Eight Questions About the Future of San Rafael

GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE
MARCH 14, 2018

What is precious here that we don’t want to lose?
Strengths (things to preserve)

- Open Space and access to nature
- Aesthetics
- Balance (urban life, neighborhoods, open space)
- Walkable, historic, authentic downtown
- Small town/Small city character
- Diversity and inclusion; welcoming persons of all backgrounds
- Accessible leadership, culture of civic engagement
- Neighborhoods and strong sense of identity—a “community of communities”
- Creative and innovative spirit
- Excellent schools, parks, and services

What is almost good that we need to make better?
Opportunities (things to make better)

- Pedestrian and bicycle safety—walkability
- Congested streets
- Aging parks and community facilities
- Our waterfront/shoreline
- Housing opportunities
- The arts, culture, entertainment, shopping, and dining scene
- Architectural quality
- Anti-immigrant sentiment
- Public Transit
- Downtown

What is terrible that needs to change?
Weaknesses (things to fix)

- Intolerable traffic congestion
- Not enough affordable/ workforce housing
- Inequities and limited opportunities for lower income and immigrant households
- Lack of parking in specific locations
- Climate-related hazards, particularly flooding and sea level rise
- Homelessness
- Trash and litter
- Condition of our creeks
- Fiscal constraints and responsibilities
- More visionary, thoughtful, and environmentally aware planning

Gaps (What’s missing)

- Community gathering places and events
- More sensitive treatment of creeks
- Better waterfront access
- More housing options
- Better commercial services
- More economic equality and access to education
- More focus on North San Rafael / Terra Linda
- More walkable neighborhoods and viable commercial centers
- Higher-quality architecture
- Emergency preparedness
- Partnerships
External Opportunities

• Learn from the 2017 wildfires – be prepared
• Leverage our role as a hub and destination
• Encourage more environmentally responsible planning
• Follow best practices in GHG reduction and climate resilience
• Improve walkability
• Address equity
• Improve public transit connections to the rest of the Bay Area
• Be a vanguard and regional leader

External Threats

• Traffic congestion
• Lack of housing supply (relative to job creation)
• Homelessness
• Climate-related natural disasters
• Diminished environmental quality/ lack of water
• Culture of fear in the immigrant community
• Intrusive state laws that take away local control
• Loss of the middle class
• Unfunded pension liabilities
• Silver “tsunami”
Your Vision

“The city in Marin that has a little bit of everything.”

“The most diverse and inclusive city in the Bay Area. A friendly city that focuses its economy on innovation, arts, and tourism.”

“On the forefront of innovation for transportation, self-driving cars, zero emission efforts, energized youth.”

“The first town in Marin to reach zero net GHG emissions—demonstrating how to remedy climate change while readying our community for its impacts.”

“A hip city of art and innovation”

“A complete community, well integrated across income levels and cultures, and with the natural environment”

“The largest, most inviting, most fun place in Marin—a welcoming community to all.”

“Let’s be known for our willingness to change and embrace the future—solve the solvable problems”

“A great fiscally sound small city with a wonderful and walkable downtown, highly diverse population, a strong economy, a great quality of life for our residents”

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