

*OUR VISION
OF
DOWNTOWN
SAN RAFAEL
AND OUR
IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGY*

San Rafael
Downtown Community Plan

April 1993

Downtown Community Plan Sponsor Organizations

Bret Harte Neighborhood Association	Mission San Rafael Rotary
Cultural Affairs Commission	North San Rafael Coalition of Residents
Design Review Board	Redevelopment Citizen Advisory Committee
Downtown Business Improvement District	San Rafael Chamber of Commerce
Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods	San Rafael City Council
Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association	San Rafael City Schools
Interfaith Council	San Rafael Housing Corporation
Kiwanis	San Rafael Library Board of Trustees
Marin Builders Exchange	San Rafael Planning Commission
Marin Conservation League	San Rafael Redevelopment Agency
Marin Council of Agencies	St. Vincent de Paul Society
Marin County AIA Task Force	West End Neighborhood Association
Marin County Historic Society	
Marin Heritage	

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A vision is a community dream ...

*... a positive, detailed image
of what the community wants to create
for itself, its children
and grandchildren in the future.*

*A clear, articulate vision can stimulate
and focus a community's energy and spirit,
especially if it's a vision that reflects
the community's deep values and beliefs
about its life and its future.*

*Such a vision is worthy of the community's
commitment, resources
and energy to bring it to life.*

*We hope we have dreamed
such a dream here
for Downtown San Rafael.*





April 1993

To the City Council and Citizens of San Rafael,

We are pleased to present our Vision for Downtown San Rafael and Implementation Strategy. This Vision represents an effort to involve many people and interest groups in a planning process. Over 600 citizens and 33 organizations helped develop our Vision over the last 20 months. This Vision and Implementation Strategy reflect a broad consensus of our Committee and the Community.

Our vision is a commitment to the future of our Downtown -- the heart of San Rafael. And that future Downtown is a vibrant, dynamic, economically successful, aesthetic place that enhances our City's civic and community life. We see Downtown as the social and economic center of our community.

This document is a Vision -- it isn't a conventional master plan or land use plan with site specific controls and detailed zoning recommendations. The Vision and Implementation Strategy are intended to serve several purposes: as an initial consensus document; as a basis for detailed land use policies and urban design plans; as a road map for public and private investment and cooperation. Finally it is intended to serve as a framework for the many public and private decisions necessary over the next 10-20 years to bring this Vision to fruition in the early 21st century.

We feel that if Downtown is economically healthy, it will support improvements in the social, cultural and civic aspects of Downtown. Therefore, this Vision incorporates economic development considerations as well as social, cultural, and urban design elements.

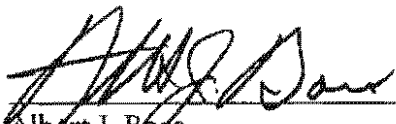
Working together as a community, we can bring the Vision to life through wise decisions, hard work, and careful investments. Implementation of some recommendations will be easy and take a short period of time. Some ideas have already been carried out during our planning process, such as the "alive after five" aspects. Other proposals require a 5 to 10 year time or further refinement and study. The private sector will implement some recommendations and the public sector will accomplish others. But all

implementation will require ongoing teamwork and collaboration between the public, private and community sectors.

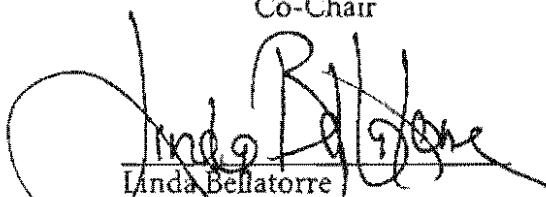
We encourage the City Council to accept this Vision and Implementation Strategy and use it as a guide for community decisions on Downtown over the next 20 years.

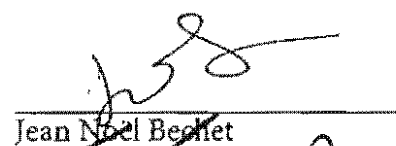
As Committee Members, we thank you for the opportunity to work with our fellow citizens to develop the Vision for Downtown. And we especially thank all the people who have given their talent, ideas and energy to this exciting and positive future for our Downtown.

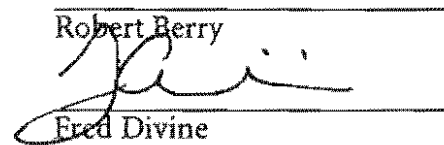
DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN COMMITTEE


Albert J. Boro
Co-Chair

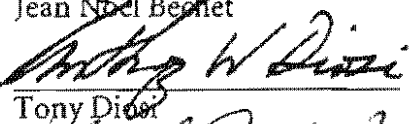

Stan Kubu
Co-Chair

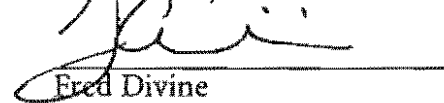

Linda Bellatorre

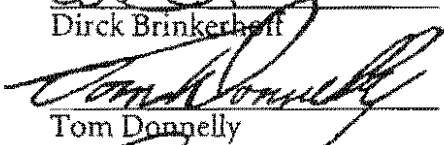

Jean Noel Bechet

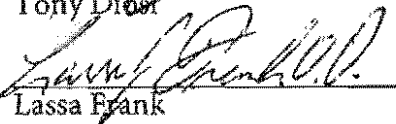

Robert Berry

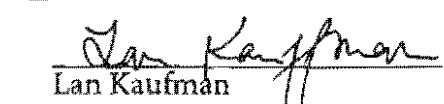

Dirk Brinkerhoff

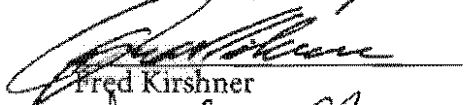

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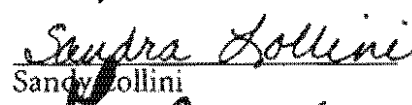

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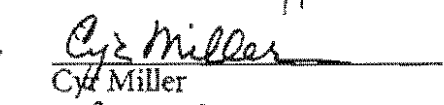

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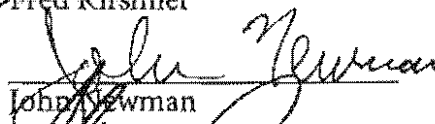

Lassa Frank


Lan Kaufman


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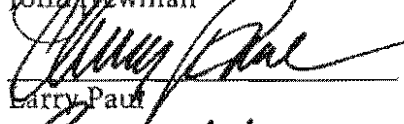

Sandy Tollini

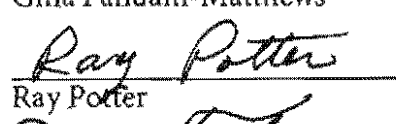

Cyz Miller

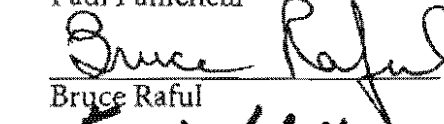

John Newman

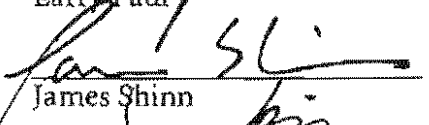

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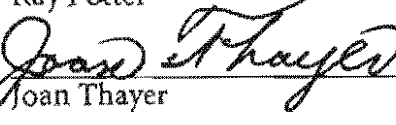

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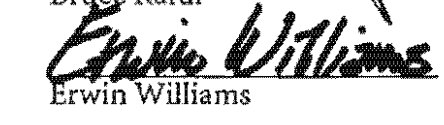

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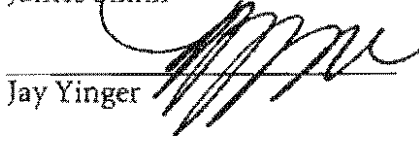

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CONTENTS

<i>THE CONTEXT</i>	1
How Our Vision Was Developed	2
The Setting	4
Our Analysis	6
<i>OUR VISION FOR DOWNTOWN SAN RAFAEL IN 2010</i>	11
Our Vision	15
Our Value Constitution	20
Economic Principles	22
Design Principles	26
<i>DISTRICT VISIONS</i>	31
Fourth Street Retail Core	33
Hetherton Gateway	43
Lindaro District	51
Second/Third Corridor	61
West End Village	71
Fifth/Mission District	79
<i>OUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY</i>	87
Preamble	88
Implementors	92
Short Term Actions	95
Long Term Actions	99
<i>VISION PARTICIPANTS</i>	101



THE CONTEXT

How Our Vision
Was Developed

The Setting

Our Analysis

How Our Vision Was Developed

In the spring of 1991, the City of San Rafael launched a collaborative approach to planning the future of its Downtown. The focus was on discovering what the community valued and wanted for Downtown. The City Council and Redevelopment Agency selected a Downtown Community Plan Committee to guide the process. The Committee reflects a diverse group of interests: residents, business owners, cultural, retail, community and government.

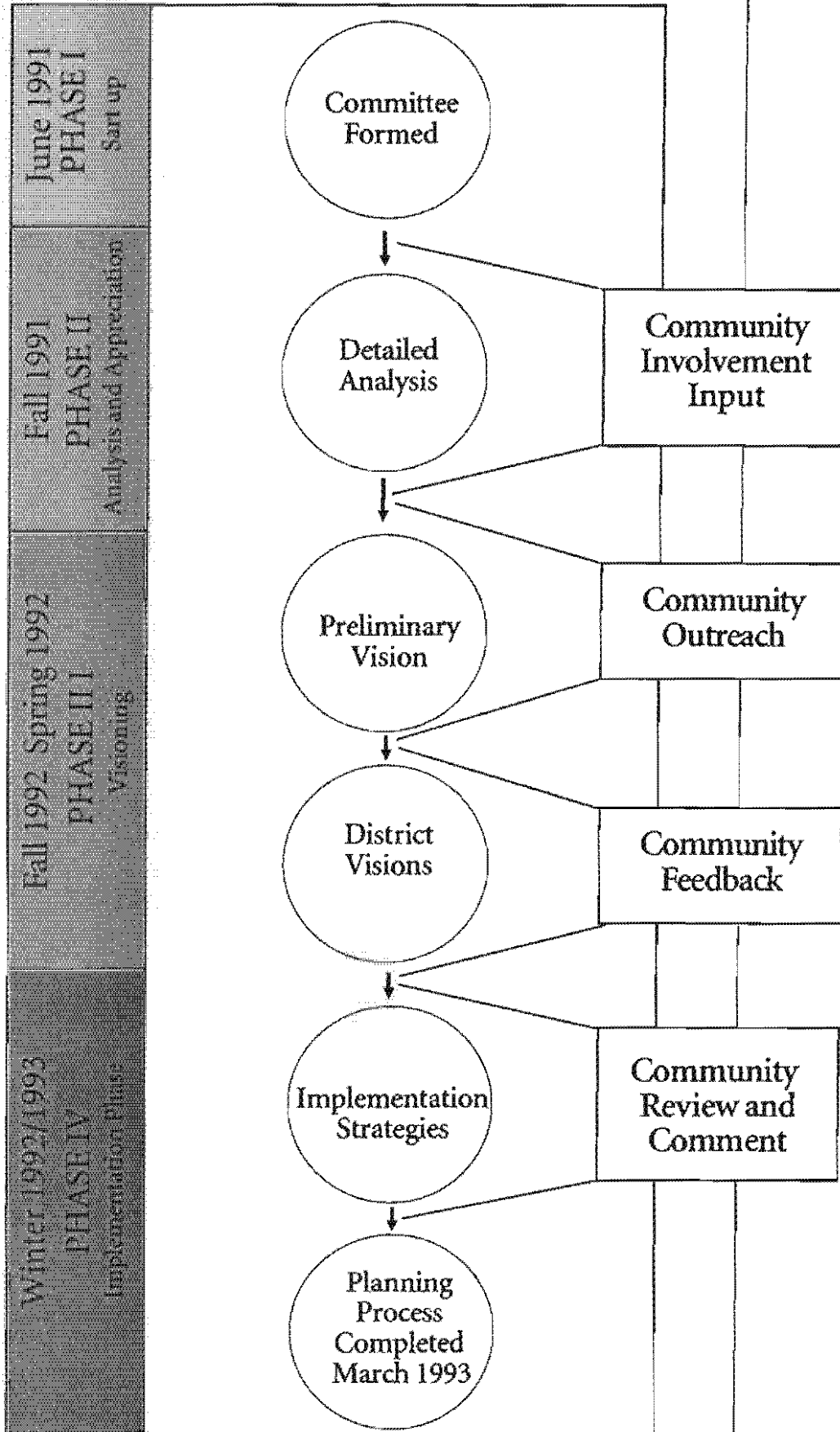
In the summer and fall of 1991, the Committee analyzed Downtown and identified its strengths and weaknesses from an economic, social and cultural perspective. We reviewed the economics of the Downtown, compared it to other downtowns and considered national and local trends. We interviewed merchants and users of Downtown, visited other downtowns and listened to national experts on the future of downtowns and public spaces. We asked our sponsor groups for their input and viewpoints. There was remarkable consensus on Downtown's strengths and weaknesses, what people liked about Downtown San Rafael and wanted to keep, and where improvements, changes and breakthroughs were desired.

This analysis and appreciation investigation gave us a solid foundation of information for our Vision and strategy. We shared this analysis with the community and asked for help in developing the Vision in a series of Visioning Sessions. Three community-wide sessions with 250 participants and nine children's sessions with 270 children and their parents were held in the spring of 1992. In these Vision Sessions, we asked, "If we were very successful, what would Downtown San Rafael look, feel, and be like in 15 years? What would it be like to shop, work, visit and live there?" Again there was a remarkable agreement among the visions generated, and a consensus Vision began to emerge.

In the summer and fall of 1992, with the help of our economic, transportation, and urban design professionals, we started to develop detailed visions for six distinct districts Downtown. We tested the validity of our visions with consultants and made revisions to insure the final vision was feasible and could be implemented.

In January 1993, we began circulating a draft Vision and Implementation Strategy to all our Sponsors. A public participation session involving 150 people was the high point of the review process. Overall, the response to the Vision was enthusiastic and supportive, and hundreds of implementation ideas were generated. The Vision presented here includes the community input generated in the review process. The Downtown Community Plan Committee officially endorsed the Vision and Implementation Strategy in April, 1993, and sent it to the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency and the City Council in May.

Our Vision Process and Timetable



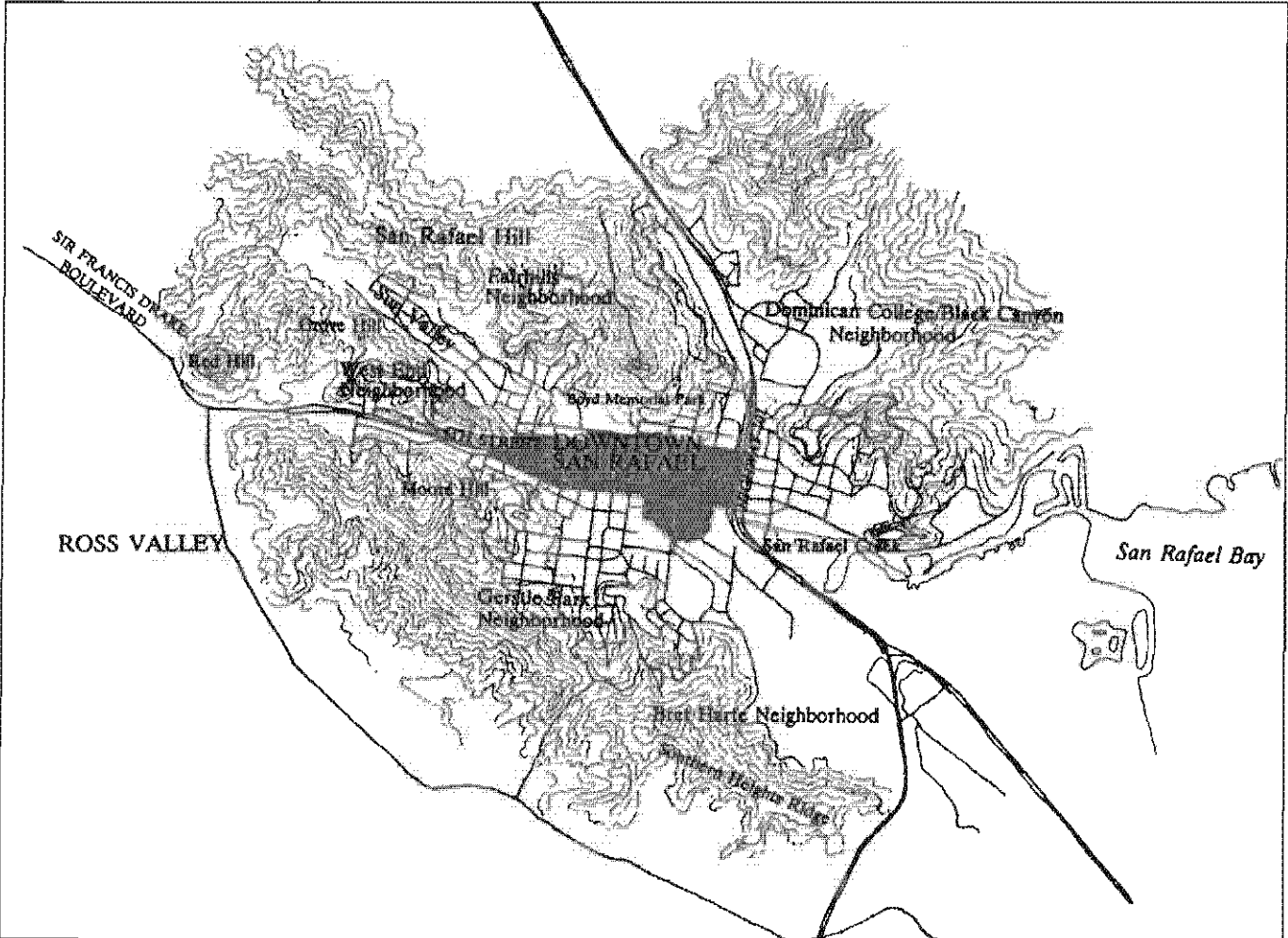
The Setting

BAY AREA

San Rafael is located on the western shore of San Francisco Bay, in a series of valleys surrounded by wooded hillsides. The city is in the center of Marin County's Highway 101 Corridor, and is approximately 17 miles north of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge.

SAN RAFAEL

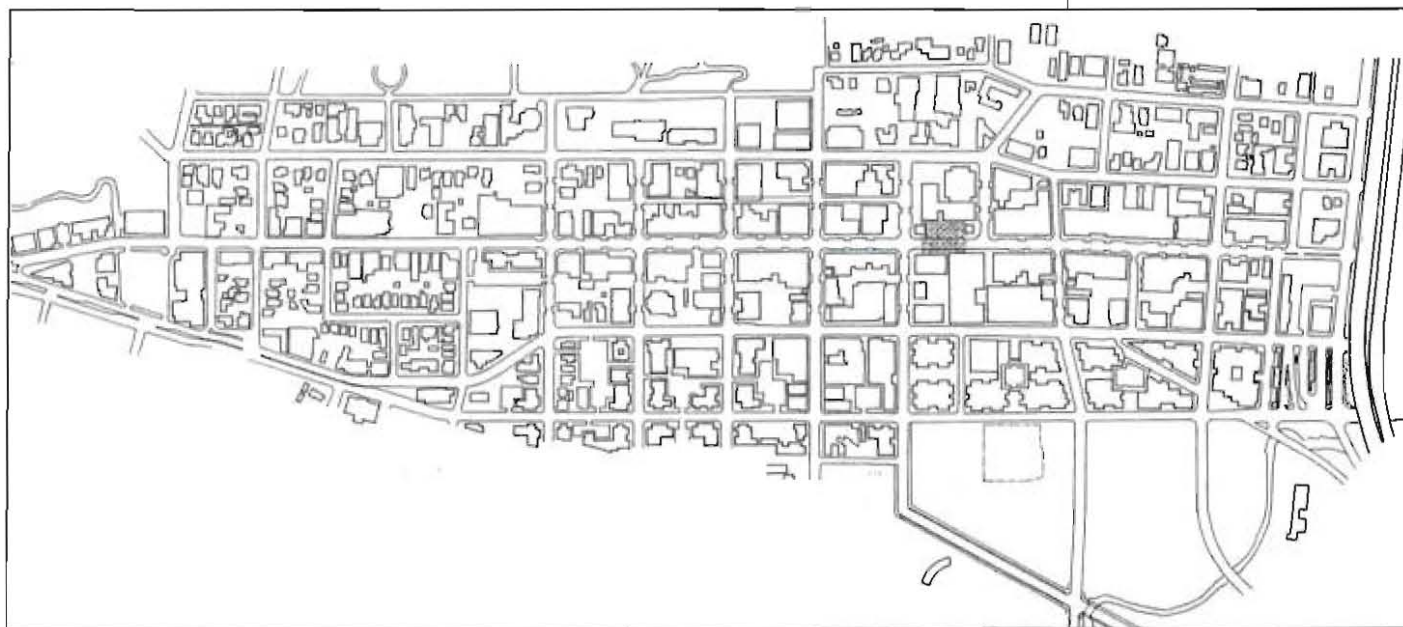
San Rafael developed around the Mission San Rafael Arcangel, and eventually became the largest city in Marin County and the county seat. Over time, San Rafael evolved into the employment, financial and cultural center of Marin and remains in that preeminent position today. When development spread out from the Mission into the surrounding valleys, it took on a suburban character. One exception was the area immediately around the Mission, which was Downtown.



DOWNTOWN

Historically, Downtown has been the only urban place in the County; it had the largest buildings, the most intense development, the best shopping and the county courthouse. Downtown was the center of action and activity. Today, there are bigger buildings, competing shopping areas, a County Government Center and other activity points that challenge the traditional role of Downtown. Downtown is still our urban place; its urban development pattern is unique and cannot be found anywhere else in the city. But what else is Downtown and how should we, the citizens of San Rafael, address the challenge posed to our Downtown? How do we want to guide Downtown's development into the 21st century so it can prosper, be relevant and serve our needs?

Downtown San Rafael is the area defined by Mission Avenue, Highway 101, Second Street, and the beginning of the Miracle Mile.



Downtown San Rafael

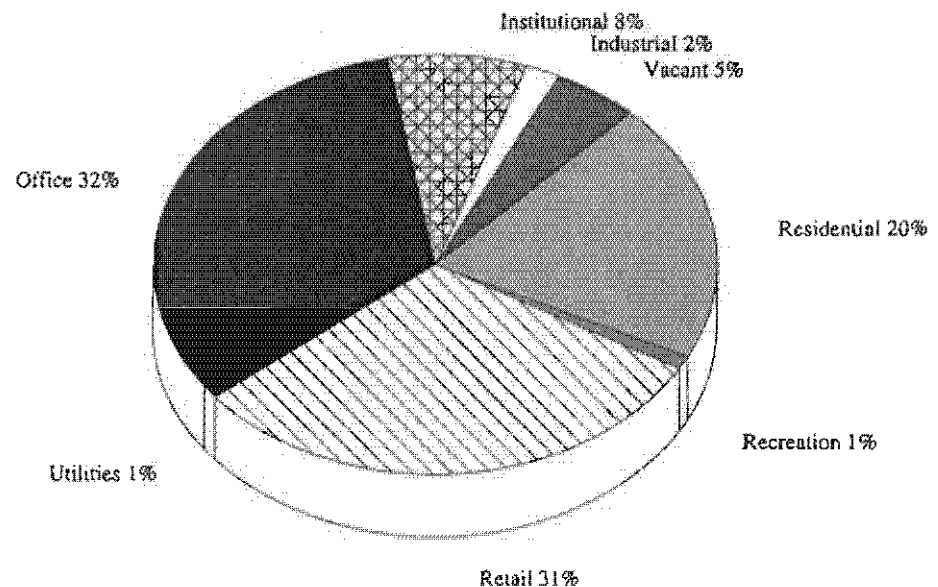
Our Analysis

A vision must be grounded in reality and start with understanding what exists now, the current situation. We therefore began with an analysis of Downtown's economic, social and business situation in 1991 and 1992. Inquiries were also made into what people liked and didn't like about Downtown and what they wanted changed. From this analysis, Downtown's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were identified.

In 1992 Downtown San Rafael had:

- 200 acres of land - one third of a square mile and 0.5% of the city
- 1 million square feet of retail and service uses - 30% of all Downtown building area and larger than Northgate Mall
- 1 million square feet of office space - 30% of all Downtown building area, primarily lease spaces less than 10,000 square feet, and 15 to 20% of all office space in Marin County
- 760 residential units - including 78 single family houses and 4% of the city housing units
- 5,500 people employed in office uses
- 7,346 public and private parking spaces - more parking per square foot of building area than Northgate Mall
- 17% of all sales taxes in the city in 1990

Building Space by Type of Use



People liked many things downtown including:

- Events, especially the Farmers Market
- Hometown, my hometown, real downtown atmosphere
- Diversity and variety in shops, mix of retail, office and service uses
- Bookstores, restaurants and specialty shops
- Trees, landscaping, the old look, Mission Avenue and Fifth Avenue
- Parking, especially the inexpensive rates

People Didn't Like:

- Panhandlers and street people, with aggressive behaviors
- Lack of parking, lack of long term parking, and parking meters
- Lack of good places to shop
- Vacant stores and lots, littered sidewalks
- Traffic congestion, especially on Second and Third Streets

Changes People Want Downtown:

Major Changes to:

- Upgrade our Downtown's image and identity
- Become a more interesting, exciting place

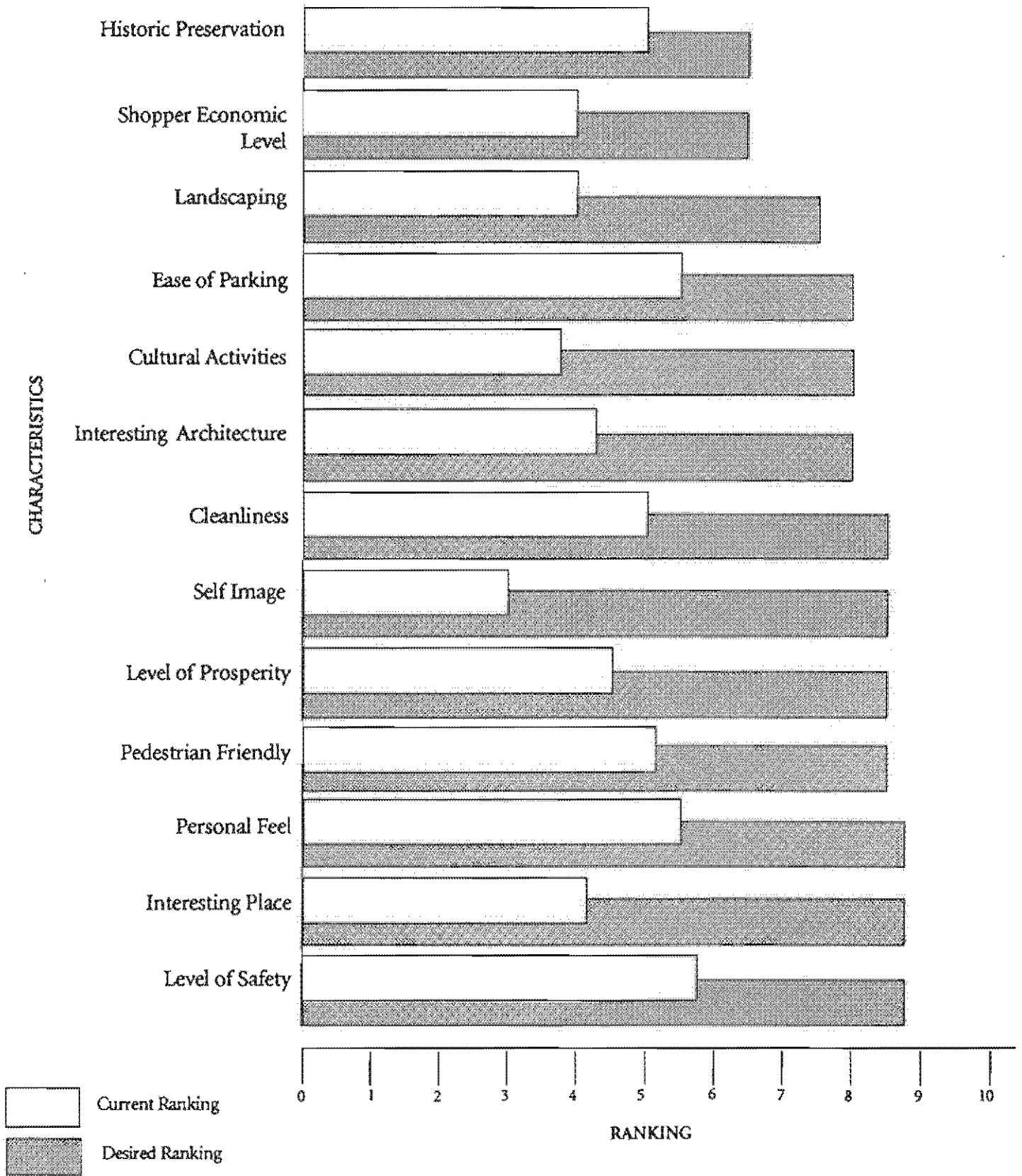
Moderate changes to:

- Be a more prosperous place
- Increase the variety of cultural activities
- Achieve a higher level of cleanliness and safety
- Be a more personal and friendly place, be everything a mall isn't
- Be pleasantly walkable
- Have interesting and varied architecture

Small changes to:

- Park more easily
- Have slightly more upscale shoppers
- Achieve the right amount of historic preservation

Comparing Existing and Desired Characteristics



This graph was developed from a survey where people were asked to rank Downtown on a scale of 1 to 10 comparing the current situation to where they wanted it to rank in the future.

Downtown's Strengths, Weaknesses And Opportunities Are:

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES
IMAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People like the hometown feel of Downtown; it is a real town, unlike any other place in Marin. • Downtown is a complete community providing all aspects of community life; housing, shopping, services, entertainment, education, recreation, religion and culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown does not have a strong image or a positive identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the community gathering and celebration place, the City's heartbeat, where people of all ages come together. • Recognize that the hometown feel is more than building appearance; it has social and cultural elements. • Take advantage of the unique urban character of Downtown.
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is room to grow on vacant land and remodeled sites. • Revitalization tools exist, including a Business Improvement District and Redevelopment Agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking is perceived as a problem. • Downtown's appearance needs upgrading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an urban parking strategy. • Use new development and rehabilitation to improve Downtown's appearance and image.
ECONOMICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown has a broad economic base to buffer changes in economic conditions. • Downtown has a concentration of cultural and historic resources. • Downtown is easily accessible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown lacks activity especially at night and on weekends. • Downtown lacks an overall marketing and managing function. • The retail sector of Downtown is fragile. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the cultural and entertainment center of San Rafael. • Establish a public / private effort to promote the interests of all portions of Downtown. • Develop a clear economic strategy to address all aspects of Downtown's economy as an interrelated whole.
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People want to be proactive in creating the future of San Rafael. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Rafael's ethnic populations are not well integrated into Downtown's economy or community life. • Many people are uncomfortable with the hostile conduct of some street people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Downtown's market population to include San Rafael's ethnic communities.

OUR VISION FOR DOWNTOWN SAN RAFAEL IN 2010

Our Vision

Our Value Constitution

Economic Principles

Design Principles

District Visions

This is our Vision for Downtown San Rafael. It is an image of what we want to create for ourselves, our children and our future. It is not a conventional land use, economic development or zoning plan. Our Vision, together with the Implementation Strategy, is intended to serve several purposes. First, it is a document stating the community consensus for the future of Downtown, the agreements we have on what Downtown ought to be. Second, it is the basis for detailed land use, design and economic plans to be developed to move toward the desired Downtown. Third, it is an indicator of how public and private actions can be coordinated, and fourth, it is a framework for the many public and private decisions needed to achieve the Vision.

Our Vision for Downtown San Rafael in 2010 has five elements:

Our Vision - What we envision Downtown to be in the year 2010. This is what we want to achieve.

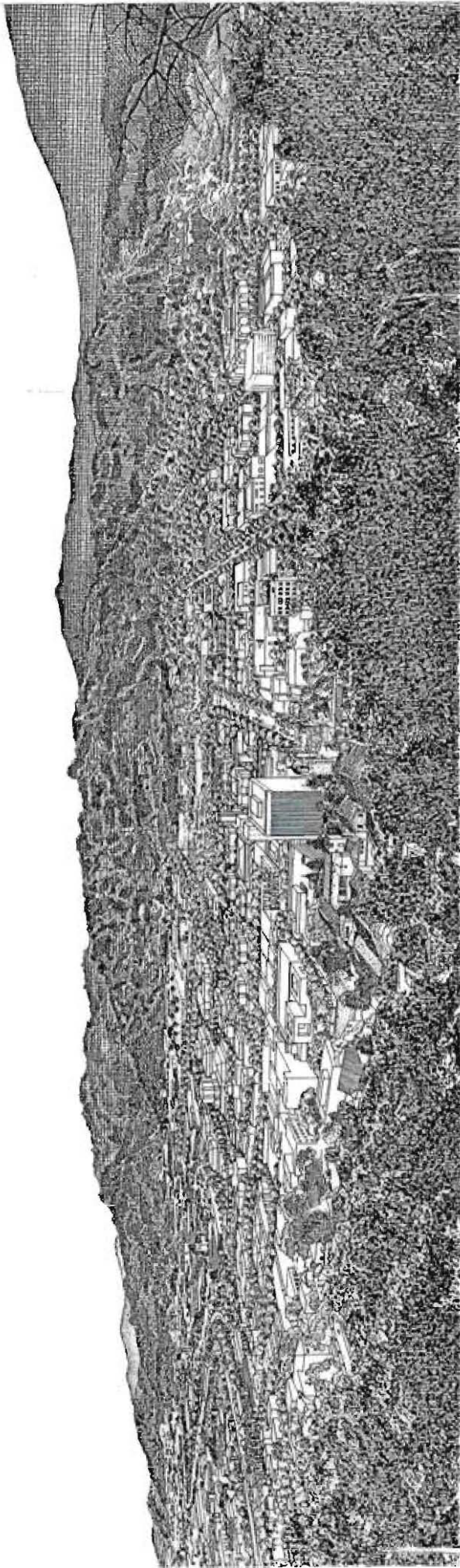
Our Value Constitution - Our Community values and beliefs which are the foundation of our Vision and are expressed Downtown. These values will guide our public and private sector decisions about development and change Downtown.

Economic Principles - Economic related courses of action consistent with the Vision and the Values Constitution. Over time, public and private projects and activities will follow the direction given in these principles.

Design Principles - Physical design factors and actions consistent with the consistent with the Vision and the Values Constitution. Some of these principles will require further study, others can be followed immediately.

District Visions - More detailed visions that address the special character of Downtown's six Districts and illustrations of how these principles can be implemented.





Downtown
<i>View from Boyd Hill</i>
Vision of Downtown San Rafael

This is our community dream, a description of Downtown San Rafael in the year 2010. It includes the image projected by Downtown, who is served by Downtown, the relationship of our Downtown to the rest of the county and the biggest changes that have occurred since the early 1990's. This Vision is intended to capture our imaginations, focus our energies and raise our spirits. This is what we want for ourselves and future generations. All future public and private actions will be evaluated to see if they further the intent of Our Vision.

We envision:

Downtown San Rafael in 2010 to be a healthy economic center, the business, financial and retail center for San Rafael and Marin County. A full range of housing, shopping, and employment activities are provided Downtown. Our Downtown is the heart and soul of San Rafael, the focal point of our community, and is the most interesting place in Marin County.

Our Downtown's Image

Downtown San Rafael is a hometown place; it is safe, friendly, warm and welcoming, a comfortable mix of old and new. At the same time, Downtown is a truly urban community, a multi-dimensional and real city.

Downtown is the center of San Rafael's activities, with a diverse mix of uses including retail, business, finance, government, culture, entertainment, community service and housing. Everyone likes our friendly hospitality and it is a great place to work or to conduct a business.

Successful retail activities are key to the health and vitality of Downtown, and our retailers are thriving. Downtown retail uses are unique and specialized, with an emphasis on local merchants and businesses. Shops provide personal and friendly service, customers know the merchants and like to do business with them.

Many people work Downtown in the new class "A" office buildings and in the restored and refurbished Victorians. Downtown is a wonderful place to live, with a wide range of units including condominiums, apartments, duplexes and houses. In fact, many of the people who work Downtown also live here.

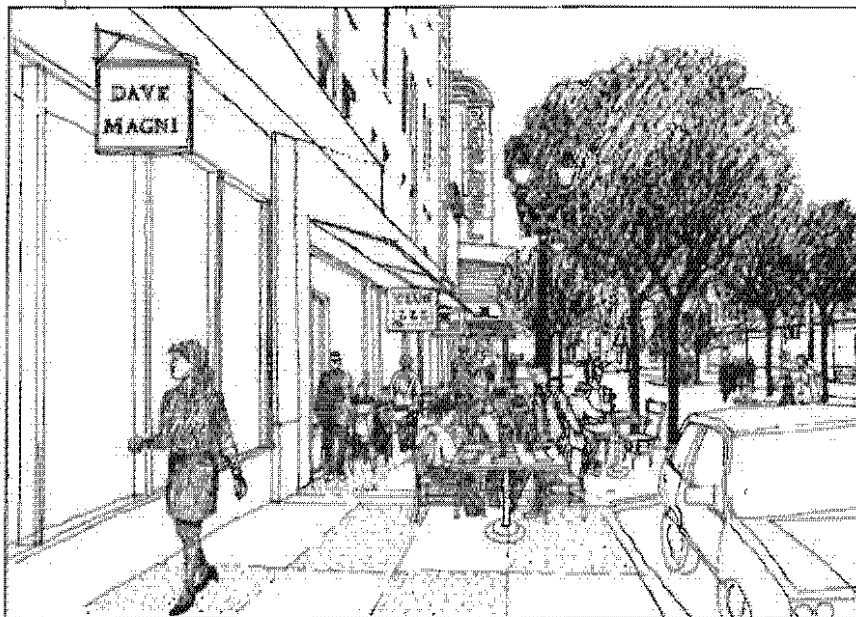
People come Downtown for lots of reasons besides work and shopping. Our cultural, recreation and entertainment activities are concentrated here, from the Falkirk Cultural Center to the dynamic Rafael Theater, and form the most interesting venue in the Bay Area. Residents and visitors alike enjoy our cultural riches: bookstores, library, art galleries, theater and museums, as well as street musicians and outdoor concerts.

Downtown is a friendly place for everyone. Our population is ethnically and culturally diverse and works well together. Children, teens, adults, and seniors all feel welcome Downtown. Families especially feel comfortable here and enjoy their Downtown outings.

Downtown is the place where good things happen in San Rafael. All ages come here for fun and entertainment. Many community celebrations and events happen Downtown. It's a gathering place for entertainment, cultural and special events like the Downtown Farmers Market, the Cinco de Mayo Festival and the Film Festival.

Our Downtown is a very attractive place with tree lined streets, flowers and good architecture. Building heights generally haven't changed, but there is more variety in building height and architecture. One and two story height increases have been granted near the freeway for special landmark buildings in the new Lindero District.

It's a great place to walk around; there are lots of trees and benches and many things to do and see. We make the most of the good weather with outdoor spaces, sidewalk cafes and open air shops.



People meet at our many outdoor cafes

Downtown is a busy place and people come from all over to work and to shop. The sidewalks are busy with people meeting friends for coffee at one of the outdoor cafes or great restaurants, browsing at the popular public market and shopping in the many interesting stores.

These increases in activity, shoppers and workers have resulted in increased traffic. The Transportation Center and the County Transitway are popular and busy alternatives to driving Downtown. We see the increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic Downtown as a mark of our success in revitalizing Downtown over the last 20 years.

District Images

Downtown has six districts, which, while they have individual images and functions, are not totally distinct and separate from one another. Together the districts form a dynamic and appealing whole, a Downtown for all.

Fourth Street Retail Core

Our Retail Core is centered on Fourth Street and flows into the surrounding cross streets. It is a strong, dynamic and growing center of retail and business activity. It's also the social heart of Downtown, the activity and celebration center of the community. Fourth Street is used throughout the year for our many special events and celebrations.

Hetherington Gateway

The Hetherington Gateway District has been revitalized and is a grand entrance to Downtown. New, well designed office buildings in the Gateway serve workers from San Rafael and other Marin communities. Our efficient and attractive Transportation Center provides environmentally friendly ways for people to get to and from Downtown.

Lindero District

The Lindero District has undergone the greatest change of all the Downtown Districts and now enhances the image of our Downtown. It is a landmark development of office, retail, recreation and residential uses. The whole District is beautifully landscaped, well utilized, with strong connections to the Retail Core, easy access to the Transportation Center and the restored San Rafael Creek.

Second/Third Corridor

Second and Third Streets have become aesthetically pleasing boulevards that function as a safe and efficient transportation corridor. This well landscaped office and retail area has been significantly upgraded and gives travellers a positive impression of Downtown San Rafael.

West End Village

Our West End Village is both a residential neighborhood and a special shopping area with a character distinctly different from the rest of Fourth Street. This area has been visually enhanced over the years but has maintained its unique identity and appealing atmosphere.

Fifth/Mission District

The Fifth/Mission District is known for its tree lined streets and pleasant sidewalks. It serves as our civic center and cultural district. It is an excellent location for small offices, apartment buildings, churches and schools. Falkirk Cultural Center, the Belrose Theater and the many Victorian buildings add a special feel to the District.

Downtown Management

Our Downtown is managed; we have a coordinated and proactive program to promote and market the entire Downtown business community. Activities include recruitment and retention of businesses, business development, service programs, common marketing and promotional programs.

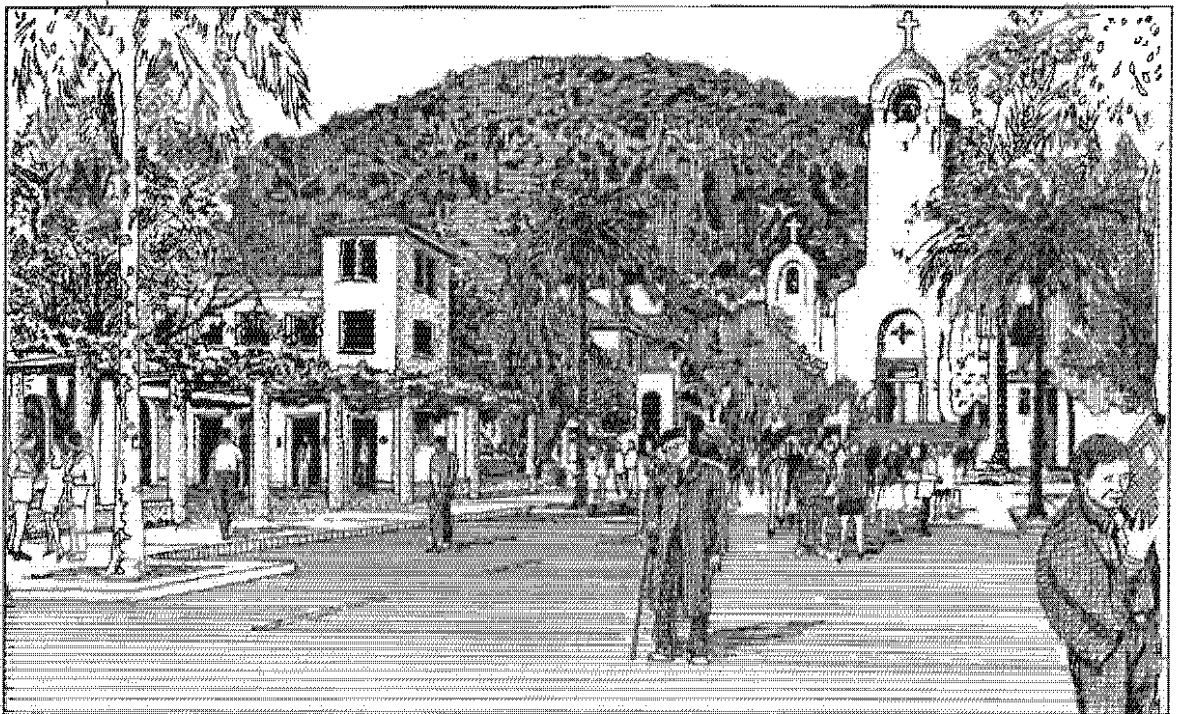
The marketing and management functions are collaborative efforts by the Business Improvement District, property owners, Chamber of Commerce and city officials. It's a friendly, open and efficient process. In addition, many organizations and individuals take responsibility for getting things done Downtown.

Who Does Downtown Serve

Downtown San Rafael serves a diverse population of all ages, cultures, physical abilities and economic levels by offering an interrelated set of activities including retail, office, culture, recreation, housing and employment. It provides business and customer convenience by locating many activities in close proximity and is the multi-purpose destination for all of Marin County.

Businesses and residents are accommodated through the provision of adequate parking, excellent public transportation, bike paths and pedestrian walkways. A range of people from local residents to the entire County are served although the emphasis is on Downtown workers and residents and San Rafael citizens. Tourists are also served through the Mission, great restaurants, cultural opportunities and the wonderful feel and atmosphere of Downtown.

Mission San Rafael Arcangel is popular with tourists



Downtown's Relationship to the Rest of the County

Downtown San Rafael is a role model for the rest of the County. It's a place which coordinates employment, housing and transportation activities and accommodates cultural and ethnic diversity.

Our Downtown has strong community involvement. It doesn't duplicate or compete with other places in the County; it has a unique and separate set of services, businesses and activities. At the same time, Downtown is connected to towns and major shopping centers throughout Marin.

Biggest Changes Downtown

Looking back from 2010, the biggest changes we see in Downtown are that it is now a much livelier place with many more people both day and evening than in 1993; a growing, dynamic, successful retail center; a more attractive place with more landscaping and trees. It is easier to get to Downtown, to move around in it, and to park. New buildings are well designed, and Downtown's events, celebrations and festivals attract the whole community. Another major change is the spirit of cooperation and collaboration among the city's residents, the business community and city officials. While Downtown has undergone these changes, it has managed to retain and enhance its hometown feeling, friendliness and pedestrian scale.



Our Value Constitution

Our Value Constitution contains the Community values that are the foundation of the Vision. These values are inherent throughout the Principles and Implementation Strategy. They are guides and inspiration for future, more detailed decisions, and will strongly influence actions of the city, property owners, developers, merchants and residents as they bring the Vision to life over the next 20 years.

We value:

Sense of Community

Downtown is the heart and soul of the San Rafael community. It's the place where people participate in community life and get involved. Downtown expresses our family orientation and social responsibility.

Healthy Economy

Downtown looks, feels and is a healthy, prosperous place. It is a good place to do business, an excellent investment opportunity and a stable residential area. Downtown is an important and expanding part of the overall city economy.

Hometown Feel

Downtown has a hometown feel; it is comfortable, walkable, the place you go to meet friends, familiar, a community unlike any other in Marin. You greet local people who work in and own their businesses.

Complete Urban Community

Downtown is an urban place that in a compact area provides all the activity needed in a community including shopping, jobs, housing, and entertainment. While Downtown is urban, it is liveable and unique because of its sense of community and hometown feel.

Strong Identity

Downtown has a strong image and presence. It is seen in the city and county as a desirable place to be. People admire and enjoy Downtown. Our Downtown is emulated by other cities and downtowns.

Clean, Safe and Attractive

Downtown is a clean, safe and attractive place. Sidewalks and streets are clean, and all utility lines are underground. People have a sense of security and safety. Buildings and landscaping are maintained, well designed and reflect pride of ownership.

Pleasant to Walk In

Downtown San Rafael is a pleasant place to stroll and people walk to and from the surrounding neighborhoods. Sidewalks are tree shaded, pe-

pedestrians are screened from traffic, and there are places to sit and “people watch.” Our buildings complement the street level ambience.

Active, Outdoor and People Orientation

Downtown capitalizes on San Rafael’s fine weather, with outdoor cafes, open storefronts, outdoor activities and events. It is fun, exciting, full of people, the place where people go and good things are happening.

Gathering Place

Downtown is the community gathering place where events, parades and special celebrations occur. This is where shopping and business activities converge, where we meet our friends, and interact as a community.

Historic Heritage

Downtown honors and preserves our historic heritage while welcoming and integrating contemporary architecture and art.

Good Neighbor to Neighborhoods

Downtown activities are focused and do not impact nearby neighborhoods. Downtown enhances the neighborhoods’ quality of life by offering easy and safe access to urban amenities and services.

Easy to Move About

It is easy to get to and move about Downtown. We are clear about where pedestrians are encouraged and where traffic efficiency is paramount. There is a full range of transportation options including cars, buses, bikes and walkways. Parking is easy to find and attractive.

Diversity

Downtown embraces diversity and expresses it in many ways. We value and foster a diverse mix of uses, activities and businesses throughout Downtown. We respect and welcome people of all ages, economic status, race and culture. Diversity and creativity in design and architecture are encouraged.

Environmentally Sound Practices

Downtown has environmentally sound practices. Natural features such as the creek are respected. Jobs, housing and transportation are in close proximity to reduce auto dependence and encroachment into open space areas. Recycling, energy and water conservation practices are all followed.

Civic Cooperation

The city, citizens of San Rafael and the business community cooperate to get things done. Actions are collaborative in nature with wide participation by property owners, merchants, business people and residents. High standards are set for development and activity Downtown, and the city works in a proactive and creative way with business to create an aesthetic, successful, people friendly and business friendly environment.

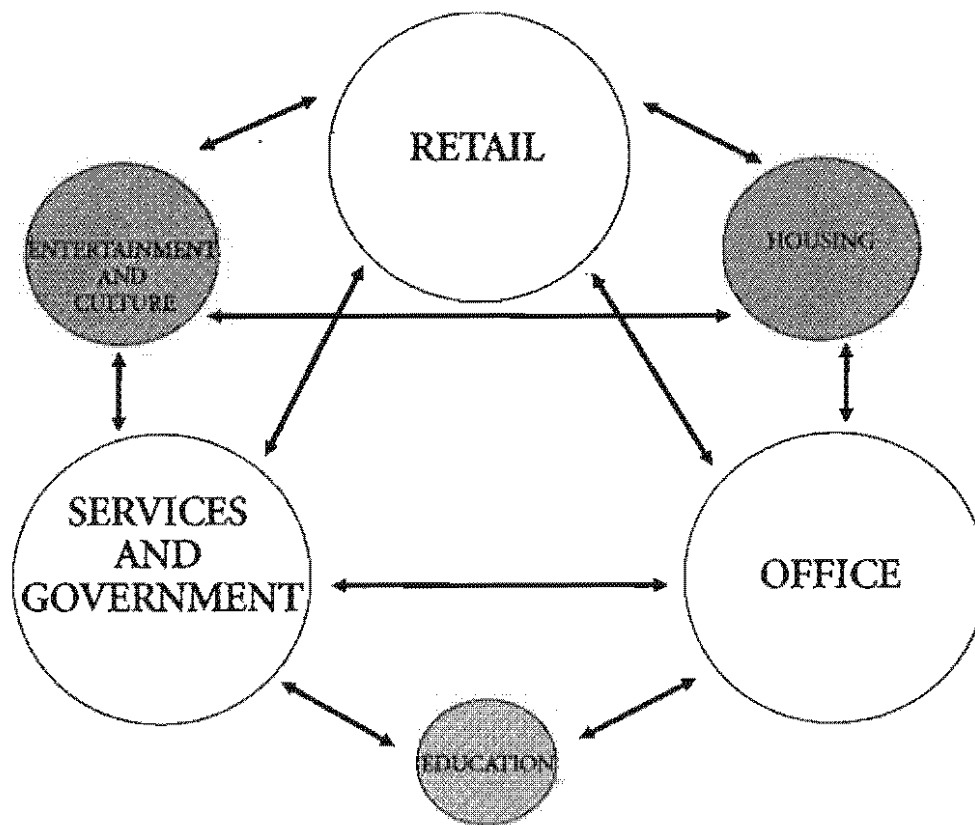
Economic Principles

Our Economic Principles are economic related rules of action flowing from the spirit and intent of our Vision for Downtown San Rafael and our Value Constitution. These are actions, approaches and developments which we feel will move Downtown towards the Vision. More specific programs will need to be developed to fill out the details. It is the details and the individual efforts of all segments of the community that will make these principles work.

We want to:

- Substantially expand Downtown's economic success and generate the necessary financial support to achieve the social, cultural and urban design elements of our Vision.
- Keep Downtown functioning as a substantial tax generator to directly benefit the citizens and City of San Rafael.
- Strengthen Downtown's position as a major business, financial and office center for the city and the county.
- Vigorously support the retail sector because a healthy retail sector is essential to a successful and prosperous Downtown. Action will be taken to:
 - ◆ Attract new enterprises to complement existing businesses,
 - ◆ Assist local businesses and merchants in their efforts to improve and expand.
- Manage and market the retail sector. A united effort that includes the Business Improvement District, Chamber of Commerce, city officials and property owners could pursue:
 - ◆ Business recruitment and retention activities,
 - ◆ Service and education programs for merchants and property owners,
 - ◆ Common marketing and advertising programs for all Downtown.
- Maintain the strong, diversified economic base generated by the mutually supportive, balanced mix of retail, office, service and government uses that exist Downtown.

Strong Economic Base with Mutually Supportive Elements



- Set up an ongoing coordinating committee or planning group to foster the interests of all Downtown. This effort will:
 - ✦ Enable individuals, public and private organizations to all take responsibility for changing Downtown,
 - ✦ Operate in a collaborative manner,
 - ✦ Include wide participation by property owners, merchants, workers, shoppers, residents and city officials.
- Emphasize flexibility and cooperation in the ongoing interactions of city officials, the citizens of San Rafael and the business community. This would include:
 - ✦ Joint public/private efforts to improve Downtown,
 - ✦ Easily understandable, flexible and efficient city development regulations and development review process,
 - ✦ Open, direct communication.

- **Make Downtown active, busy, "alive after five" and on weekends with:**
 - ✦ Many businesses open in the evenings,
 - ✦ Extensive calendar of special events,
 - ✦ Wide variety of cultural and entertainment activities,
 - ✦ More people living Downtown.

- **Establish Downtown as the cultural and entertainment center of the city. Cultural and entertainment activities will:**
 - ✦ Include public, private, non-profit and commercial efforts,
 - ✦ Appeal to people of all ages, cultures, and interests,
 - ✦ Complement and support other businesses Downtown,
 - ✦ Bring more people Downtown.

- **Expand Downtown's reputation as the event center for the city. Events could include parades, festivals, celebrations, promotional sales, sports events, and would be:**
 - ✦ Located in streets, parking lots, sidewalks, open spaces and private property,
 - ✦ Sponsored by public, private and non-profit organizations, individuals and businesses,
 - ✦ Take place in all parts of Downtown.

*Farmers Market,
one of our most
popular events*



- Construct a popular and attractive residential environment with units of all types and costs. This would include:
 - ✦ Keeping existing units,
 - ✦ Pursuing private sector construction,
 - ✦ Designing units that take advantage of Downtown's views, proximity to shopping and services,
 - ✦ Adopting residential development standards that respond to Downtown's urban situation,
 - ✦ Balancing the existing unit mix with construction of market rate, family and ownership units.

- Preserve Downtown's reputation as a special place. Our strategy is to build on existing strengths and honor Downtown's:
 - ✦ Historic heritage and buildings,
 - ✦ Unique urban characteristics and density,
 - ✦ Diversity in uses, businesses and architecture.

- Organize the six Downtown Districts to work together as a harmonious whole. Each District will:
 - ✦ Focus on its own unique character and function,
 - ✦ Complement and support the activities of the other Districts.

Design Principles

Our Design Principles establish the physical design parameters for all of Downtown. These Principles reflect Our Vision Constitution, and work in conjunction with the Economic Principles to establish a coherent system for the physical development aspects of Downtown.

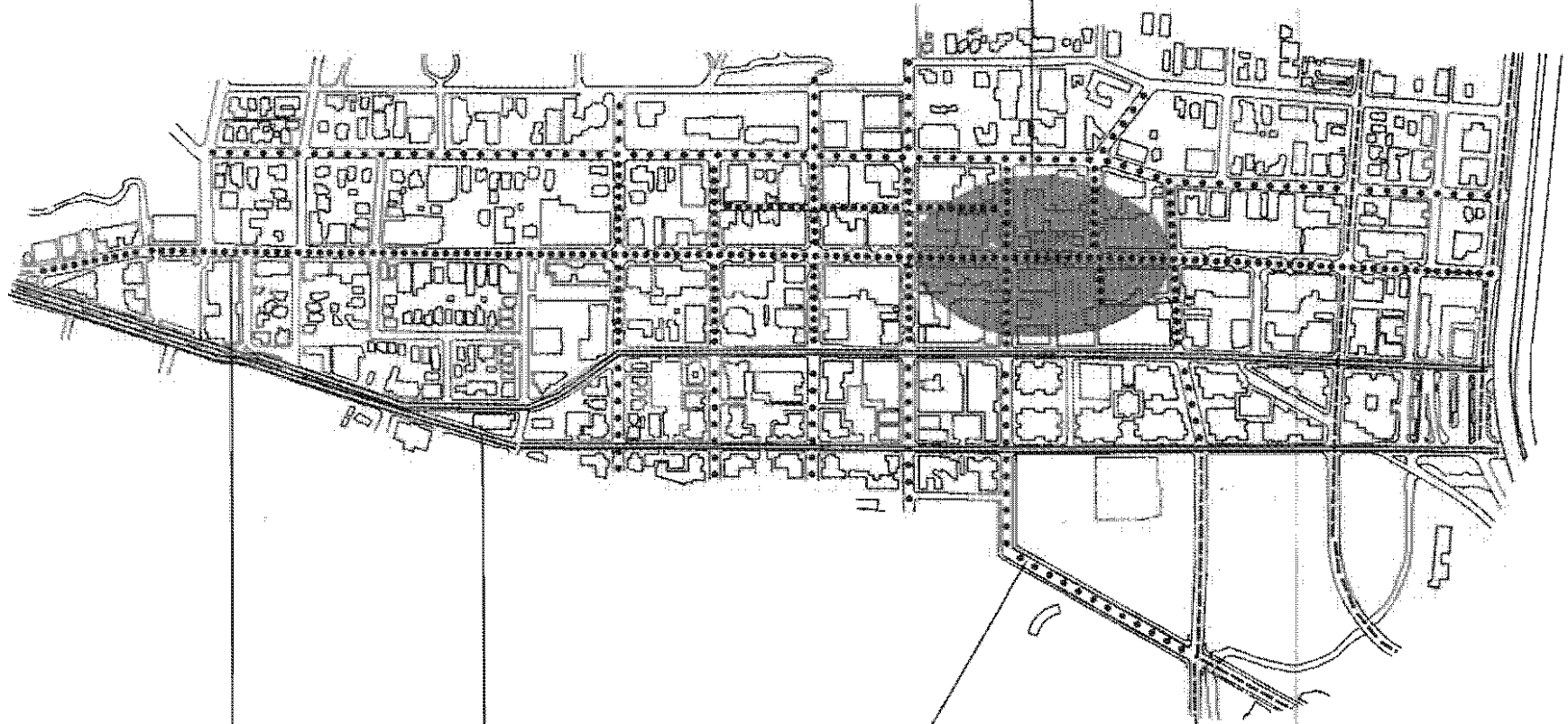
We want to:

- Emphasize quality architecture and development Downtown. We place a high value on:
 - ✦ Varied and distinctive building designs,
 - ✦ Sensitive treatment of historic resources,
 - ✦ Generous landscaping to accent buildings,
 - ✦ Appropriate materials and construction.
- Respect Downtown's urban characteristics with special development criteria to differentiate Downtown from the suburban areas of San Rafael.
- Make Downtown's street system much more comfortable for pedestrians. Our street system will:
 - ✦ Adjust the balance between the needs of pedestrians and the desire for efficient traffic flow to emphasize pedestrians,
 - ✦ Establish a range of pedestrian environments,
 - ✦ Slow traffic where necessary,
 - ✦ Improve sidewalks, street trees and other sidewalk amenities,
 - ✦ Invite creative and innovative solutions and ideas.
- Focus action and vitality in the "Heart" of Downtown on Fourth Street between the Rafael Theater and Court Street. This will be the area that first comes to mind when people think of Downtown.
- Increase the pedestrian shopping street character on Fourth Street and on adjacent portions of the cross streets. These streets will:
 - ✦ Slow traffic flow to enhance the vibrant shopping setting,
 - ✦ Increase visibility to storefronts and businesses,
 - ✦ Expand sidewalks and possibly have angled parking.

- Enhance the pedestrian environment of neighborhood access streets such as "A", "B", "C", "D", "E" and portions of Andersen Drive. These actions will include:
 - ✦ Emphasizing a comfortable walking atmosphere for pedestrians,
 - ✦ Providing two-way traffic where feasible.
- Refine the appearance of city access streets such as Lincoln, Hetheron, Lindaro and Andersen Drive that connect Downtown to the rest of San Rafael by:
 - ✦ Emphasizing safe and efficient movement of both pedestrians and vehicles to Downtown,
 - ✦ Constructing wide sidewalks on attractive, tree lined streets.
- Substantially improve the county access streets of Second and Third Streets through:
 - ✦ Planting street trees and undergrounding utilities,
 - ✦ Screening pedestrians from traffic and encouraging pedestrian use of other streets,
 - ✦ Providing safe crosswalks at all intersections,
 - ✦ Managing traffic flow for efficiency, not speed.
- Make parking convenient and easy to find. A comprehensive parking strategy will encourage innovative solutions and address Downtown's urban situation.
- Distinguish Downtown from adjoining neighborhood areas by:
 - ✦ Announcing major entrances to Downtown with gateway treatments,
 - ✦ Keeping all Downtown activities within Downtown's area.
 - ✦ Providing a gradual visual transition into adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Maximize the wonderful views of Mt. Tam and the surrounding hillsides for people in buildings and on the streets by:
 - ✦ Orienting windows and open spaces towards views,
 - ✦ Enhancing the vistas up and down streets to the hillsides.
- Retain the existing building heights of three to five stories. Limited exceptions could be made in some Districts where a taller building will:

- ◆ Accent a gateway and become a landmark element,
- ◆ Provide substantial public benefit,
- ◆ Retain pedestrian scale at the ground level.
- Ensure that all buildings, regardless of their height, are comfortable for people at the ground level. This would include:
 - ◆ Relating wall and window heights to the height of people,
 - ◆ Providing windows, building setbacks, landscaping and things for pedestrians to look at for visual variety,
 - ◆ Orienting signs to pedestrians.
- Provide many different ways in addition to cars for people to move to and through Downtown. These could include:
 - ◆ Bike and walking path connections to adjacent neighborhoods,
 - ◆ Shuttle buses,
 - ◆ The County Transitway,
 - ◆ Bike lanes on streets,
 - ◆ Efficient bus service.

Heart of Downtown



Pedestrian Shopping Streets
Fourth Street and portions
of cross streets

County Access Streets
Second and Third

Neighborhood Access Streets
A, B, C, D, E, Fifth,
Lootens, Andersen

City Access Streets
Lincoln, Hetherston,
Lindero, Andersen

Street Character and Design

Vision of Downtown
San Rafael

DISTRICT VISIONS

Fourth Street Retail Core

Hetherton Gateway

Lindaro District

Second/Third Corridor

West End Village

Fifth/Mission District

District Visions include Vision descriptions, Economic Principles, Design Principles and Vision Concept Maps for each of the six Districts that taken as a whole, make up Downtown. These District Visions convey the special characteristics of each of the Districts.

While each of the Districts is special, with its own character and function, the boundaries between the areas are flexible. The character of one District flows easily into the next. All of the Districts are connected to one another, and no one is more important than another. Office workers in one District live in another and shop in a third. Retail uses not appropriate in one District flourish in another. Together, the Districts make up our whole, urban and diverse Downtown.

Our Six Downtown Districts Are:

Fourth Street Retail Core - The heart of Downtown, our primary shopping area and the center of public events and activities.

Hetherton Gateway - The major entryway to Downtown and focus of the transportation system.

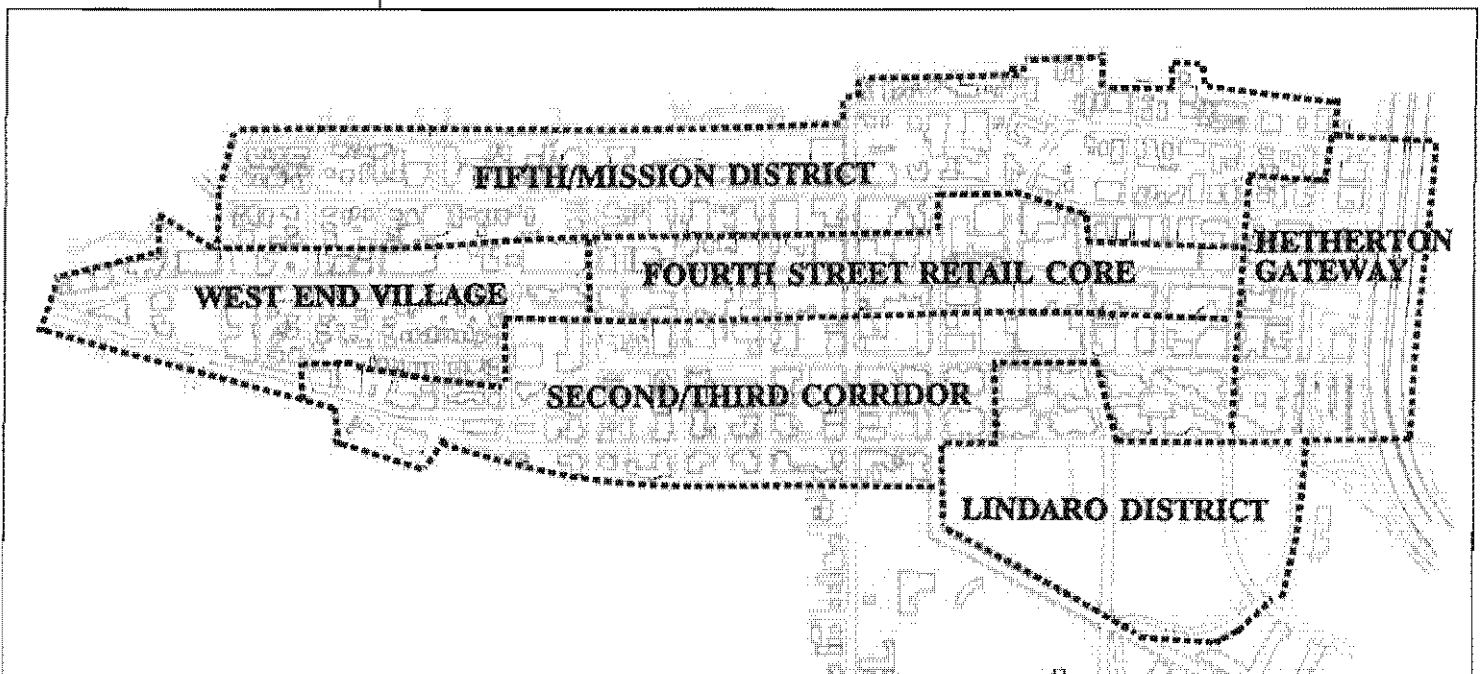
Lindaro District - The largest new development area with office and retail uses.

Second/Third Corridor - Our handsome and efficient transportation corridor with tree lined boulevards.

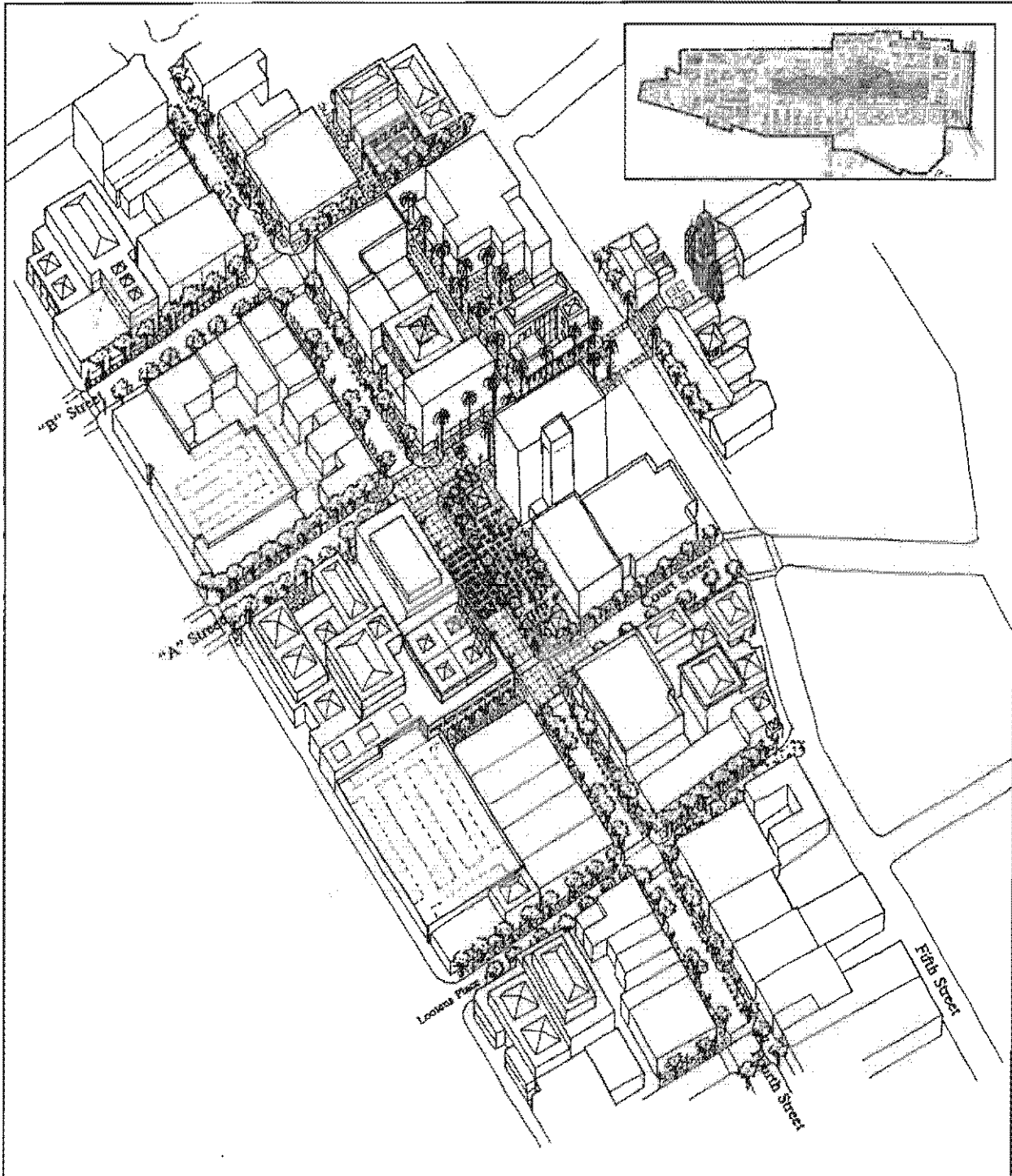
West End Village - A real village with strong connections to the Fourth Street Retail Core.

Fifth/Mission District - Our culture and civic center.

District Location Map



Fourth Street Retail Core



Heart of Downtown

Successful Retail Area

Center of San Rafael's Economic and Social Life

Fourth Street Retail Core Vision

In 2010, our Fourth Street Retail Core is one of the most interesting and popular shopping areas in the Bay Area. It's vibrant and alive all day and evening, full of people, activities and a wide variety of unique, one of a kind shops. These activities, along with the many restaurants, coffee houses and bookstores, make Downtown a vigorous and growing retail center highly valued by Marin County residents.

The Downtown Retail Core extends beyond Fourth Street now, with retail activities extending down the cross streets, especially "A", "B" and "C" Streets. With the Core's revitalized streetscape, public spaces, broadened sidewalks, public art and great lighting, it's one of the most attractive, clean and safe urban public spaces in the Bay Area.

The Courthouse Square area, the heart of Downtown, is especially vital and teeming with people, whether they are meeting for lunch or business, shopping or attending one of the many events held each year that celebrate life in San Rafael. The area around Courthouse Square plaza has been transformed into an inviting outdoor space where the citizens of San Rafael gather to celebrate community events, including ethnic and holiday festivals.

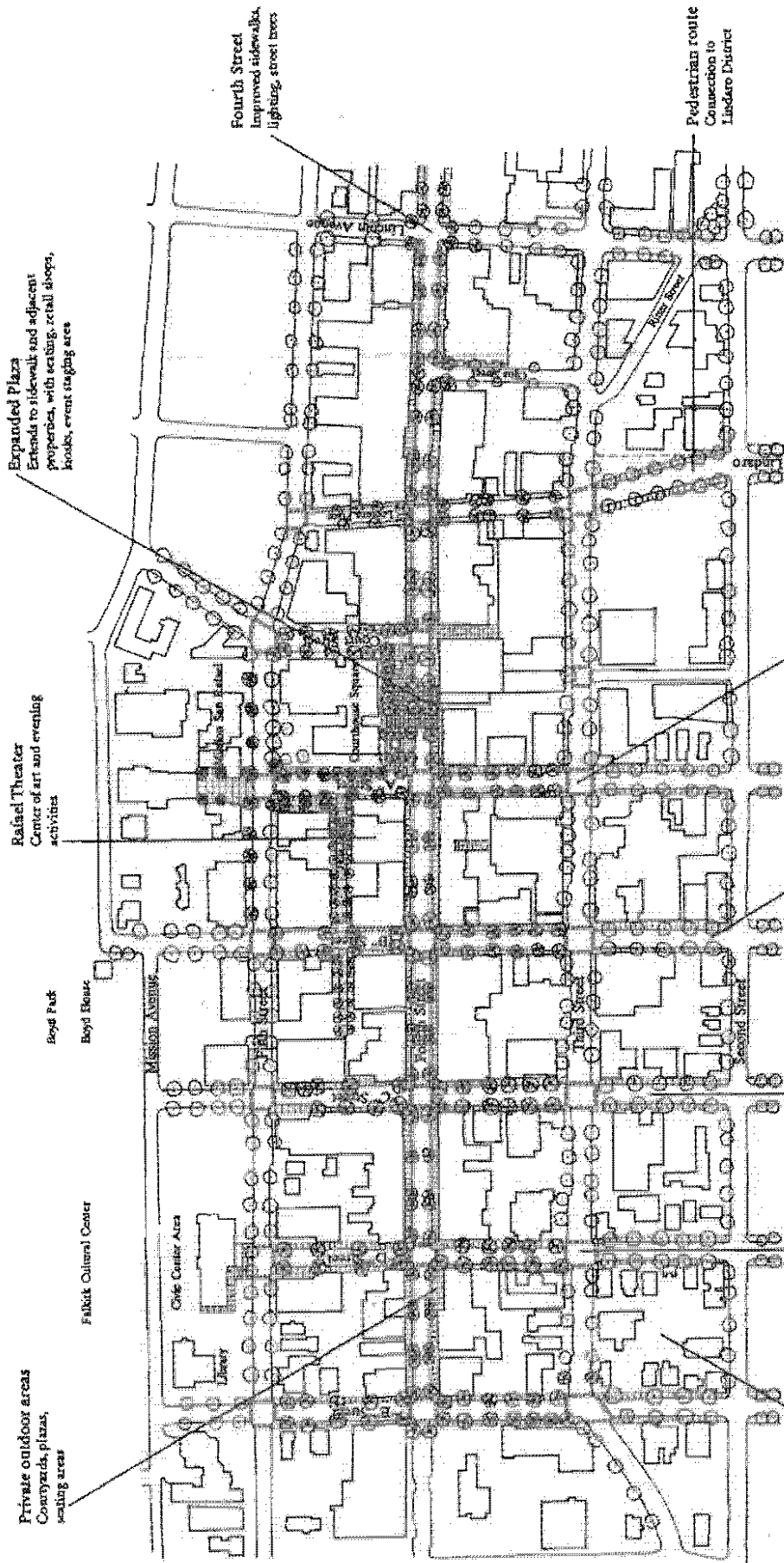
The Core is alive and jumping at night; shops are open late and the Rafael Theater is the center of a thriving local art and cultural scene. Its venue attracts people from all over the Bay Area. After seeing a movie or performance, visitors can eat, shop, attend a lecture in one of the bookstores or coffee houses, visit an art gallery, or listen to music.

The Core supports Downtown's office and residential uses by providing ample shopping, eating and entertainment opportunities as well as upper floor space for residences and offices.

Our Fourth Street Retail Core is organized and managed. A cooperative and harmonious effort of property and business owners, the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, city officials and the Business Improvement District aggressively markets Downtown's businesses, with a focus on the Core. As a result, the Fourth Street Retail Core vigorously and successfully competes with nearby shopping centers and other downtowns in the County.

People enjoy the Fourth Street Retail Core; we bring our friends here and visit it year 'round ourselves.





Private outdoor areas
Courtyards, plazas,
seating areas

Falkirk Cultural Center

Boyd House

Raisel Theater
Center of art and evening
activities

Expanded Plaza
Extends to sidewalk and adjacent
properties, with seating, retail shops,
kiosks, event staging area

Fourth Street
Improved sidewalks,
lighting, street trees

Pedestrian route
Connection to
Lindero District

Victorian character/
Compatible architecture,
adaptive reuse of buildings

Second/Third Crossings
Safe, secure, improved
access to neighborhoods

Pedestrian friendly
cross streets
A, B, C, D Streets, two way
traffic, retail shops, better sidewalks

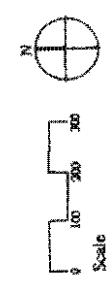
"B" Street
Historic character emphasis,
specialty shops

Pedestrian route
Connection to Albert Park

Fourth Street Retail Core

Vision Concepts

Vision of DOWNTOWN
San Rafael



Fourth Street Retail Core Economic Principles

We want to:

- Create a dynamic, compact center full of people and activity including:
 - ✦ Competitive, healthy retail businesses,
 - ✦ Entertainment and cultural uses,
 - ✦ Public markets and events,
 - ✦ Offices,
 - ✦ Residential units and live/work facilities.

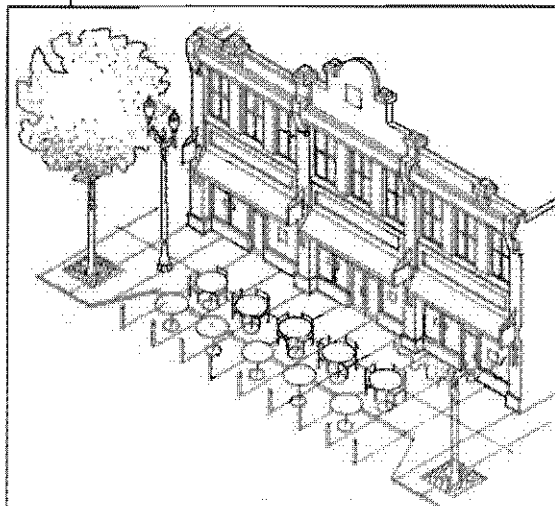


- Upgrade the Core to an exciting, diverse shopping environment through a carefully tailored merchandising mix that emphasizes:
 - ✦ Specialty retail, entertainment, cultural opportunities and restaurants on Fourth Street,

Fourth Street will be full of people, events, and healthy retail businesses

- ◆ Retail, including office and business support retail, personal and professional services on cross streets,
- ◆ Residential, business support, personal and professional services and live/work uses on upper floors of buildings.
- Fill the District, especially on Fourth Street, with lively retail uses characterized by:
 - ◆ High customer turnover,
 - ◆ Large volume of pedestrian traffic,
 - ◆ Windows, storefront displays and signs designed for pedestrian viewing,
 - ◆ Merchandise likely to be purchased in a multiple stop shopping trip.
- Focus the highest activity levels on Fourth Street, and transition to less intense activity levels extending down the cross streets to the Second/Third Corridor.
- Reserve ground floor areas for retail, service, entertainment and cultural uses, and utilize the upper floors of buildings for residential units, offices and live/work opportunities.
- Launch the Core as the "alive after five" center of the city by encouraging businesses to remain open in the evenings and seeking coffee houses, restaurants, theaters, clubs and other uses frequently open after 5 pm.
- Make the District the primary staging area for Downtown's many special events and activities and accommodate enterprises ranging from the Downtown Farmers Market, parades and sidewalk sales to outdoor cafes and vendors. Fourth Street and the cross streets will all be used to stage events and activities.
- Locate office uses throughout the Core, with higher density office buildings closer to the freeway.

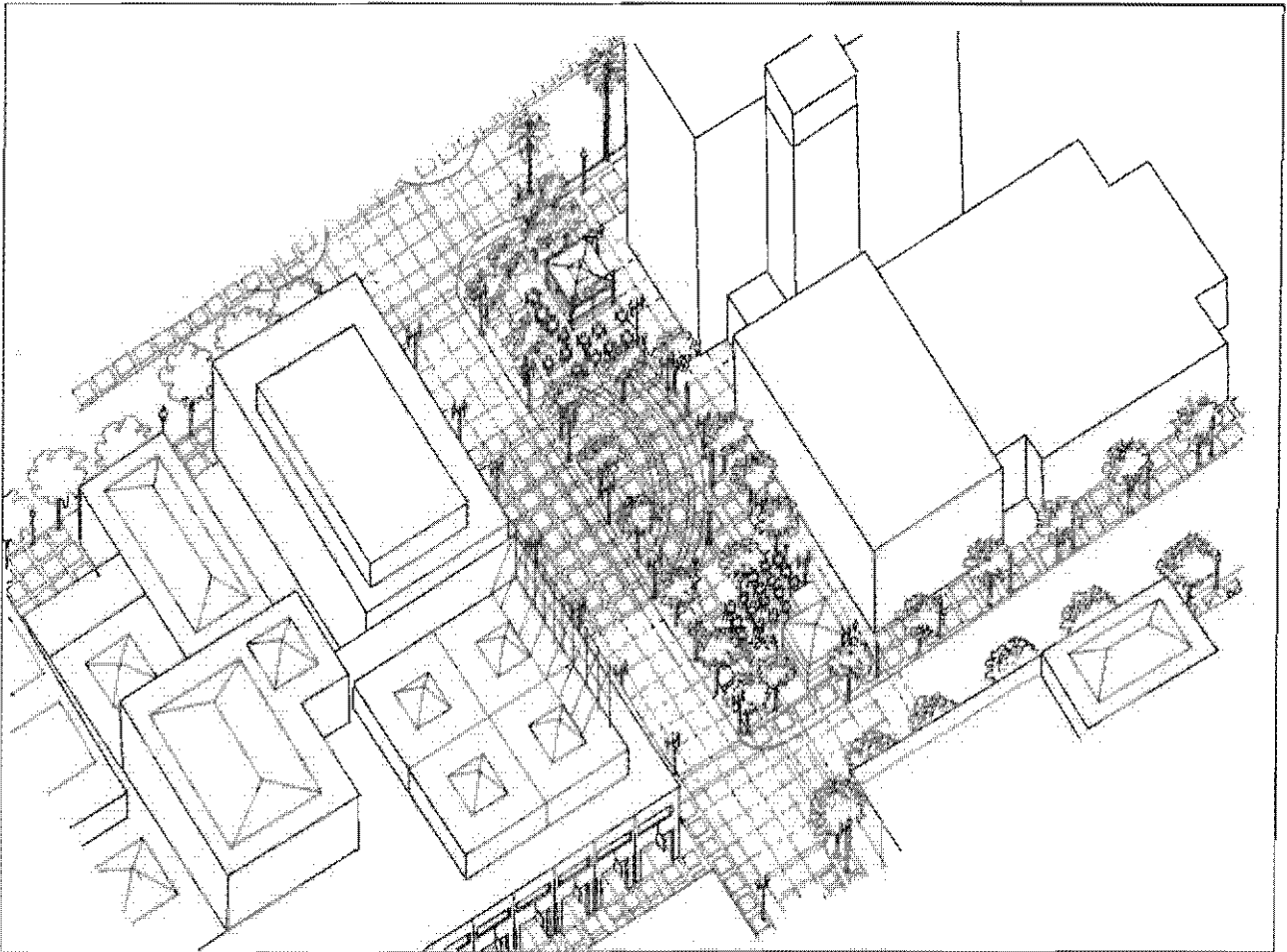
Outdoor uses are a special activity that will add to the street life



Fourth Street Retail Core Design Principles

We want to:

- Create a distinct image for the area around Courthouse Square as the "heart" of Downtown. This area could be redesigned to function as a lively plaza full of people, events and retail uses where people congregate before moving on to the Rafael Theater, shopping areas and evening activities.



- Accentuate the pedestrian environment with:
 - ◆ Flexible use of sidewalks and streets,
 - ◆ Attractive street furniture and lighting,
 - ◆ Information kiosks and public art,
 - ◆ Well designed window displays and views into stores,
 - ◆ Signs that are easy for pedestrians to see and read,
 - ◆ Sun filled outdoor courtyards, plazas and seating areas,
 - ◆ Outdoor businesses and street vendors.

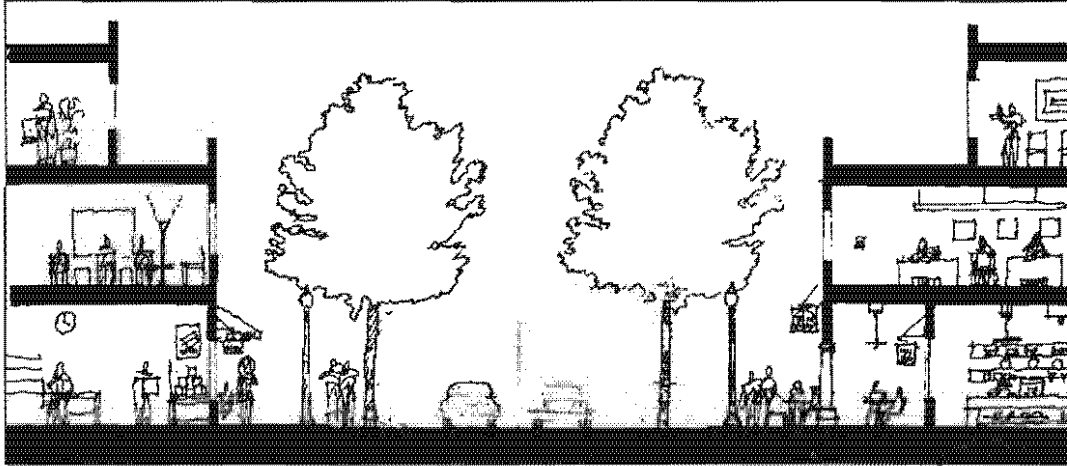
*The area around
Courthouse Square will
be the "heart" of
Downtown*



Pedestrian environment includes flexible sidewalk area, outdoor uses and special signs

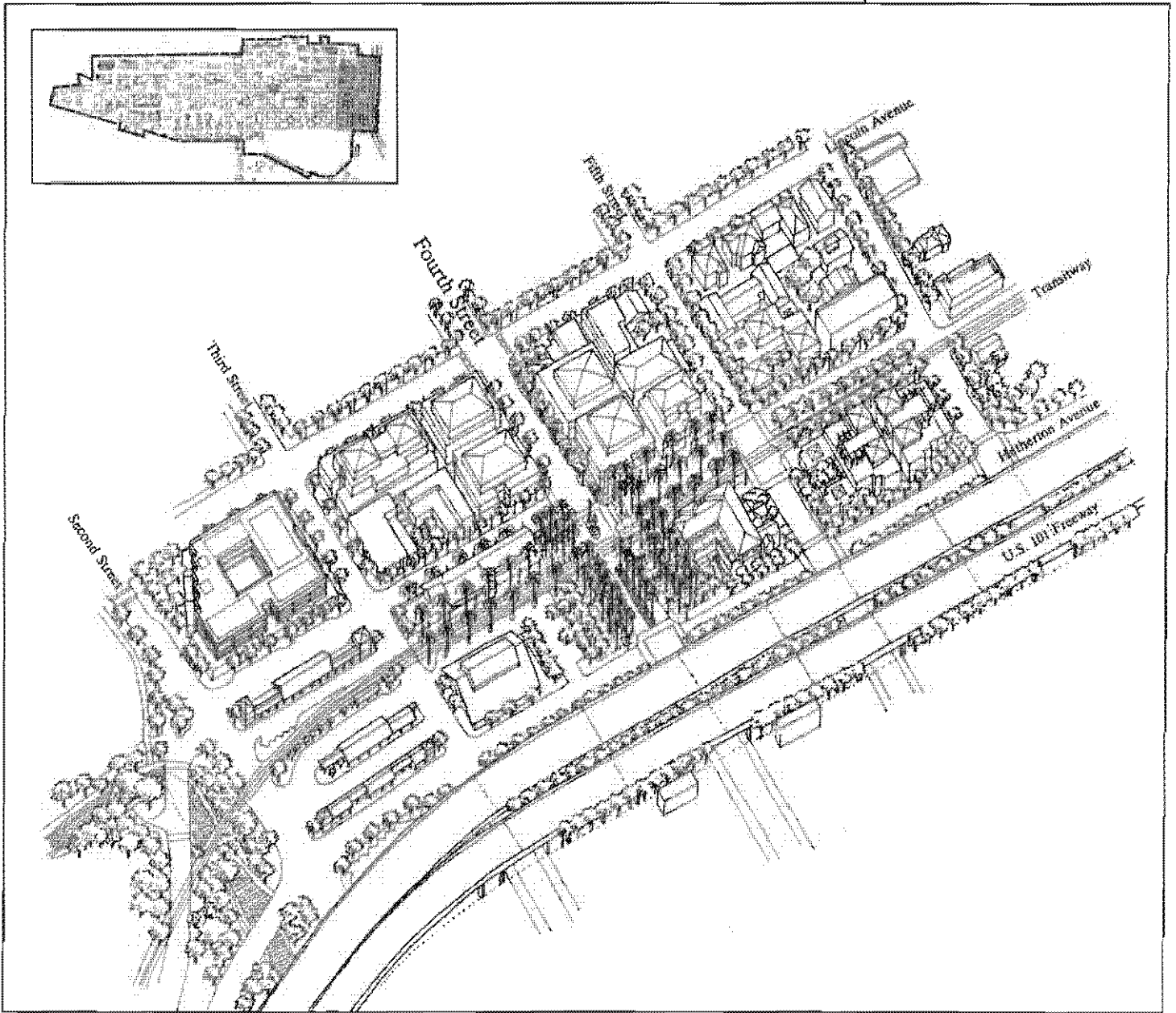
- Encourage inviting and safe public and private outdoor gathering places for community celebrations, “people watching,” and recreation.
- Transform streets, sidewalks and parking lots into temporary gathering areas and event staging areas of all sizes as needed to accommodate the busy event schedule of the Core.
- Improve the appearance of Fourth Street through:
 - ✦ Landscaping, street and sidewalk enhancements,
 - ✦ Infilling vacant and underdeveloped lots,
 - ✦ Renovating building facades.
- Address the perceived lack of parking through:
 - ✦ Improving pedestrian connections between public parking lots and Fourth Street,
 - ✦ Making all parking lots and garages easy to find, safe, attractive and well landscaped,
 - ✦ Providing a range of long and short term parking.

- Recognize and utilize the unique visual opportunities and character given to the Core by the many attractive, well liked, historic buildings.
- Maintain building heights of two to four stories in general, and allow increased height in some locations when substantial public amenities and features are incorporated into the project design.



Building heights in the Core will be two to four stories

Hetherton Gateway



Grand Entryway to Downtown

Transportation Hub

Thriving Office Center

Hetherton Gateway Vision

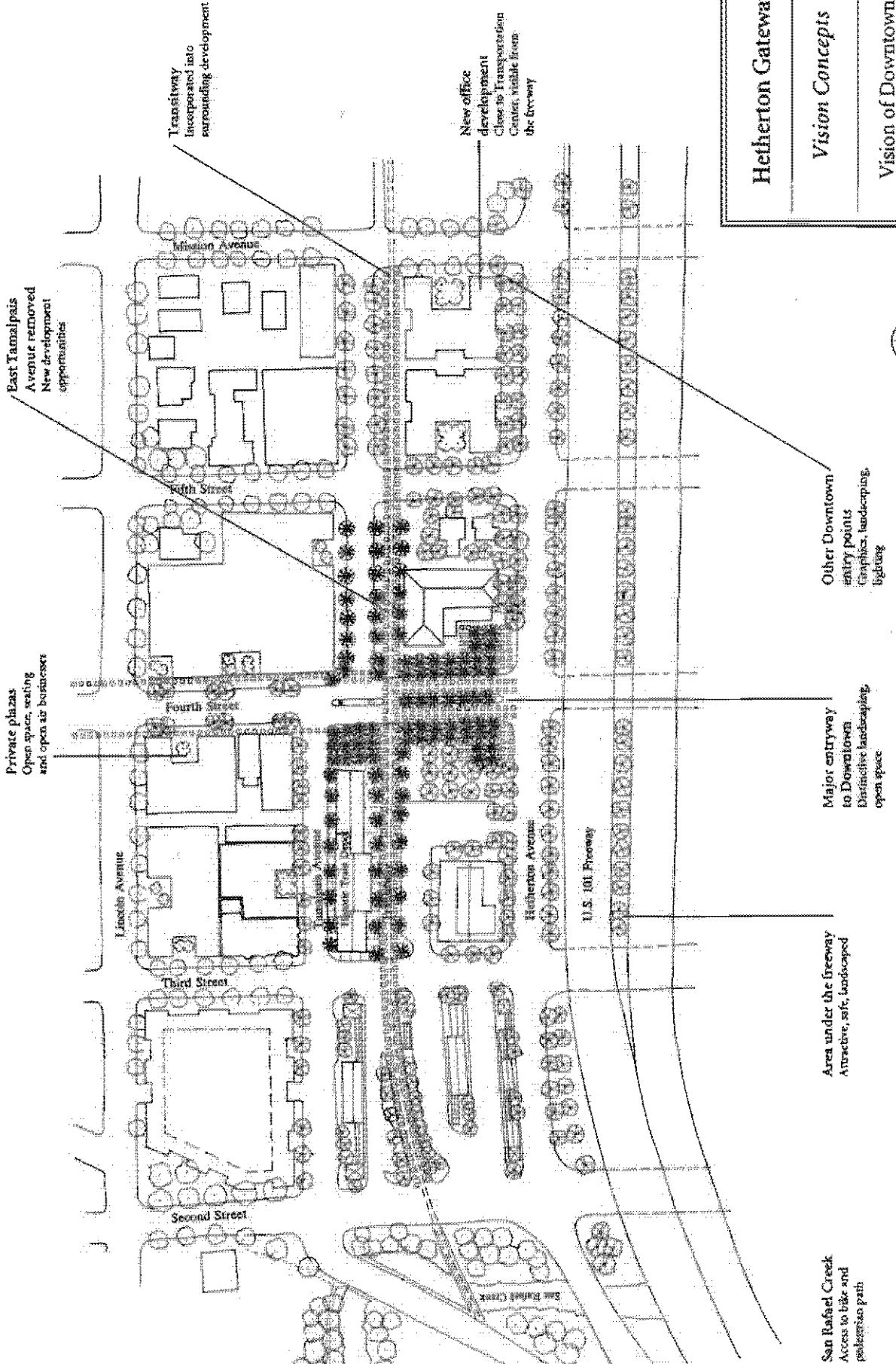
In 2010, the Hetherton Gateway District has been transformed into an elegant entryway into Downtown San Rafael and a thriving office area. The careful development of this area has helped to preserve and enhance our neighborhoods as well as revitalize our Fourth Street Retail Core.

The office and professional service buildings here serve San Rafael residents as well as commuters from elsewhere in Marin County. The increased office densities, located near the freeway and the Transportation Center and County Transitway, facilitate an ecologically sound city design. The Transportation Center and County Transitway provide attractive and convenient ways to get Downtown to work, shop, seek entertainment and return home at the end of the day.

Strong and easy to use pedestrian connections link this area to the stores, services, cultural facilities, and recreational opportunities in other parts of Downtown. Pedestrians and office workers enjoy the Hetherton Gateway, whether they are walking to and from work, relaxing in the open space areas on their lunch hour or strolling to the many shops on Fourth Street. People like the scale of the District and appreciate the many trees and courtyards.

Welcoming, safe, clean and pleasant are words that come to mind when people think of this District.





East Tamalpais Avenue removed
New development opportunities

Private plazas
Open space, seating and open air businesses

Transitway incorporated into surrounding development

New office development
Close to Transportation Center, visible from the freeway

Other Downtown entry points
Cafes, landscaping, lighting

Major entryway to Downtown
Distinctive landscaping, open space

Area under the freeway
Attractive, safe, landscaped

San Rafael Creek
Access to bike and pedestrian path

Hetherton Gateway

Vision Concepts

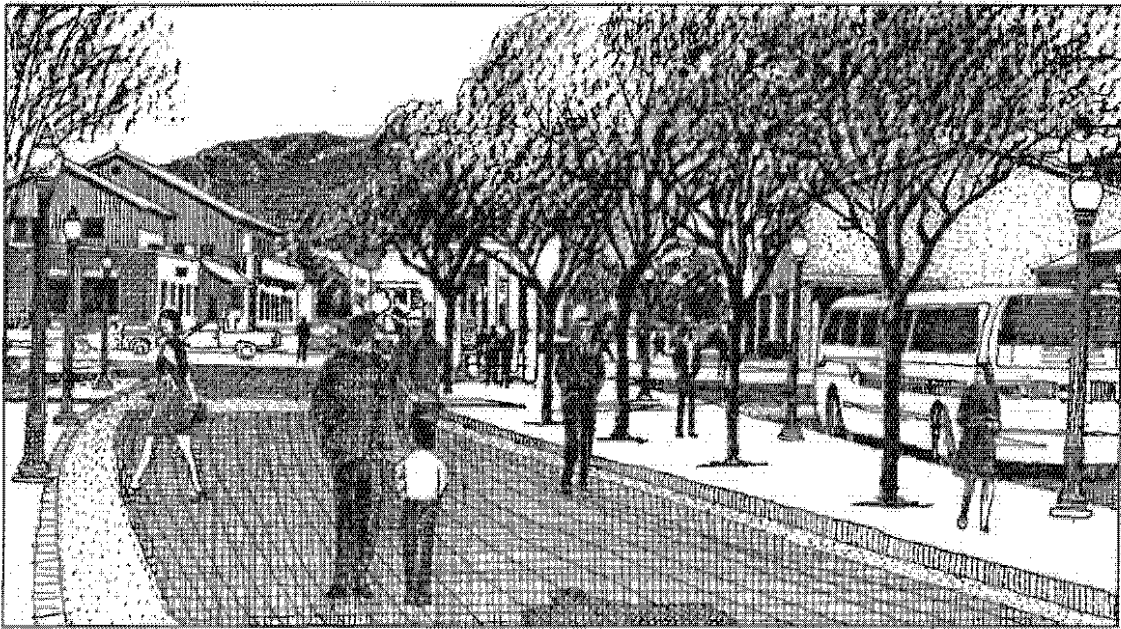
Vision of Downtown
San Rafael



Hetherton Gateway Economic Principles

We want to:

- Highlight the Gateway as the crossroads and transportation hub of San Rafael and the county.
- Make the Transportation Center a busy place by:
 - ✦ Incorporating a variety of retail services for commuters,
 - ✦ Coordinating and centralizing all the different ways people move around including bus, rail, auto, bicycle and on foot.



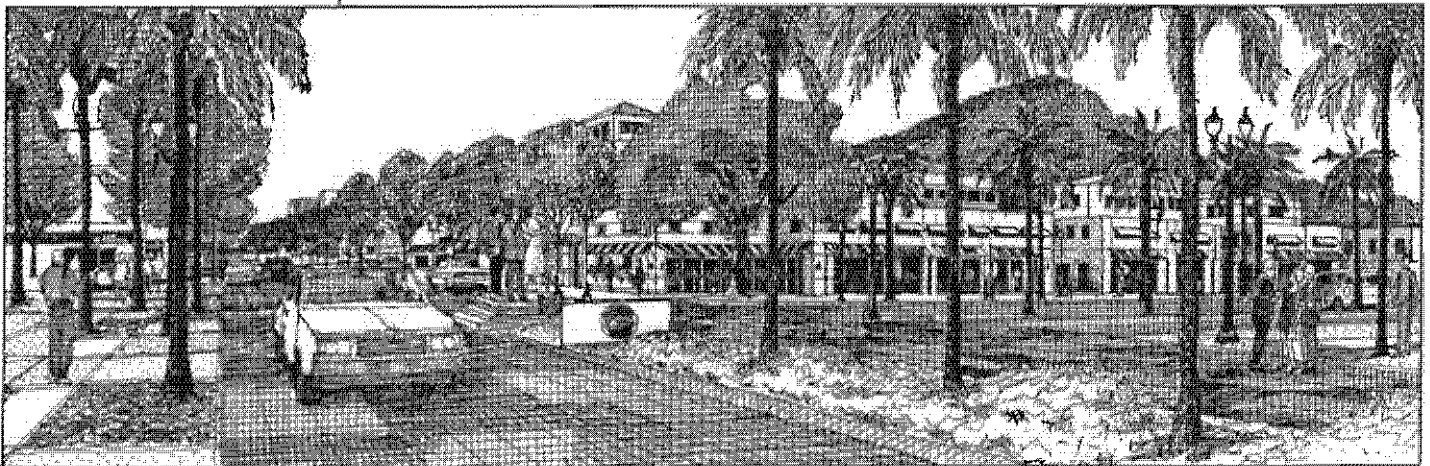
- Contribute to Downtown's standing as a business and financial center by emphasizing new office development. Office uses will capitalize on:
 - ✦ Proximity to public transportation at the Transportation Center,
 - ✦ Services provided by the Fourth Street Retail Core,
 - ✦ Visibility from the freeway.
- Provide a limited amount of business support retail services, personal services and restaurants on the ground floor of office buildings for the convenience of the building occupants.
- Provide housing especially in mixed use projects.
- Promote joint use of parking facilities for businesses, new development and commuters.

The Transportation Center will be attractive and busy

Hetherton Gateway Design Principles

We want to:

- Create a gracious and inviting entrance to all of Downtown by:
 - ✦ Improving the gateway and entry point character of Third, Fourth, Fifth Streets, Mission and Lincoln Avenues,
 - ✦ Extending the Hetherton Gateway quality of development along Fourth Street to Irwin Avenue,
 - ✦ Making the area under the freeway attractive and safe.
- Announce and mark the edge of Downtown with a distinctive gateway treatment at Fourth Street and Hetherton. The Gateway would be gracious and welcoming in character with:
 - ✦ Plaza or other open space areas both public and private,
 - ✦ Public art,
 - ✦ Strong, colorful landscaping,
 - ✦ Retail uses opening on to a plaza or other open space areas.

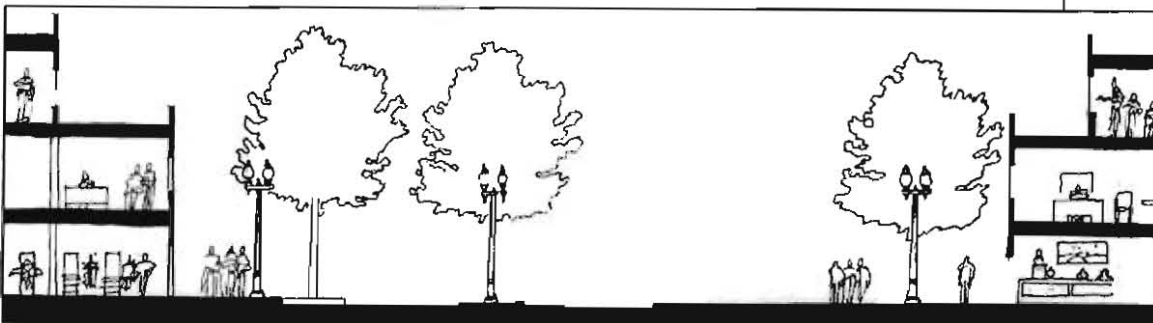


Gateway at Fourth Street and Tamalpais Avenue will announce the entrance to Downtown

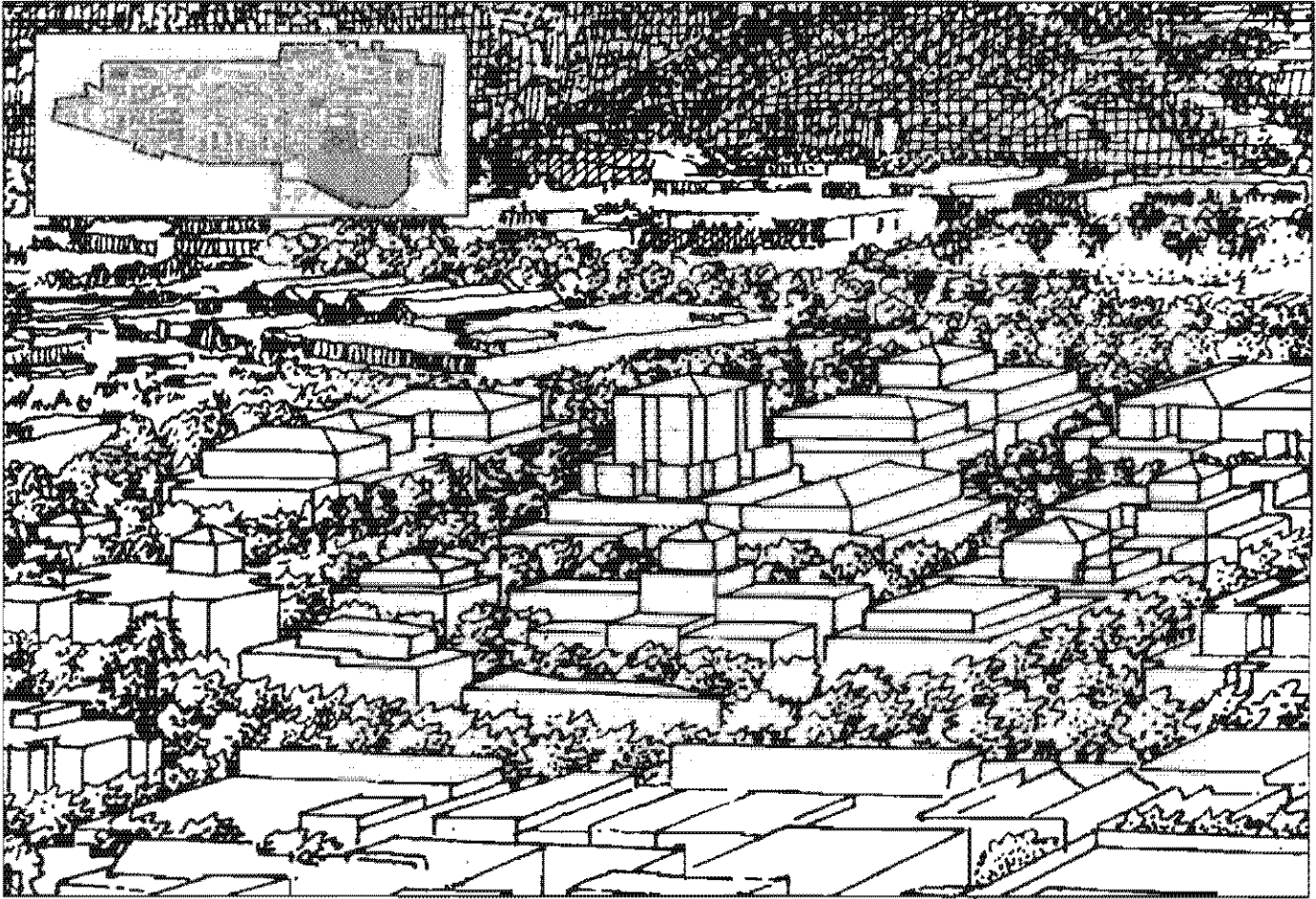
- Involve public and private contributions to the Fourth Street Gateway. New development would locate open space and landscape areas so as to expand the public areas, and retail uses would open on to these areas. Buildings would be designed to incorporate accent elements, public art and other items to emphasize the gateway character of the District.
- Improve the other entry streets of Third Street, Fifth, Mission and Lincoln Avenues with entrance graphics, planting and lighting.

- Encourage all new development to include usable outdoor spaces, courtyards and arcades in sunny locations protected from freeway noise.
- Expand connections from the Transportation Center to other parts of Downtown by:
 - ◆ Providing shuttles and trolleys to the Fourth Street Retail Core, West End Village, Montecito neighborhood and Albert Park,
 - ◆ Improving walking and biking facilities leading to nearby residential neighborhoods,
 - ◆ Providing safe connections to the bicycle and pedestrian path along San Rafael Creek,
 - ◆ Facilitating the movement of commuters to and from the neighborhoods.
- Incorporate attractive parking structures throughout the District with retail or commercial uses on the ground floor areas adjacent to the street.
- Encourage high quality and varied project designs with some landmark features to enhance the District's gateway image.
- Develop the area between the Transitway and Lincoln Avenue with:
 - ◆ Larger scale buildings of three to five stories with upper stories stepped back,
 - ◆ Ground floor area designs that are human in scale and are pleasant to walk past.
- Develop the area between Transitway and Hetherton Avenue with:
 - ◆ Smaller scale buildings of three stories with stepped back upper floors to soften the visual impact of Highway 101 and buffer Downtown from freeway noise,
 - ◆ Building designs that complement the entryway treatment,
 - ◆ Attractive facades along Hetherton Avenue.

Building heights vary with three to five stories west of the Transitway and one to three stories on east of the Transitway



Lindero District



Mix of Uses

Handsome Landmark and Gateway

Regional and Neighborhood Emphasis

Lindaro District Vision

In 2010, the Lindaro District has undergone the most dramatic change in Downtown, having been transformed from an underdeveloped area to one of the most handsome urban places in Marin County. The hazardous materials situation on the old PG&E sites has been successfully and completely mitigated. The major features of this 20 plus acre District are landmark, high quality office buildings integrated with public, entertainment and retail uses and residential units.

The image enhancement of Downtown and San Rafael generated by the development of this District is its most important contribution. The image presented is of a high quality, well designed area with uses which are special assets to the city and complementary to the rest of Downtown. Most particularly, uses do not compete with the Fourth Street Retail Core. All elements of the District including site design, architecture, tenants, types of uses, quality of merchandise, promote the image of Downtown as a high quality, healthy business, finance and office center.

Activities within the Lindaro District complement activities in other parts of Downtown, especially those of the Fourth Street Retail Core. Office workers and residents of the District walk to Fourth Street via Lindaro Street and Lootens Place, which have been realigned, creating an inviting walkway. Retail uses provide shopping opportunities not available in the rest of Downtown. At night and on weekends, there is enough entertainment, retail and residential activities in this District to give it a sense of activity.

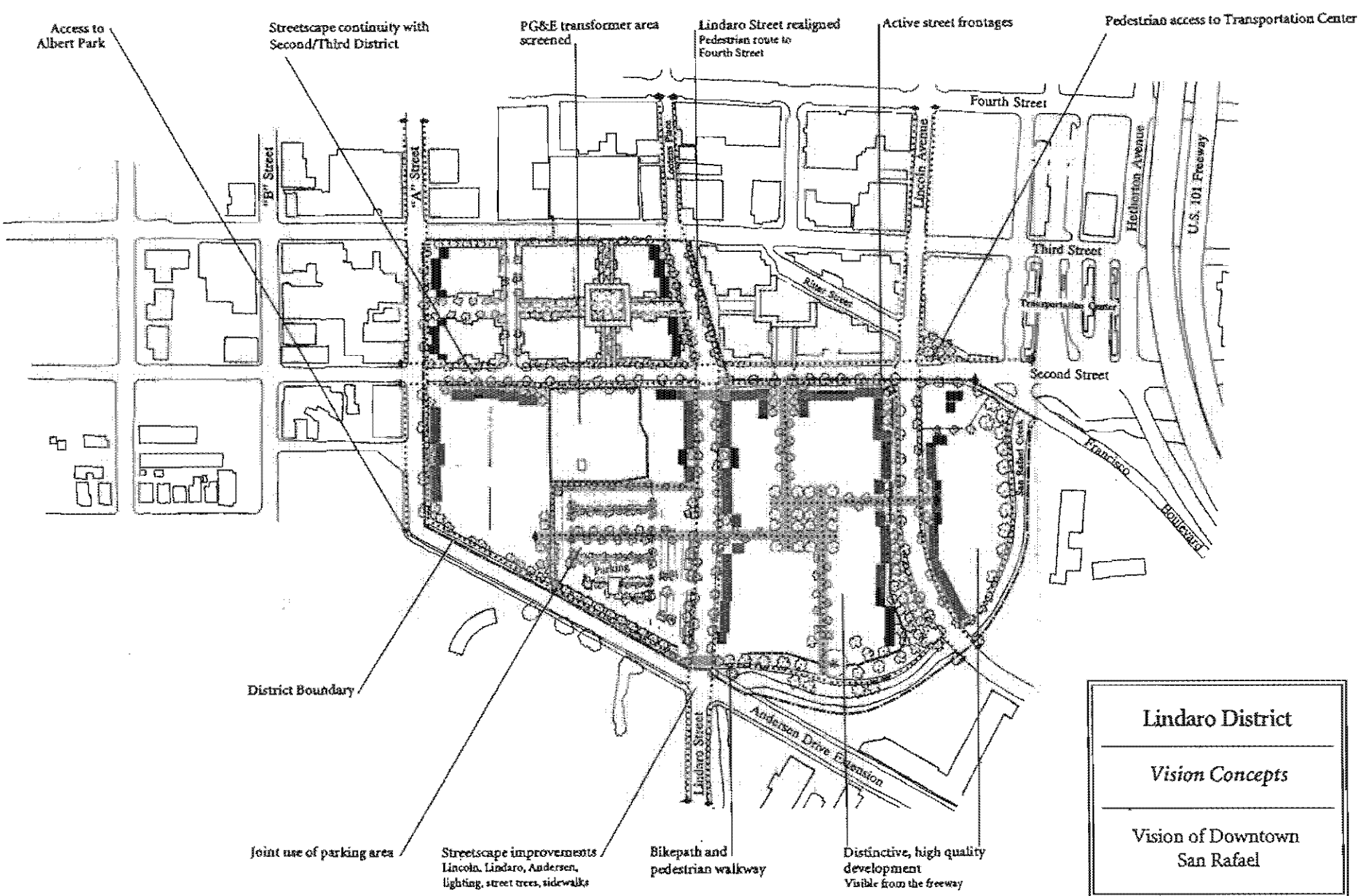
Housing units face Albert Park and have a view of Mt. Tam, while many of the office buildings orient to the San Rafael Creek. A bike and pedestrian path follows the creek bank, and connects a series of seating areas and viewing points.

Although the District is architecturally distinctive and urban in character, it blends comfortably with neighborhoods to the south and with adjacent office development in the Second/Third Corridor and Hetherington Gateway Districts. People who live and work in the area appreciate the convenient and safe access to the Transportation Center.

Even though the District is made up of a combination of many parcels and uses, it has an integrated, cohesive feel due to its similar streetscapes, strong pedestrian emphasis, extensive landscaping and other unifying design features.

The Lindaro District contributes significantly to Downtown's success, both aesthetically and economically, and San Rafael residents consider it a source of community pride and satisfaction.





Access to Albert Park

Streetscape continuity with Second/Third District

PG&E transformer area screened

Lindaro Street realigned
Pedestrian route to Fourth Street

Active street frontages

Pedestrian access to Transportation Center

District Boundary

Joint use of parking area

Streetscape improvements
Lincoln, Lindaro, Andersen,
lighting, street trees, sidewalks

Bikepath and pedestrian walkway

Distinctive, high quality development
Visible from the freeway

Lindaro District

Vision Concepts

Vision of Downtown San Rafael

Lindero District Economic Principles

We want to:

- Treat the entire area from "A" Street to the freeway as a coordinated District with a mix of uses.
- Incorporate a variety of uses into the District including:
 - ✦ Offices as the major component,
 - ✦ Entertainment, recreation or culture,
 - ✦ Retail,
 - ✦ Housing where feasible,
 - ✦ Hotel,
 - ✦ Public parking.
- Secure development which first and foremost enhances Downtown's image as a high quality finance, office and retail center. All elements of development, including types of uses, tenant mix, quality of merchandise and services, site design and building architecture will be considered for image impacts.
- Insist on development which complements and does not compete with other Downtown Districts, especially the Fourth Street Retail Core.
- Consider the benefits which could accrue to the rest of Downtown in evaluating development proposals in this District. Items which could be considered include:
 - ✦ Infill opportunities generated in other Districts by relocating appropriate existing uses to this District,
 - ✦ Attraction of new people that would shop or work in the rest of Downtown, especially in the Fourth Street Retail Core,
 - ✦ Contributions of new public amenities and facilities.
- Serve both the Bay Area and San Rafael with an emphasis on the Bay Area. San Rafael oriented projects will locate near the adjacent residential neighborhoods, and Bay Area oriented projects will locate in areas visible from the freeway.

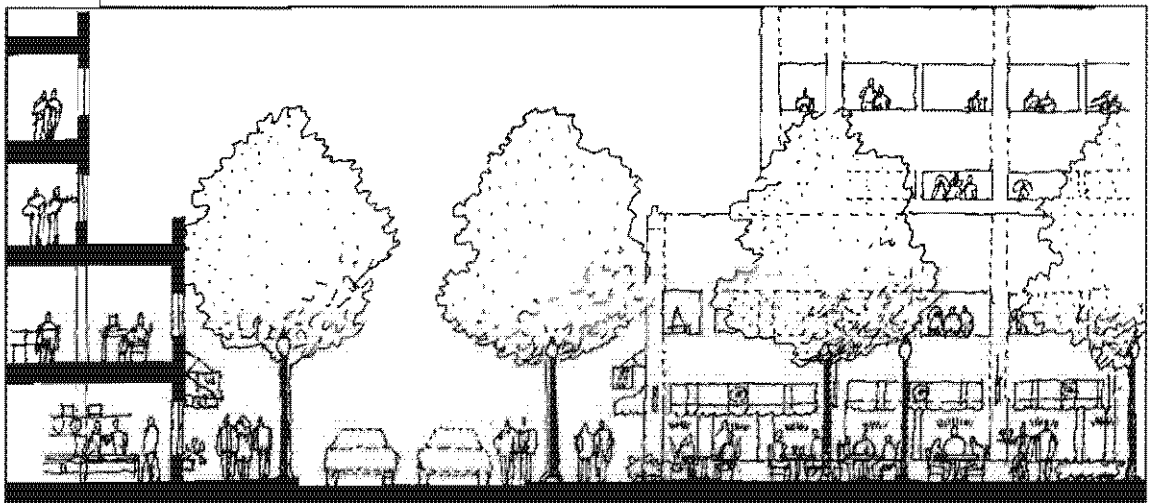
- Acknowledge that some uses do not fit into this mixed use District, including:
 - ◆ "Big Box" retail,
 - ◆ Retail that competes with the Fourth Street Retail Core,
 - ◆ Industrial uses.
- Encourage a mix of uses that would bring some life and activity to the area in the evening, but not compete with the "alive after five" character of Fourth Street.
- Facilitate the joint use of parking areas, especially on the PG&E property west of Lindero Street.

Lindaro District Design Principles

We want to:

- Enhance the visual image of Downtown by establishing distinctive, high quality development. This superior design quality will be the major identifying characteristic of the District.
- Connect the Lindaro District to the rest of Downtown. This District will be an integral visual and physical part of Downtown through:
 - ✦ Realignment and development of Lindaro Street and Lootens Place,
 - ✦ Streetscape improvements on Lincoln Avenue,
 - ✦ Direct and safe pedestrian crossing to the Transportation Center,
 - ✦ Easy pedestrian access to Albert Park,
 - ✦ Bike and pedestrian path along the San Rafael Creek,
 - ✦ Site design, architecture and streetscape continuity with the Second/Third Corridor and the Hetherton Gateway Districts.
- Create a gateway entrance to Downtown and San Rafael. All of the District will act as an announcement that this District and Downtown are different from the rest of the city. This will be achieved through:
 - ✦ Distinctive architecture, landscaping and signs,
 - ✦ Enhancing the appearance of Lincoln Avenue, Lindaro Street and the proposed Andersen Drive.
- Establish a new landmark building which would be:
 - ✦ Located in the eastern portion of the District near the freeway,
 - ✦ Visible from other parts of Downtown and San Rafael,
 - ✦ Identified by increased building height and exemplary architecture,
 - ✦ A graceful addition to the views of Downtown, St. Raphael's Church and the Mission from Highway 101.
- Tie the different properties and developments in the District together through a set of design elements including:
 - ✦ Network of public spaces linked by pedestrian pathways,

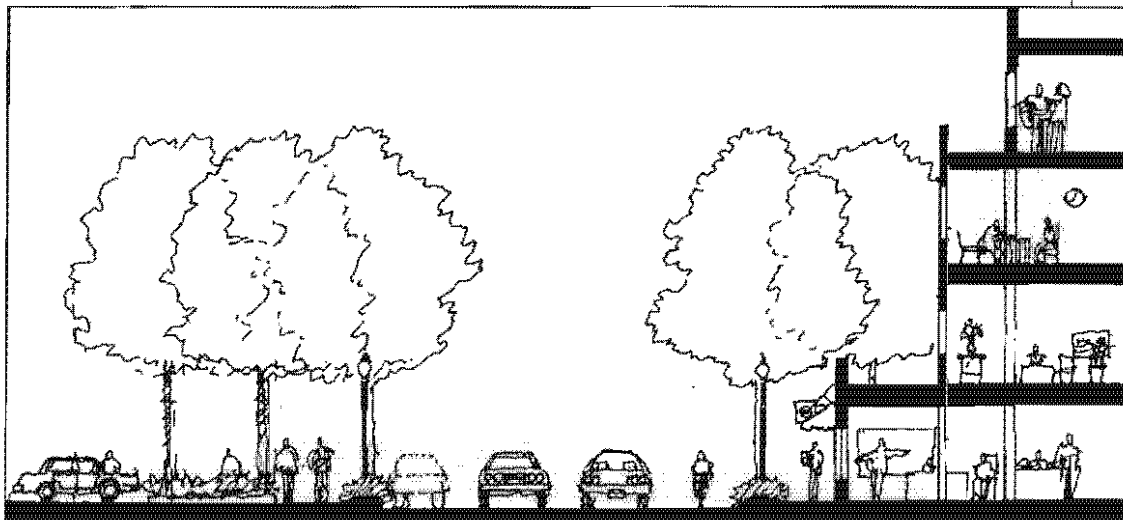
- ◆ Continuity of streetscape features such as lighting, street trees and sidewalks,
- ◆ Extensive landscaping.
- Make the District a pleasant place for pedestrians through:
 - ◆ Active street frontages at the street level (not a limitation to ground floor retail uses),
 - ◆ Buildings with human scale at the street level,
 - ◆ Pedestrian access and paths throughout the District.



All buildings will have activity at the street level

- Evoke a strong sense of place through architecture which includes:
 - ◆ Buildings oriented to utilize the creek frontage and views of Mt. Tam,
 - ◆ Variety in architectural styles,
 - ◆ Varied setbacks on Second Street,
 - ◆ Arcades and courtyards,
 - ◆ Buildings with no "backs" facing the street or pedestrian areas; they are inviting and attractive on all sides,
 - ◆ Screened loading/unloading areas.
- Provide a variety of building heights and densities within the District. Building heights are generally two to four stories, but density and height bonuses up to six stories for the landmark building are offered in exchange for the provision of substantial amenities, desired features, public facilities and open space.

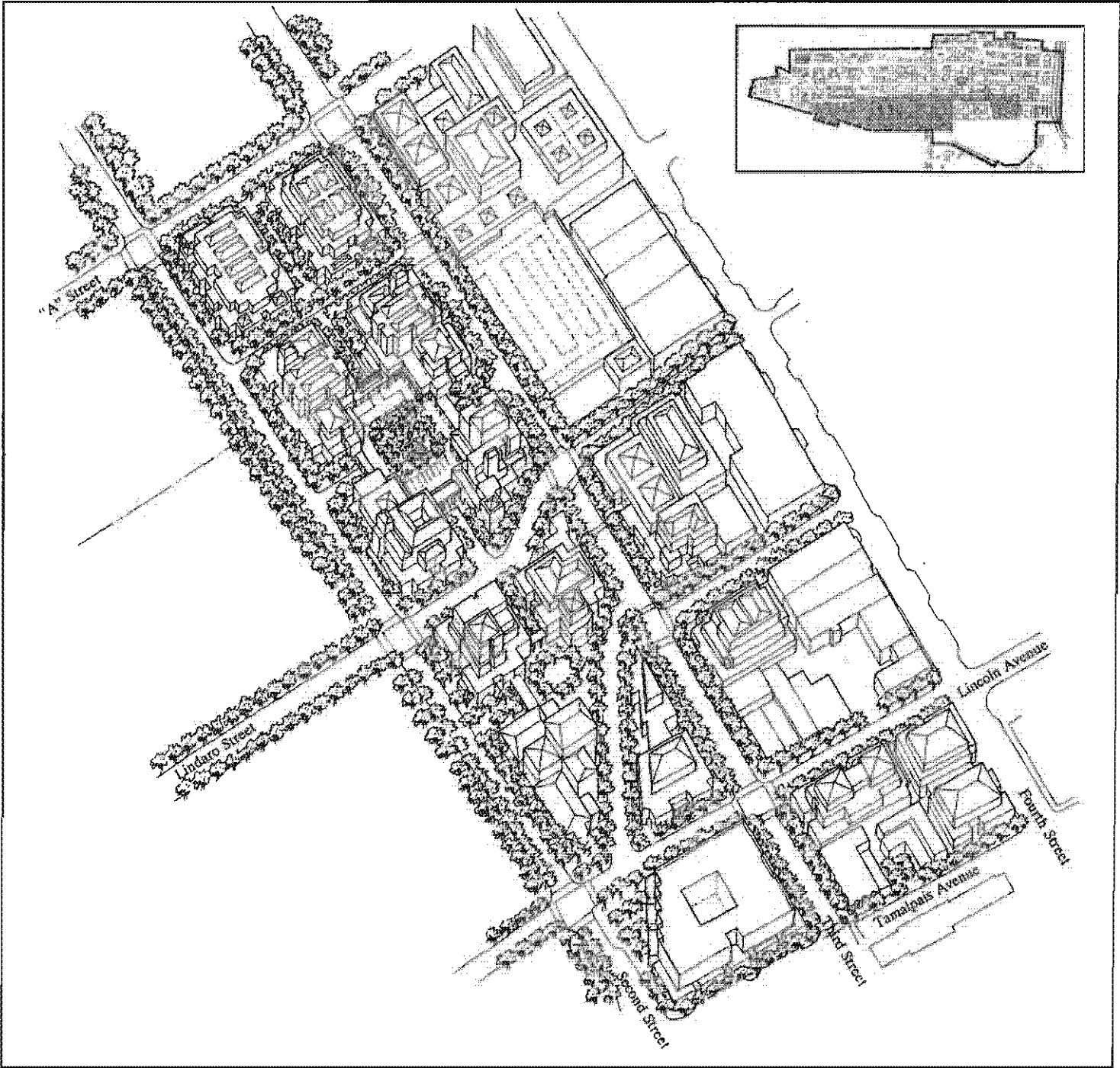
- Give the public access to and use of the San Rafael Creek through useable recreation areas, landscaping, bikepath and walkways.
- Reduce the visual impacts of parking areas through site design, landscape screens, garages.



- Screen the PG&E transformer area from view with new and creative solutions such as murals.

Parking will be accessible and attractively screened

Second/Third Corridor



Transportation Corridor
Safe, Efficient and Beautiful Boulevards
Advertises the Qualities of Downtown

Second/Third Corridor Vision

In 2010, the Second/Third Street Corridor has become an attractive, landscaped, safe and efficient transportation corridor that significantly enhances the overall impression of Downtown given to people who see it from their cars. The Corridor provides a pleasant driving experience for those who travel through the City on Second and Third Streets and, at the same time, its inviting appearance entices people to visit and shop in the nearby Fourth Street Retail Core.

The character of the Corridor has changed quite a bit in the last 15 years. Second and Third Streets are now tree lined boulevards where utilities have been placed underground. Pedestrians find it much safer and more pleasant to walk to the Core and to cross both streets. Traffic still moves smoothly, but traffic speed and noise are no longer the primary characteristics of the Corridor.

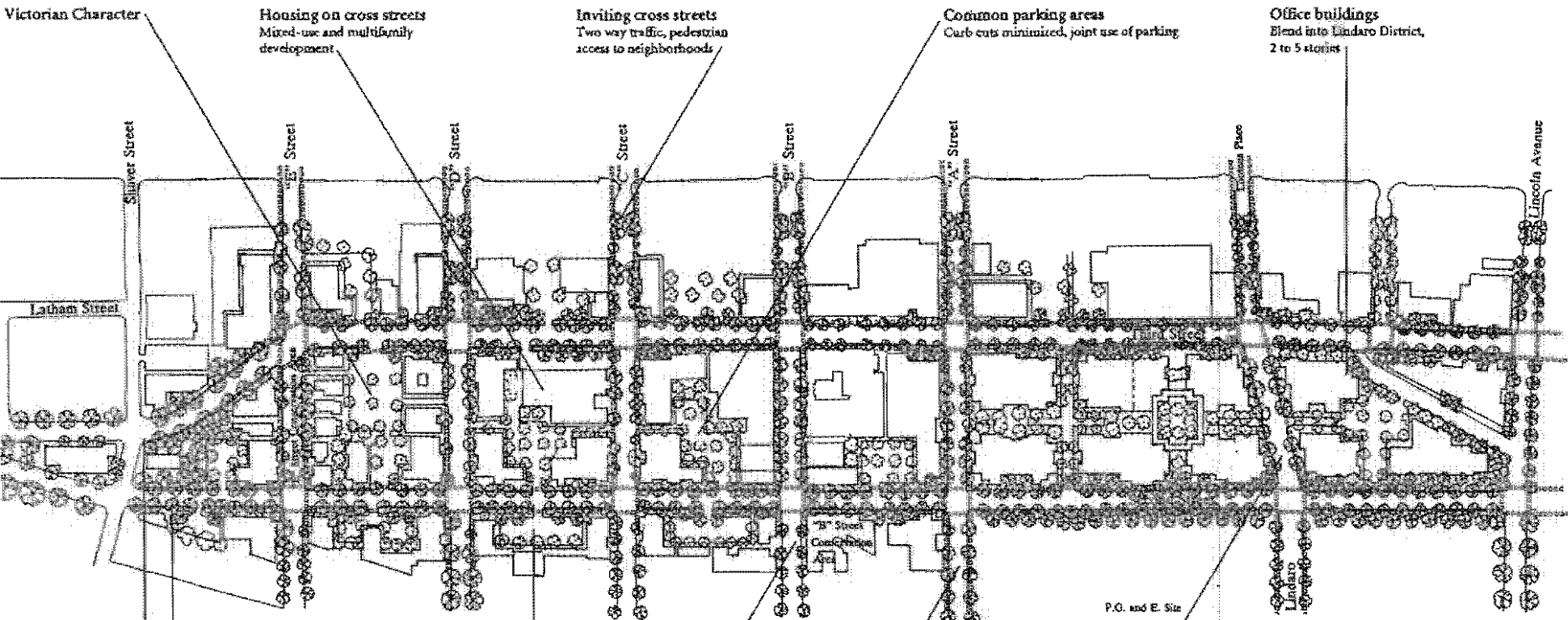
The Corridor is much more alive and well-utilized today and its character changes as one travels west from Highway 101. East of "B" Street is a vital, varied and compatible mix of offices and business serving retail uses. Grocery stores, drug stores, gas stations and other retail uses usually accessed by car are concentrated along the west end of Second Street and utilize the high traffic volumes to their benefit rather than detriment.

People like living in the new apartments and condominiums on the "A", "B", and "C" cross streets, and utilize the specialty retail and restaurants as well as the local serving corner markets and dry cleaners. Residents of Downtown and of the nearby neighborhoods all walk to Fourth Street on the cross streets. Each cross street has a delightful walking environment and a unique, identifiable character.

Building heights and densities decrease from east to west and from north to south so as to transition gradually into the neighborhoods south of Second Street.

The Second/Third Corridor has overcome the dominance of cars traveling through the City and has become a true asset to the City of San Rafael.





Victorian Character

Housing on cross streets
Mixed-use and multifamily development

Inviting cross streets
Two way traffic, pedestrian access to neighborhoods

Common parking areas
Curb cuts minimized, joint use of parking

Office buildings
Blend into Lindero District, 2 to 5 stories

Inviting appearance
Tree lined boulevard, underground utilities, safe to walk

Neighborhood transition
1 to 2 stories

"B" Street
Historic Character, link to neighborhoods

"A" Street
Connection of Mission to Albert Park

Pedestrian route
Connection to Lindero District



Second/Third Corridor

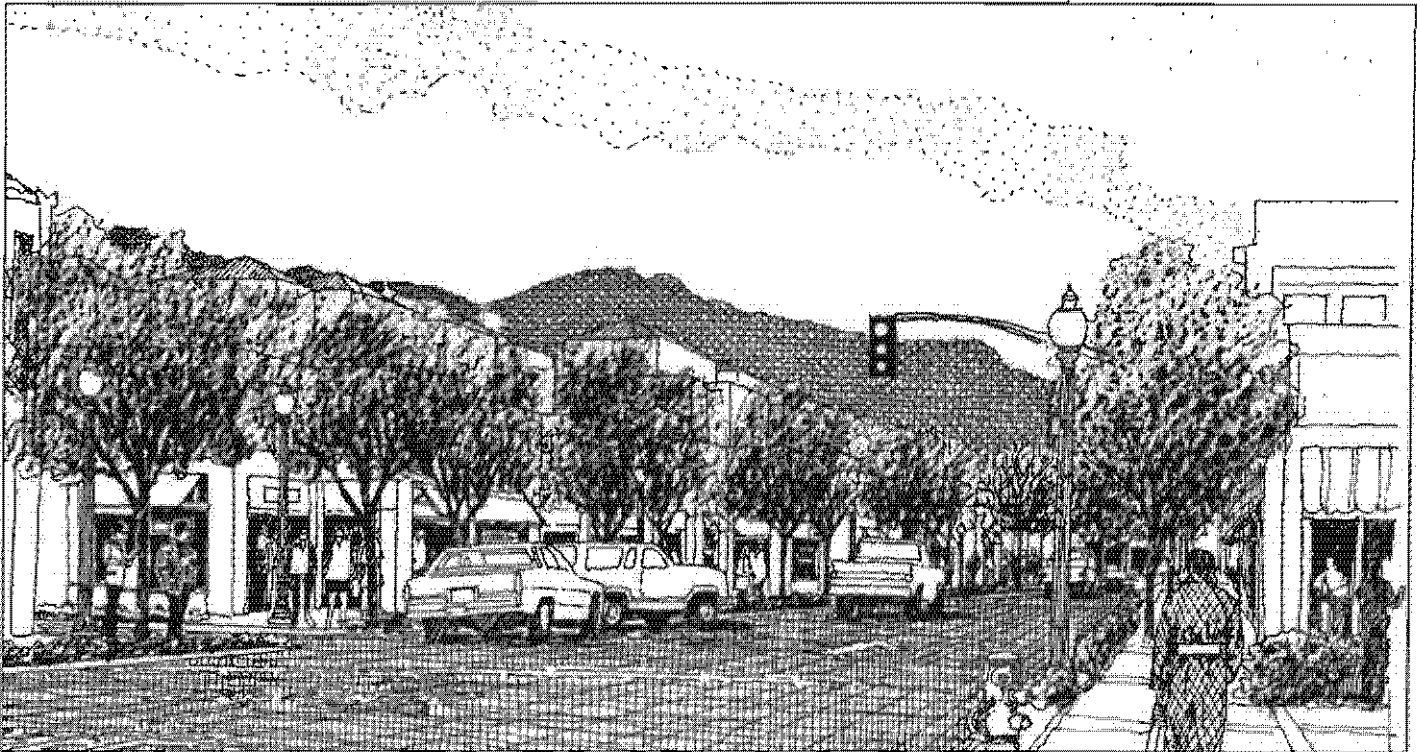
Vision Concepts

Vision of Downtown
San Rafael

Second/Third Corridor Economic Principles

We want to:

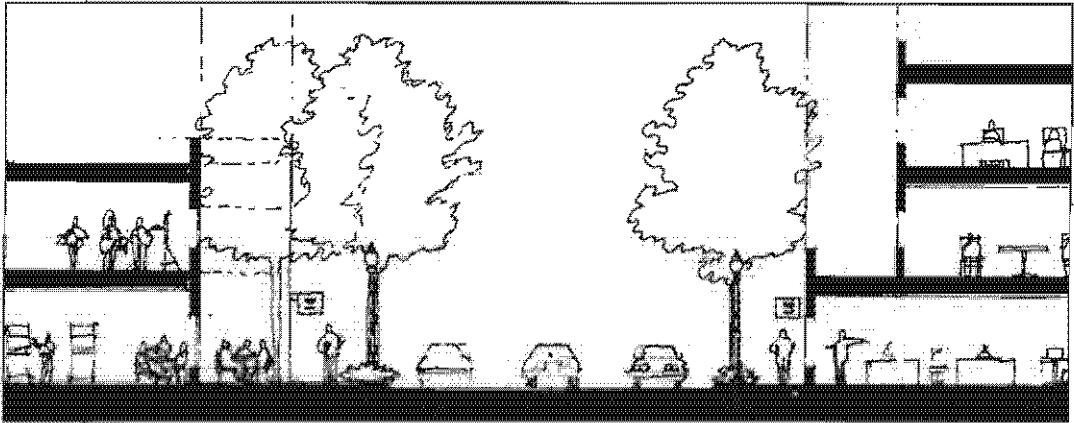
- Make Second and Third Streets a very attractive, safe and efficient transportation corridor which:
 - ✦ Advertises the fine qualities and image of Downtown through its appealing development and character,
 - ✦ Allows smooth travel through Downtown,
 - ✦ Provides easy access to the Core via the cross streets,
 - ✦ Is safe to walk along and cross.



- Establish a vital, varied and compatible mix of office, retail and residential uses that utilizes the special strengths given to this District by the high traffic volume and visibility of Second and Third Streets.
- Capitalize on the proximity to the freeway, Transportation Center and vitality of the Lindero District in the area east of "B" Street with:
 - ✦ Larger scale, higher intensity office development,
 - ✦ Retail uses to support the needs of office businesses and office workers, such as copy shops, restaurants and cleaners,

Third Street will be an attractive, safe, efficient transportation corridor

◆ Housing in mixed use projects.



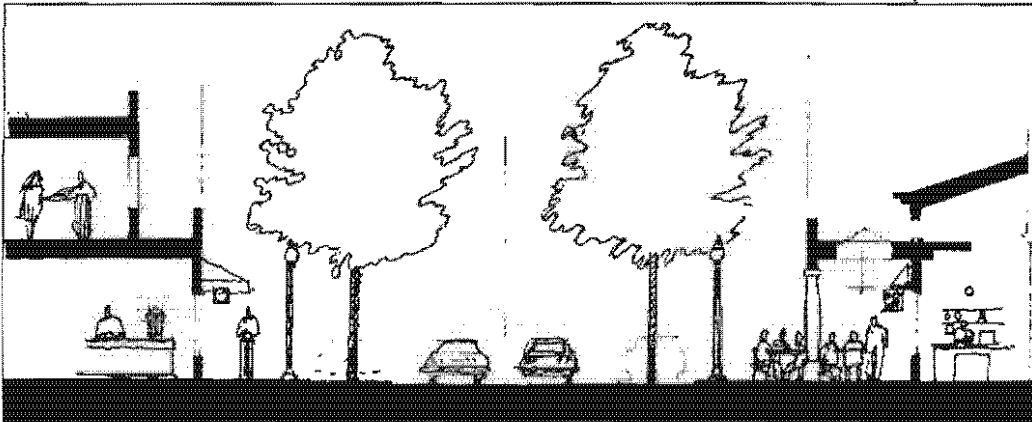
*East of "B" Street
buildings will be higher*

- Provide a transition area between residential neighborhoods and the Fourth Street Retail Core with smaller scale, lower intensity office buildings in the area west of "B" Street.
- Include retail and commercial services designed for automobile access on Second and Third Streets west of "B" Street. This type of retail use benefits from the high auto traffic visibility of Second Street and does not require heavy pedestrian traffic. It would include:
 - ◆ Daily needs retail, such as grocery and drug stores.
 - ◆ Limited number of auto serving retail uses such as gas stations,
 - ◆ Large item retail such as furniture stores.
- Focus neighborhood serving and specialty retail uses on the cross streets. These shops would add to the pedestrian environment of the cross street, and similar types of shops could cluster together on a given cross street to become a specialty area.
- Recognize the major opportunity for residential development throughout the District, especially on the cross streets, west of "B" Street. Both mixed use and multifamily development could work well in this District.

Second/Third Corridor Design Principles

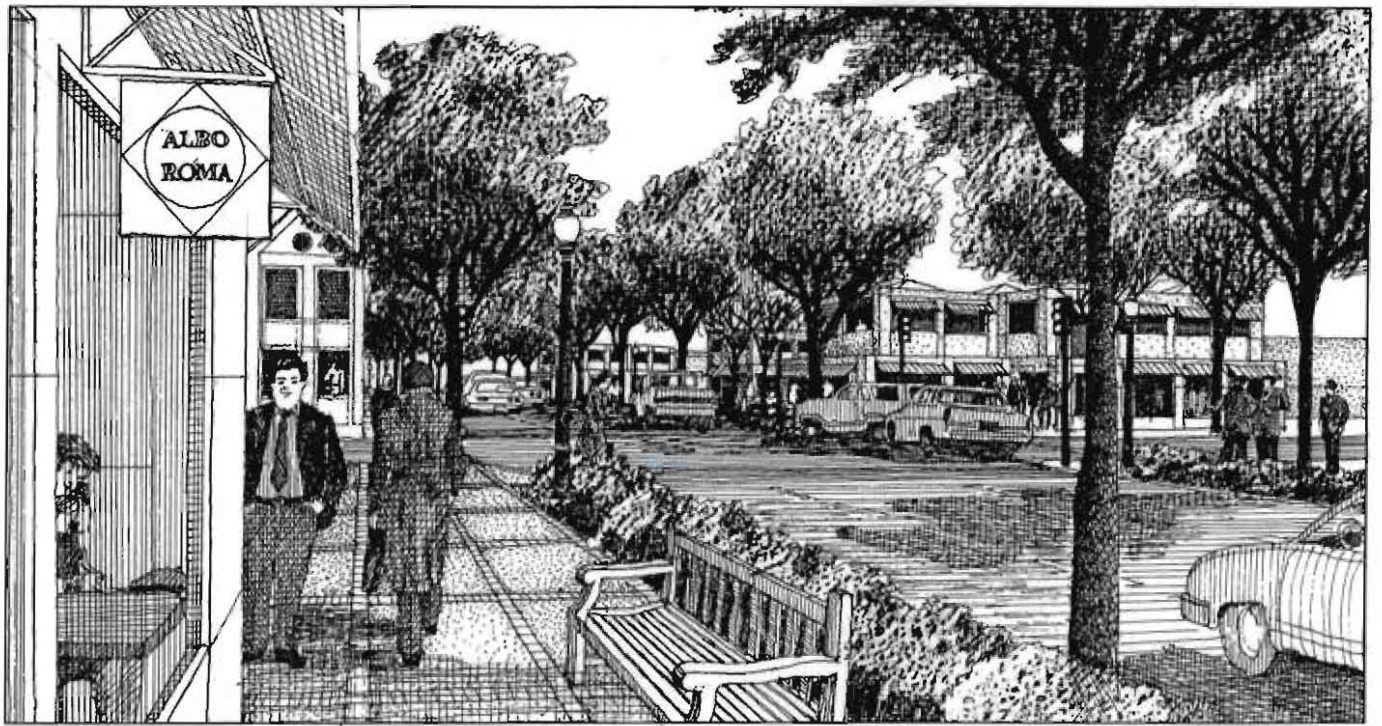
We want to:

- Create an inviting appearance which declares that Downtown is worth visiting to those who travel Second and Third Streets.
- Make Second and Third Streets more attractive and safe for pedestrians by:
 - ✦ Planting more street trees,
 - ✦ Creating a visual buffer between pedestrians and the street,
 - ✦ Reducing the number of driveways which interrupt sidewalks.
- Make each cross street a pleasant way to enter Downtown and honor it as a neighborhood access street. Traffic flow on the cross street will be two way if feasible.



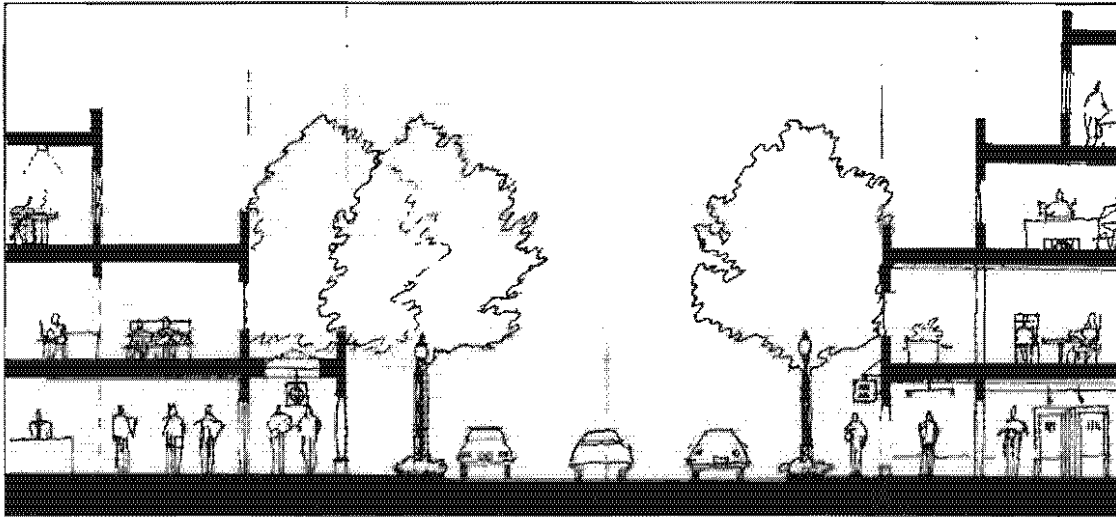
- Strengthen the unique character of each cross street and give special treatment to:
 - ✦ "A" Street as an important visual and pedestrian connection between Mission San Rafael Arcangel and Albert Park,
 - ✦ "B" Street as an area of strong historic character and the primary connection between the Gerstle Park Neighborhood and the Fourth Street Retail Core.
- Encourage safe and efficient auto transportation to and through Downtown on Second and Third Streets and respect the needs of pedestrians. Second and Third Streets are the county access streets.

Cross streets will be pleasant to walk, with trees, retail stores and safe traffic

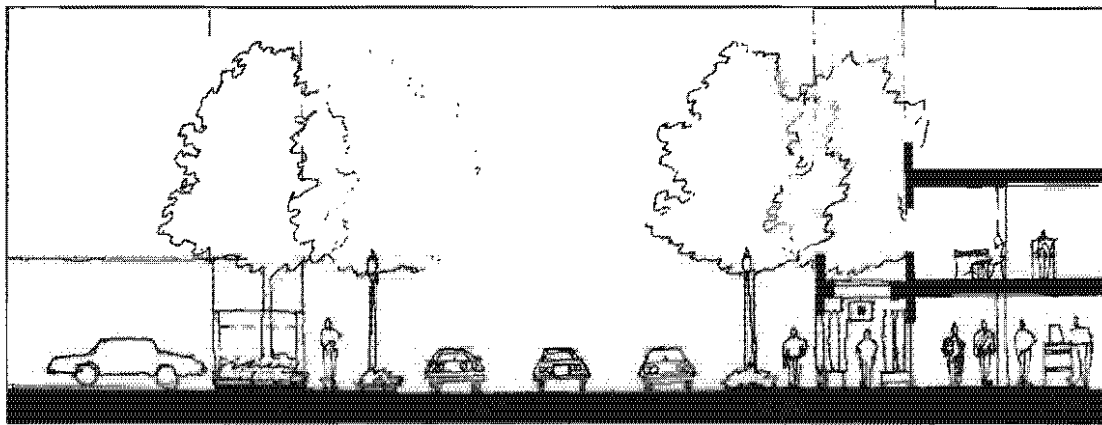


Second Street provides safe and efficient auto transportation and is a safe place for pedestrians as well.

- Develop attractive, screened and easy-to-find public and private parking areas serving both the Fourth Street Retail Core and the Second/Third Corridor.
- Vary building heights and densities, concentrating the most intense development toward the east, closest to the freeway and Transportation Center including:
 - ◆ Building heights of two to five and higher densities of east of "B" Street and heights of one to three stories and lower densities west of "B" Street,
 - ◆ Building heights of one to two stories south of Second Street to protect neighborhoods south of Downtown,
 - ◆ Greater heights and densities in special cases when desirable amenities and features are provided.



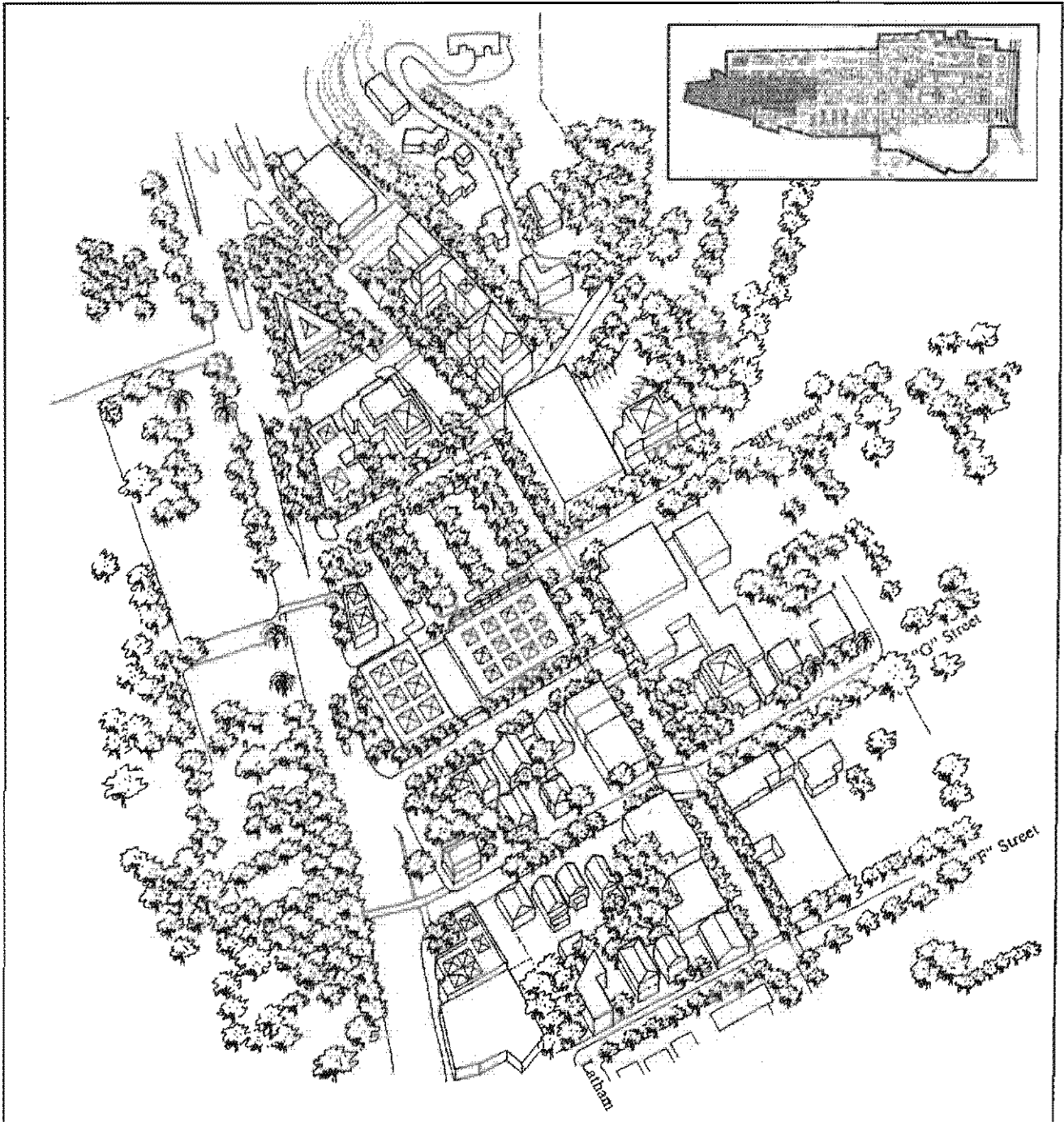
Densities and building heights are higher east of "B" Street



Building heights south of Second street will be one to two stories to protect residential neighborhoods

- Encourage attractive, creative and varied architecture, with:
 - ◆ Design detail on all sides of buildings visible to the street or pedestrians,
 - ◆ Sensitivity to the special design characteristics of some areas, such as the historic character of the "B" Street and the Victorian character of "E" Street,
 - ◆ Careful maintenance of existing historic buildings, especially on "B" Street.

West End Village



Village Within Downtown

Unique Shopping District

Connected to the Retail Core

West End Village Vision

In 2010, the West End Village has become better than ever. It's still a unique, friendly, desirable place to live and shop and now has a clear visual link to the Fourth Street Retail Core. Residential and commercial activities smoothly intermingle, and the West End Village truly is a village.

The Village is much more attractive with improved sidewalks, more landscaping and trees. A special effort was taken to provide banners and public art. Outdoor uses, including sidewalk cafes, are found throughout the District. Property owners have opened up the backs of their buildings to provide views to the Creek and the Pacific Bell building has been refurbished to be a visual landmark. Infill development has been at the same height and existing buildings have been upgraded.

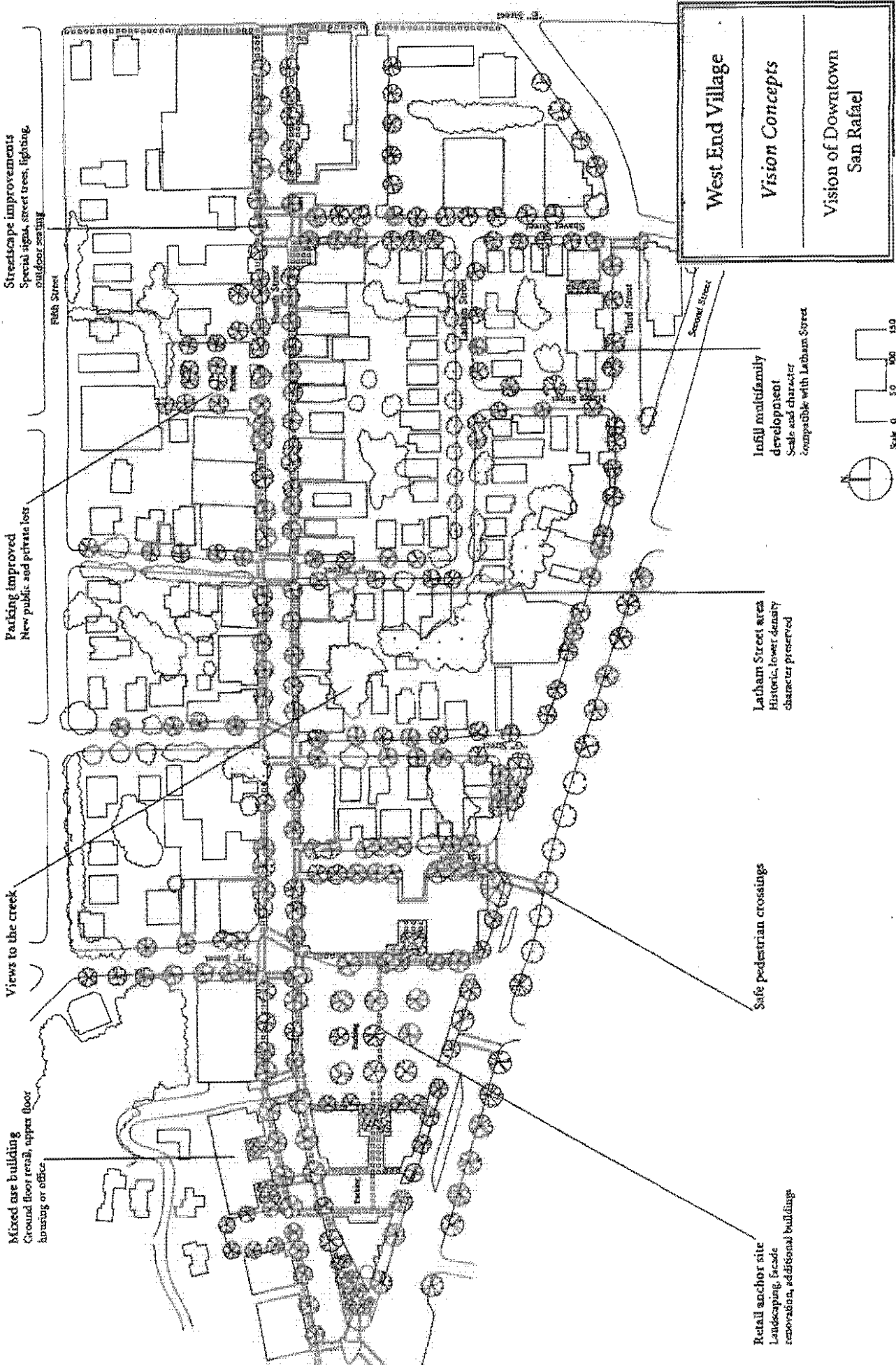
A major retail anchor use continues to be located at the Yardbird's site and connects to the other retail uses along Fourth Street. These uses complement, but do not compete with the Fourth Street Retail Core. While the Core serves everyone in Marin County, the West End Village primarily focuses on the San Rafael community, especially the surrounding neighborhoods.

People come to the Village to shop in the one of a kind businesses, especially the bakeries, restaurants, craft stores, art galleries and interior decorators. Guide Dogs for the Blind train dogs in the area and are a familiar sight on the streets. It is easy to get to the West End from the Fourth Street Retail Core, whether by car, on foot or on the shuttle service, and it is easy to find parking.

The Village is connected to the Fourth Street Retail Core and participates in the marketing and managing efforts for Downtown retailers. The street trees, twinkle lights and sidewalk improvements are the same as those used on the rest of Fourth Street, and parades, celebrations and public events have been extended into the District. A special sign program of projecting signs and other decorative elements has been established exclusively for the Village.

People are very fond of the Village, and return to it time and again. It holds a special place in the hometown feeling of Downtown.





Streetscape improvements
 Street signs, street trees, lighting, outdoor seating

Parking improved
 New public and private lots

Views to the creek

Mixed use building
 Ground floor retail, upper floor housing or office

West End Village

Vision Concepts

Vision of Downtown San Rafael

Infill multifamily development
 Scale and character compatible with Latham Street

Latham Street area
 Historic, lower density character preserved

Safe pedestrian crossings

Retail anchor site
 Landscaping, facade renovations, additional buildings



West End Village Economic Principles

We want to:

- Shape the Village as a specialized, cohesive shopping district offering one of a kind goods and services and with a community market focus. Uses will complement rather than compete with the Fourth Street Retail Core.
- Continue the charming pedestrian-oriented mix of uses including:
 - ✦ Retail shops selling items needed on a daily or regular basis by neighborhood residents,
 - ✦ Small scale, "mom and pop" and locally owned and operated businesses,
 - ✦ Family and youth oriented retail and activities,
 - ✦ Restaurants,
 - ✦ Specialty retail.
- Retain and upgrade the retail anchor at the Yardbird's site by:
 - ✦ Integrating all the individual properties and parking lots into a well designed center,

The retail anchor site could be improved with trees, lighting and new building facades



- ◆ Coordinating and connecting the shopping center with the other stores and services along the west end of Fourth Street,
- ◆ Providing a wider variety of goods and services,
- ◆ Including outdoor restaurants, sales and activities.
- Improve parking in the area by converting underdeveloped open lots into public and private parking lots.
- Locate personal service and office uses on the second floor of buildings.
- Incorporate more residential uses into the Village by:
 - ◆ Keeping the Latham Street neighborhood as a historic, lower density area,
 - ◆ Encouraging multifamily residential compatible with the character and scale of Latham Street on cross streets and Third Street,
 - ◆ Advocating residential uses on the upper floors of buildings,
 - ◆ Promoting live/work.

West End Village Design Principles

We want to:

- Preserve the West End Village as a beautiful, inviting, relaxed place with a comfortable neighborhood character and keep its historic appearance and small scale buildings.



- Add to the attractive outdoor setting of the Village and increase its interest for pedestrians. These improvements could include:
 - ◆ More outdoor cafes and other activities,
 - ◆ Streetscape improvements such as banners, benches, and public art,
 - ◆ Small staging areas for events and celebrations in the District and for events that could extend into the Core District,
 - ◆ Sidewalk repairs,
 - ◆ Views to the creek where possible,
 - ◆ Plentiful and colorful landscaping.

The Village will remain a beautiful, relaxed place with historic buildings

- ◆ Coordinating and connecting the shopping center with the other stores and services along the west end of Fourth Street,
- ◆ Providing a wider variety of goods and services,
- ◆ Including outdoor restaurants, sales and activities.
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 - ◆ Promoting live/work.

Fifth/Mission District



Civic Center

Cultural District

District We are Proud to Show to Visitors

Fifth/Mission District Vision

In 2010, the Fifth/Mission District is our elegant civic and cultural center. It is one of the nicest places to walk in Downtown because of the beautiful street tree canopy and views of Victorians, historic buildings and Boyd Park.

Mission San Rafael Archangel, the Falkirk Cultural Center, the Library building and the Marin Historical Museum at Boyd House and Boyd Park have all been lovingly preserved and are much more active places. Community oriented cultural activities thrive at the Belrose Theater, Marin Academy and the many churches. After attending events at these facilities, people stroll down to Fourth Street to shop or dine before returning home.

Offices and residential uses intermingle throughout the District. Housing is in high demand in this District because of the "in town" convenience of being located close to the cultural, entertainment and shopping opportunities provided by the rest of Downtown. People who want small, distinctive office facilities close to, but not in the heart of Downtown, come to the Fifth/Mission District. Medical services, social service providers and non-profits are concentrated in the attractive Victorian buildings west of "E" Street. East of "B" Street is a comfortable blend of mid-sized office buildings and residential developments.

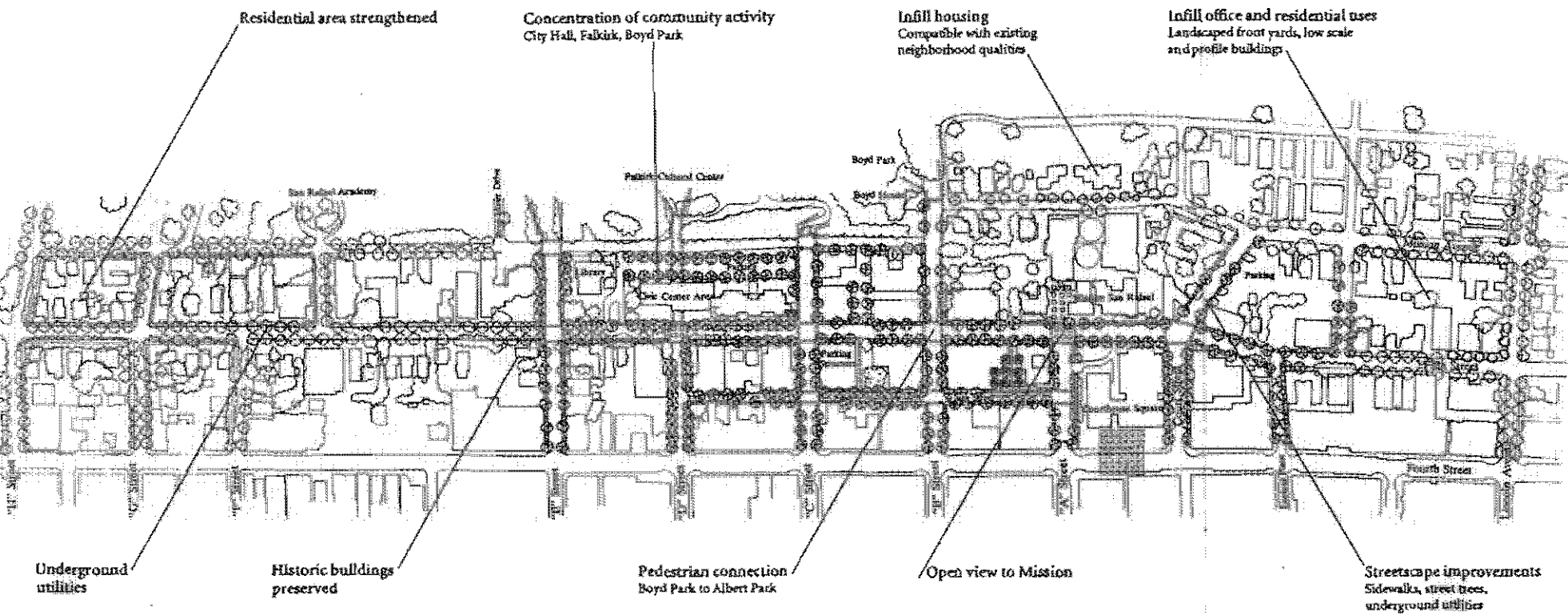
Infill development has been sensitive to and compatible with the area's historic buildings and residential character. People feel the special character and appearance of this District is its strongest asset.

The public can better see and appreciate the historic Mission San Rafael Archangel building due to the care taken with development around the intersection of Fifth Avenue and "A" Street. All the energetic happenings on Julia Street and Courthouse Square are closely tied into the Mission.

The pleasant pedestrian feeling of the area has been enhanced by landscaping, repaired and new sidewalks, and the undergrounding of utilities. Fifth/Mission is recognized as a wonderful place in which to stroll or ride a bicycle.

Fifth/Mission continues to provide an elegant backdrop for the activities of the rest of Downtown. People are proud to show this area to their friends and visitors.





Residential area strengthened

Concentration of community activity
City Hall, Faßkik, Boyd Park

Infill housing
Compatible with existing
neighborhood qualities

Infill office and residential uses
Landscaped front yards, low scale
and profile buildings

Underground
utilities

Historic buildings
preserved

Pedestrian connection
Boyd Park to Albert Park

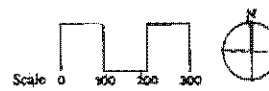
Open view to Mission

Streetscape improvements
Sidewalks, street trees,
underground utilities

Fifth/Mission District

Vision Concepts

Vision of Downtown
San Rafael



Fifth/Mission District Economic Principles

We want to:

- Focus community facilities and services in a dynamic concentration and make these facilities busy places with diverse activities appealing to the whole community. The area would incorporate:
 - ✦ Government services at the San Rafael City Hall,
 - ✦ Cultural resources including the Mission San Rafael Arcangel, Falkirk Cultural Center, the San Rafael Library building, and Marin County Historical Museum at Boyd House,
 - ✦ Community oriented cultural activities provided by the Belrose Theater, the Marin Academy, and the many churches,
 - ✦ New and expanded cultural facilities.

Community facilities and services will focus in a dynamic concentration and include City Hall, the Falkirk Cultural Center and the Belrose Theater.



- Retain and expand the wide variety of office uses, including medical, bank and professional offices.

- Extend retail uses up "A" Street to Fifth Avenue and on the cross streets leading to Fourth Street.



Retail uses will extend up "A" Street to Fifth Avenue

- Strengthen existing residential areas and encourage additional residential uses, particularly on the cross streets.
- Keep educational facilities in the District including the private schools, Public Library, museums and churches as they provide a unique opportunity and bring people of all ages and cultures Downtown.

Fifth/Mission District Design Principles

We want to:

- Reinforce the graceful, historic and culture rich feel of the District by showcasing resources such as the Falkirk Cultural Center, the City Library building, the Boyd House and the many Victorian structures.
- Enhance the small scale, interesting, pedestrian character of the streets by:
 - ✦ Making sidewalks and crossings even safer,
 - ✦ Preserving mature landscaping,
 - ✦ Planting more street trees,
 - ✦ Retaining public spaces such as the lawn areas in front of the Library and Falkirk Cultural Center,
 - ✦ Enhance views down the cross streets,
 - ✦ Undergrounding utility lines.
- Keep the feeling that this is a safe and friendly neighborhood.
- Strengthen the relationships between civic and cultural facilities within the District and improve the links between Fifth/Mission and the rest of Downtown through:
 - ✦ Establishment of a strong visual and pedestrian access connection from Boyd Park to Albert Park,
 - ✦ Creation of a more identifiable and accessible entrance into Boyd Park,
 - ✦ Opening views from Mission Avenue to the Falkirk Cultural Center and the Elk's Lodge.
- Open up the area in front of the Mission and St. Raphael's Church so that the public can better enjoy the views of these buildings and connect this area into the activities on Julia Street and at Courthouse Square.

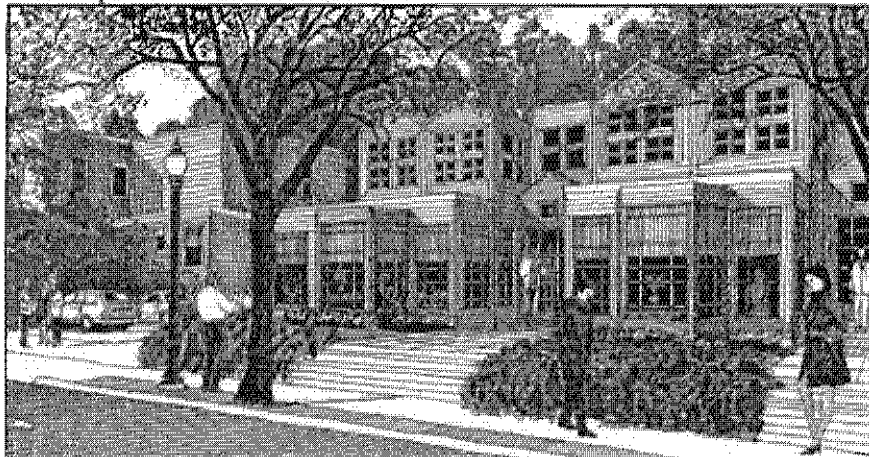
- Establish stronger connections between the Fifth/Mission District and existing and developing surrounding neighborhoods, such as those north of Mission Avenue.
- Encourage an interesting diversity of building styles ranging from historic Victorians to well-articulated new office buildings.



Views to the Mission will be opened up and improved

- Preserve the pleasing scale and character of the District, especially on Fifth Avenue west of "E" Street and on the east and west ends of Mission Avenue by:
 - ◆ Designing infill office and residential development to be compatible with existing neighborhood qualities,
 - ◆ Including landscaped front yards and historic building characteristics,
 - ◆ Respecting the low scale and profile of existing development.
- Locate mid-size offices of two to three stories in the area east of "B" Street.

New office buildings fit into the surrounding character and scale



OUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Preamble

Implementors

Short Term Actions
1993 to 1995

Long Term Actions
1995 to 2000

Preamble

This is a Vision worthy of San Rafael. It honors and respects our "hometown feel" and historic past and guides us into a prosperous, environmentally friendly future -- a fitting legacy to our children, grandchildren, other citizens and neighbors who will all live in our community.

Our Vision is a new way of approaching the future and will require new ways of thinking and doing business Downtown. Our Implementation Strategy will start those new actions, insure they continue, and make our Vision reality.

The realities of development and government are rapidly changing. Local California governments, including the City of San Rafael, do not and will not have the monetary resources in the 1990's and 2000's that were available in the 1960's and 1970's. We are all becoming aware of the limits of what government can do. As we move from an age of entitlements to an age of personal responsibility, private sector efforts and development dollars will become increasingly key to our Downtown's success over the long term.

Neither the City, the private sector or the general community can bring this Vision to life alone; success will require actions from all three. Relationships between these sectors will have to be less adversarial and much more collaborative to achieve our community dream.

Results to Date

Our Vision is already being accomplished. The Downtown described in our Vision is so compelling and in line with community desires that implementation began before we were finished. Many new ideas consistent with the Vision have been proposed and accepted. The accomplishments listed below are examples of the kinds of things we will see more of in the future:

- Active City involvement in reopening the Rafael Theater,
- New sidewalk benches and flower boxes along Fourth Street,
- Zoning regulations on restaurant limitations amended,
- Applications to open a coffee house, a billiard facility, a jazz club, and a brew pub processed in record time,
- Car wash facility upgraded,
- Auto painting shop remodeled and converted to office use,

- Macy's relocated to a remodeled building,
- Parking garages painted and made safer,
- Process to underground utilities on Second and Third Streets initiated,
- New parking lot opened at Second and Lindaro Streets,
- Downtown police foot patrol started.

Implementation Philosophy

Our Implementation Strategy is action oriented, collaborative, looks for private sector investments and leverages results. Our Strategy focuses on near term actions by specific actors that will create momentum and stimulate other actions. Implementation will be a collaborative effort of the private sector, the City, and the general public because we all have a stake in what happens Downtown. Collaboration will include proceeding at times in supportive but independent actions, and at other times in direct partnership and will bring a new positive spirit that emphasizes benefits to Downtown. In the new era of reduced governmental funding and investment, most development projects and ideas will flow from the private sector. Therefore, our Strategy is to attract private development money and energy, leverage and support those actions with the City's efforts, and maximize results for the benefit of Downtown.

Role of Our Vision

Our Vision relates to all aspects of the community and includes our desires for our social, cultural, economic, civic and urban design future. In our implementation strategy, we also take a multi-dimensional approach. While revisions and changes to city regulations are essential, they are not all that is necessary. It is also important that our implementation actions are market responsive and sensitive to both business and community needs, and that our decision making environment is broadened to encourage new arenas of businesses and ideas.

Our Vision establishes an environment where everyone's brainpower is encouraged to focus on creative solutions that enhance and enliven our Downtown within the context of the Vision. Minimum critical specifications are set in the Vision so as to allow and encourage our partners (developers, architects, merchants, property owners, residents) to bring their maximum creativity to our Downtown. With only 10 to 15 percent of the Vision referring to regulation, rules or ordinances, maximum flexibility and creativity is maintained.

Our Vision provides information for property owners, developers, architects, and merchants explaining what we as a community want to create. These important players are invited to join us in creating the future, and to shape their plans in accordance with our Vision.

With this Vision we have established a more open ended approach to Downtown, with life, energy and flexibility. It is essential to realize that our Vision is not totally open ended; it does state what we do not want and will not accept in certain instances. Nor will it cover all future issues. There will always be disagreements and conflicts, but being people of good will, we will be able to work them out within the context of our Vision framework.

Implementation Process

For projects in line with our Vision, we will have a development review process that it is informal, collaborative and open with a commitment to a quick cycle time. Determination of consistency with the Vision will involve intuitive evaluation and a wide ranging discussion. Informality and openness, coupled with the clarity of the Vision on what is desired, will help projects move rapidly through the review process or quietly go away where they are not appropriate for our Downtown. This will minimize wasted effort and subsequent time loss.

Our Implementation Strategy has one major new approach, that of advocacy and support for projects that achieve the spirit of our Vision. As a community, we will be able to actively look for ways to speak out, act and endorse projects which further our exciting Vision for Downtown.

We want to see this Vision come true in 17 years or less. This is not a long time in terms of the overall life of San Rafael to implement such a dynamic Vision. We are establishing a process and program where the improvements already achieved are preserved, where additional improvements will occur in the short term, and where our list of long term strategic actions are continually refreshed and assigned to responsible implementors. Our process will also have advocacy, monitoring and conflict resolution mechanisms built in.

Our Implementation Strategy is a coherent organized set of actions that will ultimately result in our achieving the Downtown described in our Vision. Our strategy assumes public, private and individual involvement in actions which cover short and long term time frames, the assigning of specific responsibilities, and periodic review and updating.

Our Implementation Strategy includes three elements:

- **Implementors** - These are the individuals, private interests, organizations and governmental agencies that will take action to make the Vision happen.
- **Short Term Actions** - Over the next twenty four months, these actions will be taken by Implementors to show progress and to start us down the road to substantial change and renewal Downtown.
- **Long Term Actions** - This list of intentions and possible projects are the basis for actions to be taken in a longer time frame.

Implementors

The open, flexible, informal, responsive and responsible feeling and spirit generated by the Vision process was a major accomplishment for San Rafael. We want the community based collaborative process to continue and to guard, champion, enable and monitor the progress of our implementation projects and activities. This process must be respected by all those who will be involved in implementing our Vision.

Achieving our Vision over the next 10 - 17 years will require the input and actions of many implementors. Generally, we classify implementors as Project Initiators, the City of San Rafael, Vision Champions and Downtown Promoters.

Project Initiators

Project initiators are anyone and any organization with a project, idea or action that is aligned with our Vision. Most of the Vision implementation actions will be generated by this group. Developers of new buildings, realtors locating a new building tenant, property owners doing building improvements, residents with ideas to improve the area, merchants starting special services, civic groups and non-profit organizations performing community projects, schools with special projects, all are project initiators and are invited to participate in making our Vision come to life.

Project Initiators will:

- Be the primary drivers and source of Implementation activities,
- Adjust projects to be consistent with the Vision.

City of San Rafael

The City of San Rafael, through staff activities in all departments and the actions of boards and commissions, will be an active partner in the implementation of our Vision.

The City of San Rafael will:

- Accept and respect the Vision,
- Use the Vision, Value Constitution and Principles as decision making tools for Downtown,
- Collaborate with Project Initiators,
- Leverage and support actions consistent with the Vision.

Vision Champions

We need a champion to keep the spirit of the Vision alive, to continue to involve the entire community in Downtown and to oversee Vision implementation. A group modeled after the Downtown Community Plan Committee, with representation of all of the community and following the Vision process will be this champion.

Vision Champions Will:

- Communicate the Vision through:
 - ✦ Continuing dialogue with the community,
 - ✦ Fostering communication between stakeholders,
 - ✦ Reporting on the progress of the Vision.
- Promote the Vision through:
 - ✦ Demonstrating a “can do” spirit, and be a proactive broker,
 - ✦ Igniting and sparking strategies,
 - ✦ Directing ideas and implementation actions to appropriate stakeholder groups and Initiators,
 - ✦ Advocating the Vision Values and Principles,
 - ✦ Initiating timely and appropriate projects for itself.
- Align projects with the Vision,
 - ✦ Functioning as an early, and informal tester of consistency with Vision,
 - ✦ Reviewing changes to the city’s development regulations for conformance with the Vision
- Strongly champion and advocate projects consistent with the Vision through whatever means are appropriate.
- Measure, monitor and adjust the progress made in Implementation in an annual reassessment. In the spirit of flexibility and proactive action, the group will keep the implementation process on track while optimizing our possibilities for a greater Downtown.

Downtown Promoters

Downtown already has several organizations involved with marketing and promotion; the most active are the Business Improvement District, the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce and local real estate businesses. Coordination of these efforts has been discussed in the past and with the Vision completed, these efforts can now go forward. A Downtown Promoter Organization, aligned with the Vision and including the current major players, the city and the community could address marketing and promotional issues.

The Downtown Promoters Will:

- Implement the Vision and work for the good of all Downtown,
- Initiate programs including:
 - ✦ Workshops to build capability of Downtown businesses,
 - ✦ Marketing/advertising efforts,
 - ✦ Promotion of Downtown's image through professional channels and existing businesses,
 - ✦ Events management, with signature events,
 - ✦ Retention and recruitment efforts that fit with and catalyze existing efforts, especially those of realtors and other professionals,
 - ✦ Coordinate Downtown management so that all of Downtown works together.
- Develop a clear organizational structure detailing the coordination and communication between the participating organizations.
- Have a clear budget and be self-supporting.
- Include all segments of the Downtown community, including merchants, property owners, professionals, service businesses and residents.

Short Term Actions 1993 to 1995

The next twenty four months will be a period of exploration and challenge for our Downtown community. There will be the exploration of a new process, a new method of collaboration and a new spirit along with the challenge to make it all work and to achieve immediate progress. Implementation of the Vision over a 17 year period cannot wait until year 15 to have results. Substantial progress must be made the first year and continue throughout the whole term.

Strategies and actions do not all have the same importance, urgency or magnitude of results. Our Short Term Implementation Strategy contains three types of actions, those which have:

- **Major Impact Actions** - These actions leverage other actions, provide substantial improvements in Downtown's image, increase the number of people using Downtown, generate major tax revenues or are an important time sensitive opportunity.
- **Facilitating Actions** - These actions remove barriers to achieving the Vision, serve as catalysts for other actions, have a good results and are manageable in scope.
- **Quick Results Actions** - These actions are easy to accomplish with minimum effort and cost and which produce visible results.

The following list of actions and responsible parties were identified in the Vision process as those items which the community and the Vision stakeholders saw as areas that should be addressed in the short term. This list will be monitored and evaluated by the Vision Champions, and will be adjusted and upgraded as needed. In keeping with the flexibility and action orientation of our Vision and Implementation Strategy, we will take advantage of opportunities and actions which are currently unforeseen and therefore not on this list but which substantially further the Vision.

MAJOR IMPACT ACTIONS	Initiators	Champions	Promoters	City
<p>1. City leaders, Departments, Boards and Commissions use the Vision Values and Principles. Using the Vision to guide Downtown decision making will demonstrate the city's solid commitment to making the Vision a reality.</p>				✓
<p>2. Institute a Vision Champion Organization We need a champion to keep the spirit of the Vision alive, to continue to involving the entire community in Downtown and to oversee Vision implementation.</p>		✓		✓
<p>3. Assist Rafael Theater reopening project. Reopening the theater will have major positive spinoffs and ramifications for the rest of Downtown. This project will be a model to show how the community welcomes projects consistent with the Vision and the benefits which will accrue for all.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>4. Expand the boundaries and use of the Downtown Parking District. Many building improvement projects are impeded by the constraints of the Parking District boundaries and use limitations. By adjusting these items, we can quickly provide more public parking for more people.</p>		✓		✓
<p>5. Initiate a Downtown Promoters Organization. A Downtown Promoter Organization, aligned with the Vision and including the current major players, the city and the community could address marketing and promotional issues for all of Downtown.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

FACILITATING ACTIONS	Initiators	Champions	Promoters	City
<p>6. Make the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and other city ordinances consistent with the Vision. Making our city rules consistent with the Vision is one way that projects can be aligned with the Vision. City policies can also offer rewards and incentives to encourage Vision consistency.</p>		✓		✓
<p>7. Streamline the city's development processes. Development review can be a barrier to improvements Downtown. We want a process that is informal, collaborative and open with a commitment to a quick cycle time. Determination of consistency with the Vision will involve intuitive evaluation and a wide ranging discussion.</p>		✓		✓
<p>8. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy. Parking is a major player in most development projects. The provision of adequate parking involves many different elements, including ordinance requirements, location, pricing, timing and enforcement which all need to be coordinated.</p>		✓		✓
<p>9. Initiate stronger retail cooperation, management and promotion. The retail community will benefit by building on the Business Improvement District's efforts to improve Downtown shopping, with a program offering workshops (window displays, business image), merchant information services (maps, brochures), and effective promotion.</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>10. Market and promote Downtown. Marketing and promoting all of Downtown as a business, financial and retail center will improve the image of the whole area.</p>	✓		✓	
<p>11. Explore Unreinforced Masonry financing. Creative financing such as using the credit of the City to leverage private sector loans could result in physical improvements to Downtown buildings which need to be upgraded for earthquake safety.</p>	✓	✓		✓

QUICK RESULTS ACTIONS	Initiators	Champions	Promoters	City
<p>12. Change B, C, and D Streets to two way traffic flow. Reinstating two way traffic flow will be make it easier to move around Downtown, make the streets more accessible and improve their pedestrian friendly character.</p>		✓		✓
<p>13. Build a demonstration block project. With facade renovations, sign changes and other improvements, property and business owners can see the type of changes and amenities that are possible. This block will make a major visible change and demonstrate the new character of Downtown.</p>	✓	✓		✓
<p>14. Build a prototype outdoor seating area. We want to encourage outdoor eating opportunities by demonstrating how this can be done quickly and in a quality way.</p>	✓	✓		✓
<p>15. Allow pedestrian oriented signs. Making it possible to have signs oriented to pedestrians will have an immediate change in Downtown's appearance and will add to the pedestrian friendly character of the streets.</p>		✓		✓
<p>16. Make the street patrols more visible. Increasing the visibility of the existing street patrols will add to the feeling of Downtown as a safe, welcoming place.</p>	✓		✓	
<p>17. Initiate high profile, signature events. The event program is very successful in bringing people Downtown. Developing one or two high profile signature events will round out the program and specifically promote Downtown San Rafael.</p>	✓		✓	
<p>18. Encourage planting trees. Additional trees will add to the pleasant walking character of Downtown and are small projects that can be done by many groups and individuals.</p>	✓	✓		✓
<p>19. Relocate/upgrade newsracks. Improving the appearance of our newsracks and locating them in the right places will be a substantial visual improvement on many of our Downtown street corners.</p>		✓		✓
<p>20. Underground utilities on Second and Third. Putting the overhead wires under ground will make a major improvement in the Second/Third Street Corridor.</p>	✓	✓		✓

Long Term Actions 1995 to 2000

Implementation actions will continue for many years and will not stop after the short term actions are achieved. The momentum of achievements will be continued and even excellerated. We have no crystal ball of the future, so that actions which are responsive to the contemporary situation and consistent with the Vision must be continually developed.

The community has suggested many implementation actions ideas which we can take; a short list is included here. In the list are actions requiring a lot of work over several years by a large number of people and organizations working together. There are activities we would like to do as funding becomes available or as initiators come forward. Other of the projects are dependent on the completion of one or more of the short term projects before they can be done

We will be reviewing, amending and adding to this list periodically as projects are completed, as activities change and as new ideas come forward. Opportunities which are not apparent this year could become high priority items next year, and questions about the effectiveness of an action could cause its removal from consideration. However, the question which will always be asked is whether the action is consistent with the Vision.

Possible Long Term Major Impact Projects are:

- Develop a permanent Public Market
- Develop a major children's entertainment and educational facility
- Establish a business retention and recruitment program
 - ✦ Assist with retail improvements to develop a better retail mix
 - ✦ Recruit for all of Downtown
 - ✦ Encourage evening activities, restaurants and entertainment
- Make the Fourth Street Hetherton Gateway improvements
- Encourage quality office development
- Keep the City library Downtown
- Have entertainment for children, youth and families
- Expand the area around Courthouse Square with a plaza design to expand the gathering place concept
- Start a program to allow for flexible use of sidewalks

- Develop the Lindero District
- Build more housing
 - ✦ Provide development incentives
 - ✦ Expedite processing of housing projects
 - ✦ Revise residential parking and other development standards to reflect Downtown's urban character
- Have more public events including:
 - ✦ Promotional events
 - ✦ Expand the sponsorship of events
 - ✦ Locate events throughout the Downtown area
- Develop new funding sources
 - ✦ Grants from governmental and nonprofit agencies
 - ✦ Leverage City money with private money
- Encourage the expansion of activities at Downtown cultural facilities

Possible Long Term Facilitating Actions are:

- Continue to make the City's permit processes work better
- Improve sidewalks and cross walks to the Transportation Center and the neighborhoods
- Develop an Urban Design Plan
- Start a banner program to announce community events
- Build major office projects in the Hetherton Gateway
- Develop more parking in the Hetherton Gateway and the West End
- Increase the visibility and use of public parking
- Diagonal parking for more spaces, to slow traffic, be pedestrian friendly on selected cross streets and in important retail shopping areas
- Expand the membership and area of the Business Improvement District to include non retail businesses
- Start a facade improvement program
- Have an effective advertising campaign for Downtown

Participants

These are the interested and wonderful people who attended our many Visioning Sessions and other events.

Florence Abraham	Rhian Carson	Sandra Dono
David Alvarado	April Carter	Oak Dowling
Michael Alvarado	Allison Casassa	Sydni Downs
Marisol Alvarez	Rafael Castro	John Dudkowski
Bianca Amador	Sara Chamberlin	Viet Duong
Maria Amador	Veronica Chaves	Johnathan Dupree
Yasmin Amezcua	Eric Christ	Francisco Duran
Tony Amkhamavong	Katie Christensen	Jessica Dwyer
Terry Amsler	Sue Clark	Sheila Edwards
Allene Anderson	Alice Cochrane	Jeffrey Ehlenbach
Chris Angotti	Paul Cohen	Michael Elgie
Jose Argumedo	Dan Cole	John Ellis
Lionel Ashcroft	Jason Coleman	Catherine Enos
Morton Avner	Paul Coleman	William Epstein
Stephanie Bailey	Collet Lee	Ellen Ercolini
Athena Barbic	Brian Coman	Louise Erdman
Evan Barbier	Patrick Connally	Mary Ellen Erwin
Jayni Barker	Pamela Contini	Jesse Espinoza
Al Barr	Bob Cooper	Nicole Espinoza
Ignacio Barragan	Lindsay Cope	Jim Farley
Patti Beckstrom	Cheryl Cottemier	Barbara Fernbacher
Rick Beckstrom	Ray Cox	Peter Fielder
Sue Beittel	Theresa Cox	Joseph Fink
Tony Belsich	Chris Craiker	Lynn Finkelstein
Paul Benavides	Ralph Crocker	Shirley Fisher
Al Bianchi	Carlos Cruz	Max Fitzgerald
John Blanchard	Christopher Daglow	Kate Fitzsimmons
James Boughey	Charles Daniels	Victoria Flanner
Hermine Boyadjian	Henry Dao	Bruce Foster
William Brannan	Gerald De Kerchove	Scott Foster
Ann Brebner	Mariposa de Los Angeles	Daisy Franco
Brad Breithaupt	Al Dell'Era	Betty Franklin
Cecelia Bridges	Rosemary Dell'Era	Carol Fregoso
Michele Brovelli	Obdulio Diaz-Rodas	Jeffrey Friend
Anne Brown	Alex Diefenbach	Diane Frizzie
Jason Buckallew	Carol Dillon	Michael Gallette
Bob Butler	Mary Ann Diluzio	Gary Galloway
Kathy Cabrera	Don Dimitratos	Lendon Ganey
Claudia Campos	Mary Dinh	Elise Ganz
Mary Carpou	William Dittmann	Patti Garbarino
Eddie Carroll	Larry Dodge	Oscar Garcia

John Garfolo	Allison Jacobs	Michael Mahoney
Julian Garfolo	Annie Jacobsen	Richard Mahre
Richard Gessner	Amanda Jagla	Makoto Makashina
Nima Gharavi	Kathryn Jensen	Wilber Maltez
Gary Giacomini	Henry Jespersen	Mackenzie Manning
Elissa Giambastiani	Lilia Johnson	Clark Manus
Michael Gilbert	Jo Julin	Douglass Marcellus
Jim Gilliland	Roshan Kaderali	Dan Mardesich
Jackie Gilmore	Richard Katerndahl	Hector Marin
Albert Giragossian	Daniel Kemp	Amy McAllister
Suzie Golt	Michael Kilbride	Carlene McCart
Carlos Gonzalez	Ellen Kim	Shirley McClung
Damone Gordon	Noreen Kimelman	Mary Fran McCluskey
Elizabeth Grasham	Susan King	Dan McCormick
Sandy Greenblat	Lisa Kinimaka	Molly McDolan
Gloria Grinner	Esther Kligman-Frey	Ian McDonald
Margarita Guevara	Gina Klotz	Shannon McInnis
Keven Gunn	Richard Knapp	Allan McIssac
Matt Guthrie	Katherine Knops	Sharon McNamee
Adriana Gutierrez	Hooper Knowlton	Ann Meditz
Maria Guzman	Glenn Koorhan	Ana Melara
Jessica Hale	Judy Kotula	Patrice Metzler
Fran Halperin	Bob Krolack	Blake Michaelsen
Alex Halpern	Jack Krystal	Ralph Mihan
Sajida Hamdan	Robert Kuntz	E. Mack Miller
Pam Hamilton	Chris Laddish	Karen Miller
Blair Hartzell	Hai Lam	Suzanne Mollenkopf
Helen Hayes	Carl Larin	Dana Moore
Richard Heine	Tim Laughter	Herb Moran
Eric Hellar	Anne Layzer	Pamela Moreland
Grant Hellar	Mary Jo Lazear	Miho Morinoue
Eva Hellar	Jaqueline Ledesma	Mario Murcia
Barbara Heller	Charlotte Lee	Colin Murphy
Caitlin Henehan	Barbara Leighton	Bill Murray
Gerald Craig Hill	Reg Leighton	Mary Murtaugh
Lin Hines	Michael Levinson	Victor Ngo
Maryke Hines	Adrienne Levy	Ngoc Nguyen
Dale Hodges	Linda Liebermann	Tran Nguyen
Jared Hopfer	Armand Locke	Jonah Nicholds
Val Hornstein	Terry Lofrano	Norma Novy
Jean Hountalas	Tom Lollini	Richard O'Brien
Heather Houseman	Emanuel Lopez	Roger O'Donnell
Maria Hudobnik	Lora Lorden	Margaret O'Grady
Esteban Irizarry	Jeffrey Lucas	Claire Ann O'Neil
Howard Itzkowitz	Dolores Lydon	Tom Obletz
Ian Iverson	Rosa Lee Mack	Victoria Ocegquera
Jennifer Jack	Lindsey Mahavuthivanij	Kathy Ohm

Don Onstrom	Carlo Scatena	Kenia Uriostegui
Michael Ortega	Eric Scher	Karen Urquhart
John Ortega	Michael Schulte	Bob Vasser
Stan Ott	Frank Scott	Bonnie Velchich
Mike Ovis	Matthew Scozzafava	Daniel Vollmer
Virginia Pabst	Gimi Sessi	Luther Wallace
Betty Pagett	Elizabeth Shaw	George Walton
Mark Paige	Sally Sherlock	Patty Ward
Karen Panameno	Michael Shippey	Mary Warren
Jonathan Parker	Ted Shuel	Virginia Weber
Michael Parlapiano	Rex Silvernale	Ivy Wellington
Jorie Parr	Rob Simon	Ann Weston
Webb Partick	Leslie Simons	Patsy White
Boro Pat	Niki Simons	Barbara Williams
Laura Paxton	Dorothy Skufca	Helen Willms
Lorena Perez	Dick Smith	Maynard Willms
Lisa Phan	William Smith	Thomas Wilson
Alinna Philavong	Vivian Smith	Rob Wilson
Steven Piro	Don Soldivini	Harry Winters
Katherine Polan	Whitney Sones	Richard Wolfe
Ed Pollack	Dustin Spoliansky	Doyle Worcester
Susie Pollack	Jean Starkweather	Karman Wright
Rick Pullin	John Starkweather	Josh Wyatt
Brady Quilici	Arisha Stempel	Abe Yang
Gary Raggianti	Ben Stender	Jason Yano
Leola Raggianti	Naomi Storz	Ian Young
Anuar Ramirez	Eileen Strachan	Tamara Young
Martin Rayman	Vaughn Stratford	Gerry Young
Joyce Rifkind	Chuck Stuckey	Dave Zappetini
Ramon Rivera	J.D. Sullivan	Judy Ziegler
Kate Rix	Anthony Szantos	Don Zingler
Etoyia Roberts	Maria Szantos	Barbara Zurnich
Cindy Rodriguez	Michael Tabussi	
Elizabeth Rodriguez	Mary Ann Thomas	
John Rojas	Sondra Thompson	
Elana Rosenberg	Jay Tillotson	
Amalia Rothschild	Judy Tipple	
Michel Rousselin	Elaine Tope	
Todd Rubinger	Andrew Touchstone	
Rich Rubini	John Touchstone	
Joshua Russell	Tom Trammell	
Marge Salin	Lee Ann Trang	
Paul Samuelson	Aileen Treadwell	
Smyrna Sanchez	Frank Trombley	
George Saribalis	Lois Tucker	
Katherine Sayles	Anise Turina	
Paul Sayles	George Uri	