

QUALITY OF LIFE → MOBILITY

In a global economy the ability to move people and goods efficiently is essential. Competitive economies have highly developed multi-modal transportation systems, including, ferries, buses, public transit, bicycle and hiking trails, freeways and throughfares, taxis, and rail. Good land use planning will help address the growing level of traffic congestion. Increasing the number of jobs locally instead of exporting a growing percentage of our skilled workforce to job centers elsewhere in the Bay Area will help reduce the amount of commuter traffic.

1 COMMUTE TIMES

The time spent commuting to and from work impacts an individual's quality of life, affecting the amount of time available for both family interactions and personal activities. Longer commutes also have a financial impact.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Among comparable sized counties in the U.S., Contra Costa County workers have the longest commutes, averaging more than 32 minutes one way. The County ranks 10th among all U.S. counties in average commute time and has the longest average commute of any county in the Western United States.

2 TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Traffic congestion is a key factor affecting both the quality of life and economic vitality. Traffic delays place a heavy cost on society in terms of wasted fuel, loss of productivity, and increased air pollution.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Since 2000 traffic congestion on our highways has increased by 15.4% from 16,200 vehicle hours of delay daily to 18,700 hours of delay, down 4% from a peak of 19,400 in 2002. The average travel time to work has decreased slightly over the past four years, but Contra Costa County still has one of the longest average commutes in the nation. This represents a loss of productivity conservatively valued at more than \$140 million. Contra Costa also has the worst average travel time to work among counties of comparable size. This is directly related to the lack of local jobs.

3 MEANS OF COMMUTING

Use of high-occupancy vehicles, including buses, BART, and car/van pools helps reduce the amount of traffic congestion during the commute hours. Workers who telecommute also reduce the daily volume of commute traffic.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

During the past decade there was a modest decrease in driving alone to work and a corresponding increase in the use of public transit. Car pool lanes are working to help reduce congestion. West County (18.6%) and East County (17.7%) workers are most likely to car pool, while South County (6.3%) has the lowest percentage of workers using car pools followed by Central County (9.9%). There has been a slight increase in the percentage working at home using computers, Internet, and telephone/fax to stay in touch.

4 TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

Public transit is a fundamental part of our County's infrastructure and an increasingly important means of transportation for commuters, elder citizens, students and people with disabilities. Without the County Connection, Tri-Delta Transit, WestCAT, and AC Transit bus systems, our roads and highways would be hopelessly congested and our air quality significantly impacted.

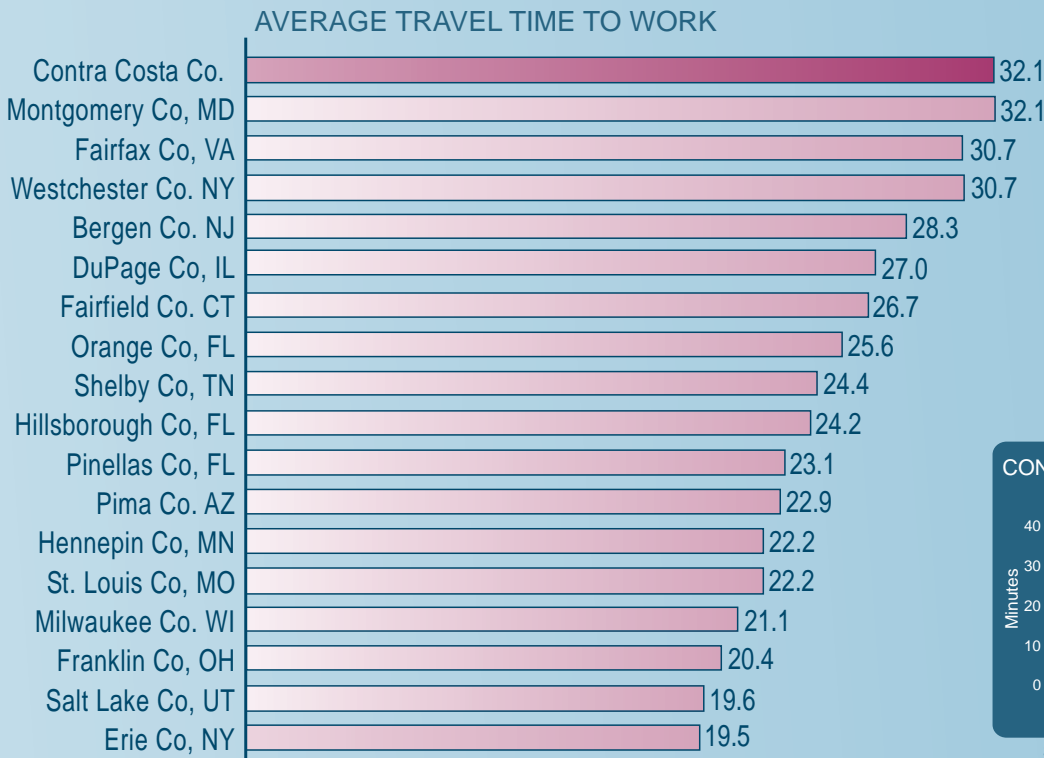
HOW ARE WE DOING?

After steadily increasing for most of the past decade, ridership on the County's transit systems peaked in 2001-2002 and has declined in recent years due to funding cuts. The increase in bus ridership was a result of both population growth and an increase in overall service due to the availability of extra funding to expand bus service. The decline in ridership has been attributed to subsequent funding cuts as the economy slowed.

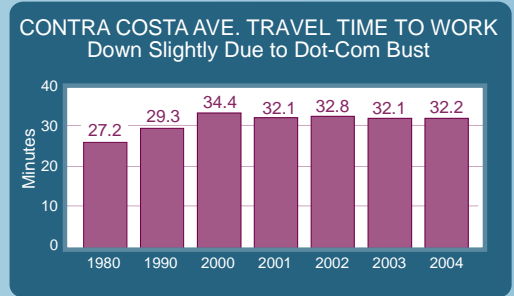
Communities in Contra Costa located along BART lines are among the highest transit users in the Bay Area. Because Contra Costa's economy was less impacted by the recession, Contra Costa BART ridership fluctuated less dramatically than in other parts of the Bay Area. BART ridership declined following the dot-com bust and recession due to fewer jobs.

1 Contra Costa Has Longest Commutes Among Comparable Size Counties and is Among Top 10 U.S. Counties With Longest Commutes

TOP 10 U.S. COUNTIES WITH LONGEST COMMUTES



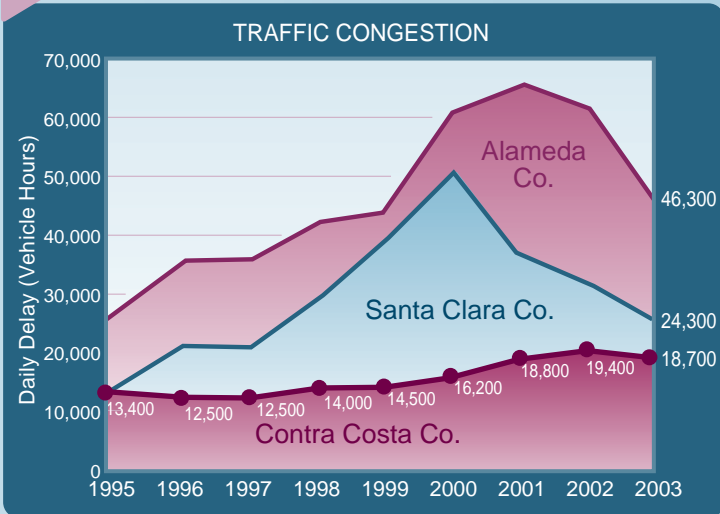
County	Ave.
1. Queens Co, NY	41.7
2. Richmond Co, NY	41.3
3. Bronx Co, NY	40.8
4. Kings Co, NY	39.7
5. Prince William Co, VA	36.4
6. Prince George's Co, MD	35.5
7. McHenry Co, IL	35.1
8. Nassau Co, NY	33.2
9. Orange Co, NY	32.5
10. Contra Costa Co, CA	32.1



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

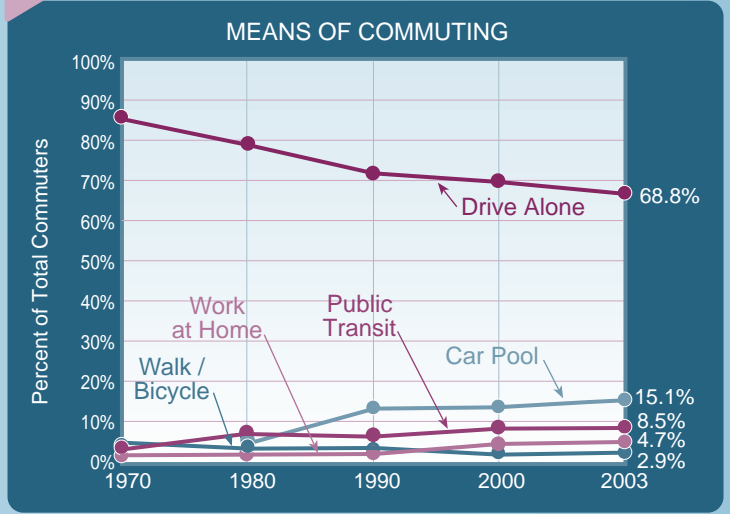
SOURCE: U.S. Census

2 Congestion Declines Slightly After Increases



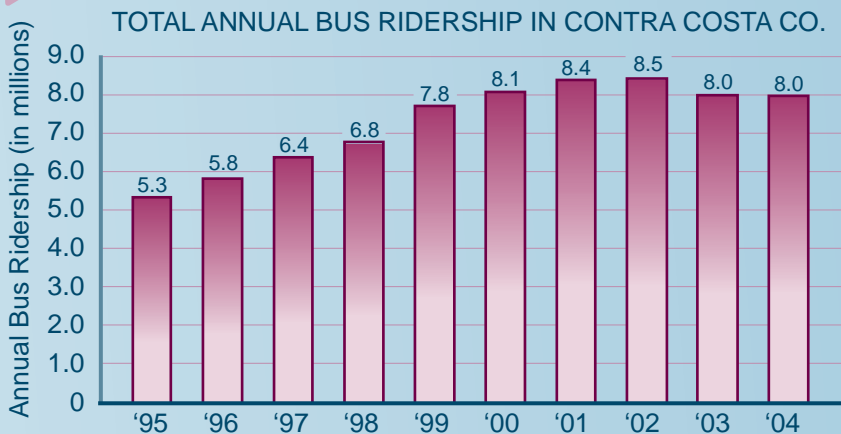
Source: Calif. Dept. of Transportation, U.S. Census Bureau

3 Commuters Driving Alone Continues to Drop

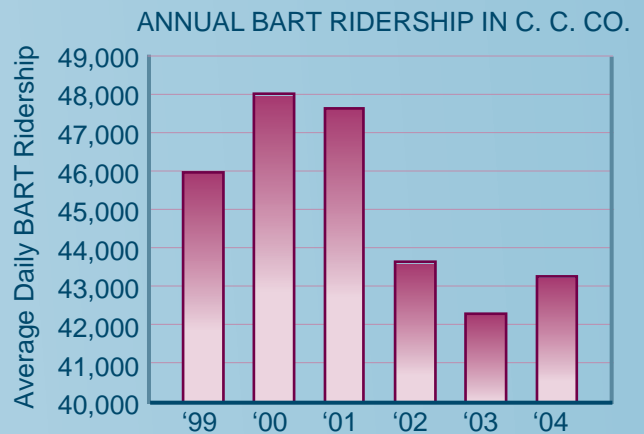


Source: Metropolitan Transportation Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

4 Bus Transit Ridership Declines Due to Budget Cuts and BART Ridership Affected by Economy



Source: County Connection, Tri-Delta Transit



Source: BART

QUALITY OF LIFE → OPEN SPACE

Contra Costa County is blessed with a beautiful environment of rolling hills, attractive valleys, and a pleasant climate. Protection of the environment contributes to the County's overall quality of life and economic vitality.

1 PERMANENT OPEN SPACE

A variety of open spaces -- from pristine natural parks, scenic shorelines, rural hiking trails, and creeks and reservoirs -- contributes to the quality of life for local residents. Preservation of these resources for recreation purposes and habitat protection is important to our quality of life.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Contra Costa has over 176,000 acres of dedicated permanent open space, which represents 38.2% of the County's land area. Efforts are currently underway throughout the County to acquire new open space to protect critical wildlife habitats and preserve our remaining shoreline. Local government efforts and non-profit organizations continue to add acreage to our open space inventory. The Muir Heritage Land Trust, for example, recently purchased the 700-acre Fernandez Ranch in the Martinez hills. Additional funding is needed as population growth continues to consume land for urban uses.

2 OPEN SPACE PER CAPITA

The amount of open space significantly influences a region's quality of life. Increasing the amount of dedicated open space is challenging as housing and urban uses compete with open space preservation for a finite number of acres.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

While open space acreage in Contra Costa County has increased in the last two years, the number of acres of dedicated open space per person has decreased due to population growth. Contra Costa is now the Bay Area's third most developed county (behind San Francisco and Alameda Counties) with more than 25% of it's land area developed compared with less than 12% in Marin County, 19% in Santa Clara County, and 20% in San Mateo County.

3 PAVED TRAIL SYSTEM

The provision of trails and bicycle paths provides safe, attractive and increasingly important alternative transportation routes for walking or cycling to work, school, recreational facilities, transit stations, and retail destinations.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Contra Costa is fortunate to have an excellent urban trail system with over 138 miles of paved bikeways - more than any other county in the Bay Area. In Central County, this network includes the Iron Horse Trail (12.9 miles), the Contra Costa Canal Trail (13.8 miles), the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail (7.6 miles) and the California Riding and Hiking Trail (16 miles). East County is served by the Delta De Anza Regional Trail (15 miles - 25 planned) and the Marsh Creek Regional Trail (6.5 miles). The Bay Trail (not entirely completed) will connect West County and Carquinez shoreline communities with the entire Bay Area. Another 100+ miles of trails are on the drawing board pending funding.

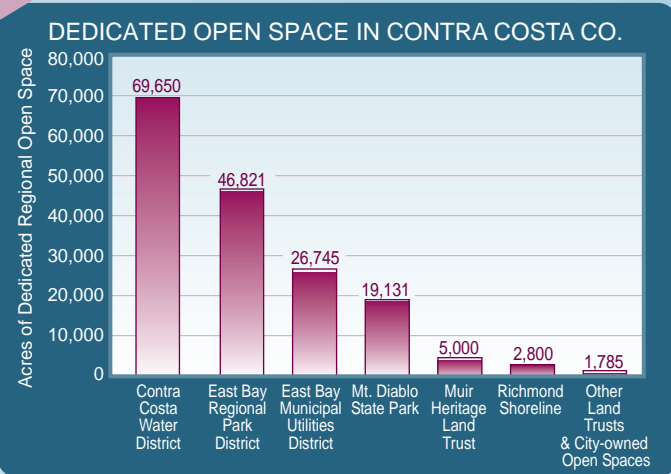
4 FARMLAND CONVERSION

Agriculture contributes to both the local economy and quality of life. Once converted to urban uses, prime farmland is lost in perpetuity for agricultural purposes.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

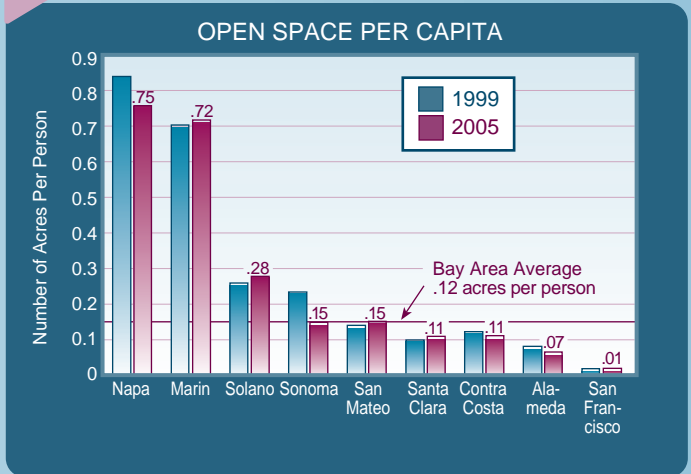
In 2003, the County's agricultural production ranked 37th in the State. Top grossing commodities were nursery products (\$33.7 million) and livestock and poultry (\$25.9 million). Top food crops included sweet corn (\$9.5 million), grapes (\$6.5 million) and vegetable crops (\$6.3 million). Total agricultural production in dollars rose to \$108.5 million in 2003 - up from \$90.4 million in 1999. Farm and grazing lands in Contra Costa continue to be converted to urban use with farmland acreage down 14.9% since 1984. In 2003, growers in Contra Costa harvested 1,000 fewer acres of vegetable and seed crops and 1,500 fewer acres of fruit and nut crops than in 1999.

1 Open Space Enhances Quality of Life



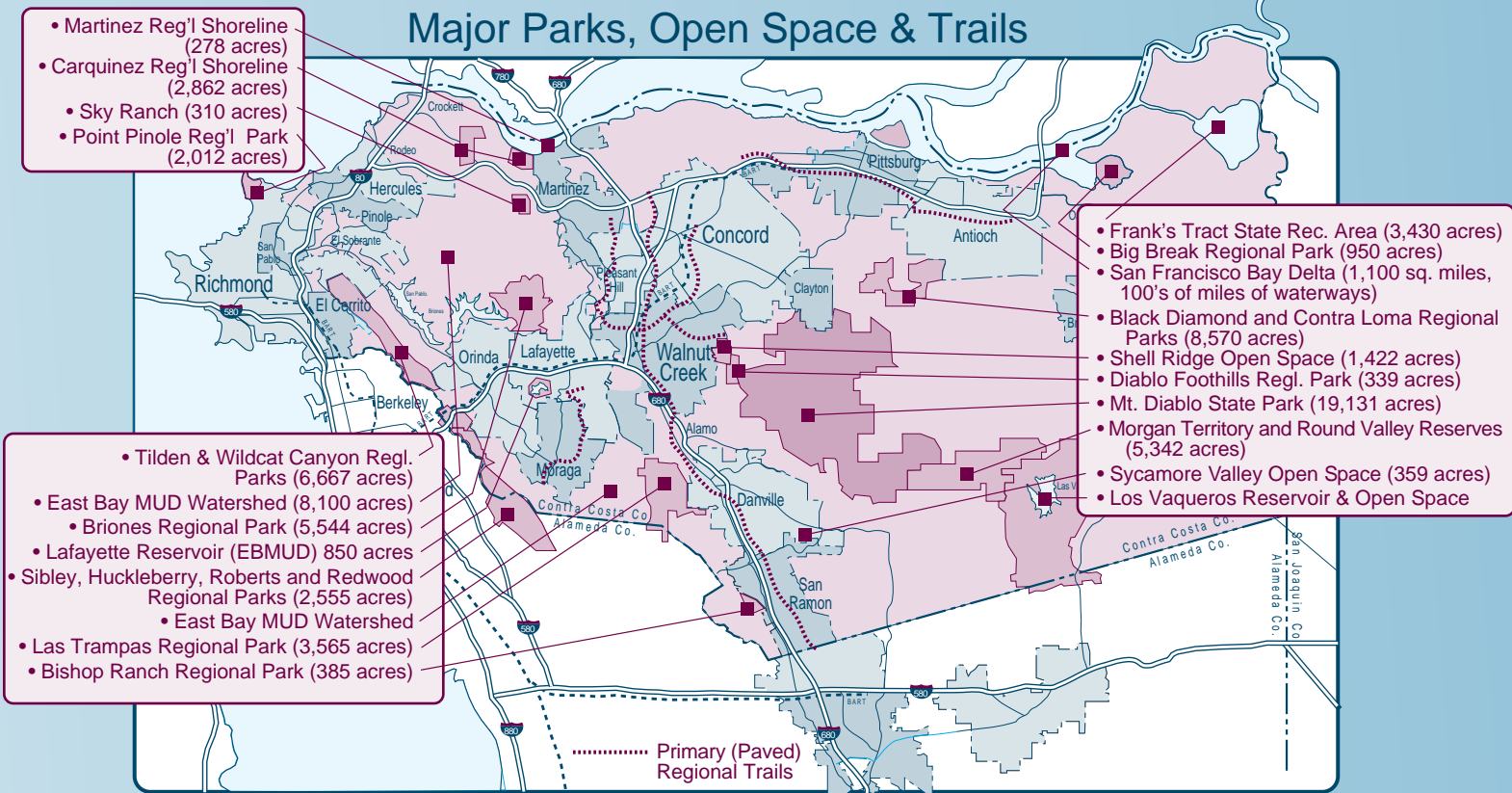
SOURCES: Bay Area Open Space Council, East Bay Regional Park District, Muir Heritage Land Trust, Save Mt. Diablo, Local Governments

2 Open Space Not Keeping Up With Growth

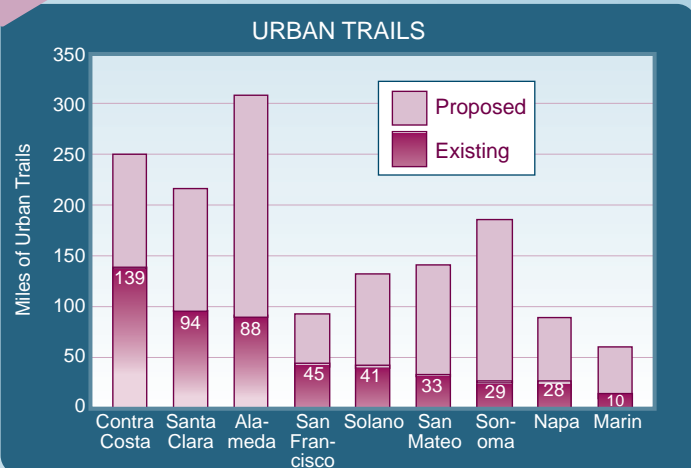


SOURCES: East Bay Regional Park District, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Contra Costa Water District, California State Parks Department, Bay Area Open Space Council

Major Parks, Open Space & Trails

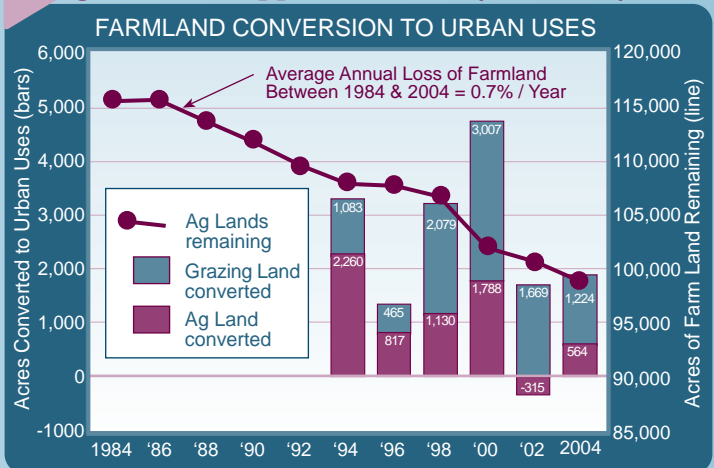


3 Contra Costa Leads Region in Urban Trails



SOURCE: Metropolitan Transportation Commission

4 Agriculture Supports Economy & Quality of Life



SOURCE: California Department of Conservation

QUALITY OF LIFE → LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

According to a Milken Institute Study of Best Performing Cities, “geography matters more than ever to businesses because skilled technical and creative people determine firm and metropolitan success. A successful business considers where high-end human capital chooses to reside.” As cities and towns around the country position themselves to attract the kinds of businesses and professionals that will contribute to their future economic growth, many are creating walkable downtown areas that include a well-defined town center with a diversity of shopping, eating, entertainment, and gathering places within easy walking distance. The town center is easily accessible by people of all ages and abilities, and is surrounded by neighborhoods with mixed income and housing.

According to a Brookings Institute study “regional economic performance is enhanced when areas are developed with community benefits and the promotion of vital urban centers in mind.” Studies show that productivity and overall economic performance may be improved to the extent compact, mixed-use development fosters dense labor markets, vibrant urban centers, efficient transportation systems, and a high “quality-of-place.”

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Contra Costa communities have a mixed track record in developing livable communities and walkable downtown areas. Because of the distributed nature of our retail, health, recreational, cultural and civic facilities, the distances between many of the places we want to go cannot be easily walked. Some of our cities, though, have been quite successful, while others have recognized the need and have been working on developing an attractive downtown. Cities such as Walnut Creek, Danville, and Brentwood have developed attractive downtowns which include a combination of housing, office buildings, libraries, art galleries and museums, movie theaters, restaurants and cafes, retail shopping core, certified farmers market, and performing arts facilities. Cities that rank high on quality of place do not just provide one thing, but offer a range of activities in attractive natural and built environments.

AGENCIES & ORGANIZATIONS

Bay Area Open Space Council
Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)
Bureau of Labor Statistics
California Air Resources Board
California Association of Realtors
California Department of Conservation
California Department of Education
California Department of Finance
California Department of Transportation
California Employment Development Department
California Franchise Tax Board
Claritas, Inc.
Contra Costa Community College District
Contra Costa for Every Generation
County Connection
Dun & Bradstreet
East Bay Regional Park District
East Bay Business Times
Grubb & Ellis
InfoUSA
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Millken Institute, 2004 America's Best Performing Cities
Muir Heritage Land Trust
Save Mt. Diablo
Tri-Delta Transit
U.S. Bureau of the Census

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CONTRA COSTA ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

M E M B E R S H I P

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Catellus Development Corporation
- Chevron
- John Muir Health
- The Mechanics Bank
- Morrison & Foerster
- Pacific Gas & Electric
- Pinole Point Properties
- Reynolds & Brown
- Shapell Industries
- Sunset Development Company
- Wells Fargo Bank

PUBLIC SECTOR

- City of Antioch
- City of Brentwood
- City of Concord
- Contra Costa County
- City of Martinez
- City of Oakley
- City of Richmond
- City of San Ramon
- City of Walnut Creek
- Contra Costa Community College District



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