

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:01 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Cc: 'beverlyagoodwin' [REDACTED]
Subject: 350 Merrydale

Hello.

I am not able to make the meeting tonight physically. I hope to attend via Zoom.

A few thoughts and questions.

I do not believe this is the right place for such an encampment. I strongly feel that you need to do more research in finding the correct place that is close to Ritter House for services, St Anthonys for meals and Marin Health for medical.

1. Is this a “done” deal? From the sounds of things and the way I am reading it, it sounds like it is not open for discussion.
2. Will the people who will be at the new encampment be REQUIRED to be drug and alcohol free?
3. How do they receive money to buy groceries?
4. Will the security on site make sure that they are not throwing garbage everywhere? That there are no shopping carts filled with stuff?
5. Will the security on site make sure that they are not panhandling for money in front of the businesses or on the streets?
6. Will you be installing cameras on site and around the area?
7. What will the policy be if someone gets out of order? Using drugs or being drunk on premises?
8. What about screaming or fighting? Hopefully that will not be tolerated.

Out of time. Thank you.

Beverly Goodwin

From: Cathy Manovi [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:39 PM

To: Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maika Llorens Gulati <maika@cityofsanrafael.org>; Eli Hill <eli.hill@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maribeth Bushey <maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>; Rachel Kertz <rachel.kertz@cityofsanrafael.org>; Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Fwd: 350 Merrydale and your representation of us

Dear Mayor Colin and City Council Members,

I am a resident of the Rafael Meadows neighborhood. Since moving here in 1990 our area has taken on a lot of infill housing that heavily impacts Merrydale Road—our only way in and out of our neighborhoods by car. For all the housing crammed into surrounding lots that have been developed, zero attention has been given to pedestrian infrastructure, which has narrow, non continuous sidewalks on only one side and extremely poor lighting for the pedestrian crossings at the 101 on and off ramp traffic for people walking to the 101 southbound bus pad .

We are hemmed in by SMART and lack a safe route for local children to walk/bike to the Venetia Valley K-8 School east of 101 because there is no safe and ADA compliant walkway under the 101 overpass on the south side of the SMART tracks. The last time I attempted to walk along the existing dirt path to get to the Civic Center on my own I encountered homeless men sitting along the path shooting up drugs after cutting through chain link fencing adjacent to the area owned by Caltrains where tents were set up.

We need some good news for a change and real progress cleaning up Merrydale and creating safe passage to east of Hwy 101. Instead we are ground zero for more problems to solve regarding the surprise homeless solution thrust upon us through a devious, secret process that provided no input from the community before that political stunt of a press conference.

The method, and so called legal process is still morally corrupt for how it went about making an end run around the community that will be affected by this. It is shameful disregard and disrespect toward us to push this forward at speed before real engagement with us and satisfactory assurances that it will not increase crime and endanger residents in our area.

I am asking you to actively push for badly needed safety improvements on Merrydale and for our planned safe route to schools that is in the path of your project. Behave and support us as if this was your own neighborhood, with real

assurances that this experimental homeless project being thrust upon us does not make things worse regarding unsanctioned homeless encampments nearby. I also want to know that the residents invited to live among us don't have violent criminal or sex offender backgrounds. Again, imagine this is your neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Cathy Manovi
Rafael Meadows resident
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cathy Manovi** [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Nov 16, 2025 at 12:07 PM
Subject: 350 Merrydale and your representation of us
To: <maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear Councilwoman Maribeth Bushey,

I am a resident of the Rafael Meadows neighborhood. Since moving here in 1990 our area has taken on a lot of infill housing that heavily impacts Merrydale Road—our only way in and out of our neighborhoods by car. For all the housing crammed into surrounding lots that have been developed, zero attention has been given to pedestrian infrastructure, which has narrow, non continuous sidewalks on only one side and extremely poor lighting for the pedestrian crossings at the 101 on and off ramp traffic for people walking to the 101 southbound bus pad .

We are hemmed in by SMART and lack a safe route for local children to walk/bike to the Venetia Valley K-8 School east of 101 because there is no safe and ADA compliant walkway under the 101 overpass on the south side of the SMART tracks. The last time I attempted to walk along the existing dirt path to get to the Civic Center on my own I encountered homeless men sitting along the path shooting up drugs after cutting through chain link fencing adjacent to the area owned by Caltrains where tents were set up.

We need some good news for a change and real progress cleaning up Merrydale and creating safe passage to east of Hwy 101. Instead we are ground zero for more problems to solve regarding the surprise homeless solution thrust upon us through a devious, secret process that provided no input from the community before that political stunt of a press conference.

The method, and so called legal process is still morally corrupt for how it went about making an end run around the community that will be affected by this. It is shameful disregard and disrespect toward us to push this forward at speed before real engagement with us and satisfactory assurances that it will not increase crime and endanger residents in our area.

As our representative I am asking you to actively push for badly needed safety improvements as if this was your very own neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Cathy Manovi
Rafael Meadows resident
[REDACTED]

From: Deanne LaRue [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 5:21 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Comments for tonight's meeting

Re: 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

Deanne LaRue, San Rafael resident

I've worked in a professional capacity for Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles before moving to Marin. HHCLA helps people wherever they are on their journey, both physically and spiritually, and medically. We're the largest harm reduction organization in the US.

My job was to help tell the stories of people living on the streets of Los Angeles, so they could be supported by surrounding neighbors and businesses to get the help they needed. They are the cousins, siblings, sons and daughters of people we know. We looked at their journey is our journey.

Once I moved here I contacted the Board of Supervisors that I could assist for free and started working to create Homeward Bound.

Then as a member of the Bahá'í Faith worked with a group to provide free voicemail to people without homes or phone. We work with 7 other counties on this work. The Voicemail Project.

I'm happy that the city of San Rafael is working hard to find solutions.

Deanne LaRue

From: Jessie Rountree [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 6:02 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd

Dear Board of Supervisors,

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, including much needed action to address our affordable shortage crisis. This is a great location for affordable housing given its proximity to the SMART train and needed health services.

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

Sincerely,
Jessie

Jessie Rountree
[REDACTED]

From: Kendra Carney Mehr <klcm@carneymehr.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:05 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Erin Grubisich <emg@carneymehr.com>
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item 6 - November 17, 2025

Proposed Interim Shelter at 350 Merrydale Road

Good evening, Mayor and Council Members. My name is Kendra Carney Mehr, and I represent Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center, located just 1,300 feet from the proposed shelter site.

We strongly oppose this project due to the unacceptable risks it poses to the vulnerable children in our care—toddlers as young as 18 months through six-year-olds.

Emergency shelters with minimal screening and high turnover create documented safety hazards: drug paraphernalia in play areas, potential encounters with registered sex offenders during outdoor activities, witnessing public intoxication and drug transactions, and increased criminal activity including trespassing onto preschool grounds.

The City has provided no plan to protect the corridor between the SMART station and the shelter—a pathway our children will traverse daily. Young children cannot recognize danger or protect themselves from harm.

No responsible parent will enroll their child in a preschool next to an unscreened emergency shelter. This threatens our enrollment, our operations, and ultimately, our ability to serve this community.

We recognize the need to address homelessness, but not at the expense of child safety. We urge you to reject this location and identify a site that doesn't place our community's youngest and most vulnerable residents in harm's way.

Thank you for your attention and serious consideration of this matter,



Kendra L. Carney Mehr

Principal

Carney Mehr, a legal corporation

t: (949) 629-4676

e: klcm@carneymehr.com

w: carneymehr.com

Schedule a meeting with me by clicking this [link](#)

My working hours are 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Thursday, and 9:30 am - 1:00 pm on Fridays.

Outside of working hours: klcm@carneymehr.com, and I will respond within 12 business hours



CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE – This e-mail transmission, and any documents, files or previous e-mail messages attached to it may contain information that is confidential or legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you must not read this transmission and that any disclosure, copying, printing, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this transmission is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately return e-mail and delete the original transmission and its attachments without reading or saving in any manner. Thank you.

From: Kendra Carney Mehr <klcm@carneymehr.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:08 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Erin Grubisich <emg@carneymehr.com>
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item No. 6 - November 17, 2025

Public Comment - San Rafael City Council

Proposed Interim Shelter at 350 Merrydale Road

Good evening, Mayor and Council Members,

My name is Kendra Carney Mehr. I represent Marin Child Development, LLC, and I speak tonight as a former city attorney who understands municipal process requirements.

I strongly oppose this project due to the City's complete failure to follow transparent, lawful planning procedures.

This community learned about this project through a press conference—after a closed-session agreement was reached, after state officials were brought in, and after commitments were apparently made. Adjacent property owners received no advance notice. No opportunity for meaningful input before decisions were finalized.

The City claims it evaluated over 20 sites but has disclosed nothing: no selection criteria, no comparative analysis, no site suitability studies, no environmental review, no traffic analysis, no neighborhood compatibility assessment. You're asking this community to accept a decade-long transformation of a residential neighborhood based on zero documented analysis.

Decisions made in closed session, announced publicly before formal approval, with community input relegated to formality after the outcome is predetermined—is not how municipal government should operate.

Before any approval, the City must conduct proper environmental review, disclose alternative site analysis, demonstrate that adequate buffering is possible, and provide meaningful detail on the long-term housing phase.

This community deserves transparency, proper analysis, and genuine participation—not decisions made behind closed doors.

I urge you to pause this process and do it right.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,



Kendra L. Carney Mehr

Principal

Carney Mehr, a legal corporation

t: (949) 629-4676

e: klcm@carneymehr.com

w: carneymehr.com

Schedule a meeting with me by clicking this [link](#)

My working hours are 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Thursday, and 9:30 am - 1:00 pm on Fridays.

Outside of working hours: klcm@carneymehr.com, and I will respond within 12 business hours



CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE – This e-mail transmission, and any documents, files or previous e-mail messages attached to it may contain information that is confidential or legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you must not read this transmission and that any disclosure, copying, printing, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this transmission is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately return e-mail and delete the original transmission and its attachments without reading or saving in any manner. Thank you.

From: Kendra Carney Mehr <klcm@carneymehr.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:01 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Cc: Erin Grubisich <emg@carneymehr.com>
Subject: Re: November 17, 2025 City Council Meeting - Correspondence re Item No. 6

Please see slightly revised correspondence on behalf of Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center.

Thank you,



Kendra L. Carney Mehr

Principal

Carney Mehr, a legal corporation

t: (949) 629-4676

e: klcm@carneymehr.com

w: carneymehr.com

Schedule a meeting with me by clicking this [link](#)

My working hours are 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Thursday, and 9:30 am - 1:00 pm on Fridays.

Outside of working hours: klcm@carneymehr.com, and I will respond within 12 business hours



CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE – This e-mail transmission, and any documents, files or previous e-mail messages attached to it may contain information that is confidential or

legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you must not read this transmission and that any disclosure, copying, printing, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this transmission is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately return e-mail and delete the original transmission and its attachments without reading or saving in any manner. Thank you.

On Sat, Nov 15, 2025 at 1:00 PM Kendra Carney Mehr <klcm@carneymehr.com> wrote:
Please provide the attached letter, sent on behalf of Miss Nicky's Preschool, to the City Council and include it in the record as public comment on Item No.6 of the November 17, 2025 City Council agenda relating to the proposed Interim Shelter.

Thank you,



Kendra L. Carney Mehr

Principal

Carney Mehr, a legal corporation

t: (949) 629-4676

e: klcm@carneymehr.com

w: carneymehr.com

Schedule a meeting with me by clicking this [link](#)

My working hours are 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Thursday, and 9:30 am - 1:00 pm on Fridays.

Outside of working hours: klcm@carneymehr.com, and I will respond within 12 business hours

—



CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE – This e-mail transmission, and any documents, files or previous e-mail messages attached to it may contain information that is confidential or legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you must not read this transmission and that any disclosure, copying, printing, distribution or use of any of the information contained in or attached to this transmission is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately return e-mail and delete the original transmission and its attachments without reading or saving in any manner. Thank you.



CARNEY MEHR LAW

Kendra L. Carney Mehr
23 Corporate Plaza Drive, Suite 250
Newport Beach, CA
(949) 629-4676
klcm@carneymehr.com

November 17, 2025

City Council
City of San Rafael
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

Sent via electronic mail and postal mail

Re: REVISED Objection to Proposed Interim Shelter Site at 350 Merrydale Road Submitted on behalf of Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center

Dear Mayor and Members of the Council:

Our office represents Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center, which operates a licensed early-childhood education facility located at 159 Merrydale Road in the City of San Rafael (the "City") and County of Marin (the "County") which is within 1300 feet of the proposed interim shelter site at 350 Merrydale Road. Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center serves very young children—ages 18 months through six year olds—and is recognized under state law as a highly sensitive receptor requiring enhanced protection from incompatible land uses. The nature, scale, and proximity of the proposed interim shelter present grave and unacceptable risks to child safety and welfare. We are compelled to submit this letter in the strongest possible opposition to the project as currently proposed.

Unacceptable Safety Risks to Young Children from Substance Abuse and Criminal Activity

The proposed interim shelter will house individuals experiencing homelessness, a population that—while deserving of compassion and support—statistically includes individuals struggling with substance abuse disorders, mental health crises, and histories of criminal behavior. Studies and documented outcomes from similar facilities across California demonstrate elevated rates of drug use, drug dealing, theft, trespassing, and public disturbances in the immediate vicinity of emergency shelter operations.

Locating such a facility in close proximity to a preschool serving vulnerable children creates an intolerable risk environment. Young children at this developmental stage lack the ability to recognize danger, adequately assess threatening situations, or protect themselves from harm. Our client has serious and well-founded concerns about:

- Exposure to drug paraphernalia, including used needles, pipes, and other dangerous items that may be discarded in areas accessible to children;
- Direct encounters with individuals who may be registered sex offenders, under the influence of drugs or alcohol during outdoor play periods and arrival and departure times;
- Witnessing drug transactions, public intoxication, aggressive behavior, or other disturbing and traumatic incidents;
- Increased risk of property crime, trespassing onto the preschool grounds, and potential direct threats to staff and children;
- Elevated police presence and emergency response activity, including arrests, medical crises, and disturbances that create an atmosphere of instability and fear.

These are not hypothetical concerns. They represent documented realities at emergency shelters throughout the state. No amount of on-site security, perimeter fencing, or "Good Neighbor Policies" can eliminate these risks when the facility operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with high resident turnover and minimal screening protocols. The City's assurances of safety measures ring hollow in light of the lived experiences of communities surrounding similar facilities.

Dangerous and Unprotected Corridor Between Transit Station and Interim Shelter

The proposed site's proximity to the SMART train station and multiple bus stops creates an additional layer of danger that the City has entirely failed to address. Shelter residents and visitors will inevitably traverse the corridor between the transit facilities and the shelter site—a pathway that runs directly through or adjacent to the neighborhood where Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center operates.

The City has provided no plan whatsoever to protect this corridor or to shield sensitive uses—particularly a preschool serving toddlers and young children—from the foot traffic, loitering, substance use, and criminal activity that will occur along this route. This corridor will become, in effect, an extension of the shelter's operational impact zone, yet it remains entirely outside the City's proposed security perimeter.

Children arriving at and departing from the preschool, playing outdoors, and participating in supervised walks will be directly exposed to individuals traveling to and

from the shelter. Staff members—many of whom are young women—will face increased personal safety risks during early morning and evening hours. Parents dropping off and picking up their children will be forced to navigate an environment that has been fundamentally and permanently altered by the City's decision to site a high-impact social service facility in a residential neighborhood without any protective measures for the surrounding community.

This complete absence of corridor planning and protection is not merely an oversight—it represents a fundamental failure to consider the safety and welfare of the community's most vulnerable population: young children in state-licensed care.

Incompatibility with Licensed Childcare Operations and Regulatory Standards

California law recognizes licensed childcare facilities as sensitive receptors requiring heightened protection from incompatible land uses. The preschool is required to maintain strict health and safety standards under Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, including provisions ensuring a safe and secure environment free from hazards, dangerous conditions, and exposure to harmful substances or behaviors.

The proposed interim shelter directly undermines the preschool's ability to maintain these standards. The facility will operate 24 hours a day with minimal screening requirements, serving a transient population that includes individuals with active substance abuse issues, untreated mental illness, and criminal histories. This is fundamentally incompatible with the operation of a preschool serving children ages eighteen months through six years old.

Moreover, the presence of such a facility will have immediate and devastating consequences for enrollment. Parents entrust preschools with their most precious responsibility—the safety and well-being of their young children. No reasonable parent will choose to enroll their toddler or preschool-age child in a facility located next to an emergency homeless shelter operating at scale. The preschool will face enrollment declines, financial hardship, and potential closure—not because of any failure on its part, but because the City has chosen to locate an incompatible use in immediate proximity without consideration of the consequences.

Severe and Lasting Impacts on Daily Operations and the Educational Environment

Beyond the direct safety threats, the proposed facility will fundamentally disrupt the preschool's daily operations. Early childhood education depends on routine, stability, predictability, and a calm, nurturing environment. The proposed shelter will introduce:

- Continuous vehicle traffic from service providers, delivery trucks, police responses, and emergency services, creating hazardous conditions during drop-off and pick-up periods;

- Noise from on-site activities, loud disturbances, arguments, and emergency incidents that disrupt classroom instruction, outdoor learning, and nap times;
- Constant surveillance and security concerns requiring staff to maintain heightened vigilance rather than focusing on educational programming;
- Parking overflow that blocks or restricts access to the preschool, creating safety hazards and operational disruptions;
- Restricted use of outdoor play areas due to safety concerns, depriving children of essential physical activity and outdoor learning opportunities;
- Staff turnover and recruitment difficulties as employees refuse to work in an environment they perceive as unsafe.

These impacts will persist for the entire three-to-four-year duration of the interim shelter operation, followed by years of construction and transition to permanent housing. The preschool and the families it serves will bear these burdens for nearly a decade, with no meaningful mitigation, no protective measures, and no recourse.

Complete Failure to Evaluate Alternative Sites and Protect Sensitive Uses

The City claims to have evaluated more than 20 potential sites before selecting 350 Merrydale Road. However, the City has not disclosed the criteria used in this evaluation, the results of any comparative analysis, or any consideration of proximity to sensitive uses such as licensed preschools. This lack of transparency suggests that child safety was not a meaningful factor in the site selection process.

Responsible planning would identify sites that minimize conflicts with schools, childcare facilities, parks, and other child-serving uses. Industrial areas, commercial corridors away from residential neighborhoods, or sites with natural separation from sensitive receptors would present far fewer risks. The City's selection of a site in close proximity to a preschool—without any demonstrated attempt to avoid or mitigate this conflict—raises serious questions about the adequacy and good faith of the site selection process.

Furthermore, the City has provided no analysis of buffering options, setback requirements, or operational restrictions that could reduce impacts on the preschool. No environmental review has been conducted. No traffic study has been completed. No health and safety analysis has been disclosed. The City is proceeding with a project that places young children at risk without having performed the most basic due diligence to evaluate and mitigate those risks.

Long-Term Uncertainty Compounds Immediate Dangers

The City anticipates that the interim shelter will operate through June 2029, to be followed immediately by redevelopment into permanent affordable housing with more than 80 units. However, the City has provided virtually no information about this second phase: no building designs, no density calculations, no parking analysis, no circulation plans, and no assessment of long-term compatibility with surrounding uses.

The preschool faces immediate safety threats from the interim shelter and uncertain long-term impacts from the permanent housing development. Parents making enrollment decisions, staff members considering long-term employment, and the preschool operator planning for the future are all left in a state of perpetual uncertainty. This is untenable and unfair.

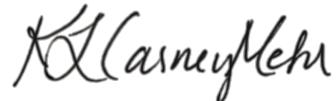
Requested Action

For the compelling reasons set forth above, Miss Nicky's Preschool & Toddler Center urgently requests that the City immediately reject the proposed project at this location due to its fundamental incompatibility with a licensed preschool serving vulnerable young children.

The preschool recognizes the importance of addressing homelessness in our community. However, solutions must not come at the expense of child safety. The City's proposal places vulnerable children in harm's way without adequate justification, analysis, or protective measures. This is unacceptable.

We remain available to discuss these concerns and to work toward solutions that protect both the homeless population and the children in our care.

Best regards,



Kendra Carney Mehr
Principal Attorney

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 7:15:45 AM

To: Daniel Cooperman <daniel.cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org>

Cc: Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Lindsay Lara <lindsay.lara@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: The 26 Businesses near 350 Merrydale you visited plus the Spanish Flyer

FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

Good Morning Mr. Cooperman:

I just wanted to follow up on two statements you made last night at the November 17, City Council Meeting and which was not the first time that you had made those statements.

1. You declared that you or your staff visited 26 businesses near 350 Merrydale. Could you provide a list of the names of the businesses you visited?
2. You declared that you distributed a spanish version of the "We Missed you flyer" in the neighborhood. Could you send me a copy of the flyer and the approximate locations where you delivered the Spanish version of the flyer and how you determined those were the appropriate locations.

I look forward to a speedy reply

Ken Dickinson
Rafael Meadows

From: Mark Allen [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:01 PM

To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Rachel Kertz <rachel.kertz@cityofsanrafael.org>; Eli Hill <eli.hill@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maribeth Bushey <maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maika Llorens Gulati <maika@cityofsanrafael.org>; Rob Epstein <rob.epstein@cityofsanrafael.org>; Daniel Cooperman <Daniel.Cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org>; John Stefanski <John.Stefanski@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: 350 Merrydale – Please avoid pre-commitment; CEQA first; on-record assurances tonight

Dear Mayor Colin and Councilmembers,

I'm attending via Zoom but cannot comment live. I respectfully request the following be placed on the record **before** any action regarding 350 Merrydale:

1. **No pre-commitment before CEQA (Save Tara).**
Please state clearly that the City will **not**: (a) open escrow; (b) execute a purchase agreement, option, or LOI; (c) accept, allocate, or obligate funds tied to this site; (d) record any document; or (e) make any filing that triggers legal deadlines—
until CEQA review is complete and Council retains genuine discretion over all alternatives, including **No Project** and **selection of a different site**. See *Save Tara v. City of West Hollywood* (2008) 45 Cal.4th 116.
2. **CEQA is required here.**
The parcel's **northern creek/riparian corridor** introduces potential **biological resources** and **hydrology/water-quality** impacts (likely CDFW **Fish & Game Code §1602** and Water Board considerations) and local **creek setbacks**—all inconsistent with a "no-possibility-of-impact" theory (Guidelines **§15061(b)(3)**). At minimum, please direct staff to prepare an **Initial Study** (Guidelines **§15063**) and publish a **constraints map** (creek centerline, riparian buffer, floodplain, wetlands if any, WUI/wildfire overlays).
3. **Emergency declaration ≠ CEQA bypass.**
Please state on the record that any homeless "emergency" item **does not authorize** the City to bypass CEQA for **site acquisition or site-specific commitments** at 350 Merrydale. If any emergency action is considered, limit it to **non-site-committting** steps and confirm CEQA review will precede any binding site action.
4. **Language access notice issue.**
It was announced tonight that **Spanish fliers were not broadly distributed due to rain**. Please acknowledge this on the record and **continue** any site-specific

decision until equivalent outreach is completed and materials are posted online (all slides/handouts). This protects the City and the public.

Requested motions tonight (or direction to staff):

- "No escrow, purchase/option, recording, acceptance/allocation of funds, or other steps that commit the City to 350 Merrydale until CEQA is completed, with all alternatives preserved."
- "Direct staff to prepare an Initial Study and publish a constraints map for 350 Merrydale (creek/riparian, floodplain, WUI)."
- "Confirm any emergency action taken does not authorize bypassing CEQA for site selection/acquisition."
- "Continue any site-specific decision until Spanish-language outreach is completed and all materials are posted."

Thank you for placing these assurances on the record.

Respectfully,

Mark Allen

[REDACTED] San Rafael, CA 94912
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 5:06 PM

To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Rachel Kertz <rachel.kertz@cityofsanrafael.org>; Eli Hill <eli.hill@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maribeth Bushey <maribeth.bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maika Llorens Gulati <maika@cityofsanrafael.org>; Daniel Cooperman <Daniel.Cooperman@cityofsanrafael.org>; John Stefanski <John.Stefanski@cityofsanrafael.org>; End Homelessness <endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org>; Rob Epstein <rob.epstein@cityofsanrafael.org>; Andrea Visveshwara <Andrea.Visveshwara@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Public Comment for Tonight (Nov 17) - 350 Merrydale: No Lock-In Before CEQA (Please read into record)

Dear Mayor Colin, Councilmembers, City Clerk, and City Attorney,

Please include this in the record for tonight's meeting and read it aloud during the 350 Merrydale item. If time has closed for live public comment, please distribute this to the full Council and City Attorney immediately and include it in the minutes and administrative record for this item.

Good evening. Mark Allen, San Rafael resident. I respectfully request that any approvals related to **350 Merrydale** be expressly **non-binding pending CEQA**. Specifically:

- **No opening escrow;**
- **No execution of a purchase agreement, option, grant, or other binding instrument;**
- **No acceptance or expenditure of site-specific funds;**
- **No recordation of documents;**
- **No site work, procurement, occupancy, or other actions** that would foreclose meaningful consideration of alternatives,

until CEQA review is completed for the interim shelter and any subsequent housing at 350 Merrydale, analyzing a full range of alternatives—including **No Project** and **alternate sites**—and after the Council considers that CEQA document.

If the City intends to rely on the **Low-Barrier Navigation Center (Gov. Code §§65660-65668)** pathway, please state that on the record **tonight** and confirm that all siting and standards are met and approvals are **ministerial**; otherwise, CEQA review is required.

Please also **post all slides/handouts** from tonight's presentation to the agenda page.

Thank you for ensuring no **irreversible commitments** are made before environmental review is completed.

I request this language be added to the motion.

*"Notwithstanding any approval herein, the City shall not open escrow; execute a purchase agreement, option, grant, or other binding instrument; accept or expend funds dedicated to 350 Merrydale; record any instrument; commence site work, procurement, or occupancy; or otherwise take any action that could limit consideration of alternatives, **until** completion of CEQA review for the proposed interim shelter and any subsequent housing at 350 Merrydale—including analysis of **No Project** and **off-site alternatives**—and after Council consideration of that CEQA document. If the City later proceeds under **Gov. Code 5565660–65668**, staff shall first place on the record the specific findings demonstrating all statutory requirements are met and approvals are **ministerial**; otherwise CEQA applies."*

Sincerely,

Mark Allen

[REDACTED] San Rafael, CA 94912
[REDACTED]

From: Michelle Baumert [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 7:14 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: please post for public record ASAP

Hello, my name is Michelle Baumert and I have lived in the San Rafael Meadows for over 25 years, a neighborhood of ice cream socials, summer barbecues, Easter egg hunts, and visits from Santa.

I was deeply alarmed and disappointed to learn—after the fact—that the city has approved the construction of 65 tiny homes for the interim, then 80 permanent affordable housing units for individuals in the middle of our residential neighborhood. This decision was made without informing or involving the very community that will be most impacted, and that lack of transparency feels like a breach of trust.

Let me be clear: I believe strongly in supporting the unhoused and creating meaningful pathways to stability.

But placing such a large transitional housing site in an area filled with children, families, and elderly residents is a major decision that deserves open conversation, honest communication, and a thoughtful assessment of safety and community impact. None of that happened here.

Our neighborhood deserves answers. We deserve to understand why this location was chosen, what safety measures will be in place, and how the city plans to support both the unhoused residents and the families already living here. We deserve to be included—before decisions are finalized, not after.

Please recognize the weight of what this decision means for our neighborhood. Our residents deserve the chance to be heard, to ask real questions, and to get clear, straightforward answers. We are not turning our backs on those who need help—we are pushing back against being blindsided by choices that reshape our daily lives, our homes, and our peace of mind.

Being shut out of decisions that alter the fabric of our neighborhood and jeopardize our sense of security.

Ask yourself this: if a decision this significant were happening in your neighborhood, how would you want your local officials to communicate it to you?

Michelle

From: Matt Popovich [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 5:15 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Public Comment: Support for 350 Merrydale Rd

Dear City Councilmembers,

My name is Matt Popovich. I'm a dad of two young kids in Larkspur and a third generation Marin County resident. I'm writing strong support of the proposed project at 350 Merrydale Road, which will provide badly needed housing for unhoused individuals.

This dual-phase approach brings both immediate and long-term benefits: in the short term, it moves a vulnerable unsheltered population into safe, dignified private cabins with on-site services, enabling real pathways into permanent housing. In the long term, the redeveloped site will provide at least 80 deed-restricted affordable housing units, which is badly needed in Marin County.

The location is particularly well-suited, less than a half-mile from the SMART Marin Civic Center Station, and served by Marin Transit bus routes along Redwood Highway, making it reachable without car dependency. It is near county offices, health and social-service providers, and non-profits, so delivery of case-management and support services is efficient.

The parcel is underutilized, vacant for about five years, and repurposing it avoids outward expansion, uses existing infrastructure, prevents blight, and strengthens the neighborhood fabric.

I believe this project aligns with Marin County's values of compassion, inclusion, and smart growth. I urge the Council to approve the staff recommendation so the work can move forward without delay. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Matt Popovich

From: tburgon Gmail [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 4:41 PM

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

Subject: Comments for Shelter Crisis and Acquisition of Property at 350 Merrydale Road

Good evening, Mayor Colin and Councilmembers.

My name is Trever Burgon, and I'm a resident of San Rafael and Terra Linda. I'm here simply as a neighbor and community member to express my support for the Merrydale land acquisition offering temporary tiny home housing for our unhoused residents currently living in encampments and longer-term affordable housing for our community.

I believe the proposal before you represents a thoughtful and balanced approach to an extremely challenging situation—one that prioritizes temporary housing and meaningful support services, while also recognizing the urgent need for long-term affordable housing in San Rafael. Our city, like so many in this region, desperately needs more permanent, stable options, and I appreciate that this plan looks beyond short-term solutions toward lasting impact.

In my work with my religious community, I've had the privilege of partnering closely with organizations such as St. Vincent de Paul, Ritter Center, Homeward Bound, the Street Chaplaincy, Seeds of Hope, the Post-Partum Support Center, and Canal Alliance. Through these partnerships, I've seen both the complexity of the need and the tremendous good that happens when housing is paired with compassionate, structured support.

I've also seen firsthand the success of a similar tiny-homes project at COTS in Petaluma. There, temporary housing is combined with case managers and wraparound services—and it works. People stabilize. They rebuild. They move forward. It's a reasonable, proven approach with clear timelines and measurable outcomes.

I'm grateful the city is pursuing solutions that honor both the dignity of these individuals and the wellbeing of the broader community. This model—temporary housing with robust support, combined with long-term planning for true affordability—deserves our collective backing.

Thank you for your time and for your continued efforts to care for all who call San Rafael home.