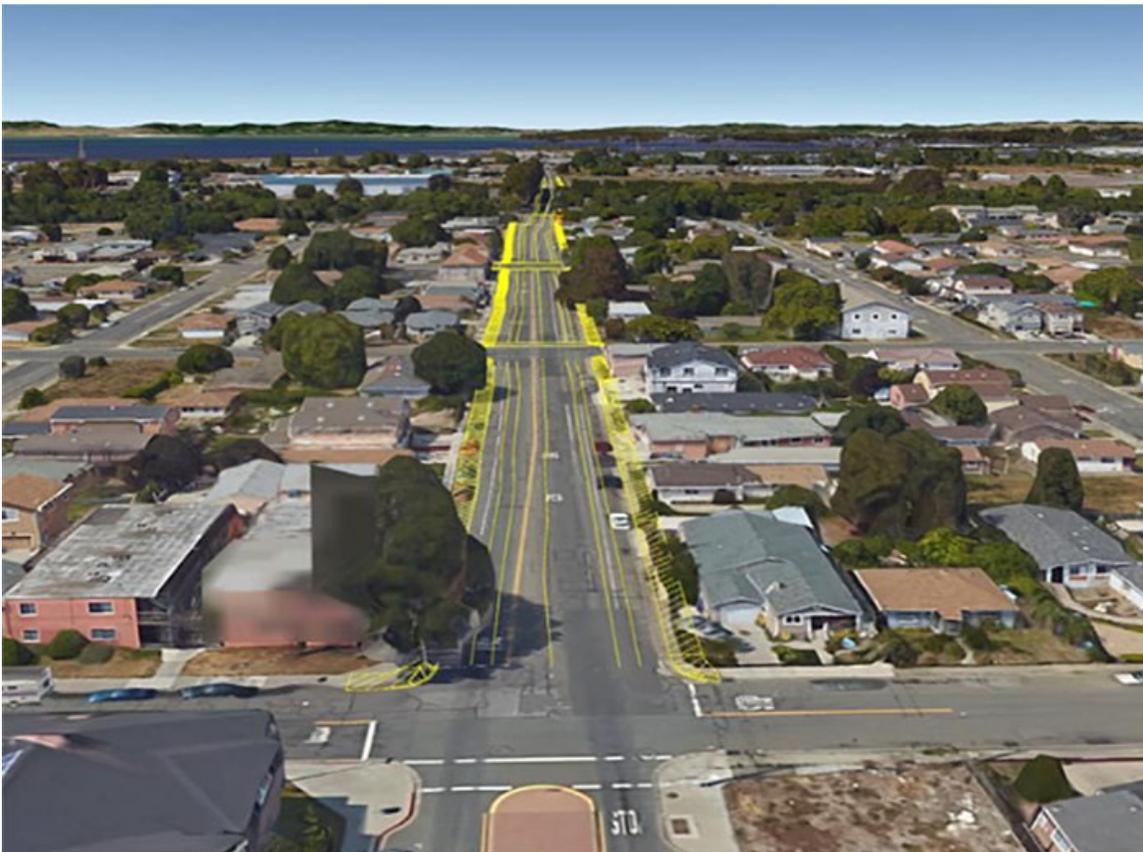




## Plan in works for pedestrian improvements on Fred Jackson Way in North Richmond



Plans are in the works to widen sidewalks and install other improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility-impaired along Fred Jackson Way from Grove Street to Brookside Drive in North Richmond.

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Currently, the corridor that links to key sites including Verde Elementary, affordable housing, an urban farm, four transit stops and Wildcat Creek Trail features deteriorated sidewalks and is at points too narrow for mobility-impaired users, according to the project description (see below). Where utility poles now exist, the sidewalk is just three feet wide.

A proposal in the works, known as the Fred Jackson Way First Mile/Last Mile Connection, would remove those utility poles, widen the sidewalks to eight feet, re-stripe the roadway to include bike lanes, add trees, and improve access to transit stops.

The hope is that the improvements will encourage more residents to walk, bike and ride transit in the neighborhood, thus reducing pollution.

In a letter to Jerry Fahy of the county's public works department on May 15, Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia described the \$4.5 million pricetag for improvements as a "modest cost" that would make significant quality of life enhancements in North Richmond.

Gioia's office has been asking around for community input on the plans as it prepares a funding application for the state's [Active Transportation Program](#), which combines state and federal grants to pay for projects encouraging walking, cycling and emissions reductions. Grant applications are due June 1.

In Gioia's letter to Fahy, posted [here](#), the supervisor said an ongoing relationship between Verde Elementary and the nonprofit Urban Tilth, which operates a garden dedicated to student education and development on campus, further proves the need for a more walkable corridor.

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Urban Tilth is currently designing a 3-acre farm at Fred Jackson Way just south of Brookside Drive that it will manage along with a watershed restoration training program, Gioia said. Such sites require safe connections.

“Widening of the sidewalks would enable children and the disabled to safely and easily navigate the sidewalks and encourage families to access these healthy community resources,” Gioia said.

Construction on the project would tentatively begin in 2018 followed by the environmental review and design phases.

North Richmond is notorious for poor infrastructure, and up until the 1980s the community was frequently marred by floods from the nearby creeks which turned the dirt roads into muddy rivers, said Robert Rogers, the district coordinator for Gioia’s office.

## Fred Jackson Way First Mile/Last Mile Connection



The median and landscaping project (left side of photo) constructed in 2008 initiated a pedestrian friendly environment. The First Mile/Last Mile Project (right side of photo) would finish this good work for North Richmond.



Utility poles currently block access for pedestrians

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Fred Jackson Way - First Mile/Last Mile Pedestrian Connection Project will remove barriers to pedestrians and provide access to affordable housing, transit, schools, employment, shopping, regional trails, a senior center, and community facilities. The existing sidewalks represent barriers to mobility impaired users as the sidewalk width is only three feet with power poles located in the middle of the sidewalk. The proposed First Mile/Last Mile Pedestrian Connection Project will eliminate this barrier and utilize excess lane width and parking width to narrow the road section and install an eight foot wide sidewalk on Fred Jackson Way to extend approximately 1,400 feet from Grove Street to the Wildcat Creek Trail. The roadway will be restriped to provide a complete street for all modes including bike lanes and safe pedestrian access to four transit stops. A pedestrian friendly environment will include street trees which is an important benefit for a community with a poverty rate that is 50% higher than the surrounding area. North Richmond is identified as a Community of Concern and a Priority Development Area.

The proposed project will provide residents with improved access to safely walk their first mile and last mile of their commute. These multi modal options will reduce impacts to the environment such as Green House Gas Emissions and at the same time improve public health by fighting obesity with an active lifestyle.

### Something to Think About....

Studies have linked urban greening provided by trees to a reduction in crime.

#### Provisions by mode:

	Reduced asphalt pavement width will reduce speeds
	ADA pedestrian access and Class II bike lanes striped consistent with CCTA Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan
	Improved access to Four bus stops operated by AC Transit

# Fred Jackson Way First Mile/Last Mile Connection

## MEETING ATP GOALS

The Fred Jackson Way project fulfills all the goals of the ATP program. Improved access for all users will encourage active modes to be accomplished by biking and walking while improving access to transit to reduce GHG emissions. The project sponsor will continue to collaborate with Contra Costa Health Services Injury Prevention Division to continue the education and encouragement activities that have been ongoing with the Verde Elementary School Community. A revitalization of the walking school bus will be a result of the improved pedestrian access. These ongoing efforts to support active modes and fight childhood obesity are targeted for one of the most disadvantaged communities in Contra Costa. As indicated to the right, the project also has the opportunity to expand the spectrum of projects to incorporate a neighborhood farm to table project.

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### Funding Required

Expanded Project Estimate For PE, R/W, and CONST	\$4.5 M
Original Project Scope For PE AND CONST	\$1.5 M

## OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND GRANT SCOPE

The County was contacted two weeks ago by the Urban Tilth Project located on Fred Jackson Way south of Brookside Drive. The proposal is to extend pedestrian and bicycle improvements beyond the current project limits to connect residents to the proposed Urban Tilth community farm. The Urban Tilth program is intended to improve sustainability and public health by hiring residents and training youth through a community based organization where community members grow, cook, distribute and consume fresh local produce using their "home grown experts."

The County is currently considering this great opportunity and appreciates feedback on the value of extending pedestrian and bicycle access.

## SCHEDULE

ENV STUDIES: Complete Fall '16  
DESIGN: Fall '16 – Fall '17  
RIGHT OF WAY: None required  
CONSTRUCTION: Summer '18



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