



MEETING DATE: September 12, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: 5.A

**ATTACHMENT: 2**

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## REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

**Subject: Youth in Arts/ Y-Plan Youth Engagement Initiative**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Steering Committee will be briefed on an upcoming initiative to engage fourth and fifth grade San Rafael students in discussions about the future of the City. Committee members may provide feedback and are encouraged to volunteer as this initiative is launched.

### REPORT

Community engagement is an essential part of the San Rafael 2040 General Plan Update and will help shape the Plan's maps and policies. Youth are sometimes left out of this process—despite the fact that they will inhabit the places we are planning today. Part of the 2040 planning program is to engage San Rafael's youth in creative and meaningful ways. Accordingly, the City is teaming with Youth-in-Arts and Y-Plan to initiate an engagement program for elementary school age students. While the program will initially focus on a single school, we may expand it if there are a sufficient number of volunteers.

**Youth in Arts** (917 C Street) is a San Rafael based organization that builds visual and performing arts skills through innovative programs for youth and educators. **Y-Plan** (Youth-Plan, Learn, Act, Now) is an award-winning educational strategy that empowers young people to tackle real world problems in their communities through project-based civic learning experiences. It is operated through the Center for Cities + Schools at UC-Berkeley.

Youth in Arts and Y-Plan partnered to launch an "Architects in Schools" program at Laurel Dell Elementary School in 2016-18. Through this program, architects and artists have helped students develop the ability to present ideas visually and verbally, and consider how to create places aligned with their hopes for the community. The group's most recent initiative was linked to the Resilient by Design challenge and engaged students in developing creative solutions to sea level rise.

Youth in Arts/ Y-Plan have approached the City of San Rafael to make the General Plan the focus of their next exercise. They are working on soliciting student feedback on the following question: **"How do you grow a city in a way that makes it a great place for everyone."** Students will use the General Plan section headings presented at the July meeting ("Quality of Life" "Connecting the City" and "Natural Environment") to express their ideas—with an intensified focus on downtown Arts and Culture.

At the next Steering Committee meeting, representatives from Youth in Arts and Y-Plan will describe their proposed program and respond to questions and ideas from Steering Committee members. Once the program is initiated, we will seek out opportunities for Steering Committee members to participate as volunteers. We also anticipate that students themselves may present their ideas to the Steering Committee (and others) at a special school presentation later in the General Plan process.