


Gregory Andrew



November 17, 2025

Ms. Lindsay Lara, City Clerk, and City of San Rafael
City of San Rafael
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
Via email: city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org

Re: Public Comment for the San Rafael City Council meeting of November 17, 2025; Item 6 on Declaration of Shelter Crisis and Approval of Related Actions and Acquisition of the Property Located at 350 Merrydale Road (APNS 179-041-27 & 179-041-28) for Use as an Interim Shelter and Affordable Housing

Dear Ms. Lara and City of San Rafael,

I am submitting this public comment and request that it be entered into the public record for the above reference City Council meeting and agenda item.

The City of San Rafael, led by the Mayor, Councilmembers, and City Manager have taken a planned, deliberate, and intentional course of action to: decide to purchase 350 Merrydale and establish it for use as an interim homeless shelter; to hide this decision from the public, and to prevent the public from having any opportunity to participate and comment on this decision before the decision was made and agreed upon. In so doing, the Mayor and Councilmembers have denied me my constitutional right to free speech and to petition them on this matter.

Some of the evidence that shows this violation of my rights, include:

August 11 & 18, 2025 - City Council Closed Sessions on: CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS; Property: 350 Merrydale Road / 3833 Redwood Highway, San Rafael APNs 179-041-27 & 179-041-28 had been occurring since March 2025, with no reportable actions released from any of those sessions. The August 11, 2025 City Council meeting agenda was the last time a Closed Session on this item was posted. At the August 18, 2025 City Council meeting, Chief Assistant City Attorney Andrea Visveshwara announced that, *"no reportable action was taken in Closed Session on August 11, 2025."* At no time, has a reportable action be announced to the public from any Closed Sessions on this item. And yet, on October 24, 2025, I received written confirmation from the City that:

"The parties have completed their negotiations as to the price and terms of the payment for the property. Staff are currently negotiating the documents to be executed based on the direction given by the Council."

It should be noted that the City admits that price and terms of payment had been decided and that City staff was proceeding with direction given by the Mayor and Councilmembers; none of which has

ever been reported out of Closed Session to inform the public or allowed to be commented on by the public.

On October 7, 2025, the County of Marin, stating they were speaking on behalf of the County and City of San Rafael, wrote to Governor Newsom's office, inviting the Governor to an October 15th press event, *"to publicly announce the acquisition of a large property in San Rafael for transitional housing & interim shelter, planned to be open in 2026."* The invitation also states, *"We would be honored if the Governor, First Partner – or a representative in their place –were able to join us for the press event for some remarks about the importance of projects like these."* Lastly, the invitation also describes that the invitation and information had to be kept secret. A similar invitation was sent on October 8th to Secretary Tomiquia Moss of the California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency. The Mayor and Councilmembers would not have approved the release of that invitation unless they had already decided to purchase the property (350 Merrydale) and develop it for interim shelter and to hide that information from disclosure.

On or before October 10, 2025, the two property owners of 350 Merrydale signed a (final) Purchase and Sale Agreement for the City of San Rafael to purchase the property. The two owners would not have signed this Agreement if the Mayor and Councilmembers had not approved the City moving forward this agreement being drawn up and given to the property owners to sign – if the City had not stated to the owner the City's desire and intention to purchase the property and to also sign the (final) Purchase and Sale Agreement. This is not standard for government transactions. The City cannot sign or accept delivery of a signed contract until the City Council approves the transaction in open session.

On October 15, 2025, the Mayor and two Councilmembers attended and spoke at the Press Announcement, held at 350 Merrydale, with the Mayor beginning the event and making the following statements:

- "I am joined here today by Councilmember Rachel Kertz and Councilmember Eli Hill and we are pleased to represent the entire San Rafael City Council."
- *"The ultimate goal is long term affordable housing; and while that goal is being realized, because we know it takes time to entitle and build affordable housing projects, there will be an interim shelter project, here on this site."*
- *"We also rely on our State government partners. With their support, we have already received, for the Mahon Sanctioned Camping Project, \$6 million, of which some of that money will now go towards this project. A portion of this funding will fund the first 18 months here at 350 Merrydale."*

The Mayor's statements at the October 15th Press Announcement are emphatically clear that the entire City Council had already approved the project, that the purchase of 350 Merrydale and an interim homeless shelter at the site are a done deal; and that the City is committing public funds to the site and project. This was stated all before a single public meeting was held on this item and decisions were made by the Mayor and Councilmembers, denying me and all the public any knowledge of or comment on any of it.

These four actions alone provide clear and obvious evidence that the Mayor and Councilmembers had decided and conspired to purchase 350 Merrydale and establish an Interim Homeless Shelter all before there had been any publicly noticed and open public meeting for me and all the people to learn about, comment on, and participate in the decision process.

Between July and October, the City communicated with the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District (LGVSD) and the property owner, to conduct due diligence on sewer service at 350 Merrydale. While this is certainly appropriate for investigating the property, it appears that the City intervened, on behalf of the property owner/seller, for the LGVSD to pull a Revocation of Will-Serve Letter for 350 Merrydale from its Board meeting agenda of October 2, 2025. On September 29th, San Rafael Director of Community and Economic Development, Micha Hinkle notified City staff of communications between the LGVSD and the property owner on the LGVSD's intended revocation and in this notification Mr. Hinkle stated that he had earlier *"raised concerns that the applicant should have awareness of the District actions."* October 1st, Mr. Hinkle requested a meeting with the City's broker regarding LGVSD's intended actions. On October 2nd, Mr. Hinkle was cc'd on a letter from the property owner to the LGVSD summarizing that the LGVSD had agreed to pull the revocation item from the October 2nd LGVSD Board meeting and that there would not be any further discussions regarding a revocation. There does not appear to be any particular improper actions by the City on this matter. However, these actions are further evidence of the City's unwavering intention to purchase 350 Merrydale - to do whatever was necessary to secure the purchase. These were not Closed Session actions but all of these actions occurred before there had been any public announcement or public meetings on the intended purchase. The Mayor and Councilmembers had an obligation to inform the public and seek public input but the Mayor and Councilmembers intentionally breached their duties.

The Brown Act states:

"The people of this State do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created."

I do not and will not relinquish my constitutional rights to free speech and petition.

The Mayor and Councilmembers have turned a blind eye to the Brown Act. This is demonstrated in an October 22, 2025 response the Mayor wrote to a resident who had questioned the transparency and rushed timeline for the City Council's vote to approve the purchase and project, In this October 22nd response, the Mayor wrote:

"The City and County have been exploring this project for several months, and as with all potential property negotiations, the initial discussions were held in closed session as required by state law. Once those negotiations reached a point where public input would be most useful, the City immediately shared details publicly, created a project webpage, and scheduled two community meetings to ensure residents could learn more and ask questions."

This response shows that the Mayor believes the City is the one who decides what is good for the people to know and when to know it, which is only when public knowledge and input , “would be most useful.” The Mayor’s response also limits public engagement to the public being allowed to be informed - to learn and ask questions, but apparently not to engage, analyze, comment on, or participate in any decisions.

It appears that the City is prepared to pay a much higher price for 350 Merrydale than it might actually be worth. The City is prepared to pay \$6.7 million for a property that the Marin County Assessor has assessed at \$1,081,615, such that the market value, based on the sale price, would appear to be over 6 times the assessed value. A cursory analysis of a half dozen commercial and multi-family residential properties currently for sale within the 94903 area reveals that, on average, the market value (i.e., the asking price) is less than 2 times the assessed value. While property assessment is complicated this raises a concern that the City will pay too much for the property Furthermore, the tax implications of the City purchasing 350 Merrydale and converting this parcel from taxable private ownership to tax-exempt public use will have immediate and long-term financial consequences that cannot be ignored. The public must be engaged in these decisions and the Mayor and Councilmembers have a fiduciary responsibility to the public, on spending taxpayer money, which cannot be denied or set aside.

To the Mayor and Councilmembers – You have been willfully derelict of duty. You must rescind all actions that have been taken on 350 Merrydale and vote NO on all aspects of Item 6. For the sake of my rights and the rights of all the people, for the sake of your duties and obligations, and for the sake of your political careers, you must vote NO!

Thank you,



Gregory Andrew
GMA:gma
encl.

cc: Mayor Kate Colin kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org
Councilmember/Vice Mayor Maribeth Bushey maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org
Councilmember Eli Hill eli.hill@cityofsanrafael.org
Councilmember Rachel Kertz rachel.kertz@cityofsanrafael.org
Councilmember Maika Llorens Gulati maika@cityofsanrafael.org

From: [Talía Smith](#)
To: [Alan Moore](#); [Abigail Solis](#)
Cc: [Laine Hendricks](#); Daniel.Cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org; [Sackett, Mary](#); [Julia Reinhard](#); Preya.Nixon@cityofsanrafael.org
Subject: Weds 10/15 3:30pm press event invite - new San Rafael housing site
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 5:05:51 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Abigail and Alan,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to reach out on behalf of the County and the City of San Rafael to invite you, or another representative from your office, to a press event next **Wednesday 10/15 @ 3:30pm** to publicly announce the acquisition of a large property in San Rafael for transitional housing & interim shelter, planned to open in 2026.

This project was made possible in large part thanks to a [\\$6 million state Encampment Resolution Funding \(ERF\) grant](#) awarded to San Rafael and the County to address encampments along the Mahon Creek Path. This soon-to-be-announced project will house 65 unsheltered Marin residents, making it the largest and most impactful project like this in Marin to date.

We would be honored if the Governor, First Partner – or a representative in their place – were able to join us for the press event for some remarks about the importance of projects like these. We know what a high priority it is for the Governor to meaningfully address homelessness in all communities, and this project right here in his home county is an excellent example of what is possible from a strong City-County-state partnership.

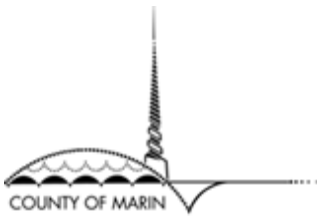
Senator McGuire and Assemblymember Connolly will also be at the event, along with Supervisor Mary Sackett, San Rafael Mayor Kate Colin and other local electeds.

Please let me know if attendance from the Governor, First Partner, or a representative from your office is possible.

Finally, note that **this information is embargoed**, so we appreciate you keeping this information and invite confidential until after next Wednesday.

Thank you!

Talia



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Talia Smith (she/her)
INTERIM DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 325
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 450 0239 Cell
Talia.Smith@marincounty.gov

From: Micah Hinkle <micah.hinkle@cityofsanrafael.org>

To: John Stefanski <John.Stefanski@cityofsanrafael.org>, Cristine Alilovich
<Cristine.Alilovich@cityofsanrafael.org>

Cc: Daniel Cooperman <Daniel.Cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org>, "Andrea Visveshwara"
<Andrea.Visveshwara@cityofsanrafael.org>, Rob Epstein
<Rob.Epstein@cityofsanrafael.org>, Greg Minor <Greg.Minor@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: FW: Notice of Revocation of Will-Serve Letter for 350 Merrydale - FYI District
Communication to property developer

Date: Mon, 29 Sep 2025 21:37:11 +0000

Importance: Normal

Inline-Images: Outlook-LGVSD-logo

FYI-

The below message is from the district to the applicant as I raised concerns that the applicant should have awareness of the District actions.

The District has informed the seller of their intended actions.

Micah

From: Mike Cortez <mcortez@lgsd.org>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:28 AM

To: mhooper campusproperty.com <mhooper@campusproperty.com>

Cc: Micah Hinkle <micah.hinkle@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Notice of Revocation of Will-Serve Letter for 350 Merrydale

Hi Mike,

Please be advised that the October 2, 2025 LGVSD Board meeting agenda includes an item for the revocation of the Will-Serve Letter for 350 Merrydale, which was issued by the District Board about a year ago. The details are shown in Item 4I on page 27 of the agenda shown on this link:

<https://www.lgsd.org/files/5d46973cc/agendapacket10022025.pdf>

I also left a message for you at (415) 298-7571. Please confirm if that phone number is still valid and let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Michael P. Cortez, PE

District Engineer

101 Lucas Valley Rd, Suite 300

San Rafael, CA 94903

Direct: 415.526.1518

Main Office: 415.472.1734



MD000001

From: Micah Hinkle <Micah.Hinkle@cityofsanrafael.org>

To: Greg Minor <Greg.Minor@cityofsanrafael.org>

Cc: John Stefanski <John.Stefanski@cityofsanrafael.org>, Daniel Cooperman <Daniel.Cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org>, Cristine Alilovich <Cristine.Alilovich@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: CED - 350 Merrydale land transaction support

Date: Wed, 1 Oct 2025 18:43:56 +0000

Importance: Normal

Inline-Images: image001.png

Hello Greg,

I had a chance to connect with Daniel this morning and get caught up on the areas he is supporting that intersect with the land transaction related to utilities.

Can you please schedule a meeting with Joe McCullum who is our brokerage rep as he has been the lead with engagement with the seller? I want to bring him up to speed on the district activities and next steps. Steps/Activities include:

1. Seller needs to secure modified agreement with District to secure sewer capacity agreement. If the district revokes agreement, then the sales terms and appraisal are of concern. There are many options to resolve this including modified payment schedule that provides a good faith payment to lock in the sewer capacity allocation. The seller needs to lead this effort, but terms need to be disclosed to us and agreed to by the City prior to close of escrow.
2. Daniel is working on the interim use plan including the building improvements that may trigger water/sewer improvements that need utility approvals. Daniel anticipates plan for this by 10/15. We should request a meeting with the District staff on 10/16 or shortly thereafter in order to catch their ad-hoc meeting in early November if it is triggered that sewer capacity is needed. We also need to establish what our unit target for the long-term project as the district will need to give us sewer allocation for that project. Additional units over 45 triggers sewer capacity analysis, so I want to be clear on our unit targets.
3. Water – Greg can you outreach the water district to make sure we have capacity availability for interim use and long term?

John – do we have a schedule on the County funding agreement? I know that financing is a closing contingency for this project, so I just want to track that timing.

Thank you,

Micah

Micah Hinkle (He/Him) | Director

City of San Rafael

Community & Economic Development Department

1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael CA 94901

Office 415.485.3460



MD000005

CAMPUS
PROPERTY GROUP

Michael P. Cortez, District Engineer
Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District
101 Lucas Valley Road, Suite 300
San Rafael, CA 94903

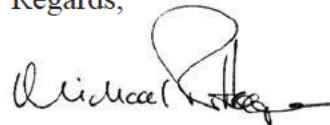
Re: 350 Merrydale Rd, San Rafael, CA 94903 – Agenda Item 4.I

Dear Mr. Cortez:

Pursuant to our voicemail exchange this morning, the purpose of this letter is to confirm your message to me that the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District (LGVSD) has pulled Agenda Item 4.1 from today's LGVSD Board Meeting and that no further discussion regarding the Will Serve Letter, or any action by the LGVSD to revoke the Will Serve Letter for the above-referenced project will proceed at this time.

As we discussed in our prior conversations when this matter first arose on September 29th, we will meet with you to discuss the project status and next steps pursuant to the current Will-Serve Letter. We look forward to discussing this matter with you on October 6, 2025.

Regards,


Michael Hooper

cc: Dale McDonald, Administrative Services Manager
Curtis Paxton, General Manager, LGVSD
David Byers, LGVSD General Counsel
Daniel Cooperman, City of San Rafael
Micah Hinkleman, City of San Rafael
David Jacobson, Ridgewood Properties

From: "Mayor Kate" <Kate.Colin@cityofsanrafael.org>

To: '[REDACTED]' <[REDACTED]@icloud.com>

Subject: Re: 350 Merrydale

Date: Wed, 22 Oct 2025 16:54:22 -0000

Importance: Normal

Inline-Images: Outlook-3albdmaj.png

And lmk if the link works as another resident told me it didn't work when they clicked it. Sometimes that happens with the city's strong firewall.

Kate Colin (she/her/hers)

Mayor, City of San Rafael



From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@icloud.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 9:51 AM

To: Mayor Kate <Kate.Colin@cityofsanrafael.org>

Cc: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Re: 350 Merrydale

Thank you, Mayor Kate.

On Oct 22, 2025, at 9:47 AM, Mayor Kate <Kate.Colin@cityofsanrafael.org> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED] - Thank you for reaching out and for sharing your concerns about the Merrydale Interim Shelter Project. I understand there's a lot of information circulating, and I want to be very clear about what's actually happening and how the public is being included.

The City and County have been exploring this project for several months, and as with all potential property negotiations, the initial discussions were held in closed session as required by state law. Once those negotiations reached a point where public input would be most useful, the City immediately shared details publicly, created a project webpage, and scheduled two community meetings to ensure residents could learn more and ask questions.

The first meeting will be a virtual community meeting on **Monday, October 28 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.**, which allows the greatest number of people to participate and will be recorded for anyone who can't attend live.

From: Amy Ewing [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:34 PM
To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: in favor of 350 Merrydale

I am very much in favor of the 350 Merrydale housing project. I live in Lucas Valley.
Amy Ewing

[REDACTED]
San Rafael 94903

-----Original Message-----

From: Antoinette Golbus [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:19 AM

To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: re: Merrydale Project and Affordable housing in general

Dear Council Members, I support the Merrydale project and affordable housing for all!!!!!!

Antoinette Golbus

[REDACTED]

94901

From: Bryn DEAMER [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:49 AM
To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Need for development of south side track access from 350 Merrydale to SMART station.

Friends,

Congratulations on moving ahead on 350 Merrydale St.

One thing I wonder about is if there will be an access from the end of Merrydale to the SMART station. There is a fence blocking that access, but it has been cut, and an informal track created that leads under the 101 underpass on the South side of the Track.

This needs to be formalized and made safe.

I trust that you will work with SMART and the county/city to have this ready for our new cabin residents as well as the existing users of the path.

Warm Regards,
Bryn Deamer,
Happy Valley/Montecito
[REDACTED]

From: Cristine J [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:49 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd

Dear Mayor Kate Colin, and City Council members Maika Llorens Gulati, Eli Hill, Maribeth Bushey and Rachel Kertz ,

I am writing in support of the proposed project at 350 Merrydale, to provide interim shelter for 65 unhoused individuals and subsequently 80 units of affordable housing.

This project brings many benefits to our community.

This dual-phase approach offers immediate assistance to vulnerable individuals, and also contributes long-term affordable housing stock. It quickly brings more interim shelter online. We have too many unsheltered homeless in Marin and this will provide a short-term solution for many of them, and will ultimately contribute to Marin County's affordable housing stock via a multi-year process to develop affordable housing development while using the land productively in the interim.

This is a great location for affordable housing.

The site is less than a half-mile from the SMART Marin Civic Center Station, providing direct rail access to jobs and services throughout Marin and Sonoma Counties. It's also served by Marin Transit bus routes along Redwood Highway, giving residents and shelter participants reliable connections without needing a car.

The location is near county offices, health and social services, and nonprofits that already work with unhoused and low-income residents. This makes it easier for program staff to coordinate care, and for residents to access case management, employment programs, and healthcare.

Redwood Highway is already a mixed-use area with multifamily housing, light commercial uses, and community services. Adding this project fits with the existing neighborhood fabric and helps activate an underused property rather than extending development into new areas.

This project makes efficient use of an underutilized site. The site has been vacant for about five years. Using this parcel for affordable housing prevents blight, supports neighborhood vitality, and leverages existing infrastructure rather than expanding outward.

Sincerely,
Cris Jones

From: Catherine John [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:11 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: In support of the 350 Merrydale Road project

To Lindsay Lara, City Clerk,

I'm writing to express my support of the 350 Merrydale Road interim shelter project. San Rafael and Marin will benefit from this step in the right direction toward helping our unhoused community get back on their feet.

Thank you,
Catherine John

From: Craig Thompson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:01 PM
To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: In favor of 350 Merrydale

I am very much in favor of the 350 Merrydale housing project. I live in Lucas Valley.

Craig Thompson

[REDACTED]
San Rafael 94903

From: Frank Mason [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:56 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Comment for 350 Merrydale

Agenda item 350 Merrydale

Please Post For the Public Record

Notification to Mayor and Staff of missing information

Clarification Requested on \$8 Million “Grant” for 350 Merrydale Project

Frank Mason [REDACTED]

Sun, Nov
9,
7:44 AM
(8 days
ago)

to Kate, Daniel.Cooperman

Dear Mayor Kate,

I’m writing to request clarification regarding the City’s repeated description of the \$8 million in County funding for the 350 Merrydale project as a grant.

From what I have learned directly from the County, those funds must be repaid if the City fails to meet the required deadlines or secure a qualified developer to build the permanent low-income housing phase. If that’s the case, then this is not a true grant—it is a conditional loan that carries real financial risk for the City and its taxpayers.

That risk is significant, given how difficult it may be to attract a developer willing to take on this site under the current conditions. Yet the public is being told this is “grant money,” implying no repayment obligation. That’s misleading, and it’s unacceptable when the community is being asked to trust City leadership on an \$8 million commitment.

Please provide the full and exact loan or grant agreement terms between the City of San Rafael and Marin County, including:

1. The repayment or clawback provisions;

2. The deadlines or conditions that trigger repayment; and

3. The responsible party if those conditions are not met.

The residents of San Rafael deserve full transparency on the true financial exposure of this project.

Sincerely,
Frank Mason

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Frank Mason.

San Rafael, CA 94903

From: Frank Mason [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:59 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Comment for 350 Merrydale

Agenda item 350 Merrydale

Please Post For the Public Record

What is the first date the city contacted TV channels and speakers about the project launch that was held at the site?

Frank Mason

[REDACTED] San Rafael, CA 94903

From: Frank Mason [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:21 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: WRITTEN PROCEDURAL OBJECTION – PRE-DECISION ANNOUNCEMENT Revised

WRITTEN PROCEDURAL OBJECTION – PRE- DECISION ANNOUNCEMENT

Revised Nov. 17 12:20am Typo on month of email

**For submission to the Public Record
San Rafael City Council Meeting – November 17, 2025
Agenda Item 6(a): 350 Merrydale Road Acquisition & Shelter Project**

**Submitted by:
Frank Mason – Resident of San Rafael**

[REDACTED]
San Rafael, CA 94903
[REDACTED]

FORMAL OBJECTION

I am submitting a formal objection requesting that Agenda Item 6(a) be **continued**, based on evidence that the decision regarding the acquisition of 350 Merrydale was **made prior to any public meeting or vote**, and publicly announced before tonight's hearing.

Pre-Decision Announcement

On **October 7th**, Marin County distributed a **public email invitation** to state representatives, government officials, and members of the press, regarding a scheduled media event at the 350 Merrydale site.
In that email, the County referred to 350 Merrydale as property that had already been **“acquired.”**

If the County publicly announced that the property was already acquired prior to any public discussion or vote by this Council:

- The decision was effectively **made in advance**, outside a public meeting;
- Tonight's action is reduced to a **rubber-stamp**, not legitimate deliberation;
- Public input is **meaningless**, since the outcome was predetermined.

This violates the fundamental principle that public decisions must be made **in public**, not presented after the fact.

REQUEST

For the integrity of the process, and to protect the rights of residents to genuine participation, I formally request that the Council:

1. **Continue Item 6(a)** to a subsequent meeting; and
2. Provide a public explanation of **when and where the acquisition decision was actually made**, and why the County publicly stated it had occurred before any vote.

Proceeding tonight without addressing this discrepancy denies the public's right to open process and erodes trust in local government.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Mason
Resident, City of San Rafael



From: Frank Mason [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:44 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: OFFICIAL OBJECTION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

Agenda item 350 Merrydale
Please Post For the Public Record

OFFICIAL OBJECTION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

I am submitting a formal procedural objection to the Council's ability to vote on Agenda Item 6(a) tonight due to **incomplete and misleading public notice**.

The agenda and supporting documents fail to disclose the **repayment / claw-back obligations** related to the \$8 million in County funding described publicly by city officials as a "grant." County representatives confirmed directly that this funding is actually **conditional**, and must be **repaid in full** if the City does not successfully convert the property to **80 units of long-term affordable housing by 2028**.

This **material financial obligation** is nowhere included in the posted agenda, packet, resolutions, or public notice.

Because the public could not review or comment on the true fiscal terms, a vote tonight would **deny the public's right to informed participation**.

Therefore, I am formally requesting that the Council **continue Item 6(a)** until:

1. The full text of the funding agreement is publicly released, including repayment conditions, deadlines, and risk exposure; and
2. The agenda is reposted with accurate notice allowing the community to evaluate the true implications.

Proceeding with a vote tonight despite the omission of material terms would violate the public transparency requirements that govern City Council actions.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Mason

San Rafael Resident

From: Karen Mason [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:16 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: comment on 350 Merrydale COUNCIL MEETING

POST TO PUBLIC RECORD

I am writing to express my deep disappointment and concern over the way the 350 Merrydale project has been handled. Many of us only recently learned about this development—long after critical decisions appear to have already been made—and it has left our neighborhood feeling blindsided and disregarded.

This process has severely damaged our trust in local government. Transparency is not simply a procedural step; it is a reflection of respect for the people you represent. In this case, that respect has been absent. The secrecy surrounding the 350 Merrydale project has created a deep sense of disillusionment and frustration among residents who now feel excluded from decisions that directly affect their lives and property.

We strongly urge you to **pause this project immediately** and take a hard look at how this process unfolded. Trust cannot be rebuilt without honesty, accountability, and genuine transparency—none of which have been demonstrated so far.

I have long been proud to call San Rafael home, which makes this loss of faith even more painful. Please **pause this project immediately** to restore transparency, rebuild trust, and show that the voices of your constituents still matter.

Sincerely,

Karen Mason

[REDACTED]

San Rafael

From: katie rice [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:19 AM
To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>
Cc: Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: 350 Merrydale

Dear Mayor, Council and staff,

Writing to add my voice of support for the proposed 350 Merrydale interim housing project and longer term vision for the creation of 80 units of much needed affordable housing at the site.

The project continues and builds on our collective efforts to address homelessness here in Marin. Since Oct 2017, 900+ chronically homeless individuals have been housed through programs that pair housing with services AND are committed to both client and community success. I stress community because a project/program is only successful if it is a good neighbor which means taking into account and responding to the concerns of the neighborhood.

For example: Youth/student safety was of particular concern to neighbors of the County's permanent supportive housing project on South Eliseo in Larkspur. In response, we required the program operator to have staff (community safety ambassador) streetside during school commute hours.

A commitment to ongoing communication with the neighborhood was also important and helpful towards alleviating concerns. Regular meetings with neighbors helped us address any issues that arose, share program progress and build trust.

Bottom line: What we've learned over the years from Eliseo and other supportive housing programs is that in addition to applying all the best practices for successful supportive housing programs, a commitment to strong communication, accountability, and responsiveness to community are key.

Sincerely,

Katie Rice

From: Lisa Doering [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:43 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd
Importance: High

Dear City Council members,

I am writing in support of the proposed project at 350 Merrydale, to provide interim shelter for 65 unhoused individuals and subsequently 80 units of affordable housing.

This project brings many benefits to our community.

This dual-phase approach offers immediate assistance to vulnerable individuals, and also contributes long-term affordable housing stock. It quickly brings more interim shelter online. We have too many unsheltered homeless in Marin and this will provide a short-term solution for many of them, and will ultimately contribute to Marin County's affordable housing stock via a multi-year process to develop affordable housing development while using the land productively in the interim.

This is a great location for affordable housing.

The site is less than a half-mile from the SMART Marin Civic Center Station, providing direct rail access to jobs and services throughout Marin and Sonoma Counties. It's also served by Marin Transit bus routes along Redwood Highway, giving residents and shelter participants reliable connections without needing a car.

The location is near county offices, health and social services, and nonprofits that already work with unhoused and low-income residents. This makes it easier for program staff to coordinate care, and for residents to access case management, employment programs, and healthcare.

Redwood Highway is already a mixed-use area with multifamily housing, light commercial uses, and community services. Adding this project fits with the existing neighborhood fabric and helps activate an underused property rather than extending development into new areas.

This project makes efficient use of an underutilized site. The site has been vacant for about five years. Using this parcel for affordable housing prevents blight, supports neighborhood vitality, and leverages existing infrastructure rather than expanding outward.

Sincerely,

Lisa Doering
A nearby San Rafael resident on Lincoln Avenue

November 17th, 2025

Mayor Kate Colin and City Council members

RE: 350 Merrydale project vote

I am writing to you today to ask you to postpone tonight's vote on the purchase of 350 Merrydale.

The City has made the decision to purchase the property behind closed doors, in secrecy and without transparency, and without the input from the constituency which you serve.

You are rushing to complete the deal before the public can be part of the decision. To build trust and serve the people whom the City is supposed to represent, The City must postpone the purchase until the public is fully informed and can be part of the process.

You also have a lot of gaps in 1) the logistics on how you will successfully implement a Homeless Shelter without negatively impacting those who live in the surrounding area and 2) in how you will fund the Homeless Shelter past 2027 and obtain funding for the Affordable Housing project.

Changing the approved use from a townhome complex of 45 units to an Apartment building of 80 units is disingenuous to the Planning Process and previous community engagement and will cause further distrust of our elected officials. This is not what the community was involved in the decision making process of.

Spending \$2 million a year on a population of 65 people, many of whom are not even from this community, is an ill-advised use of public funds. There is no proof offered by your engaged vendors thus far that indicates this will be money well spent. There are no statistics or proof offered on their websites.

Overall, this plan of purchasing 350 Merrydale, running it as a Homeless Shelter, then building apartments is a very ill thought out plan and there will be no funding for such a project, so you will most likely fail by any metrics. To rely on private donors for the short term and public funding for the long term is not a sound fiscal plan.

Please put a pause to this purchase until the City and yourself have had a chance to engage the community and iron out a lot of the gaps in logistics that exist.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Cichon
San Rafael, Ca

November 17th, 2025

Mayor Kate Colin and City Council members

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Sincerely,

Ken Azevedo
San Rafael, Ca

November 17th, 2025

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Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Samantha Sargent
San Rafael, Ca

From: notify=proudcity.com@getproudcity.com <notify=proudcity.com@getproudcity.com> **On Behalf Of** MeganBrizzolara
Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 9:28 AM
To: Info <info@cityofsanrafael.org>; Open Data <opendata@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact City Council

| |
|---|
| Name |
| Megan Brizzolara |
| Email |
| [REDACTED] |
| Subject |
| Tiny homes |
| Message |
| I'd like to express my support for the "tiny homes" project for Merrydale Rd. It is an innovative albeit temporary solution to the many undomiciled people in our city and I applaud you for it. |
| Address (optional) |
| United States [REDACTED] |

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Ellen Jenkins [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:27 PM

To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Support Merrydale interim housing project

Please vote to move forward the Merrydale interim housing project.

It is a good solution in a suitable location.

Thank you,

Mary Ellen Jenkins

MOC

Sent from my iPhone

From: Rebekah Helzel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:27 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd

Dear City Council members,

San Rafael is fortunate to have the opportunity to have such a project in your community. I am writing in support of the 350 Merrydale Road affordable housing development.

Traffic and congestion didn't just happen. It's a result of decades of neglecting the need to house the growing workforce. It has also forced many out of their homes with higher rents due to lack of supply. Economic growth begets traffic but also opportunity. If the workers live in their community, they support local businesses by virtue of their daily lives. If housed, many more already living in the community can stabilize their lives and contribute to the economy. New businesses can be formed. Don't choke off your economy, like so many other small towns in Marin have done.

This project makes efficient use of an underutilized site. The site has been vacant for about five years. Using this parcel for affordable housing prevents blight, supports neighborhood vitality, and leverages existing infrastructure rather than expanding outward.

Sincerely,
Rebekah Helzel

From: Sunni Epstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:57 AM
To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Support for 350 Merrydale homeless project

I support the project at 350 Merrydale Road as a much needed interim way to address the huge homelessness problem. The facilities provided and support services needed will make a significant difference for those that are able to get off the streets and for the community in general.

Of course much work still needs to be done for more permanent solutions however we can't wait for that to happen without acting now.

I applaud all who have made an effort to develop this project.

Thank you,

Sunni Epstein
San Rafael resident for 39 years

From: Summer Lopez [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:01 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd

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Sincerely,
Summer Lopez
[REDACTED]
San Rafael, CA 94901

From: Sara McEvoy [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:52 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment For Public Hearings Agenda Item 6

Hi my name is Dalyla and I am [REDACTED] years old. I live in San Rafael. I think we should all be kind to the homeless people because It is not nice to be mean to the people who don't have that much. Once you get to know them they are really nice. Pretend it was you that was homeless. I don't think it would feel very good if it was raining and your tent had a hole in it. I mean, you can't even imagine what it would feel like. In school if another kid is sitting on a bench or on the ground by themselves, we are taught to go ask them if they wanna make up a game or play with us. We include other kids if they're sitting alone. You should always be kind to other people, because if you do something, your kids follow it. To be kind you have to treat people how you would want to be treated.

I think the tiny homes will be a good thing for people that are homeless because they would finally get some good sleep and they would have things that people need to survive.

Thank you,
Dalyla

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:35 AM

To: End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: In support of the homeless project at 350 Merrydale Road

I am writing to express my support for the proposed interim shelter and affordable housing project at 350 Merrydale Road.

I believe this project is a compassionate and practical approach to addressing homelessness in our community. Providing individuals with their own private, secure cabins is an essential step in restoring their dignity and stability, which is a key component of successful housing-first strategies.

The availability of on-site support services, including case management and health resources, will give residents the tools they need to transition into permanent housing and become self-sufficient. This not only helps the individuals involved but also improves the overall health and safety of our neighborhoods by transitioning people from unmanaged encampments into a professionally managed environment.

I also appreciate that this project is an interim step toward the long-term development of much-needed permanent affordable housing units.

Thank you for your commitment to implementing effective and compassionate solutions to homelessness.

Tracy Solomon

[REDACTED]

San Rafael City Resident

-----Original Message-----

From: Theresa Ward [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:02 PM

To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: In Support of Merrydale Housing

To the Board of Supervisors,

We need housing. Please be swift in approving development on Merrydale. No site in Marin will ever be perfect. Humanitarian effort is of the highest priority.

Sincerely,

Theresa Ward

Marin Organizing Committee

Sent from my iPhone

Bryn Deamer, Union street, Happy Valley / Montecito area.

About 6 years ago St. Vincent DePaul purchase a private property 3 doors up from us on Union street that stretched from Union through to Park and had 3 buildings on it with multiple apartments, as part of their joining the “Housing First” initiative. There was no contact with neighbor’s, announcement or press conference. Several of the new residents were smokers, and the neighbors on Park St. where not happy with them smoking around their houses, and “chased” them around, until they ended up at our corner of Belle and Union.

My wife was a smoker when I married her, and smoke did not worry us, so we let them be. Our hearts particularly went out to Barbara, an elderly lady making her way back to being housed who we’d often see standing on the corner (sometimes under an umbrella in the rain) having a smoke. When we had to remove a juniper bush for Firewise reasons, leaving a bare patch outside of our fence, we purchased and installed a “Welcome” bench for her and anybody else to use. The only request we made was that they take their butts with them – which they did. 6 years later, people have come and gone, and Barbara has been re-housed, but each new resident has been told by the others of the condition of using our bench and have respected it, and us, ever since.

This experience has demonstrated to us the truism of the central spiritual teaching of all religions: “Do as you would be done by.” If we treat others with respect and empathy, we receive respect and empathy in return.

To our friends in Merrydale – If this does go ahead, my recommendation to you is that when the first residents move in, take them flowers or food, introduce yourselves, welcome them to the neighborhood, and engage them in neighborhood clean-up projects or anything else your neighborhood does, and they will return the love.

Thank you.