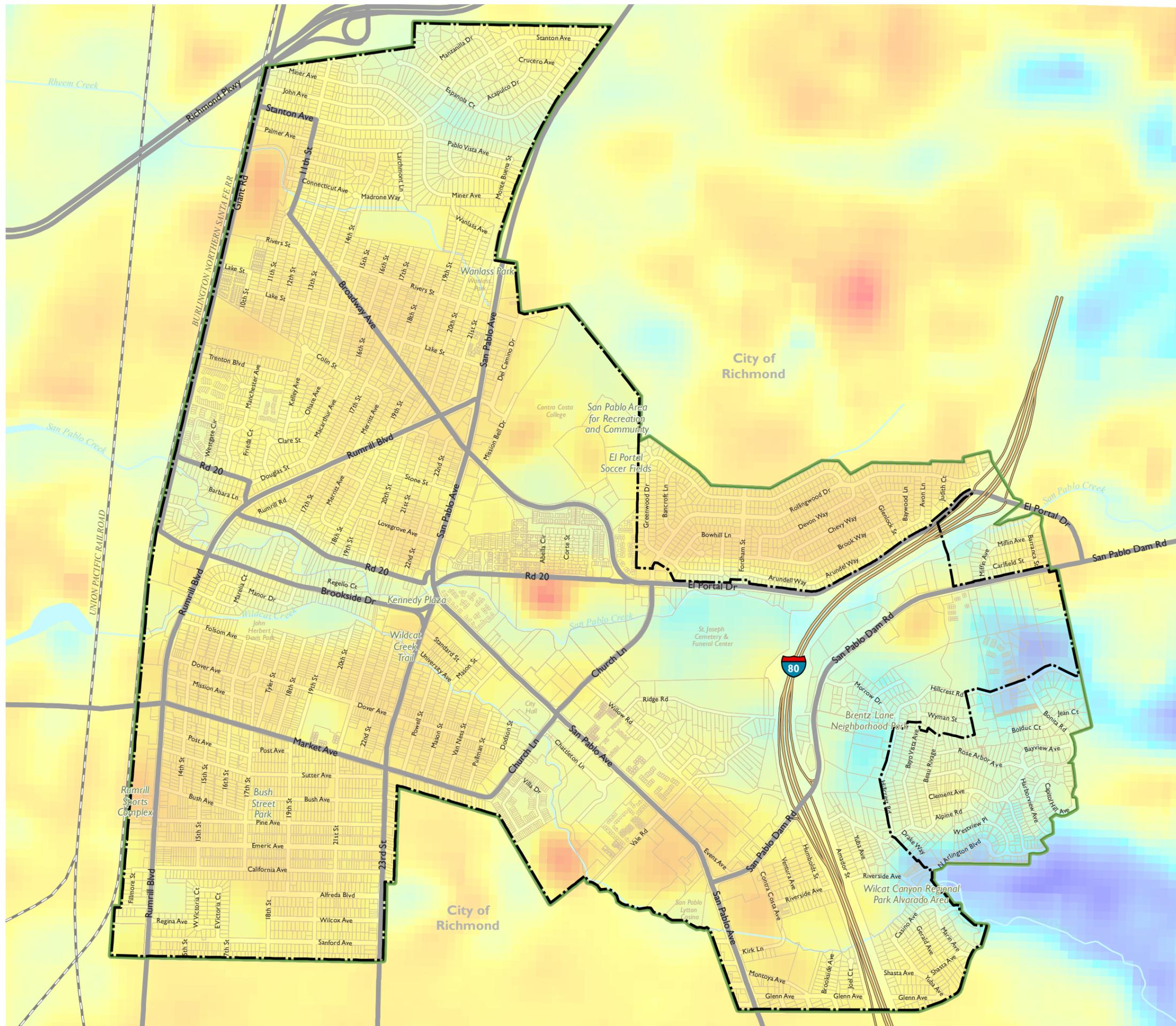
Figure 8-3: Urban Heat

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

**Daytime Land Surface Temperature**



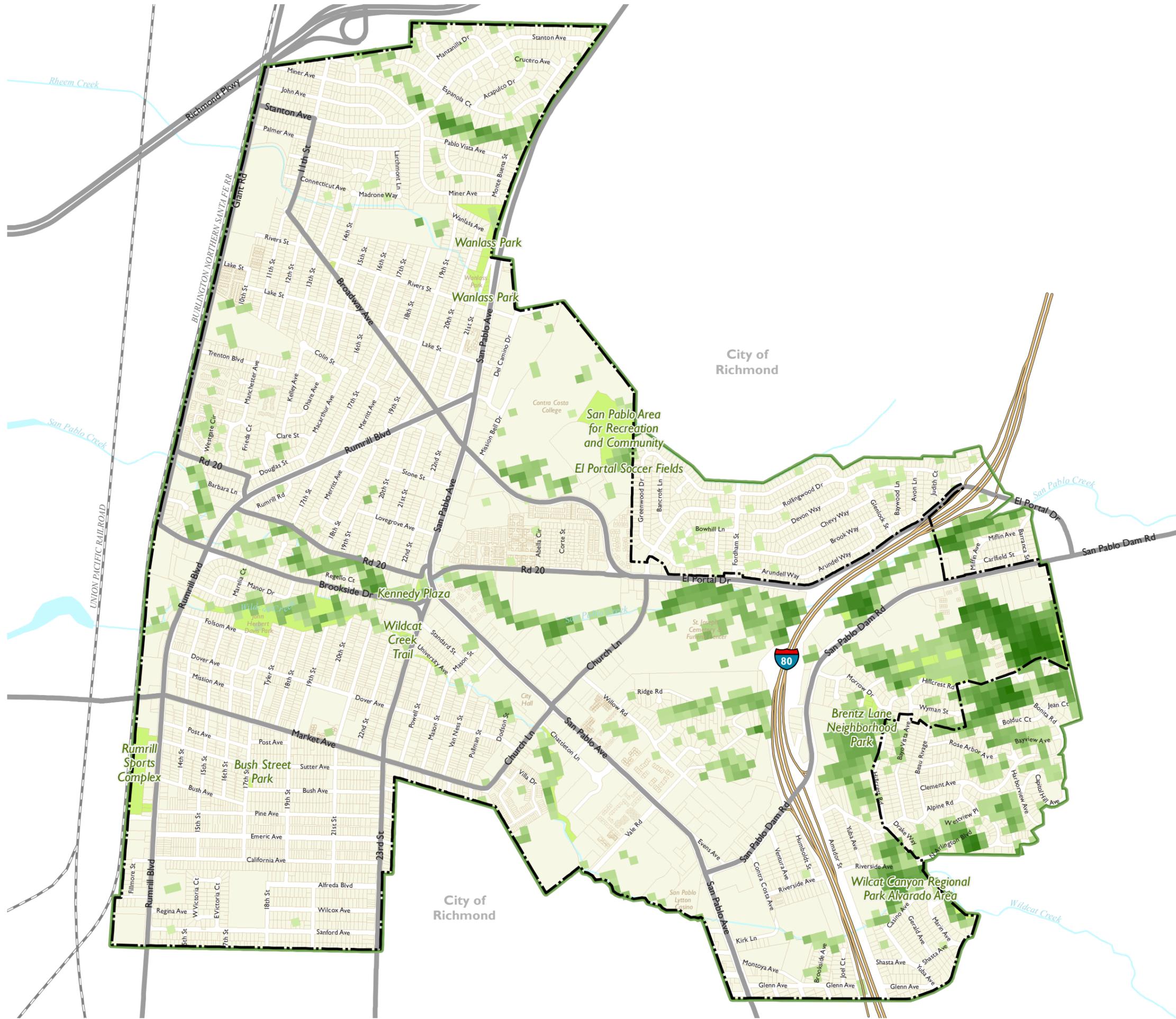
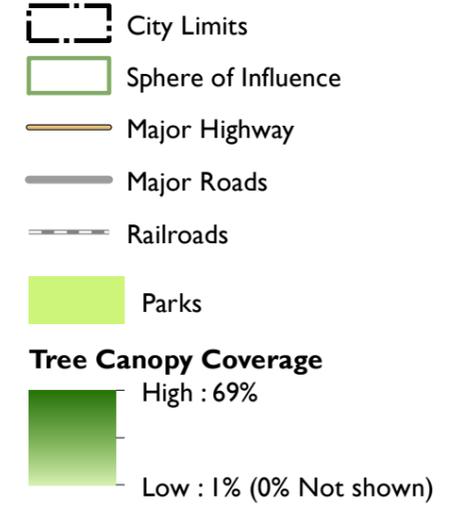
This map shows the average daytime land surface temperature based on satellite imagery (USGS Landsat 8, Collection 2 - Level 2 products) of a day in August 2018-2022, intended to represent a peak summer day in San Pablo.



SOURCE: CalEPA, 2022; City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2022

**DYETT & BHATIA**  
Urban and Regional Planners

Figure 8-4: Tree Canopy



SOURCE: Multi-Resolution Land Consortium/National Land Cover Dataset (U.S. Forestry Service), 2019; City of San Pablo, 2021; Contra Costa County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2023

**DYETT & BHATIA**  
Urban and Regional Planners

## GUIDING POLICY

*CHEJ-G-11 Build community resilience to the effects of urban heat with actions to:*

- *increase tree canopy, green spaces, and heat-reducing public amenities throughout San Pablo;*
- *expand access to information and services to help residents to manage heat.*

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**CHEJ-I-38** Through design guidelines, informational materials, and other means, encourage the use of landscaping, building materials, and site design techniques that provide passive cooling and reduce energy demand. In particular, promote the use of voluntary measures identified in the California Green Building Code (Title 24, Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations) to minimize heat island effects, including hardscape and roof materials with beneficial solar reflectance and thermal emittance values and measures for exterior wall shading.

**CHEJ-I-39** Partner with local community-based tree planting and urban greening organizations such as Groundwork Richmond or Richmond Trees to implement an Adopt-A-Tree program in San Pablo. The program should seek to foster a health urban forest by providing interested property owners with tree planting and tree care services, education, and permitting assistance.

**CHEJ-I-40** Work with property owners and community members to identify and implement mitigation strategies to address localized urban heat islands.

**CHEJ-I-41** Prioritize the installation of heat-reducing public amenities in areas with vulnerable populations most affected by urban heat. Amenities could include the following:

- Drinking water fountains or bottle refilling facilities in public parks, at community facilities, transit centers, or other appropriate locations.

- Splash pads, sprinklers, fountains, and other water features in public parks, where appropriate.
- Shade structures and shading elements in parks and public facilities, where appropriate.
- Additional trees planted in passive landscape areas in parks and public facilities.



- CHEJ-I-42 Work with transit providers to study the feasibility of bus shelter design that offers protection and relief from heat, including the incorporation of drinking fountains and shade trees with drip irrigation.
- CHEJ-I-43 Expand access to and awareness of cooling centers and resilience hubs, especially for outdoor workers, seniors, and the homeless and other vulnerable populations.
- CHEJ-I-44 Employ best practices and protocols for outdoor safety to protect area employees and contractors during periods of extreme heat.
- CHEJ-I-45 Collaborate with Contra Costa County Health Services and community organizations to provide information and services that help residents to manage extreme heat.
- CHEJ-I-46 Identify additional locations for cooling centers and resilience hubs in San Pablo and ensure the locations develop backup power sources in the event of a power outage.

## 8.9 Crime Reduction and Perceptions of Safety

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The last key theme addressed in this Health Element is that of crime reduction and perceptions of safety in San Pablo. Research points both to the challenges of crime prevention as well as the opportunities to reduce crime and increase perceptions of safety through changes in the built environment:

- San Pablo has the fourth highest rate of violent crime in Contra Costa County, preceded by nearby Richmond, Antioch, and Pittsburg (See **Table 8.6**).
- The physical features, layout, and design of many aspects of neighborhoods can influence crime prevention and other crime-related outcomes, such as neighborhood deterioration and residents' fear of crime.<sup>15</sup>
- Violent crime and property crime rates in California increased between 2020 and 2021 at a 6.7 and 3.0 percent increase respectively. However, in Contra Costa County specifically, violent crimes<sup>16</sup> followed the statewide trend and increased slightly between 2020 and 2021, while property crimes actually decreased between 2020 and 2021.
- In October 2022, Contra Costa Health was awarded \$1.5 million for a Federal Violence Prevention Grant, which will focus on social services interventions for populations disproportionately affected by violent crime to improve outcomes, especially in the West County area.<sup>17</sup> A team will assess the causes of violent crime and work with partners to develop a strategic plan to reduce violence-related injury and death, improve health equity, and perceptions of safety and community partnerships.

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<sup>15</sup> R. Taylor and A. Harrell. *Physical Environment and Crime*, presented to the National Justice Institute (1996).

<sup>16</sup> Office of the Attorney General. *Crime in California*. (2021)

<sup>17</sup> Contra Costa Health. *Contra Costa Health Secures \$1.5 Million Federal Violence Prevention Grant*. (October 2022).

**Table 8-6: Violent Crime in Contra Costa and Selected Cities (2021)**

	<i>Population</i>	<i>All Violent Crimes</i>	<i>Per 1,000 Population</i>
Richmond	115,183	881	7.65
Antioch	114,902	728	6.34
Pittsburg	75,633	444	5.87
San Pablo	32,022	161	5.03
Concord	124,684	603	4.84
Martinez	37,213	77	2.07
Contra Costa County	1,161,238	4,001	3.45

*Sources: California Department of Finance, 2021; California Department of Justice, Open Justice Data Portal, Crimes and Clearances, 2013-2022.*

**GUIDING POLICY**

*CHEJ-G-12 Use the built environment and city planning tools to deter crime, increase respect for neighbors and property, and improve the public perception of safety throughout the community.*

*CHEJ-G-13 Encourage a sense of ownership, community pride and civic respect as a means of improving the safety and image of the City.*

**IMPLEMENTING POLICIES**

*CHEJ-I-47 Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles and best practices into the Zoning Ordinance and project review procedures for new development and major renovations. Guidelines and checklists should include concepts such as:*

- **Natural Surveillance**, e.g. orient building and windows to provide maximum surveillance of exterior areas, and locate entryways such that they are visible to adjacent neighbors or passersby;
- **Natural Access Control**, e.g. use landscaping such as low hedges and flowerbeds to identify points of entry and movement on property, and use signage and symbolic barriers to direct vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
- **Natural Territorial Reinforcement**, e.g. use thorny or thick plant materials in perimeter landscape areas

to discourage cutting through parking areas, trampling vegetation, approaching ground floor windows or climbing fences and walls;

- **Maintenance**, e.g. make it easier to maintain property by recommending graffiti-resistant surface materials, vandal-proof lighting, and landscaping selected for durability and easy maintenance; and
- **Shared Facilities**, e.g. promote activity in public areas throughout the day by coordinating shared uses of facilities (parking lots, parks, sports fields).

CHEJ-I-48 Enforce property maintenance and environmental design regulations for businesses, especially “corner stores,” including regulations for alcohol and tobacco advertisements. assist store owners in identifying low-cost solutions to maintenance issues and provide financial assistance to qualifying businesses.

CHEJ-I-49 Continue to enforce provisions in the municipal code to manage alcoholic beverage sales locations and hold store owners accountable for litter, graffiti, assault, prostitution, or other public nuisance connected to their stores.

CHEJ-I-50 Ensure that San Pablo has minimum illumination standards for streetlights and, if necessary, update the standards to reflect best practices for safety lighting.

CHEJ-I-51 Continue community policing and relationship-building programs, including educational and mentoring initiatives with schools.

*The San Pablo Police Department should continue its practice of setting up safety tables at community events, staffed by police officers to offer information to residents and visitors about the services provided by the Police Department And to continue to host major events like the National Night Out and Fourth of July celebration.*

CHEJ-I-52 Continue to involve residents in neighborhood improvement efforts, including issues concerning safety, neighborhood character, planning, and revitalization.

*The City holds regular community workshops and/or meet with neighborhood-specific citizen committees to solicit feedback on planning activities for different neighborhoods. The Police Department has an active Neighborhood Watch program and Community Police Academy.*

CHEJ-I-53 Enhance aesthetics and quality of the housing stock and remove blight by implementing policies and programs identified in the Housing Element.

CHEJ-I-54 Increase public awareness of youth program opportunities in and around San Pablo. Efforts may include, but are not limited to:

- Helping to create and maintain a central directory of youth programs serving Richmond, North Richmond, and the school district;
- Ensuring the directory is available online, as well as through school guidance counselors; and
- Targeting increasing participation in existing programs, and increasing subsidized program spots for low-income youth.

*While studies have shown that most juvenile crime is committed between 2:00 and 8:00 p.m., with a spike occurring immediately after school,<sup>18</sup> an evaluation of youth programs across the country found that program participants were less likely to have committed a violent crime and less likely to have used or sold drugs in the past month than their peers.<sup>19</sup>*

CHEJ-I-55 Work with interested organizations and residents to create a youth job development partnership – connecting local businesses to teens for after school and summer work, volunteer positions, and other skills development opportunities. *(See also policy ED-I-8 in the Economic Development Element.)*

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<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice. *Working for children and families: Safe and smart after-school programs*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office (2000).

<sup>19</sup> Beckett, M. *Current-generation youth programs: What works, what doesn't work, and at what cost?* RAND Corporation (2008). Retrieved July 2010.

Other Policies that Address Crime Reduction and Perceptions of Safety

<i>Element</i>	<i>Health-Relevant Implementing Policies</i>
Economic Development	ED-I-28 (adopt graffiti abatement program)
Land Use & Physical Design	LU-I-9 (development to foster day-night activity and visibility) LU-I-10 (involve police in development review)
Circulation	C-I-26 (usability of bus stops and shelters)
Parks, Schools, Community Facilities & Utilities	PSCU-I-7 (park security lighting) PSCU-I-9 (citizen participation in parks maintenance)
Safety & Noise	SN-I-26 (feasibility of new Rumrill/Market police station) SN-I-28 (school and youth law enforcement outreach) SN-I-29 (community engagement in crime prevention)

## 8.10 Civic Engagement and Community Participation



The active participation of the community in local government brings diverse viewpoints and values into the decision-making process and helps ensure that City actions benefit the broadest range of people possible. Inclusive, participatory processes lead to better informed solutions and build mutual understanding and trust between local government officials and the public they serve. Meaningful civic engagement can be successful through partnerships with community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and community leaders to help reach out to residents of DACs and co-create policies and actions to improve the physical environment so that it supports everyone’s good health and quality of life. San Pablo has an active citizenry who are involved in the City’s boards and commissions and who participate in extensive community service programs and facilities. The City sponsors several community-wide events, and publishes a quarterly newsletter called *El Portal* that is mailed to all residents and a weekly City Manager’s E-newsletter is posted on social media and on-line. All these materials are produced in both Spanish and English.

In San Pablo, almost three out of four residents speak a language other than English, and nearly half of the population speaks English less than “very well,” a significantly larger share than in Contra Costa County as a whole. Linguistic isolation is a challenge for increasing involvement in civic and community life, and it means that these residents may be more vulnerable, as linguistically-isolated households may not hear or understand important information when there is an emergency like a fire, earthquake, or extreme heat wave. The “digital divide” is also an issue in San Pablo, where a full 30 percent of households living in poverty lack home-based internet access. The City of San Pablo, along with the San Pablo Library and West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD), have aggressive connectivity goals for the community. The San Pablo City Council has adopted the San Pablo Environment for Everything Digital (SPEED) initiative as part of its work plan to improve access to high-speed broadband internet and data networks in the City. The San Pablo Library has an emphasis on providing connectivity services and offers free Wi-Fi systems for loan. Improved small-cell Wi-Fi access throughout the City is also a joint initiative of the City and WCCUSD.

## GUIDING POLICY

*CHEJ-G-14 Encourage the active participation of local residents and businesses in civic life.*

*CHEJ-G-15 Consistent with the City’s San Pablo Environment for Everything Digital (S.P.E.E.D.) Policy Framework for 2020-2030, expand access to and availability of a wide range of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems and services for households, businesses, institutions, and public agencies throughout the city.*

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**CHEJ-I-56** Conduct inclusive, participatory City processes that emphasize the collaborative exchange of ideas by all segments of the community. Possible strategies may include:

- Holding public meetings and outreach activities at culturally appropriate neighborhood gathering places or community events when feasible.

- Employing a range of outreach methods and activities, including pop-up events, focus groups, community workshops and online surveys, in Spanish and other languages.
- Encouraging the participation of low income residents in civic processes by providing transportation vouchers, interpretation and translation services, childcare, food, or remuneration.

CHEJ-I-57 Collaborate with existing community organizations and culture brokers to reach and engage underserved populations.

CHEJ-I-58 Build the capacity of community members of all backgrounds, ages, and incomes to participate in local decision-making and engage meaningfully in planning efforts, including increased through representation on City boards and commissions and at City-sponsored activities and events.

CHEJ-I-59 Consider creating a Civic Academy which provides opportunities to learn how the City is managed and operated, discuss challenges facing the City, and learn about strategies used to address challenges.

CHEJ-I-60 Explore innovative strategies for increasing community involvement in civic processes and ownership of outcomes, such as participatory budgeting.

CHEJ-I-61 Ensure that all meetings, materials, and other engagement methods that use technology are mobile-friendly and provide non-digital communication options for residents as well.

CHEJ-I-62 In negotiating agreements for the use of public rights-of-way, work with providers to expand service to underserved communities and require adherence to the principal of net neutrality (unfiltered access to internet information) for all new agreements.

CHEJ-I-63 As feasible, incorporate state-of-the art telecommunication systems and services (e.g., internet) for public use in City-owned public buildings to increase opportunities for digital engagement in civic life for all community members.