



Revisiting the San Rafael Downtown Vision

City Council Presentation
November 6, 2017



Discussion Overview

Paul Jensen

- Recap Downtown Vision
- Key issues
- 3-D simulation exercise
(CivicKnit - Breeze Kinsey)

Planning Commissioner Larry Paul

- Elements of good design

Next steps/ Council direction



Context

- Booming job market
- Pent up housing demand
- PDA designation
- Strong development interest in Downtown San Rafael
- Multiple planning processes underway
 - General Plan 2040
 - Transit Center relocation
 - Downtown Parking and Wayfinding
- SMART has arrived
- Time to revisit Downtown Vision



How Did We Get Here?

- Downtown Vision (1993)
 - Vision, Principles, Policies
 - Six Districts
 - Implementation Strategy
- General Plan 2020 (2004)
 - New Downtown Map designations
 - Higher densities
 - Higher Floor Area Ratios (FARs) for non-residential
 - Taller buildings and height bonuses
- Downtown Zoning (2004)



How Did We Get Here?

- Station Area Plan (2012)
 - Focus on SMART Station area
 - Generally reinforces earlier plans
 - Proposes additional height and FAR allowances (along 101)
 - Relocate Bettini Transit Center
 - Explore height and FAR bonuses, form-based code
 - Ped and bike improvements



How Did We Get Here?

- General Plan 2040
 - First phase underway
 - Steering Committee to revisit Downtown Vision and standards
 - What's the vision for 2040?
 - Height, bulk, parking, and design
- Transit Center Relocation
 - Bridge District study to address circulation and design
- City Council Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee – Community Design

SAN RAFAEL

GENERAL

PLAN

2040

What kind of place will San Rafael be in 20 years?

Will the city look the same as it does today? Will people travel the same way they do now? Will there be new homes, new shopping places, new work places, and new parks? These questions point to an even bigger question: do we know where we want to go as a city—and how we will get there?

The purpose of the General Plan is to respond to these questions. The General Plan provides a vision for San Rafael's future, and the policies and actions to guide us to that vision. The Plan is a legal document required by State law. It includes the City's official policies for how land may be developed and how natural resources may be used. The City is in the process of updating its General Plan, looking ahead to the Year 2040. This brochure provides an overview of the project, and how you can help shape the outcome.

Downtown is Growing!

Downtown Development "Watch" Area and project list



- 1** 1203 Lincoln Ave. (36 residential units; approved)
- 2** 524 Mission Ave./1200 Irwin St. (15 residential units; completed and occupied)
- 3** 930 Tamalpais Ave. (Whistlestop, 50 senior units & senior services, restaurant; on hold)
- 4** 700 3rd St. (13,000 s.f. site/30 units no application to date)
- 5** San Rafael Corporate Center Lincoln Ave. Parking Garage (@ build out 1,558 parking spaces; completed and occupied)
- 5a** San Rafael Corporate Center Lincoln Ave. Parking Garage (600 space parking garage expansion [Phase II]; approved)
- 6** San Rafael Corporate Center Lincoln Ave. (80,000 s.f. lab; constructed and occupied)
- 7** San Rafael Corporate Center Lindaro St. (72,000 s.f. office [Phase II]; approved)
- 8** Bio Marin @ PG&E - 999 3rd St. (200k office/lab [estimate by FAR], Whistlestop, 50 senior apartment units; pre-application completed)
- 9** 1001 4th St. (no additional commercial sq. ft. anticipated; potential for 100+ units, no application to date)
- 10** 809 B St. (41 residential units [2,000 s.f. retail]; approved)
- 11** 638-640 4th St. – House of Bagels (mixed use); no application to date
- 12** 703-723 3rd St. (138 residential units; pre-application and conceptual review completed)
- 13** 1313 5th Ave. (Public Safety Center – 44K; approved; under construction)
- 14** 1201 5th Ave. (5000K office addition, approved)
- 15** 800 Tamalpais Ave. (Bettini Transit Center re-location; under review)

2015-2023 Housing Element identifies additional Downtown properties as "opportunity sites"

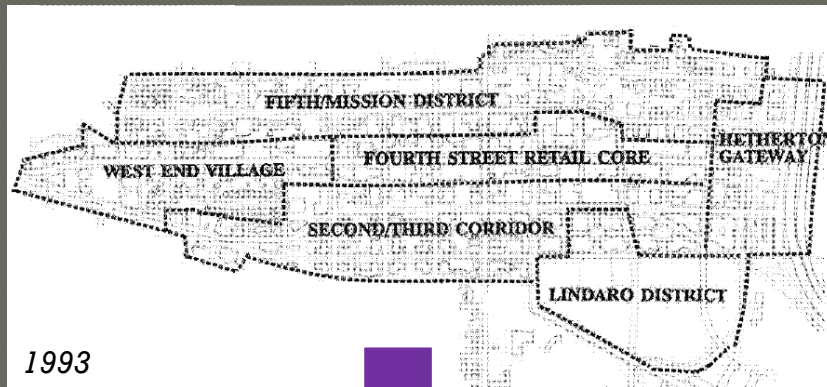
Current Vision

- Lively, dynamic business center
- Vibrant shops and restaurants
- Well-designed buildings
- Active street life, with celebrations, entertainment, special events
- More housing and mixed use
- Hometown feeling
- Multi-modal transportation
- Coordinated service delivery
- Variety of building heights, designs, and sizes



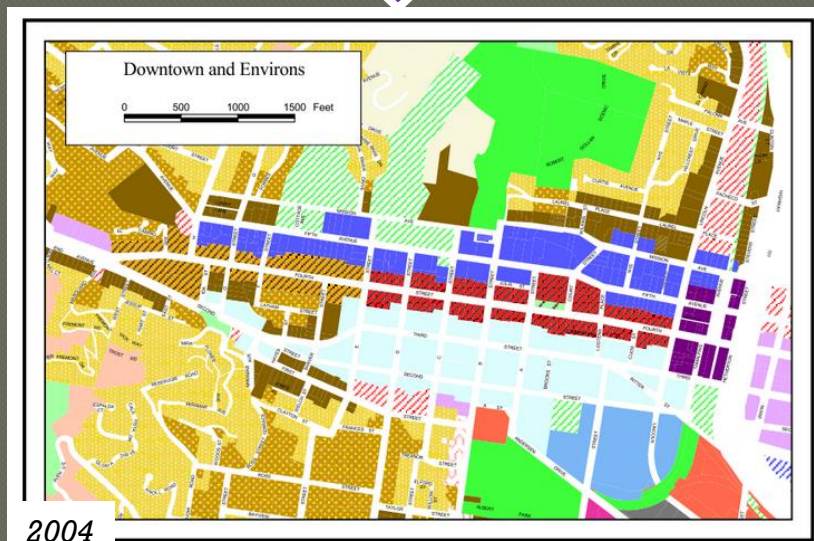
Existing Downtown Regulations

DISTRICTS



1993

- 1993 Districts provided basis for GP 2020 Map and zoning designations
- Each district has associated development standards and use regulations



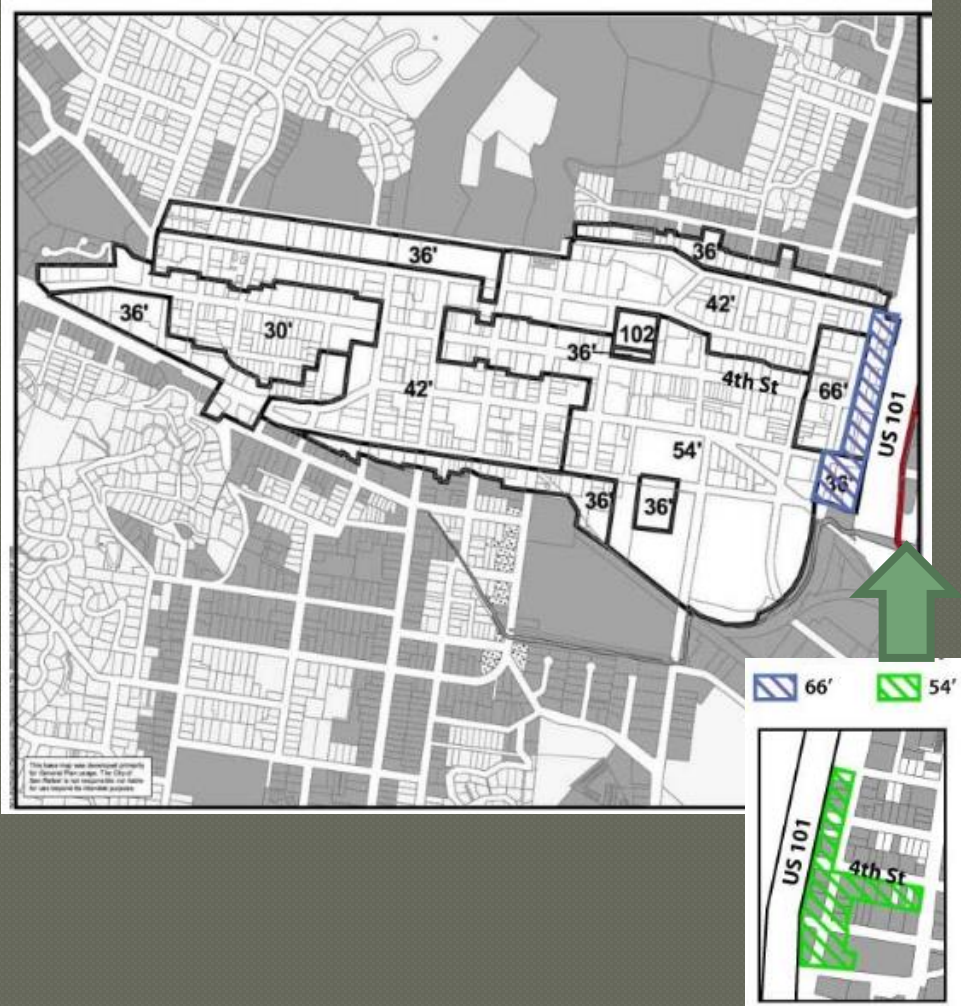
2004

	Hetherton Office, 32 - 62 units/acre
	Lindaro Mixed Use, 6.5 - 15 units/acre
	Lindaro Office, 15 - 32 units/acre
	Second/Third Mixed Use, 32 - 62 units/acre
	Fourth Street Commercial Core, 32 - 62 units/acre
	Fifth/Mission Residential/Office, 15 - 32 units/acre
	West End Village, 15 - 32 units/acre

Existing Downtown Regulations

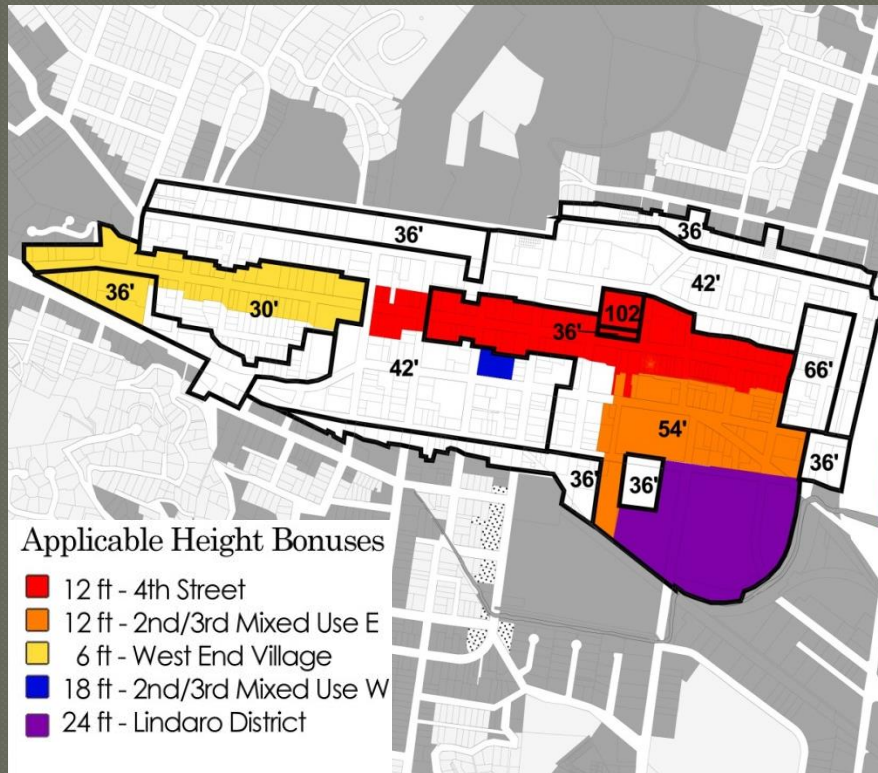
HEIGHT

- Heights generally range from 30-66 feet
- Policies support 2-4 stories, with additional height where amenities are provided
- 2012 Station Area Plan suggested increased heights along 101



Existing Downtown Regulations

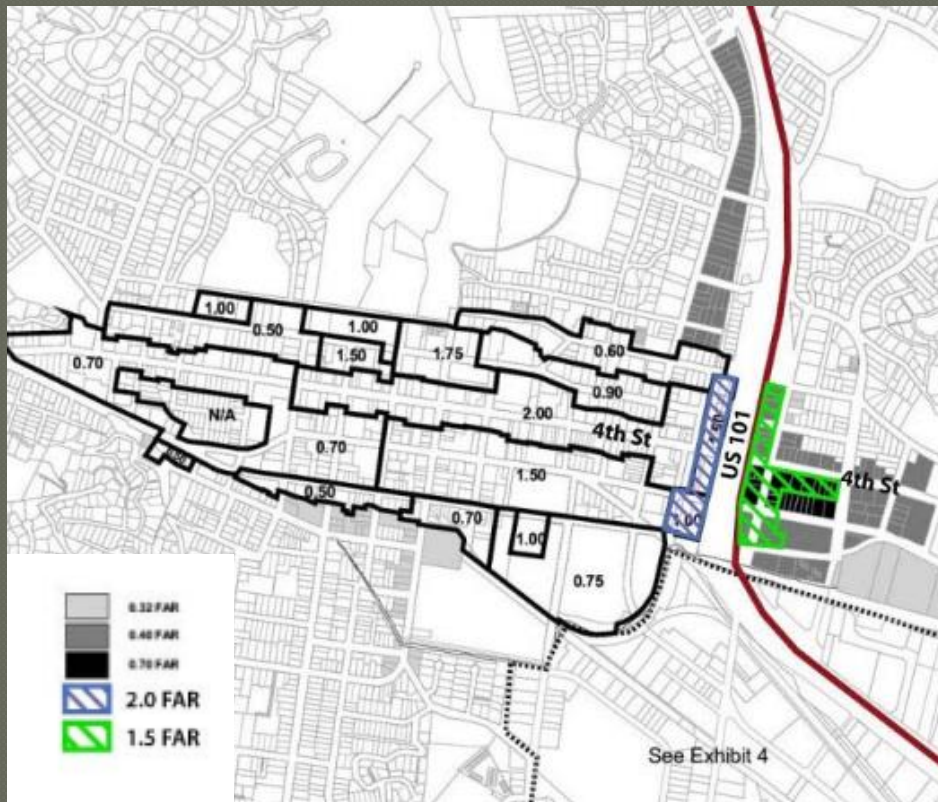
BONUSES



- Height bonuses: 6 to 24 ft
- Linked to specific amenities
 - Affordable housing
 - Courtyards and plazas
 - Public parking
 - Parks
 - Community facilities
 - Passageways and crosswalks
 - Hotels
- State law and City ordinance permits residential density bonus

Existing Downtown Regulations

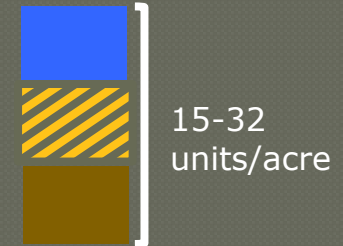
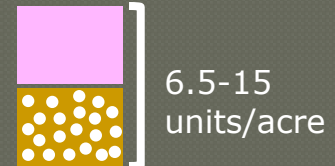
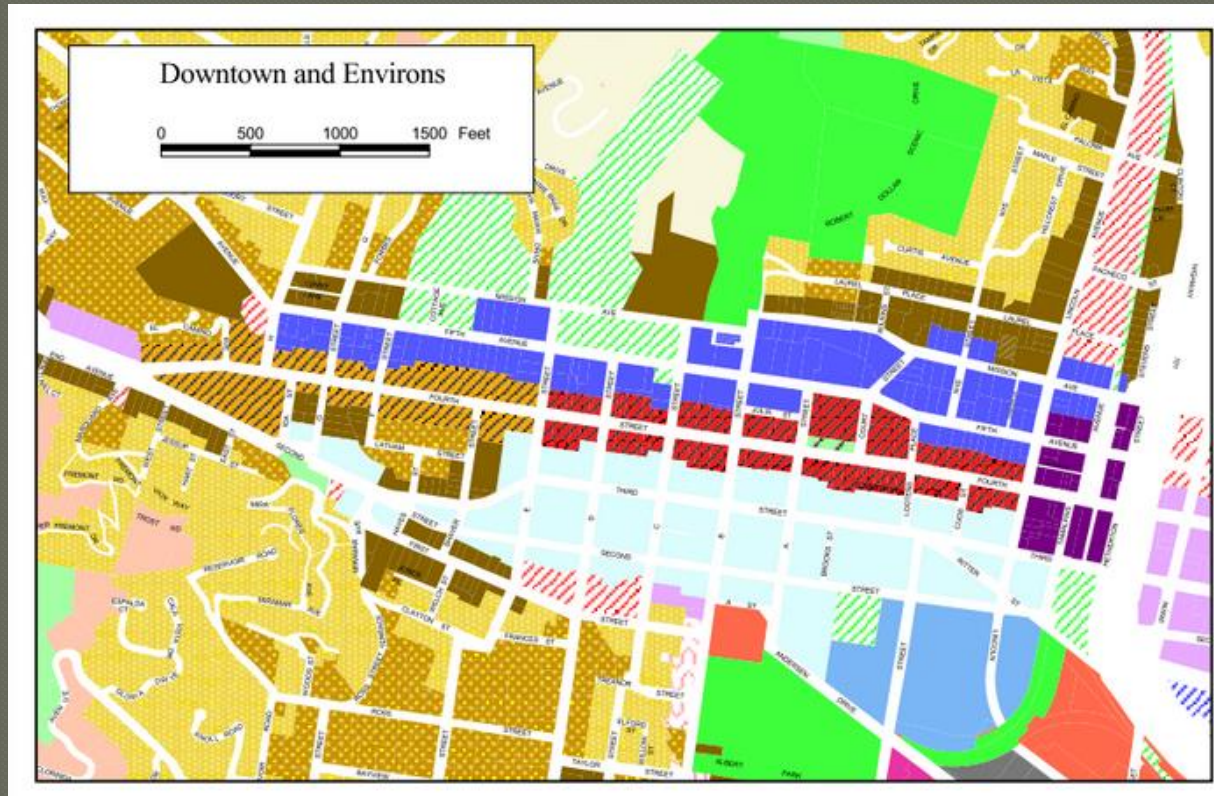
FLOOR AREA RATIO



- FAR range: 0.5 to 2.0
- Excludes housing and structured parking
- 2012 Station Area Plan suggested increased FARs along 101

Existing Downtown Regulations

DENSITY



The 9 land use categories in Downtown represent three density ranges

Existing Downtown Regulations

SETBACKS AND STEPBACKS



- Continuous “street wall” supports pedestrian character
- Zero setbacks in most districts
- 5’ front setback on 2nd/3rd
- Exceptions near residential zones
- Upper story setbacks reduce perceived height and mass at street level
- Add articulation and visual interest
- Supported by Downtown Design Guidelines

Existing Downtown Regulations

PARKING

- Non-residential
 - Up to 1.0 FAR covered by assessment district
 - Additional requirements vary by use
 - Separate standards for West End
- Residential
 - 1-2 spaces per unit, depending on number of bedrooms, location, etc.
 - Exceptions apply
 - Shared parking can reduce requirements in mixed use projects



Design Guidelines

- Street Edge
- Setbacks
- Driveways and Parking
- Entrances
- Windows
- Public Spaces
- Landscaping
- Streetscape
- Historic Buildings



Recent Examples

➤ G Square (4th and G) - Mixed Use Project with

- 7,500 sq ft parcel
- 10 units
- 750 sq. ft retail
- 14 parking spaces

➤ Stats:

- Height: 36 ft (includes 6 ft bonus)
- Density: 10 units (includes 3 state density bonus units) = 58.8 units/acre
- FAR: 0.10 FAR (comm'l only)



Recent Examples

➤ San Rafael Town Center - Mixed Use Project with

- 44,248 sq ft (1.02 acre)
- 133 units
- 41,783 SF office
- 20,312 SF retail
- 247 parking spaces

➤ Stats:

- Height: 66 ft (includes 12 ft bonus)
- Density: 113 units (includes 38 density bonus units) = 112 du/acre
- FAR: 1.4 (commercial only)



Recent Examples

➤ San Rafael Corporate Center - Office Project

- 15.5 acres
- 473,000 sq. ft office
- 1,570 parking spaces

➤ Stats:

- Height: 54-74 feet (tower= 75 ft)
- FAR: 0.70





Revisiting the San Rafael Downtown Vision

Visual Simulation

Questions for Council Discussion

- What is the City Council's vision for Downtown San Rafael?
- To what extent to existing policies, guidelines, and regulations support this vision?
- What feedback or policy direction should be provided to the General Plan 2040 Steering Committee as they begin their work?

Extra Pics (delete this page)

