
REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Subject: General Plan Land Use “Exercise”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Steering Committee will be divided into four groups of six people each to participate in an exercise related to the General Plan Map. The exercise will consider potential opportunities for Map changes, the criteria to be used for evaluating requests to change Map designations, and the boundary of “Downtown” San Rafael.

REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of the Group exercise is to solicit feedback on the existing General Plan Land Use Map, the criteria that should be used to evaluate proposed changes to the Map, and the potential boundaries for “Downtown” to be used in the General Plan and Precise Plan. The 24 Steering Committee members will be divided into four groups of six persons each for this exercise. Staff will move between groups to answer questions and assist as needed. Alternates who are present at the meeting may participate in this exercise and will be assigned to small groups.

Land Use Map

Each small group will be furnished with a poster-size General Plan Map of San Rafael, along with a Table that defines the Land Use Categories. Committee members will be asked to identify at least three places on the General Plan Map where they feel the existing designation should be revisited during the General Plan Update, what new designations might be considered in those areas, and why. Groups may identify more than three places, but should be prepared to identify their “top three” in any event. Dissenting viewpoints will be considered and should be recorded during this discussion.

Groups should spend about 15 minutes on this exercise.

Criteria for Considering Map Changes

Each small group will be asked to evaluate the following hypothetical scenario:

A property owner has approached the City with a request to change the General Plan designation of 123 Apple Street (not a real address) from Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential. There is no specific development proposed on the property at this time. The property is 5 acres, and includes one single family home built in 1930, as well as the remnants of a former orchard. It is surrounded by publicly-owned open space on two sides, single family homes on one side, and a two-story office building on the fourth side.

What are the factors that should be considered as the City evaluates this request? What data would you want to see before making your decision? *Groups should spend about 15 minutes on this exercise.*

Defining Downtown San Rafael

Each small group will be provided with a oversized map of Central San Rafael that shows:

- (a) The boundaries of the area covered by the 1993 Downtown San Rafael Vision Plan
- (b) The boundaries of the adopted Priority Development Area around the SMART station.

Committee members in each Group will be asked to collaboratively develop a boundary for “Downtown” that could be considered for use in the General Plan and Precise Plan. The boundary should reflect factors such as:

- Boundaries from prior plans and studies
- Existing land uses and neighborhood “edges”
- Opportunities for change and improvement
- Natural features and constraints
- Transportation features
- Zoning and General Plan designations

Groups should spend about 15 minutes on this exercise.

Reporting Out

At the start of the group exercise, each group should identify a “recorder” who will take notes and a team captain. Each team captain will be asked to provide a 3-4 minute summary to the full Committee at the end of the exercise.