



MEETING DATE: September 12, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: 5.B

ATTACHMENT: 3

REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Subject: General Plan Land Use Map and Categories

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Steering Committee will receive a presentation on the General Plan Land Use categories, and will be asked to provide feedback on proposed changes. This staff report highlights the purpose and evolution of San Rafael's General Plan Map, the relationship of the General Plan categories to zoning categories, the use of "gross" vs "net" density standards, the current (General Plan 2020) land use categories, and proposed new categories to be used in General Plan 2040. Committee feedback on this material will be requested and proposed new ideas will be discussed.

REPORT

The General Plan Map

The General Plan Map (also referred to as the Land Use Map) has been a core part of the San Rafael General Plan since the early 1960s. All California cities are required to include such a map in their general plans, illustrating the "proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of land uses" for housing, business, industry, open space, recreation, education, and public buildings. In short, the General Plan Map shows what to put where. Cities are given considerable latitude in how this information is displayed, including the number and types of categories on the map and the level of precision used.

In addition, State law requires that the Land Use Element of the General Plan define the "standards of population density and building intensity for the various districts and other territory covered by the Plan." Practically speaking, this means that multiple residential categories are shown on the map, each differentiated by the number of housing units allowed per acre (density). Commercial and industrial categories usually describe the types of uses present, along with a metric (such as floor area ratio or height) that determines the maximum size of buildings.

The General Plan Map is an expression of the pattern of uses envisioned in the horizon year of the Plan (e.g., 2040). In stable and mature communities such as San Rafael, this pattern matches existing land uses in most locations. However, the designations may allow different uses or more intense uses in locations where change is desired in the next 20 years. These areas may currently be vacant or they may contain underutilized structures (vacant or partially vacant buildings, lower-value commercial

activities, storage, etc.). The General Plan Map also incorporates flexibility, particularly in commercial and industrial areas, so that property owners may explore different uses in response to changes in market demand, transportation patterns, technology, lifestyle trends, and so on. This is one of the things that distinguishes a General Plan Map from a Zoning Map.

Zoning maps are required to be “consistent” with General Plan Maps, but they do not need to match them exactly. A zoning map depicts what is allowed today, while a General Plan Map depicts the vision for 2040. Decision-makers may use the General Plan Map to evaluate requests for rezoning, and for coordinating infrastructure and capital improvement decisions with anticipated patterns of growth.

Evolution of Land Use Categories in San Rafael

Early general plans for San Rafael used a few simple categories to express the desired pattern of future growth. The 1963 Plan used five categories: residential, commercial, industrial, institutions, and park and open space.

By the late 1960s, residential areas were further divided into “Single Family,” “Multi-Family,” and “Planned Hillside” areas, while commercial areas were divided into “Professional and Administrative,” “Commercial Recreation,” “Regional Shopping Centers,” and “Local Shopping Centers.” Industrial areas became “Planned Industrial” and “Special Industrial and Service Commercial.” Tidal and marshland areas were mapped, and the institutional categories were retitled as “Public Service.” Symbols were used to show schools and neighborhood parks, while larger open spaces were shown as “parks and recreation.”

The 1970s brought a new system of classifying land uses, including “Multi-use Activity Centers” (Downtown, Northgate, etc.), “Business and Industrial” areas, “Water-oriented Areas,” “Open Space Preserves,” “Recreational and Agricultural” areas, and “Residential and Open Space areas.” The 1974 General Plan relied on area plans to provide more specific direction for San Rafael neighborhoods.

Much of the current classification system was established in 1988, when General Plan 2000 was adopted. At this point, densities were assigned to the residential categories and floor area ratios (FAR) were established for commercial and industrial areas, with different FAR limits set for different geographic areas. Residential areas were classified as High, Medium, Low, Hillside, and Hillside Resource. Employment areas were classified as Downtown Core, Neighborhood, General, Retail/Office, Residential/Office, Office, Light Industrial/Office, Industrial, Marine Related, and Mineral Resource. Other categories included Public/Quasi-Public, Parks/Open Space/ Conservation, and Agriculture/ Recreation/ Land Reserve.

These categories were largely carried forward to General Plan 2020, with a few changes. Seven new categories were added to reflect the sub-areas of the 1993 Downtown Plan. A “large lot residential” category also was added, as was an “Airport/Recreation” category and a “Water” category. The Parks/ Open Space/ Conservation category was divided into three separate categories corresponding to each of these uses.

There are now 28 separate categories shown on the General Plan Map, which is an unusually large number. By contrast, the recently completed Novato General Plan includes 20 categories, while the relatively recent Santa Rosa, Hayward, and Richmond General Plans each have 19 categories. Other

Marin County cities have far fewer categories—for example, there are 11 in Mill Valley’s recently completed General Plan and 14 in Corte Madera. The largest city in California—Los Angeles—uses 29 categories on its land use map, covering an area that is 30 times larger than San Rafael and with 60 times the population.

As the number of General Plan categories increased, the look and feel of the General Plan map also changed. Early San Rafael General Plan maps depicted future land uses with “blobs” rather than precise shapes matching parcel boundaries. By the early 2000s, the map became more exact, with land use categories following parcel lines. In areas like Downtown, there is a one to one correspondence between the General Plan Map and the zoning map, with equivalent categories.

Land Use Categories in the 2020 Plan

Table 1 (attached) shows the categories in the 2020 Plan.

There are six residential categories (differentiated by topography and density), 14 mixed use categories, seven non-residential categories, and a “water” category. Each mixed use category allows housing as well as a particular non-residential use, and thus also has an allowable density range assigned to it. The definitions themselves are quite short. There are policies in the Land Use Element that provide more context—for example, indicating the land use categories where hotels are permitted (Policy LU-20), or where mini-storage facilities are appropriate (Policy LU-21).

The allowable intensities for non-residential land uses are not included in the land use category definitions, but are contained in maps elsewhere in the Land Use Element. Exhibits 4, 5, and 6 in General Plan 2020 show the allowable Floor Area Ratio on commercial and industrial lands. Exhibits 7, 8, and 9 show allowable building heights on commercial and industrial lands.

Policies LU-8 and LU-9 in General Plan 2020 state that the maximum density or intensity shown on the General Plan Map is not “automatically” guaranteed. On any given site, allowable densities and intensities must consider site resources and constraints, potential hazards, traffic and access, adequacy of infrastructure, City design policies, and development patterns and densities of adjacent developed areas. General Plan 2020 also includes provisions that allow the “transfer” of density from one parcel to another where certain conditions apply.

Table 1: General Plan 2020 Land Use Categories

Land Use Category	Gross Residential Density (units/acre)	Land Uses
Residential		Residential, open space/ conservation, parks/ playgrounds, schools, churches, plant nurseries, group day care, and large day care facilities. In medium and high density neighborhoods, hotels/motels, clubs, and similar uses may be allowed. Public/ quasi-public uses such as churches and schools, in residential zones shall not exceed a 1.0 FAR and shall meet City development standards including the zoning height and setback requirements.
<i>Hillside Resource Residential</i>	0.1 to 0.5	Characterized by very steep slopes which have geologic and seismic constraints and which have community visual significance or which have been identified as having very limited potential through prior development approvals. This designation is typical of sensitive hillside areas in the Planning Area.
<i>Hillside Residential</i>	0.5 to 2	Characterized by moderate to steep slopes; may have unstable geology and/or local visual significance. Typical of undeveloped hillside residential areas in the Planning Area.
<i>Large Lot Residential</i>	0.5 to 2	Flat or gently sloping single family large lots/ large lot subdivision
<i>Low Density Residential</i>	2 to 6.5	Typical of single family areas
<i>Medium Density Residential</i>	6.5 to 15	Typical of duplex, garden apartment, and condominiums
<i>High Density Residential</i>	15 to 32	Typical of apartment densities
Mixed Use		
<i>Fifth/Mission Residential/Office</i>	15-32	Residential uses and office uses are allowed. Ground floor retail and personal services uses are allowed from "C" Street east, on cross streets between Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue.
<i>Fourth Street Retail Core</i>	32-62	Retail, service, entertainment, cultural, office, residential, and live/work uses are allowed. Residential uses are allowed on the rear ground floor, second floor, and above. On Fourth Street, first floor street frontage uses which encourage an active and healthy retail center are characterized by all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High customer turnover • Large volume of pedestrian traffic • Windows, storefront displays, and signs, and • Merchandise or service likely to be obtained in a multiple stop trip or similar activity which draws large number of people Downtown
<i>General Commercial</i>	15-32	General retail and service uses, restaurants, automobile sales and service uses, and hotels/ motels. Offices as secondary uses except along Francisco Blvd West where retail redevelopment is strongly encouraged.
<i>Hetherton Office</i>	32-62	Office use; and ground floor retail, personal service, food service, and live/work uses are allowed. Residential and live-work uses are permitted on the upper floors on Fourth Street, and on the ground floor and above elsewhere.
<i>Lindaro Mixed Use</i>	6.5 to 15	Motor vehicle service, contractor uses, light manufacturing; distribution, warehousing, and storage; and incidental employee-serving retail/ service allowed. Live/work use allowed.
<i>Lindaro Office</i>	15 to 32	Office, hotel, cultural, or entertainment facility; or residential if feasible
<i>Marine Related</i>	6.5 to 15	Water dependent businesses such as boat building; boat repair, sales and service uses; and boat charter services. Other uses that draw people to the waterfront that may be allowed include shopping centers, restaurants, hotels/ motels; retail and parks. Residential use and non-marine related office is allowed on the second floor and above.

Land Use Category	Gross Residential Density (units/acre)	Land Uses
<i>Neighborhood Commercial</i>	6.5 to 15	Neighborhood-serving retail and service uses such as pharmacies, supermarkets, and dry cleaners. Residential use allowed. Ancillary office uses allowed.
<i>Office</i>	15 to 32	General offices, medical and professional offices, administrative or headquarters offices, and residential uses.
<i>Public/ Quasi-Public</i>	15 to 32	Government or quasi-public buildings or facilities; utility facilities and similar facilities owned or operated by public/ non-profit agencies; residential. An exemption to development standards may be granted if findings are made that a higher height or FAR is necessary for health or safety purposes.
<i>Residential/ Office</i>	15 to 32	Residential and office uses allowed. Limited retail or service uses may be permitted as conditional uses.
<i>Retail/ Office</i>	15 to 32	Retail and service uses; office and residential uses allowed.
<i>Second/Third Mixed Use</i>	32 to 62	Office and office support retail and service uses (such as copy shops, food service and cleaners) are encouraged throughout the district. Residential uses and additional retail uses are allowed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On Second and Third Streets east of B Street, limited auto-serving retail (such as gas stations), and residential uses as part of a mixed use development are allowed. - On Second and Third Streets west of B Street, retail usually accessed by car, including daily-needs retail (such as grocery and drug stores), limited auto-serving retail (such as gas stations), large item retail (such as furniture stores), and residential areas are allowed. - On the cross streets, neighborhood serving and specialty retail uses are encouraged in order to have an active pedestrian environment. Residential use is also encouraged, especially west of B Street.
<i>West End Village</i>	15 to 32	Retail uses, especially specialty and neighborhood serving retail and restaurants. Personal service, high customer volume office and limited amounts of other office uses are also allowed. Residential and live-work uses are permitted on the upper floor of Fourth Street, and on the ground floor and above elsewhere.
Non-Residential		
<i>Industrial</i>	0	Motor vehicle service, contractor uses and yards; manufacturing; storage uses; wholesale; incidental employee-serving retail uses; rock, sand and gravel plants; solid waste management and recycling facilities; trucking yards or terminals; ancillary offices and small offices.
<i>Light Industrial/ Office</i>	0	Allowed uses include motor vehicle service, contractor uses and yards; light manufacturing; distribution, warehousing, and storage; incidental employee-serving retail/service; office use and region-serving specialty retail when contained in a building of 50,000 square feet or greater in size and located on a site greater than 10 acres. Other specialty retail uses may be allowed to occupy minor portions of the Light Industrial / Office districts provided that intensity and traffic standards are met and the integrity of the district is not threatened.
<i>Airport/ Recreation</i>	0	Uses on this site are governed by a land use covenant agreed to by the City, the County, and the property owner. Recognize the unique and valuable recreational and environmental characteristics of the airport site. The following uses are allowed on the property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses consistent with the 2002 Master Use Permit, including the airport and ancillary airport services and light industrial uses. - Private and public recreational uses - Public utility uses
<i>Mineral Resources</i>	0	Quarry and brick yard uses, which utilize mineral resources of regional significance.

Land Use Category	Gross Residential Density (units/acre)	Land Uses
<i>Parks</i>	0	Parks
<i>Open Space</i>	0	Secured public and private open space
<i>Conservation</i>	--	Areas identified as having visual or other natural resource significance that should be protected through the development review process. The conservation designation is applied to environmentally sensitive areas that are part of a larger site of contiguous parcels under common ownership. Absent evidence that some portion of the area is appropriate for development, no development of residential, industrial, or commercial buildings shall be allowed. The City will consider some level of intensity and density of development upon evidence that such use is appropriate. Upon evidence, the land use designation(s) may be revised through the General Plan Amendment process.
<i>Water</i>	0	Major navigable bodies of water, applicable to the bay and canal, excluding creeks and drainage ways. The Water District provides an opportunity for limited water-dependent uses which require access to the water as a central element of its basic function, and which contribute to the maritime character of the area.

Issues

Net Versus Gross Density

There are two common ways to express residential density. Both use “units per acre”—but with a different denominator in the equation.

- Gross density is the total number of units per acre in a given area, *including* internal streets, easements, common open space, and undevelopable areas.
- Net density is the total number of units per acre in a given area, *excluding* these areas. In other words, net density only considers the portion of the area on which buildings may be constructed. Net density is typically 20 to 30 percent higher than gross density. It is used in the Zoning Ordinance to determine minimum lot sizes and the number of units that may actually be constructed on a given site.

A “gross” density standard is appropriate in cities that are growing outward through the addition of large single family subdivision tracts, with new public streets and large areas set aside for public parks, schools, and amenities. Cities that are “built out” typically use a net density standard, recognizing that development will occur on smaller parcels that already have street access, with denser product types and less land set aside for public use. Most Bay Area cities have shifted their General Plan maps from a gross density standard to a net density standard in the last 20 years, reflecting a focus on infill development and open space protection. The shift allows the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to use the same standards for density, making it easier to demonstrate consistency and providing more certainty for property owners, developers, and other stakeholders.

Making this shift requires a definition of what constitutes “developable” land on a given site, since the density standard will only apply to the portion of each site that is considered developable. Land required for public and private streets is excluded, as are public parks, easements that cannot be privately used, and lands that are considered “unbuildable” due to natural constraints such as flood plains, wetlands, and steep slopes. Areas that are used for facilities serving residents of the development (including recreational features such as swimming pools and private playgrounds) driveways and accessways, parking lots, and parcels developed with housing are usually considered “developable.”

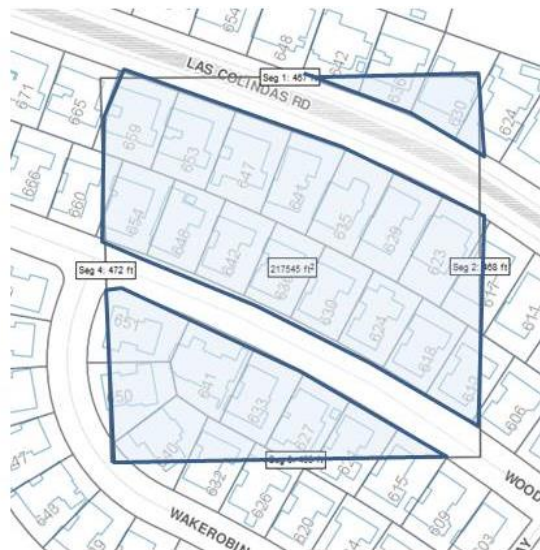
The shift from gross to net density is not intended to increase the allowable number of units on a given site. In fact, the two metrics should be roughly equivalent in terms of the number of units that may be built. Net density is simply more predictable, and more appropriate given San Rafael’s developed character.

An example of the difference between gross and net density is shown below, using an existing neighborhood in North San Rafael. In the diagram at left, gross density for a “typical” five acre area is shown. There are 22 single family homes within the square, for a gross density of 4.4 units per acre. The same area is shown at right, with a net density calculation. Streets are excluded, leaving 3.85 net acres. The same 22 homes have a net density of 5.7 units per acre (roughly 7,600 square feet per unit, which is roughly the average lot size in this area). Net density in this example is 29% higher than gross density, although the number of units is the same.



22 units
5.0 gross acres
4.4 units/ gross acre

GROSS DENSITY



22 units
3.85 net acres
5.7 units/ net acre

NET DENSITY

As applied to San Rafael’s residential categories, the impact of the shift from gross to net is as follows:

Category	Gross Density (units per acre)	Net Density (units per acre)	Corresponding Zones
<i>Hillside Resource Residential</i>	0.1 to 0.5	Less than 0.5	R2a
<i>Hillside Residential</i>	0.5 to 2	0.5 to 2.2	R1a, R20
<i>Large Lot Residential</i>	0.5 to 2	0.5 to 2.2	R1a, R20
<i>Low Density Residential</i>	2 to 6.5	2.2 to 8.7	R10, R7.5, R5
<i>Medium Density Residential</i>	6.5 to 15	8.7 to 21.8	MR5, MR3, MR2.5, DR, MR2
<i>High Density Residential</i>	15 to 32	21.8 to 43.6	HR1.8, HR1.5, HR1

As noted previously, residential uses also are allowed in most commercial areas. The “Medium Density Residential” ranges apply to the Marine-Related and Neighborhood Commercial categories. The “High Density Residential” ranges apply to the General Commercial and Office categories. Net General Plan densities for Downtown correspond to a maximum of 73 units per net acre (equivalent to the one dwelling unit per 600 square feet of lot area that currently applies in several of the Downtown zoning districts).

Following adoption of the General Plan, existing zoning would not require changes specifically related to the adjustments described above, as the two documents would be fully consistent. The shift from gross to net would not preclude property owners from applying to change the designation of their properties from one category to another during the General Plan process, nor would it impact the City’s ability to make further changes to the categories to reflect new policy direction taken over the course of the update.

Number of Mixed Use Categories

As noted earlier, there are 14 separate mixed use categories in the San Rafael General Plan. This is largely the result of having the 1993 Downtown Plan¹, including its land use plan, incorporated into the General Plan. Since a “Precise Plan” is being prepared for Downtown San Rafael and will be adopted concurrently with the General Plan, it is recommended that Downtown categories be consolidated into a single new category called “Downtown Mixed Use.” The definition of this new category will reflect the full range of land uses and densities/intensities described in the seven existing Downtown categories and will defer to the Precise Plan for more detailed guidance on specific uses and standards.

The creation of a Downtown Mixed Use category raises an important question—what are the boundaries of Downtown? At minimum, Downtown should include the area covered by the 1993 Downtown Plan. The eastern edge of that Plan area was Highway 101. Given the opportunities

¹ The official name of this document is “Our Vision of Downtown San Rafael and Our Implementation Strategy”

presented by the SMART station and the designation of the area around the station as a Priority Development Area (PDA), the boundary should also include several blocks to the east, perhaps as far as Grand Avenue or Union Street. Much of this area is designated “Retail/Office,” with uses that in many cases are as intense as those in the traditional Downtown.

There is also an opportunity to consolidate the three Office Mixed Use categories into a single category, and rely on multiple zoning districts to differentiate the mix of uses and standards appropriate in areas with this designation. The three categories (Office, Office/Retail, and Office/Residential) are primarily differentiated from each other by the types of non-office uses that are permitted, and their location in the City. “Office/Retail” is primarily mapped on the Miracle Mile and the area east of Downtown, “Office/Residential” is primarily mapped on Lincoln Avenue, and “Office” is mapped primarily on campus style office properties in North San Rafael. However, residential uses of 15-32 units per gross acre are already allowed in all three of these categories and there have been several instances (such as the 33 North project) where entirely residential projects have been built.

A simpler approach would be to create a new “Office Mixed Use” category, with General Plan policies addressing where the R/O, C/O, and O zoning districts should apply.

Conservation and Open Space Categories

The existing General Plan includes separate categories for Parks, Open Space, and Conservation.² The mapping of these categories is not always intuitive, since the “Parks” and “Open Space” designations apply to land with similar characteristics, such as China Camp State Park (Parks) and the adjacent land owned by the Marin County Open Space District (Open Space). At the same time, the Parks designation does not differentiate “active parks” such as Albert Park and Pickleweed Park from large “passive parks” primarily geared toward land conservation (such as China Camp).

Meanwhile, the “Conservation” designation applies to specific properties—both public and private—where wetlands, steep hillsides, and other constrained lands are present. This includes most of the Canalways site, the Marin Sanitary District lands (south of Andersen Drive and east of 101), Tisconia Marsh (owned by the Audubon Society), several HOA-owned properties, and a small part of San Rafael Airport. In General Plan 2020, these lands are defined as possibly being appropriate for general plan amendments to other uses, “upon evidence that such use is appropriate.”

An alternative approach would be to map active recreation areas as “parks” and designate all other open space and conservation properties as “Resource Conservation Areas.” If necessary, a separate category could be used to identify conservation areas with some development potential, as General Plan 2020 does.

² The “Hillside Resource Residential” category could also be described as an open space category since it is applied to constrained land, but a limited amount of development potential is acknowledged on these sites.

Proposed Classification System

Based on the analysis above, the following classification system is proposed for General Plan 2040.

RESIDENTIAL CATEGORIES

There will continue to be six residential designations used on the General Plan Map. Five of these correspond to traditional residential neighborhoods while the sixth is applied to constrained, mostly undeveloped lands with very limited development potential.

In all residential areas, the following general conditions also should apply:

1. Some of the categories on the General Plan Map have multiple corresponding zoning districts. The designation of an area with a particular category does not mean that the most intense zoning district consistent with that category is automatically permitted.
2. The maximum density stated in each case is subject to State density bonus laws. These laws allow a 35 percent increase in the number of permitted units for projects meeting specific criteria with respect to the inclusion of affordable housing units.
3. Pursuant to state law, accessory dwelling units may not be counted as a dwelling unit when calculating the number of units permitted on a property under the General Plan.
4. Other compatible uses, such as schools, child care centers, parks, and religious facilities, may also locate in areas with this designation, subject to a Floor Area Ratio limit of 1.0.

Hillside Resource Residential (Maximum 0.5 units per net acre)

This designation is intended for privately owned land, typically with geologic or seismic constraints that limit development potential. Such areas are often located on steep hillsides that are visually significant and have been identified as having very limited potential through prior development proposals. Hillside Resource Residential Areas include single family homes on very large lots, as well as undeveloped properties.

Hillside Residential (0.5 to 2.2 units per net acre)

Hillside Residential areas are residential neighborhoods characterized by moderate to steep slopes, with lots that are generally larger than 20,000 square feet in area. These areas may have geologic and seismic constraints, local visual significance, and access constraints that limit their suitability for development at greater densities. Many of these areas are in unincorporated Marin County, within the San Rafael sphere of influence. Examples include the Country Club and Los Ranchitos neighborhoods.

Very Low Density Residential (0.5 to 2.2 units per net acre)

These areas are similar in density to Hillside Residential areas, but are on flat or gently sloping terrain. Lots are generally larger than 20,000 square feet and are developed with single family detached homes. Subdivision potential is limited. Land with this designation is concentrated in the Dominican area and Peacock Gap.

Low Density Residential (2.2 to 8.7 units/net acre)

This designation permits detached single family homes and is characterized by lots of 5,000 to 20,000 square feet. This is the predominant residential development type in San Rafael and includes most of the city's single family neighborhoods. Multiple zoning districts apply within Low Density Residential areas, distinguishing areas with different minimum lot sizes.

Medium Density Residential (8.7-21.8 units/net acre)

This designation applies to patio home and small lot subdivisions, townhomes, mobile home parks, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, attached units in planned developments, and areas characterized by a mix of single family homes and small multi-unit buildings. A variety of lot sizes may be present, but overall net densities may not exceed one unit per 2,000 square feet of lot area (21.8 units/acre). Many areas with this designation possess the qualities of single family neighborhoods, including landscaped yards, off-street parking, and low building heights.

High Density Residential (21.8-43.6 units/net acre)

This is the highest density category that applies in residential areas. Densities above this range may be permitted in the Downtown Mixed Use area only. The designation applies to multi-family residential areas and includes a mix of housing types, including apartments, flats, condominiums, and townhomes. A variety of lot sizes may be present but overall net densities may not exceed one unit per 1,000 square feet of lot area (43.6 units per acre). On larger parcels with this designation, amenities such as swimming pools, community rooms, and common open space are often included.

MIXED USE CATEGORIES

There are five mixed use categories on the map. Each category allows a mix of residential and non-residential uses, although there is a focus on employment and revenue generating uses in each case. Residential uses in these areas may be subject to specific requirements or findings related to compatibility with adjacent commercial uses and the City's desire to sustain retail, service, office, and similar economically-productive uses in the future. Different zoning districts may be used in each category to differentiate the intensity or mix of activities allowed in a given area. The most intense zoning district deemed consistent with a given category is not automatically permitted. As in residential areas, projects incorporating affordable housing are subject to a State density bonus allowance of up to

35 percent. Other compatible uses, such as schools, child care centers, parks, and religious facilities, may locate in each designation, subject to specific requirements codified through zoning.

Downtown Mixed Use (21.8-72.6 units/net acre; maximum FAR 2.0)

This category corresponds to properties in Downtown San Rafael. It includes the highest development densities and intensities in the city, and contains a mix of housing, office, retail, service, and public land uses. Development in this area is guided by the Downtown San Rafael Precise Plan, which identifies a series of Downtown subareas, each with its own set of development standards and land use guidelines. The maximum FAR of 2.0 (and maximum net density of 72.6 units per acre) apply only where shown in the Downtown Precise Plan; lower FAR and density limits apply on most parcels within the Precise Plan boundaries.

Community Commercial Mixed Use (21.8-43.6 units/net acre; maximum FAR 0.3)

This category corresponds to general retail and service uses, restaurants, automobile sales and service uses, hotels/ motels. Offices are also permitted, subject to General Plan policies regarding priority uses in specific areas. Housing is also permitted, ideally as an ancillary use to commercial uses and other activities generating sales tax, jobs, and local service opportunities. Residential development is subject to a maximum net density of 43.6 units per acre, as well as General Plan policies that may further guide the use of key opportunity sites or corridors. The FAR limit of 0.3 applies to non-residential uses only, and excludes square footage associated with housing in mixed use projects. Lower FAR limits may apply on some parcels, as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps). Areas with this designation include the Northgate Town Center, Merrydale Road, and portions of Francisco Boulevard East and West.

Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use (8.7 to 24.2 units/net acre; maximum FAR 0.32)

This category corresponds to neighborhood-serving retail and service uses such as pharmacies, supermarkets, and dry cleaners. Residential and ancillary office uses are allowed, subject to policies in the General Plan and zoning standards establishing the conditions for non-retail and service uses. A maximum net density of 24.2 units per acre applies to projects that include residential uses. The FAR limit of 0.32 applies to non-residential uses only, and excludes square footage associated with housing in mixed use projects. Lower FAR limits may apply on some parcels, as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps). Areas with this designation include small neighborhood shopping centers, and pockets of local retailers, the Regency Theater, and the B Street corridor south of Downtown.

Office Mixed Use (21.8-43.6 units/net acre; maximum FAR 0.40)

This category corresponds to areas where office is the prevailing use but where other uses also may be present. Predominant uses include general offices, medical and professional offices, and administrative or headquarters offices. Different zoning districts have been developed to reflect the specific combinations of uses that are desired in each area. These include office-residential areas and office-retail areas, as well as a general office district. Residential uses are allowed in all of these areas, subject

to specific zoning standards and permitting requirements as well as policies in the General Plan. A maximum net density of 43.6 units per acre applies to projects that include residential uses. The non-residential portion of such properties is subject to an FAR limit of 0.4. Lower FAR limits may apply on some parcels, as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps).

Marine Related Mixed Use (8.7 to 21.8 units/net acre; maximum FAR 0.32)

This category includes water dependent businesses such as boat building; boat repair, sales and service uses; and boat charter services. Other uses that draw people to the waterfront are allowed, including shopping centers, restaurants, hotels/ motels; retail and parks. Residential use and non-marine related office is allowed on the second floor and above. Where residential uses are included, they are subject to a maximum density of 21.8 units per net acre. The non-residential area on any given site is subject to a FAR limit of 0.32. Lower FAR limits may apply on some parcels, as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps).

INDUSTRIAL CATEGORIES

There are two industrial categories on the General Plan Map. Residential uses are generally not permitted in these areas, so a density standard is not included. Where consistent with General Plan policies and zoning regulations, a limited amount of live-work or work-live uses may be acceptable in these areas; in such cases, these activities are subject to FAR standards rather than density standards.

General Industrial (Maximum FAR 0.33)

This is the broader of the two industrial categories, with a variety of production, distribution, and repair uses. These areas play an essential role in the Marin County economy, create local jobs, and provide a high volume of tax revenue for San Rafael. General Industrial areas include activities such as manufacturing, storage and warehouse facilities, motor vehicle service and repair, contractor uses and yards, wholesalers, sand and gravel plants, solid waste management and recycling facilities, and trucking yards or terminals. Uses that are incidental or ancillary to these activities also may occur, including offices related to the primary use and employee-serving retail uses. Given the potentially impactful nature of these uses, buffering and screening may be required to enhance public rights of way and ensure land use compatibility. A maximum FAR of 0.33 applies, although lower limits may apply on some parcels as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps).

Light Industrial/Office (Maximum FAR 0.38)

Like the General Industrial areas, the Light Industrial/ Office areas are characterized by a variety of production, distribution, and repair activities that are essential to the local and countywide economies. However, the range of industrial and heavy commercial uses is more limited than in General Industrial areas, reflecting the design of these areas as business parks or their proximity to more sensitive uses such as housing. Typical uses may include repair and servicing, “maker” activities (woodworking and

carpentry shops, creative businesses, etc.), research and development, e-commerce activities, light manufacturing, and tech-related activities and facilities. On sites larger than 10 acres with this designation, and in buildings of 50,000 square feet or greater, region-serving specialty retail uses (including “big box” type uses) may be appropriate. Other specialty retail uses may be allowed to occupy minor portions of the Light Industrial / Office districts provided that intensity and traffic standards are met and the integrity of the district is not threatened. Light Industrial/ Office districts are subject to a maximum FAR of 0.38, although lower limits may apply on some parcels as indicated on Figures # and # (Floor Area Ratio maps).

PUBLIC, OPEN SPACE, AND MISCELLANEOUS CATEGORIES

Public/ Quasi Public (Maximum FAR 1.0)

This designation denotes public schools, libraries, post offices, churches, public hospitals, and institutional facilities such as Dominican University and Marin Academy. It also is applied to major utility properties and public facilities. The maximum FAR is 1.0, although this level of intensity is not appropriate in all instances. Additionally, exemptions from development standards may be granted if findings are made that a higher FAR is necessary for public health or safety purposes. While housing is not envisioned on land with this designation, it may be acceptable in circumstances prescribed by the General Plan or zoning regulations. In such instances, net densities may not exceed 43.6 units per acre.

Mineral Resources (Maximum FAR 0.02)

This designation applies to quarry and brick yard uses which utilize mineral resources of regional significance. It applies only to the San Rafael Rock Quarry and McNear Brick and Block properties on the San Pedro Peninsula. Future activities on these lands are subject to further policy guidance as provided by the General Plan.

Parks and Recreation

This designation denotes land which is used for active recreational purposes, including neighborhood and community parks and recreational amenities at County and state-operated park facilities (such as the McInnis Park Golf Center and China Camp picnic areas). Permitted uses include athletic fields and sports facilities, civic buildings with a primarily recreational or social function, and leisure-oriented uses such as picnic areas, boat slips, and tot lots.

Resource Conservation Areas

This designation denotes land which is to remain undeveloped due to high environmental sensitivity, exceptional visual resource value, or hazards such as wildfire, slope instability, and flooding, including inundation related to sea level rise. The primary objective in these areas is to manage and restore natural resources, and to minimize environmental hazards and associated threats to life and property. A secondary objective is to accommodate limited passive recreation activities such as hiking, where such

activities are compatible with resource management goals. Where appropriate, activities such as grazing and food production also may be considered on such properties. Resource Conservation Areas include a combination of public and private land. On private properties, this designation is generally applied to the portion of a site that has been determined to be undevelopable due to the factors listed above.

Airport/Recreation

This designation applies to the San Rafael Airport. Land uses are governed by a covenant agreed to by the City, Marin County, and the property owner. The agreement recognizes the unique and valuable recreational and environmental characteristics of the airport site and identifies a limited range of uses including airport and ancillary airport services, light industry, utilities, and private and public recreation.

Water

This designation applies to the navigable waters of San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, the San Rafael Canal, and associated marinas along the San Rafael shoreline. The designation provides an opportunity for a limited number of water dependent uses which require water access as a central element of their function and which contribute to the maritime character of the area.