

From: AIDA DELVALLE [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:59 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Plz post to public record
Importance: High

Please post to the public record city council meeting agenda November 17. 2025.

Beyond the issues of this deal being brokered in secrecy without community input, the unpredictability of the homeless population's mental status is at the heart of our concern. In recent times in the Bay area people have been randomly stabbed or thrown onto train tracks or murdered on the way home from work by some solitary, unhinged homeless person. What to speak of a whole community living adjacent to day cares, pathways that children take to school, a city park where all community members—young and elderly, play and walk? Of course, we know that not all homeless people are prone to violence, but the odds are significant with an entire community of homeless people living in a dense, residential area.

Anything could happen, and no one deserves to live in such dense, close proximity to a potential act of erratic violence happening at any moment. Our children and our community deserve better than that and the city cannot unilaterally make decisions that would endanger us and then say we would never do something to endanger your community. How not? Where is the proof of "no danger"? If we lived in some utopian world where the mental health problems of homeless people were being fully addressed, it would be one thing, and even then still risky. But we know that is not the state of things. Anywhere. It is a problem that has stumped the most sophisticated minds in government. Certainly San Rafael as a city has shown no sign of solving it. This is not a NIMBY reaction. We are one of the most diverse communities in Marin--across class, cultural, racial and generational boundaries--that has shared space peaceably, including in our local city park with people from all walks of life and economic levels. We have engineers, lawyers, therapists, house cleaners, construction workers in our communities and there is mutual respect here. However, now we are talking about putting in a tiny house homeless project in an already dense residential community with many vulnerable children and elders without any kind of community input. A potentially dangerous situation is being imposed on us with no real say in any of it, with no real consideration of our children's safety, our quality of life, our property values, and a host of other very tangible repercussions. This process must be stopped and considered carefully with the full input of the communities that will be affected by it. To do otherwise, is undemocratic, and egregious at worst.

Aida del Valle
[REDACTED]

San Rafael, CA

From: Astrid Zometa [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:55 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: 350 Merrydale Project - Public Comment

To whom it may concern:

I write to request a pause on the development at 350 Merrydale in San Rafael.

This process has had zero neighborhood input and as a mother of two, I am appalled. I am quite sure that if this project was going up in your neighborhood, you would have the same feelings.

I worked in affordable housing, community development, and economic development in a large municipality - this is not the way. Community meetings, design input, months and years of communication - not days.

Please pause and restart the process to find a location that is suitable for transitional housing - our neighborhood is filled with families with children, a child care center and in-home child care locations, and senior housing. We do not need the insecurity created by individuals with various degrees of social safety net needs roaming our streets.

With respect,

Astrid Zometa
[REDACTED]

From: Barbara George [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:36 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: I support the 350 Merrydale project

I am a San Rafael resident [REDACTED] and support the 350 Merrydale Project as described on the City's website- short term interim housing through a tiny home community, then establishing permanent affordable housing units in the long term. The City's plan is well thought out. And the need for such housing has been very clear for years. The plan is supported by actions which have proven to be successful - that is housing is a priority to help people get off the streets when combined with wrap-around services. The community engagement plan is also robust and allows for comprehensive citizen input into the plan.

I urge you to continue to move forward with this plan.
Barbara George

November 17th, 2025

San Rafael City Council Meeting

Dear City Council,

The process for the site selection and purchase of 350 Merrydale — not the issue of homelessness, but the process — has violated the basic expectations of transparency, honesty, and public involvement that this city owes its residents.

We learned about the 350 Merrydale proposal the same way everyone else did: helicopters overhead and a press conference we weren't invited to. By then, everything was polished — the website, the FAQ, the talking points. This wasn't a proposal; it was the presentation of a done deal.

You kept this plan behind closed doors under the excuse of "property negotiations." But paying two to three times market value for land doesn't require secrecy. It only requires secrecy if the goal is to keep the public out.

And that's exactly what happened.

No legitimate community meeting.

No outreach to Merrydale families.

No notice to the school district.

And Spanish-speaking families were left out entirely until the community demanded inclusion.

Now suddenly there's a rush to move this forward — and the public deserves to know why.

This isn't engagement. It's negligence.

If this project is truly meant to serve the community, the community shouldn't learn about it from a surprise press conference.

We deserve notice. We deserve transparency.

We deserve honesty before pageantry.

Postpone the vote. Open the process. Let the public in.

Regards,

Carter Phelps

From: DEBRA HOWELL [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:56 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: I support the 350 Merrydale Road housing project;

Hello City Council Members:

I am Debra Howell, a member of the Marin Organizing Committee and voter. I live within walking distance of the proposed interim housing project at 350 Merrydale Road and I support it.

Housing is the number #1 issue for residents of Marin according to a recent survey. Although homelessness is a difficult and widespread issue, Marin has been making progress. Since it started using a Housing First model in 2018, over 900 chronically unhoused people have been permanently housed. There are still people waiting to be housed. This interim housing site will give those who are waiting a safe place to be until they do get housing.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the City Council to approve this project.

Sincerely,

Debra Howell

[REDACTED]
San Rafael, CA 94903

From: Jennifer Robinson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:00 PM
To: BOS@marincounty.org <BOS@marincounty.org>; Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Lindsay Lara <lindsay.lara@cityofsanrafael.org>; Eli Hill <eli.hill@cityofsanrafael.org>; msackett@marincounty.gov <msackett@marincounty.gov>; Maribeth Bushey <maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: 350 Merrydale Road

**Letter Opposing the Development at 350 Merrydale Road
City of San Rafael**

To the San Rafael City Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the interim housing development recently announced for 350 Merrydale Road. My concerns are not rooted in a lack of compassion for those in need, but in the way this project was selected, communicated, and placed into an established residential and business community without transparency or meaningful public involvement.

From the beginning, the process has felt secretive and intentionally obscured from the very people who will be most impacted. The community learned of the project only after the ribbon-cutting ceremony had already taken place, leaving no opportunity for residents or local businesses to ask questions, understand the implications, or voice their concerns. This unilateral rollout has eroded trust and suggests the City never intended to engage the neighborhood in an honest dialogue.

It is also deeply troubling that the City and County evaluated 32 other potential sites (still with no matrix or understanding of how you eliminated them all), ultimately in favor of Merrydale—a quiet residential corridor that was never designed to absorb a high-intensity service program of this scale. The decision to dismiss dozens of alternatives and concentrate the project here raises understandable questions about motives, criteria, and whether equity and community input were ever meaningfully considered.

Furthermore, the relocation of services from downtown—where oversight, resources, and transit access are strongest—into a neighborhood area is alarming. It gives the impression that the City's goal is not better care or improved outcomes, but rather to move activity out of the public eye and away from the scrutiny of residents, businesses, and visitors near downtown. Shifting challenges from one part of the city to another is not a solution; it simply places new burdens on a neighborhood that had no voice in this decision.

Residents and business owners deserve transparency, safety planning, and real engagement, not after-the-fact announcements. This development, as currently executed, represents a failure in public communication, a dismissal of stakeholder rights, and a breakdown in the collaborative process that should define local government.

I urge the City to pause further action on this project, re-engage the community immediately, and reconsider the selection of 350 Merrydale Road. Decisions of this magnitude must be made with openness, accountability, and respect for the people who live and work in the surrounding area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Gavin & Jennifer Madden

From: Jeanine Strobel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 2:20 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: I support the Merrydale Interim Housing Project

Dear Supervisors,

I strongly support the Merrydale Interim Housing Project. Here in Marin, we see vulnerable seniors, the disabled and other vulnerable people living on the streets, in RVs and in their cars.

Here is an opportunity to take a step towards ending homelessness in Marin. I strongly support this project and encourage you to stand strong for creating affordable housing for our neighbors.

Thank you so much,
Jeanine Strobel

From: Ken Casey [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:01 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Please post for the public record November 17th 350 Merrydale

Please post for the public record November 17th 350 Merrydale

My name is Ken Casey.

I'm here with a very clear message: **This vote must be postponed.**

The City is asking the public to accept a major, multi-million-dollar real estate purchase while providing **none** of the basic information required for informed decision-making.

We still do **not** have the records.

We still do **not** have the selection criteria.

And we still have **no explanation** for why 350 Merrydale was chosen over other sites.

That alone should stop this process in its tracks.

But now, something even more serious has happened:

A judge issued a **Temporary Restraining Order** blocking the City from moving forward until November 24. A court does not freeze a project like this unless the concerns are **substantial, urgent, and potentially consequential**.

If the judiciary is sounding the alarm, the City Council should not be charging ahead.

This is not responsible governance.

This is not transparency.

And this is not how you treat the community you serve.

Pushing through a high-impact real estate deal—without documents, without community trust, and under the shadow of a court order—is reckless.

This Council has a choice tonight:

You can continue down a path of secrecy and rushed decisions, or you can pause, show accountability, and give the public the information we are entitled to.

We are not asking for anything unreasonable.

We are asking for **basic due diligence**.

We are asking for **the truth** about how this site was chosen.

And we are asking for **the transparency the City promises but has not delivered**.

Until the City produces the records, the criteria, and a credible review of this process—

Postpone the vote.

Do not move forward in the dark.

Do not ignore the court.

Do not ignore the community.

Thank you.

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: Katie Fleet [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:00 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Merrydale Road Interim Housing Project

Dear Ms. Lara, Mayor Kate, and City Councilmembers, and City Manager's Office,

I wanted to address the Mayor and City Council on the issue of the Merrydale Road housing project. I'm a San Rafael resident and a parent and I've been involved in community discussions related to housing and homelessness in San Rafael since the issue came up in connection with my daughter's childcare program in 2022.

At that time, there was an encampment adjacent to the Parkside Children's Center. Since then, I've followed this issue and encampments we've seen on Lindaro Street and Anderson Drive, the sanctioned camping area on the Mahon Creek path, and camping in city parks and other locations. I also served on the Homeless Solutions Working Group last winter.

I am writing and attending the City Council meeting today because I support this project and the city's and county's efforts to provide supportive housing for people in San Rafael. There is no perfect place for a project like this. I think we all wish it didn't have to exist. And I know there is a lot of fear and uncertainty about this issue. I experienced it when the Mahon Creek sanctioned campground idea was first introduced. In hindsight, Mahon Creek was a big step forward. And we need to keep moving forward toward real solutions.

To be clear, I don't think encampments like what we see now on Anderson Drive are the answer to this situation – either on Anderson Drive or at Merrydale Road. But that's not what we're talking about here. We are talking about a sanctioned, supervised project, where there are rules, accountability, and safety measures for residents and neighbors.

I appreciate the city doing what they said they would do to find alternatives to Mahon Creek and camping on Anderson. I also appreciate the city's commitment to dialogue with neighbors and community members. For all our sake, I hope we can keep the momentum going so we can make meaningful progress on this important issue.

Thank you.

Katie Fleet

From: Lauren Vreeland Long [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:56 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Merrydale Interim Housing in Terra Linda

Hello San Rafael City Council members,

I am writing in support of the Merrydale Interim Housing project in Terra Linda. I own a home in the neighborhood and attend the Unitarian Universalists of Marin Church, also in Terra Linda.

This project addresses the immediate needs of our unhoused neighbors. We, Unitarians believe in social justice and the dignity of each person and of our responsibility as a community to help those in need.

Please approve this plan and continue your efforts to find and fund real solutions to the growing homelessness we see around the county.

As a former Commissioner on the Marin County Commission on Aging and a current member of the Marin Organizing Committee's Aging and Disability team I am aware of the increased numbers of older adults falling into homelessness.

Sincerely,
Lauren Vreeland Long

From: marci friedman [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:15 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Please Post for Public Record

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express deep frustration with your handling of the proposed homeless site at 350 Merrydale.

You are not involving your constituents who voted you into office! You are giving snippets of information at the last hour so it will appear you have notified your constituents when in reality you are not giving them an opportunity for proper dialogue.

Until a full fiscal impact study and transparent community review are completed, I strongly urge you to pause all funding and approval processes for this site.

Sincerely,
Marci Friedman

From: marci friedman [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:11 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Please Post for Public Record

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express deep frustration with your handling of the proposed homeless site at 350 Merrydale. The lack of communication, closed-door negotiations, and absence of a clear cost-benefit plan is not only disappointing—it is fiscally reckless.

Here are just a few of the concerns that demand immediate attention:

1. Outrageous Public Spending Without Community Input

An \$8 million county allocation is being spent on land acquisition and setup for an interim project with no defined path to permanency. There is no developer, no financing, no timeline—just vague plans for an 80-unit future that may never materialize.

2. Zero ROI Accountability

Where is the plan to track impact? What's the projected cost per person served—and how many will exit to permanent housing? Other counties have poured hundreds of millions into similar programs with 27% success rates—and half of those return to homelessness. This is not a solution; it's a very expensive revolving door.

This approach doesn't solve homelessness—it displaces it. And it does so at a premium.

Until a full fiscal impact study and transparent community review are completed, I strongly urge you to pause all funding and approval processes for this site.

The community deserves to understand how its money is being spent—and to have a say in whether it's being spent wisely.

Sincerely,
Marci Friedman

From: Margaret Partlow [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Merrydale interim housing project

Dear Council Members:

I am voicing support for the Merrydale interim housing project concept as a plan to address the needs of those without a home in our community. If the project's residents are provided with onsite services, as the plan outlines, and if neighbors' concerns about security can be addressed, then the project can set a great example for other parts of Marin County where projects can happen.

Margaret Partlow

From: Paula Doubleday [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:58 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: In the nick of time! For the meeting tonight

RE: Merrydale

I appreciate that many people are very concerned about safety when they oppose the tiny homes community project. However, the structure of this interim shelters seems well attuned to providing safety for its residents, as well as those housed in the Merrydale neighborhood. I imagine a woman who has been sleeping outside in a tent or a doorway and the difference in HER SAFETY from having a door she can lock. Or electricity. Or running water and showers nearby. I wish people would just take a moment to think about that.

It is so important for us to create support paths out of homelessness in our County. I see so much demonization of those who simply have no roof over their heads. There are many more people in the County living WITH a roof who have addiction and mental health challenges, litter our roads and are criminals. But for the person who experienced trauma as a child, is disabled, is a senior who lost their lease, domestic violence victim or the kid who was kicked out for being gay: They all deserve more in this world than living in a tent. We are one of the wealthiest counties in the State and every step we take to lift those less fortunate than us is just the right thing to do.

It only takes a moment to imagine oneself or a family member living outside. Empathy can build bridges.

Thank you for supporting this effort and collaborating with the County.

Paula Doubleday

--

Paula Doubleday Design Inc.
[REDACTED]

From: Rick Swanson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:13 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: 350 Merrydale

City Council of San Rafael:

One of my concerns of the Merrydale tiny home project includes, drug use, sex offenders and crime. In an email correspondence with Mayor Kate, these questions were asked and not answered. Her response and I quote " I also want to be clear that I would never support a project that I believe would compromise the safety of nearby residents."

My response, how irresponsible is that! The City is simply moving a problem from one area to another with full knowledge of the tense situation. Why don't you help the homeless, don't just relocate them, it solves nothing. Quit playing politics and involve those being affected.

We request you pause the project and hold open well publicized meeting before any further commitments are made.

Please post for public record.

Sincerely,
Rick & Teri Swanson

From: Susan Woodhouse [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:35 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: 350 Merrydale Project Please Post in the Public Record

350 Merrydale Homeless Shelter Project
November 17 Public Hearing Comments
Please Post in the Public Record

I am speaking as a resident of Rafael Meadows, I understand your goal is to get unhoused people housed. The site that is proposed to be purchased by the City to create another encampment of tiny homes is moving too fast without input from the surrounding community. This is not about being against homelessness but lack of transparency on the part of the city and county. The criticism you are hearing is not about “not in my backyard” but why were we deliberately kept out of the process? Why was there no early outreach, no public workshops, no neighborhood meetings, no opportunity for community-based problem solving before you, the City moves forward. We want you to stop the vote and include the surrounding community on information regarding this project to include the concerns of the businesses and family neighborhoods.

The problems we find concerning are as follows:

1. Why expose small children to individuals that are suffering from mental illness, and addiction,.
2. We are concerned that there will not be vetting of individuals that may be sex offenders. We want to keep our children safe.
3. Homelessness attracts homeless individuals, that is how they build their community. The area called “gray area” by the train tracks may become a place for individuals to congregate. Children use this path to walk to school. Again why subject children to unsafe conditions.
4. Why are you overlooking the community’s concerns for safety. Why are you not involving the surrounding community, businesses, apartments and Rafael Meadows neighborhood. the
5. Why not place the tiny homes in areas that are separate from children going to school and neighborhoods? I was quoted by MaryBeth Bushy, “ these individuals will be too busy getting ID, seeking community resources for housing, job opportunities, they will not be wandering your neighborhood. We will be using a van to take the people to downtown to access the services.” Then they should be located near the services!!!!
6. What happens if the money runs out or then people are not housed and they want to start construction on the apartments, will they be moved elsewhere? Will the encampment remain??
7. Answers please! This is not acceptable. what will actually be the plan??? How will it look, will there be porta potties, porta showers. how will the privacies of these individuals have to take care of personal business?

It was also stated that individuals who do not follow the “Code of Conduct” will be removed from the program, and the city will ensure that those individuals do not reestablish encampments near the site. Where are they going to go?????

Since the City of San Rafael is planning on placement of this encampment in a neighborhood, therefore, the City of San Rafael is 100% liable for any theft, fire, trespassing on private property and assault performed by said individuals.

We want transparency. Hold transparent well-publicized public meetings before any further decisions are made. Release a full chronological account of how this site was selected, and who approved each step and when. This is not a workable solution for helping the homeless at this site. It appears to be just a band aid to remove a group in tents to the suburbs with no real plan of how the encampment will work or look or how services will be considered. No one was able to give me a plan at the meeting at the JCC 10/28/25.

Susan Woodhouse, Rafael Meadows