

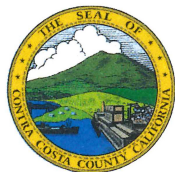
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Dear 2072 Contra Costa Residents,

October 4, 2022

How exciting this must be to open our Time Capsule from 2022! We've been thinking long and hard about what to include, and I have especially wanted to provide this letter telling what life in Contra Costa is like today and what I hope it is like for you in the future.

These past few years have been very difficult years for our country and our county. We are still dealing with the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. I can honestly say in all my years of public service that we have never dealt with such a massive public policy – not to mention health policy – issue that touched each individual in the county. I have never been prouder of county staff and the majority of the public who all rose to the occasion and either implemented and/or followed the many actions taken necessary to keep us safe.

But what was most distressing, other than the lives lost, was how some in our county chose to defy health orders, believed conspiracy theories, and issued death threats to elected leaders, including me. The concept of "I can make my own health decisions" led to "I don't care about others' health." It was beyond anything I had ever observed in my professional life and, frankly, very disturbing. I mention this because I am hopeful you are hearing dissenting points of view from the public in a civil manner, rather than in a hostile and demeaning manner from a minority of public that we unfortunately are dealing with today.

Which leads me to what I see as being a greater threat to our citizens than even the pandemic. And that is our national politics.

My comments do not relate to partisan politics but rather how a partisan and divisive elected leader can inject anger and distrust into a portion of the populace using race and fear of the other. I'm specifically referring to the January 6, 2021, insurrection (and, yes, it was an insurrection) and its aftermath, which we have not yet seen the culmination of. I am hopeful that you in the future are living in a more polite, equal, and understanding body politic.

Let me switch here to major issues we are dealing with in Contra Costa County.

**The Delta:** For the last 40 years, we have fought off any attempt of a conveyance under the Delta of fresh water in the north to the south, thereby bypassing the critical ecosystem of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. I am hopeful that this issue will have been laid to rest and that the many other concepts advocated by Contra Costa County and the Delta Counties Coalition

(and other organizations) have been implemented, all to the benefit of the entire state without sacrificing the Delta.

2. Transportation: As a member of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (the half-cent sales tax measure), I have been excited to see the many innovative ideas for transportation in the future. Electric automobiles are becoming the norm, and state law requires no internal-combustible engine vehicles can be sold here after 2035. GoMentum Station is located in Concord on the current Concord Naval Weapons Station, and transportation models of the future are being tested there. When you read this letter, I am hopeful that how we move around in our communities and the Bay Area in general is more transit-oriented and away from single-occupancy vehicles. This will also address air quality in our region.

3. Housing: This is one of our most contentious public policy issues. We all recognize the great need for affordable housing (a current joke is affordable housing is any housing you can afford), but there is also great resistance to more housing when we are dealing with so much traffic and drought. Controversial zoning laws from Sacramento have ignited anger at the local level, especially laws that remove local control. Yesterday's East Bay Times printed an article which included a survey reflecting a majority of Bay Area residents are against building additional housing. These next 50 years will reflect how this issue has been resolved.

4. Public Service: I am very concerned today about the reticence of community members to serve either on advisory bodies or in elected office. What I have observed over the last several election cycles, but most recently in 2022, is the lack of individuals willing to step up and serve. This is not a criticism of that behavior but rather a reflection that the hostile environment (as mentioned in an earlier paragraph) has resulted in citizens not wanting to subject themselves or their families to this behavior. It is one of my greatest hopes that public meetings have returned to civil discourse with no personal and/or hateful/fearful speech directed to those in public service.

Today, District IV consists of Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill and about 2/3rds of Walnut Creek. If CNWS has reached its development capacity in 2072, I believe the boundaries of this district will change to reflect the population change. To my successors as Supervisor, I hope you have enjoyed serving District IV as much as I have. It has been an honor and a privilege.

I will close with my thanks to all public servants, either those working in government or those serving their communities. They are my s/heroes.

Sincerely,

Karen Mitchoff  
Chair, 2022 Board of Supervisors