



March 2, 2026

**Mayor Kate Colin
Vice Mayor Kertz
Councilmembers Llorens-Gulati, Bushey, and Hill**

Re: Support for Canal Neighborhood Active Transportation Enhancement Project

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

On behalf of Canal Alliance, I write in strong support of the City of San Rafael's proposal to install pedestrian-scale lighting along the Starkweather Path, as part of Agenda Item No. 3a: Canal Neighborhood Active Transportation Enhancement Project.

For many residents of the Canal neighborhood, this path is not recreational; it is essential infrastructure. Families rely on Starkweather Path every day to walk children to school, travel to work, access transit stops, reach parks, and connect to basic services. As a community where many households depend on walking, bicycling, and public transportation, safe and well-lit pathways are critical to daily life.

Through the [Canal Community Lighting Project](#) where Voces del Canal, Dominican University, Canal Alliance, and the City of San Rafael worked and our long-standing engagement with residents, improved lighting has consistently been identified as a top safety priority. Residents, particularly women, seniors, and youth have shared concerns about navigating the path during early morning and evening hours when lighting is limited. Thoughtfully designed, pedestrian-scale lighting such as bollards and small-area fixtures can significantly improve visibility and comfort while minimizing impacts to adjacent homes.

Public infrastructure investments should reflect the needs of those who rely on it most. Improving lighting along Starkweather Path is a practical, equitable step that advances safety, mobility, and quality of life for the Canal community and for all who use the corridor.

We appreciate the City's continued partnership and commitment to creating safer, more connected neighborhoods. We respectfully urge you to move forward with these improvements.

Sincerely,

Omar Carrera
Chief Executive Officer

91 Larkspur Street
San Rafael, CA 94901
415.454.2640

canalalliance.org

From: Dennis Duff [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2026 4:55 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Fwd: Serious Concerns About Environmental Impact on Starkweather Path

Subject: Concerns About Environmental Impact on Starkweather Path

Dear City Clerk,

My name is Dennis Duff, and I'm a homeowner in the Baypoint / Spinnaker neighborhood. I'm writing to express SERIOUS concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed "Peoples of the Canal" art installation and trail lighting projects on the Starkweather Path - Bay Trail.

Starkweather Path runs directly adjacent to sensitive salt marsh habitat, one of the Bay Area's most fragile ecosystems. The proposal to install 22 permanent placards, a large steel sculpture, and artificial lighting would:

- Disturb nesting shorebirds and migratory species that depend on this corridor
- Introduce artificial light into a naturally dark environment, disrupting nocturnal wildlife and natural circadian rhythms
- Proposal to increase foot traffic on a shared use path with constrained widths leading to pedestrian safety issues
- . Create more congestion in a neighborhood that already has a major parking problem

I understand and appreciate the value of public art and cultural storytelling. However, I believe this particular location, a nature corridor with documented wildlife sensitivity, is not the appropriate setting for permanent infrastructures of this scale.

I respectfully request that the city reject both proposals in their current form and stand with the residents who are directly impacted by these decisions.

Sincerely,
Dennis Duff

[REDACTED]

From: Mariah Bevard [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 2, 2026 5:00 PM

To: Mayor Kate <kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org>; Maika Llorens Gulati <maika.gulati@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>; Paul Navazio <paul.navazio@cityofsanrafael.org>; April Miller <april.miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Craig Veramay <craig.veramay@cityofsanrafael.org>; Greg Minor <greg.minor@cityofsanrafael.org>; Grey Melgard <grey.melgard@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Concerns About Environmental Impact on Starkweather Path

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Mariah and I walk my dog every day on the the Starkweather Path - Bay Trail. I'm writing to express serious concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed "Peoples of the Canal" art installation and trail lighting projects on the Starkweather Path - Bay Trail.

Starkweather Path runs directly adjacent to sensitive salt marsh habitat, one of the Bay Area's most fragile ecosystems. The proposal to install 22 permanent placards, a large steel sculpture, and artificial lighting would:

- Disturb nesting shorebirds and migratory species that depend on this corridor
- Introduce artificial light into a naturally dark environment, disrupting nocturnal wildlife and natural circadian rhythms
- Proposal to increase foot traffic on a shared use path with constrained widths leading to pedestrian safety issues

I understand and appreciate the value of public art and cultural storytelling. However, I believe this particular location, a nature corridor with documented wildlife sensitivity, is not the appropriate setting for permanent infrastructures of this scale.

I respectfully encourage the city to consider alternative locations that could honor the same history while preserving what makes Starkweather Path special, such as:

- Placing the installation at end of the Bay Trail (beach near the Gun & Rod Club to picnic area by Target)
- Integrating the exhibit within the Pickleweed Community Center campus
- Placing exhibit at History Museum in San Rafael
- Placing the installation at Olompali State Park

These locations would allow the story to be shared in settings that are more accessible, appropriate for gathering and reflection, and better supported by nearby parking and all while protecting the unique and peaceful nature of Starkweather Path.

I respectfully request that the city reject both proposals in their current form and stand with the residents who are directly impacted by these decisions.

Sincerely,

Mariah Bevard

 San Rafael, CA 94901