

# Iron Horse Corridor Management Program

## Public Information Element

### Vision

***The Public Information Element of the Iron Horse Corridor Management Program is intended to communicate the vision and activities associated with the Corridor to the public and local communities, adjacent land owners, elected officials, emergency response organizations, and other affiliated agencies. The Public Information Element is intended to disseminate and mitigate user and other stakeholder uses within the corridor to insure the safety and enjoyment of all those who use the corridor.***

### Background

On July 22, 1997 the Board of Supervisors directed the Public Works Department, the Community Development Department (now the Department of Conservation and Development), and the County Redevelopment Agency to jointly develop a management program for the former Southern Pacific San Ramon Branch Right of Way from Concord to the Alameda County line, herein referred to as the Iron Horse Corridor. The management program was to include the development of a public information element to inform interested individuals about the Iron Horse Corridor. The Iron Horse Corridor Management Program was developed with participation by the public through an advisory committee. The following Public Information Element was developed by the County with input from the Iron Horse Corridor Advisory Committee.

### Audience

The audience for Iron Horse Corridor-related communications spans a wide range of groups and individuals. This section attempts to define the main classifications of the Corridor audience.

#### Trail Users

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) operates the Iron Horse Trail throughout most of the Iron Horse Corridor. The public is most familiar with this function of the Corridor, and most of their experiences with the Corridor are gained through use of this facility.

Trail users can typically be classified as either recreational or those that use the trail for transportation. Recreational users on the trail include walkers, joggers, cyclists, dog walkers, and horseback riders. Transportation uses may include school children and those commuting to work or to transit.

### Adjacent Property Owners

There are hundreds of properties adjacent to the Iron Horse Corridor. The majority of these are single family homes, but there are also commercial properties, schools, parks, and multiple-family dwellings. Many of these residential areas have homeowner associations, some of which actively participate in projects within the Corridor. In addition to existing adjacent uses, there is isolated commercial and residential development taking place along the Corridor.

### Iron Horse Corridor Rights-Holders

The Corridor serves as a utility corridor for multiple utilities, including electric, water, sewer, recycled water, petroleum, and telecommunications. These agencies have agreements with the County which provide them rights to place and maintain their facilities within the Corridor. The EBRPD also has an agreement with the County which provides EBRPD with the rights to operate and maintain the Iron Horse Trail.

Cities along the Corridor also have rights along isolated sections of the Corridor. These rights are typically at road crossings where cities install and maintain landscaping, benches, and fountains.

### Elected Officials and Advisory Groups

Elected officials with a direct interest in the Corridor include County Supervisors for Districts 3 and 4, whose districts the Corridor passes through. Elected officials for the cities the Corridor passes through also have an interest in the operation and development of the Corridor. County Municipal Advisory Committees (MACs) for unincorporated areas along the Corridor also have an interest in the Corridor. These committees are not elected officials and serve at the pleasure of the County Supervisors. Their role is to advise County staff and elected officials on County business.

### Volunteer Groups

The Iron Horse Corridor is an attractive property to volunteer groups, and from experience the groups interested in this work have included school clubs and environmental groups. Other volunteer groups that may be interested in the Corridor include recreational groups (dog walkers, horseback riders, cyclists, etc.).

## **Priority Information to Disseminate**

As the corridor becomes increasingly popular with residents living adjacent to the trail and trail users alike, the Public Information Element is intended to provide outreach to the general public. Below are information sources and background information to assist the public with understanding the management and maintenance of the corridor.

### Website Addresses

These websites contain Corridor information such as corridor history, landscaping and management programs, maps, news and events, contact information and trail information.

Contra Costa County Public Works Department - <http://www.ironhorsecorridor.org/>

East Bay Regional Park District - [http://www.ebparks.org/parks/trails/iron\\_horse](http://www.ebparks.org/parks/trails/iron_horse)

### Safety Information

There are numerous utility easements throughout the corridor. Prior to any construction or community projects, Underground Service Alert (USA) - Northern California must be notified at 1-800-227-2600 to mark for utilities and East Bay Regional Park District must be notified to review the impact to their trail.

### Transit Corridor

The County purchased the corridor right of way with assistance from state transportation grants. To comply with the terms of state grants the County received, Contra Costa County must preserve the 34-foot wide transit corridor easement for a future busway or exclusive mass transit guideway. No building or planting projects that will impair the ability to construct the busway or mass transit guideway will be allowed. Currently, there are no specific projects or funding for this system.

### Advisory Committee

The Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee was authorized by the Board of Supervisors on July 22, 1997. The nine-seat Committee includes one representative from each jurisdiction or unincorporated community along the corridor (Alamo, Concord, Danville, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek), Supervisor Districts III and IV appointed seats, and a seat for the East Bay Regional Park District. All meetings are open to the public and duly noticed in advance in accordance with the Brown Act and the Contra Costa County Better Government Ordinance. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis or more frequently as needed.

### Funding Sources

The Iron Horse Corridor Management Program's Financial Element contains information on the costs and funding sources available to manage the Corridor, implement projects and maintain

the Management Program. A link to the Financial Element may be found in the County website described above under “Program Management”.

#### Policies and Guidelines

The Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Elements contain specific policies and guidelines. Links to the various Elements can be found under “Program Management” in the County website listed above.

#### Encroachments

Questions about county encroachment permits for landscaping and other joint use projects should be directed to the County’s Application and Permit Center. Contra Costa County has developed an Adopt-the-Corridor Program to provide opportunities to enhance the Corridor. The opportunities include litter removal, wildflower and native plantings, preservation of existing native plant communities, landscaping or erosion control projects, the improvement of wildlife habitats, and the control of invasive weeds or brush within the right-of-way. A link to the Adopt-the-Corridor Program can be found under “How to Propose a Landscaping Project” in the County website listed above.

#### **Ways to Disseminate Information**

Vehicles used to inform the public about the Iron Horse Corridor will include the website, press releases to local newspapers, advisory committee and community meetings, resident mailings, city flyers, homeowner association newsletters, East Bay Regional Park District brochures, monuments and kiosks. The Iron Horse Corridor Program Manager is also available to present at public meetings.

Signage may be allowed within the Corridor to assist trail users in determining their location and points of interest, and to provide users with historical and ecological information. Mileage markings and interpretive and directional signs may be allowed upon approval by the Iron Horse Corridor Program Manager. Mileage markers may be placed on sign posts, fences, or by trail pavement markings. Interpretive signs may include historical, ecological, and other items of interest, and directional signs may be allowed to provide for links to parks, trails, transit, or other points of interest. Signage density and the various utilities and easements will be a factor in determining the number and location of signs approved within the Corridor.