

Agenda

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Wednesday, July 11, 2012; 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Volunteer Center, Guide Dogs for the Blind
350 Los Ranchitos Road



Desired Outcomes/Products

- Review public comments and staff responses to public draft
- Give staff direction on changes to document

I. Welcome 7:00

- Agenda Review
- Action on Meeting Notes
- Announcements
- Correspondence

II. Open Time 7:15

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on matters not on the agenda. Presentations are generally limited to TWO MINUTES.

III. Draft Plan Review 7:20

- Introduction
- Discussion of building height and density
 - Staff presentation
 - Public comment
 - Committee discussion and action
- Discussion of Christmas Tree lot
 - Staff presentation
 - Public comment
 - Committee discussion and action
- Discussion of affordable housing
 - Staff presentation
 - Public comment
 - Committee discussion and action
- Discussion of other suggested changes
 - Staff presentation
 - Public comment
 - Committee discussion and action
- Other items raised by committee

IV. Next Steps 8:30

- Set July 25 meeting agenda

V. Public Comment 8:45

VI. Meeting Evaluation 8:55



The meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. American Sign Language interpreters and assistive listening devices may be requested by calling (415) 485-3198 (TDD) or (415) 485-3067 (voice) at least 72 hours in advance. Copies of documents are available in accessible formats upon request. Public transportation is available through Golden Gate Transit, Line 45, 49 or 52. Paratransit is available by calling Whistlestop Wheels at (415) 454-0964. To allow individuals with environmental illness or multiple chemical sensitivity to attend the meeting/hearing, individuals are requested to refrain from wearing scented products.

VII. Closing

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 25
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
For more information, call 485-3076

9:00

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes: Wednesday, May 9, 2012; 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Guide Dogs for the Blind, 350 Los Ranchitos Rd.

Attendance

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee

Emily Dean	Rich McGrath	Roger Smith
Mike Fryer	Larry Paul	Jean Starkweather
Elissa Giambastiani	Kate Powers**	Tammy Taylor
Barbara Heller*	Jeff Schoppert	Craig Thomas Yates
Nicholas Kapas	Judy Schriebman*	

*Ex officio, non-voting member

**Ex officio alternate

Absent: Bob Huntsberry*, Casey Mazzoni, Brigitte Moran, Andrew Patterson, Gayle Theard

Observers: Bill Hale, Greg Brockbank, Greg Andrew, Stuart Shepard

Staff: Katie Korzun (Economic Development Coordinator, City of San Rafael), Rebecca Woodbury (Management Analyst, City of San Rafael), John Eells (Consultant to TAM)

Welcome, Announcements and Introductions

Co-chair Mike Fryer opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. noting a quorum present. He said the purpose of the meeting was to review and approve the Draft Plan for public review and to hear an update on the public review process.

Jeff Schoppert asked that the committee consider changing the date of the June meeting. Several committee members will be on vacation and there is concern over whether there will be a quorum. This item was added to the agenda after the item on the public review process.

Schoppert suggested language for page 2 of the minutes, adding a discussion about the committee's process for reviewing the Plan's recommendations. Jean Starkweather had two changes for the minutes, clarifying her comments regarding height east of the freeway as well as creek setbacks. With the suggested changes noted, Schoppert made a motion to approve the minutes, Starkweather seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Tammy Taylor said she will not be able to guarantee her attendance for the duration of the Committee due to work commitments. She asked the committee if they would prefer for her to resign or attend when she is able. The committee asked that attend when she is able.

Emily Dean announced that May is National Bike Month and Thursday, May 10 is Bike to Work Day. She also said that a recent study showed that a \$25 million federal grant to Marin County for pedestrian and bicycle improvements was deemed a success. Bicycle trips countywide increased by 64%.

Open Time

Fryer asked if any members of the public would like to speak on items not on the agenda. There were none.

Review Draft Plan

Katie Korzun said that staff and the consultants incorporated the changes from the last meeting. She asked the committee to direct staff if any changes were incorrect.

Emily Dean said that although there is a proposal to add sidewalks along Las Gallinas between Los Ranchitos and Merrydale, there is no discussion in the text about its impacts to parking. She suggested that a discussion be added or the sidewalk deleted.

Jeff Schoppert made note of three typos:

- Section 3.4.3: "... (each of which can accommodate at least two bicycles..."
- Section 4.3.5: "Exceptions or reductions are subject to review..."
- Section 5.3: "...increases to the City's affordable housing stock could..."

Schoppert also asked about the capitalization and definition of the term "Planning Area." Korzun concurred that it means the ½ mile radius around the station.

Schoppert asked about the suggestion in section 4.3.5 to require developers seeking parking reductions to periodically report the success of its parking reduction program. Jean Starkweather said she did not think that suggestion made sense. Larry Paul said that a conditional use permit granting a parking reduction could be revoked. Roger Smith said that the reporting requirement should be removed as it would only result in a layer of bureaucracy with no purpose. Nick Kapas said that information gained from the reporting requirement could help inform future decisions. Emily Dean concurred that the information would be helpful.

Public Comment: Greg Andrew said that without reporting, there will be no data to base decisions on. The information will be helpful for future decisions.

Nick Kapas made a motion to keep the language as stated. Elissa Giambastiani seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Public Comment: Greg Andrew asked for clarification regarding the 3-story height limit on Merrydale in Section 5.8.3. He asked if it also applied to the Northgate Storage, Public Storage, and Marin Ventures parcels.

Korzun said that the intent as staff interpreted it was that those three parcels could be higher due to their immediate proximity to the station. Dean said that since those properties border the Rafael Meadows neighborhood, they should be maintained at 3 stories. Schoppert suggested leaving the language as is and waiting for comments from Design Review Board and Planning Commission.

Korzun introduced the Implementation Chapter and explained the cost and priority columns in the table. She noted a typo:

- Number 4: "~~Improve access to Walter Place crossing from west side of Los Ranchitos Road by installing high-visibility crosswalk with flashing yellow beacons (HAWK signal or Rapid Flashing Beacon), advance yield lines and signage, a median pedestrian refuge, and ADA-compliant ramps on either end.~~"

Dean expressed concern that the cost for number 10, regarding the widening of Las Gallinas, seemed too low. Korzun said she would ask the consultants to confirm that recommendation.

Fryer asked for public comment. There was none.

Schoppert made a motion to approve the Plan with the recommended changes. Giambastiani seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Rebecca Woodbury said she would work with the consultants to make the suggested changes and email out the pages where changes were made. She will also upload the final version of the Draft Plan to www.cityofsanrafael.org/stationareaplans.

Public Review Process

Woodbury shared the schedule of community meetings for the Draft Plan. She asked members of the committee to attend the meetings in order to hear the comments from the meeting participants as well as help out with the presentation.

Woodbury explained the format for the next committee meeting. Staff would bring a summary of all comments and letters submitted. The committee would consider the comments and direct staff with any changes. Staff would then make changes and bring back a final Plan for the committee to review and approve at the following meeting.

June Meeting Change

The committee decided to cancel the June meeting due to concern about having a quorum present. They decided to review public comments at the regularly scheduled July 11 committee meeting and then hold a special meeting on July 25 to review and approve the Final Plan.

Public Comment

Greg Andrew acknowledged the milestone of approving the Draft Plan and commended the committee for their work. He asked whether Santa Venetia or Marin Lagoon had been contacted for a presentation of the Plan. Rich McGrath said he had contacted Santa Venetia HOA and Rebecca Woodbury said she would see if Marin Lagoon has an association.

Stuart Shepard thanked the committee for their hard work on the Plan.

Meeting Evaluation

+	-
Consistent public participation	

Closing

Fryer closed the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Draft Notes for 05/09 Meeting

Attendance

	2010			2011							2012											
	9/22	10/13	10/16	11/10	12/8	1/12	2/9	3/9	4/13	5/11	6/8	7/13	8/10	10/12	11/9	12/14	1/11	2/8	3/14	4/11	5/9	
Damon Connolly* (CC)	E	√	(tour-optional)	√	(Brockbank)	(Brockbank)	√	√	(Brockbank)	-	√	√	√	√	-	-	Reappointed					
Emily Dean	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Michael Fryer	√	E		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	
Elissa Giambastiani	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Barbara Heller* (CC)																	Appointed		-	√	E	√
Bob Huntsberry* (DRB)	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Nicholas Kapas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Stanton Klose* (GGBPAC)	√	√		√	-	-	√	-	√	E	Resigned											
Greg Knell	√	√		-	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	-	E	-	-	E	-	Resigned				
Klif Knoles	-	√		-	-	Resigned		-														
Marcus Lee	E	-		√		√	E	√	E	E	√	-	√	√	E	-	-	Resigned				
Preston McCoy* (BPAC)	(Powers)	-		√	√	-	√	√	√	√	-	(Powers)	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	(Powers)	(Powers)
Casey Mazzoni						Appointed		√	-	√	√	E	-	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	E
Rich McGrath	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Brigitte Moran	√	E		√	√	√	E	√	E	√	-	E	√	(Ann Hussman)	√	-	√	√	-	E	E	
Larry Paul* (PC)	√	-		-	-	E	√	√	E	(Wise)	-	-	√	√	-	√	√	-	E	√	√	
Andrew Patterson	√	√		√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	-	√	-	-	
Jeff Schoppert	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Judy Schriebman* (LGVSD)	√	E		√	-	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	(Loder)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Roger Smith	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√
Jean Starkweather	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	
Tammy Taylor	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Gayle Theard	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	√	E	-	-	-	-	√	E	-	
Craig Thomas Yates	√	-		E	√	-	√	-	√	-	-	-	√	√	√	-	√	-	E	√	√	

*Ex officio, non-voting member
E: excused
BPAC: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CC: City Council
DRB: Design Review Board
LGVSD: Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District

PC: Planning Commission
GGBPAC: Golden Gate Bicycle Pedestrian Committee

**DRAFT CIVIC CENTER STATION AREA PLAN
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

This is a compilation of all comments submitted by July 1 (via letter, email, and at meetings) on the Draft Plan. The organization making the comment is identified by the initials following the comment. Comments have been grouped by subject and numbered for reference. Staff's responses and suggestions are noted.

Major discussion items are in bold and color-coded as follows:

- Height and density (ID# 1 – 9) : Yellow
- Christmas Tree lot (ID# 10) : Green
- Affordable housing (ID# 11 – 13) : Blue

The following are a list of acronyms for organizations that submitted comments:

BOS : Board of Supervisors	DRB : Design Review Board	FSRN: Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods
GWC: Gallinas Watershed Council	LRNA : Los Ranchitos Neighborhood Association	LWV : League of Women Voters
MCBC: Marin County Bicycle Coalition	MEHC : Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative	NSRC : North San Rafael Collaborative
PC: Planning Commission	SRMIA : San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association	SSR : Sustainable San Rafael
SMNA : Santa Margarita Neighborhood Association	TAM: Transportation Authority of Marin	

ID#	Category	Comments Made by Public	Staff Response/Suggestions
<u>MAJOR DISCUSSION ITEMS</u>			
1	Height General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four stories is OK if correctly done (PC) • 4 stories is too tall (DRB) • 4 stories are questionable (LRNA) • Same comment as Downtown, 4 and 5 stories are too tall (DRB) • 5 stories is too tall (DRB) • 5 stories is too tall (LRNA) • Vertical plane is too tall (DRB) • Surprised at height, is out of character (DRB) • For height, need to look at site specific architecture (DRB) • Concerned about height and densities (PC) • Concerned that heights are out of context (FSRN) • We recommend height limits that protect the character of existing single-family neighborhoods. In some cases and in some locations buildings could be up to 5 stories, provided the developer offers 	See attached Height Discussion materials

		<p>public benefits such as affordable housing or creek restoration. (MEHC Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 4 or 5 story buildings in the neighborhoods near the station or adjacent to the creek. They will create a bleak, unaesthetic wall out of character with the surroundings. (GWC Letter) 	
2	Height Redwood Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 stories on Redwood Highway frontage is ok (NSRC) Nothing over 3 stories, including Redwood Highway (SRMIA) Don't allow 4 stories west of 101 and south of tracks (SRMIA) The Plan should recommend no taller than 3 story buildings along Redwood Highway. If there were 4 story buildings along Redwood, they would not be blocked by the buildings along Merrydale and they would still look down into our neighborhood. (SRMIA letter) 	See attached Height Discussion materials
3	Height Merrydale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question whether there was Committee consensus on Merrydale heights (NSRC) Maximum 3 stories on Merrydale for its entire length; 4 stories on Redwood (SRMIA) Consider 2 stories on Merrydale and 4 on Redwood Highway – problem is looking into backyards; home values will decrease (SRMIA) The Plan should recommend a maximum of 3 stories for buildings along both Merrydale Road and Redwood Highway. Taller buildings would look down on Rafael Meadows properties, adversely effecting privacy and property values. Currently the majority, the majority of buildings along Merrydale and Redwood Highway are 1- or 2-stories tall, with only two buildings being 3-stories tall. The goals of the Plan could still be met with buildings along both streets limited to no more than 3 stories. The Plan must not recommend 4 story buildings on the Marin Ventures, Public Storage, or Northgate Storage lots and it would be unacceptable if the Plan were to allow such massive structures. This would be the equivalent of constructing the Extended Stay Hotel (on E. Francisco Blvd.), the 33 North Building (between N. San Pedro and San Pablo Ave.), or the Whole Foods building (on DeLong in Novato) across the street from the single-story, residential properties along Las Flores Ave. or Corrillo Road in San Rafael Meadows. Such tall buildings would be completely out of character with the neighborhood and would destroy the privacy and values of those properties. No amount of design modifications would mitigate those impacts. When the Advisory Committee drafted its Land Use 	See attached Height Discussion materials

		<p>statement, the consensus was that all buildings along Merrydale should not be any more than 3-stories tall; there was no consensus for 4-story buildings at the Marin Ventures, Public Storage, or Northgate Storage lots; any inference to this should be removed from the Plan. (SRMIA letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.8.3: Tighten the language in this section to clarify that building heights for all properties along Merrydale Road should be limited to 3 stories, including the Marin Ventures and Public Storage parcels and also for Northgate Store (on the north side of the tracks). All three parcels are opposite homes in the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood and allowing 4 story buildings would loom over these homes, having an adverse effect on the character of the neighborhood. During the May meeting of the Civic Center Advisory Committee, City staff indicated that the language in the draft plan was meant to allow for up to 4 stories at these three parcels mentioned but there was not consensus amongst Committee members on this point. It is important that all of three parcels should be limited to no more than 3 stories for any future development, in order to protect the neighborhood. (NSRC Letter) • The plan should recommend that no more than a single-story building be allowed on the Dandy Market site on Merrydale Road. The existing, single story building backs up to the Rafael Meadows properties along Corrillo Road. A 2 or 3 story building would look down into the back yards of these properties. (SRMIA letter) • The Plan should recommend that no more than a 2 story building be allowed on the Casa de Rafael apartments parcel at 171 Merrydale. The existing 2 story building backs up to the Rafael meadows properties along Corrillo Drive and El Prado Ave. A 3 story building would adversely impact these properties. (SRMIA letter) 	
4	Height Northgate Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.9.4: Specify a 3-story building height limit for the Northgate Storage site, to prevent any taller buildings from bearing down on the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood, which is just across the railroad tracks. (NSRC Letter) • 4 stories on both storage lots and Marin Ventures is too high (NSRC) 	See attached Height Discussion materials
5	Height 5 stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density and heights are OK as proposed, but there may be opportunity for 5 stories at Northgate III and the Christmas Tree Lot as there are fewer privacy issues (PC) 	See attached Height Discussion materials

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan would allow buildings up to 5 stories east of Highway 101 in some cases. We support this but only with the provision for the public benefit of affordable housing and it should only be considered on a limited basis, after consideration of sensitivity to the adjacent areas. (NSRC Letter)Using the term “public benefit,” in this section is ok but given the long-term, land use implications of this Plan, this term should be very specifically defined to mean what the Advisory Committee intends it to mean, in order to limit future confusion over and potential misrepresentation of this term. (NSRC Letter) 	<p>Suggest: Section 5.7.3 pg. 60 Public benefit could be items such as <i>would be</i> additional affordable housing, additional creek improvements, public plazas, or other <i>substantial</i> amenities.</p>
6	Density General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density is fine (DRB) TOD takes a long time to happen; look how long it has taken BART, but helps transit succeed (PC) Let the market dictate demand for development; the market will drive intensity; zoning doesn’t mean development will actually happen (PC) Don’t forego commercial development if there is a market for it (PC) Opportunities for more intensity at Northgate III and Autodesk (PC) Developers need incentives (PC) Concerned about success of SMART – it needs intensification around stations to be successful (PC) Generally comfortable with proposed densities and heights, but it is important to have good design guidelines including step backs and articulation (PC) Success of vision is dependent on success of SMART; there is a symbiotic relationship (PC) Residential increases only is too restrictive (PC) Neighborhoods don’t need to be so concerned; City process (DRB, Planning Commission, etc ensure sensitivity to impacts, neighborhood concerns (PC) New units can go towards compliance with ABAG (FSRN) 	Comments noted.
7	Density Development Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSR strongly supports the heights and densities in the Plan, especially the increases in the immediate area of the SMART station. The suggested zoning changes are consistent with the original intent of designating this area as a Preferred Development Area, with increased densities in tandem with increased transit. The changes accomplish important implementation actions specified in the City’s Climate Change Action Plan, consistent with SB 375 and the 	Comment noted.

		<p>Sustainable Communities Strategies. They also make good common sense, backed by a thorough planning process, increasing the range of housing options in our community, reducing car dependence, and animating the station area with more people. (SSR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan does not provide any information that warrants the development intensity the Plan promotes. While we understand that the Plan is meant to enhance a transit-oriented community around the Civic Center station, there is no basis provided to support the level of increased density that could occur from the implementation of this Plan. What information is there that the San Rafael or Marin County population will grow to support the housing density proposed in the Plan? The Plan does not give any such information. The economy shows few signs of recovering to the level that would provide the demand for housing and retail in the Plan. Projections by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) have been questioned and debated and, unfortunately, may not be a reliable source of data for the Advisory Committee and City to rely on. As noted in this link to an April Marin IJ article: the Marin County Board of Supervisors recently questioned ABAGs job and housing forecasts and have asked for a peer review of those projections. This is hardly an endorsement for dramatically increasing housing densities. Aside from growth projections, where is the information that would support a flux of people who will actually move to within walking distance of the Civic Center station? Certainly there may be some but what information is there that there would be anything close to the numbers that the Plan seemingly anticipates? The Plans lack any of this basic information and as such the Plan may be fatally flawed. A wholesale evaluation of growth projections should be conducted and included in the Plan. The Plan itself presents a conflict regarding the development potential it seemingly promotes. (SRMIA letter) • Table 3 in the Plan indicates that there is a maximum capacity for 620 residential dwelling units that could be added in the entire Plan area. At the same time, the Plan recommends multi-story housing units be built throughout the area. If there were full build out, as proposed in the Plan, the number of housing units would likely far exceed maximum capacity available. The Plan does not provide a basis for this amount of housing development and it does not even analyze 	<p>The Plan does not propose any more development than that anticipated in General Plan 2020, and focuses that development around the Station. No change proposed.</p>
--	--	---	--

		<p>how many units could be built per the recommendations in the Plan. The Plan should provide this information and scale the development recommendations to fit within what might realistically be built over the next 25 years. While the Plan might still want to recommend housing in a variety of locations, the size and density of that housing should not overwhelm the capacity. (SRMIA letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 5.8.4: The recommendations for the Public Storage and Marin Ventures properties are much more specific and detailed than the Advisory Committee discussed during any of their meetings; these recommendations call for more intense development in FAR and density than the general guidelines discussed by or agreed to by the Advisory Committee; there is no basis for increasing the FAR and density above the highest limits of any parcel within the entire study area (higher than any indicated on Table 4). These parcels certainly have been a focus of discussions by the Advisory Committee but this recommendation should be modified to reflect the more general guidelines that the Committee has discussed and it should recognize the limits on development that would help to protect the character of the neighborhood. (NSRC Letter) Specific FAR and density on Marin Ventures and the storage lots is too specific; have general guidelines instead (NSRC) 	
8	Density Transit Oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 5.1: A fundamental component of the transit-oriented developed is stated as “sufficient densities to support transit,...” What does that mean and more specifically, how much density is that in the case of the Civic Center Station Area Plan? Is that even known? This component, as stated, is very broad and could open the door to densities that are far beyond what may actually be envisioned. This statement should be clarified, tempered, or more clearly articulated. Perhaps the paragraph that follows the statement and Section 5.2 is what is intended and could simply be referenced. (NSRC Letter) Section 5.1 what does “support transit mean”? (NSRC) 	The section referenced is a general description of transit oriented development and provides a context for the rest of the section. No change proposed.
9	Density Single family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect single-family neighborhoods (PC) This area has a lot of land use constraints (i.e. Civic Center, cemetery). There may be opportunities to increase densities in the single-family neighborhood near the station to allow for duplexes. (BOS) 	A primary consideration of the Plan was to retain the existing single family areas. No change proposed.
10	Christmas tree lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 5.7.3: It would be helpful to refer to the “vacant County site,” as the Christmas Tree Lot, which it is commonly known by. (NSRC 	Suggest: Section 5.7.3 pg. 60 ...the vacant County lot next to the Station <i>also known as the Christmas</i>

		<p>Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the constraint of the required County-wide vote for any development on the County Christmas Tree lot in the Plan (MEHC) Christmas tree is the elephant in the room. (LWV) County Christmas Tree lot is the prime site in the Planning Area for residential development (MEHC) The Plan should reflect the County’s Renaissance Plan which indicates the use of the Christmas Tree Lot for civic purposes or a farmer’s market. (BOS) There is the possibility of blending uses on the Christmas tree lot. It could accommodate residential as well as the County uses. (LWV) Remove showing or mentioning anything now or in the future about housing on the Christmas Tree lot (County property) from the SAP as it is a public facility now and planned to be so in the future. (County of Marin Letter) Section 5.4.7: The recommended uses and densities in section 5.7.4 on page 60 are not clear. Describe the restrictions on development on the Civic Center grounds; a countywide vote is required for any building larger than a storage shed. The Plan should recommend the City and County engage in planning for this site, which has a potential for residential use. (NSRC Letter) The recommended uses and densities in section 5.7.4 on page 60 are not clear. Describe the restrictions on development on the Civic Center grounds. (A countywide vote is required for any building larger than a storage shed.) The County should engage in planning for this site, which should be designated as mixed-income residential, with a high percentage of affordable units. (MEHC Letter) 	<p>tree lot, presents an opportunity....</p> <p>Suggest: pg.60 The Christmas tree lot is under County jurisdiction, <i>and in addition, any development that exceeds 250 sq .ft. in building area requires a two-thirds countywide vote.</i></p> <p>The plan specifically acknowledges the County plan and further states the Committee’s opinion on appropriate future use if the County were to change the proposed use.</p> <p>The densities referenced are the existing high density Zoning provisions. The Plan recommends that the densities be increased above these levels in later zoning change implementation actions. No change proposed. The County limitations are noted in the Suggested change noted above.</p>
11	Affordable Housing location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an opportunity for affordable housing (NSRC) Some sites in the area are especially good for Affordable Housing (MEHC) Explicitly include a policy endorsing Affordable Housing (MEHC) Mention that a development agreement with Northgate on Affordable Housing is in the works (MEHC) I object to placing affordable or other homes near rail or freeways or major roads. The adverse health impacts are well-documented. (Carolyn Lenert) 	<p>Section 5.3, pg. 54 identifies the Area’s Affordable housing potential and endorses the City policy on affordable housing. No change proposed.</p> <p>No proposal has been submitted to the City. No change proposed.</p> <p>Housing near freeways was previously discussed by the committee. No change proposed.</p>
12	Affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the current Affordable Housing policies (MEHC) 	<p>Suggest: Add to Section 5.3, pg. 54: The City has a</p>

	Housing Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include more details on Affordable Housing – the affordability levels, how Affordable Housing will be encouraged (MEHC) • Section 5.3: Expand this section. What are the City’s current requirements? The Civic Center Station area is especially appropriate for affordable housing because of its proximity to jobs, transit, and other services. (NSRC Letter) • Expand this section, 5.3 on page 54. What are the City’s current requirements? (MEHC Letter) 	<p>longstanding commitment to affordable housing as reflected in General Plan 2020’s <i>Housing Element and Section 14.16.030 Affordable Housing Requirements of the Zoning Ordinance</i>. Note – as this information is periodically updated as required by law, including it in the Plan would cause it to be rapidly outdated.</p>
13	Affordable Housing Amounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affordable housing sections are too weak; a default to the general plan is not enough (NSRC) • Encourage workforce housing throughout the area. Particularly appropriate locations are Northgate Mall and also the public storage and Marin Ventures sites, which should be designated for 50% affordable units, unless they are used for parking for the SMART station. (NSRC Letter) • Include an Overlay Zone where there can be no increases in density without an increase in Affordable Housing (MEHC) • The plan should establish goals and incentives for developing affordable housing, such as an overlay zone that permits an increase in density only when a minimum share is below market rate. Prioritize housing for households earning less than 65% of Area Median Income for Marin, which reflects the incomes of many employees working in and near the station planning area. Specify sources of funds for affordable housing. Retain existing affordable units even as they are improved. (NSRC Letter) • Encourage workforce housing throughout the area. Particularly appropriate locations are Northgate Mall and also the public storage and Marin Ventures sites, which should be designated for 50% affordable units, unless they are used for parking for the SMART station. (MEHC Letter) • The Civic Center Station area is especially appropriate for affordable housing because of its proximity to jobs, transit, and other services. The plan should establish goals and incentives for developing affordable housing, such as an overlay zone that permits an increase in density only when a minimum share is below market rate. Prioritize housing for households earning less than 65% of Area Median Income for Marin, which reflects the incomes of many employees working in 	<p>Visions and area plans should be consistent with General Plan 2020 to insure a consistent and equal treatment of City wide issues. The existing City wide affordability levels were set in the Housing Element after extensive technical analysis, and are periodically reviewed as required by state law. The Housing Element includes policies to retain affordable units. Affordability levels for both the Downtown and Civic Center Station Areas will be evaluated in that process; the analysis required is beyond the scope of this Plan. Overlay zones were considered in the last Housing Element update and were not identified as an implementation action. No change is proposed.</p>

		<p>and near the station planning area. Specify sources of funds for affordable housing. Retain existing affordable units even as they are improved. (MEHC Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the idea of “affordable-by-design” which usually means allowing smaller units (PC) 	Smaller unit sizes are allowed in existing regulations. No change proposed.
<u>OTHER ITEMS</u>			
14	Likes, Compliments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impressed with the Committee’s work (MEHC) Looks great (LWV) Thoughtful plan shows much effort by Committee (PC) Make no small plans (PC) Plan ably embraces goals of sustainability and TOD (SSR) Appreciate how the Plan emphasizes the objective of protecting and enhancing the residential neighborhoods around the station and this comes across repeatedly in the Plan. (SRMIA) Likes connectivity and complete street ideas (PC) Likes complete streets (PC) Supports complete streets (PC) Multi-use path is excellent idea (SMNA) Thoughtful building on the Promenade plan – good idea! (TLHOA) Supports extension of promenade (PC) I applaud all efforts to incorporate past planning such as the long-anticipated Promenade from the Terra Linda Recreation Center to the lagoon at the Civic Center. (Carolyn Lenert) 	Comments noted and compliments richly deserved by Committee.
15	General Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Plan is overall guiding document (PC) 	The Plan references and is consistent with General Plan 2020 provisions.
16	Bike Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike parking is important too. (LWV) Bike parking at station should be a priority 	SMART is providing 6 racks accommodating approximately 12 bikes and 8 bike lockers in the Station (Pg 32). No change proposed.
17	Bikepath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about the bikepath interface with North San Pedro freeway on/off ramps (PC) Civic Center Drive/Redwood Highway Class II: Between McInnis Parkway and Smith Ranch Road, the Bay Trail is pleased to see the SAP’s plans for a Class II bike lane. (Bay Trail Letter) 	Interface issues would be addressed in a specific project design. No change proposed. Comment noted.
18	Bikepath Class Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Center Drive: Class I from North San Pedro to McInnis Parkway. A multi-use path on Civic Center Drive meets the goals of the San 	The Plan is consistent with the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The BPMP states that

		<p>Rafael Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, the Bay Trail Plan and Guidelines, aligns with SMART’s overall plan for a 70-mile MUP, and is the best possible way to encourage SMART riders to access the Civic Center via non-motorized transportation. Please include a Class I facility in near term planning for the Civic Center Station. (Bay Trail Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCBC strongly recommends that instead of a Class II bike lane, the SAP propose a separated, multi-use pathway along North San Pedro from Civic Center Drive to Los Ranchitos Road, or at minimum, to Merrydale Drive. This would result in a continuous, separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway from Civic Center Drive to the west side of Highway 101, allowing for safe, convenient access from the Civic Center and SMART Station to the existing Puerto Suello Hill Pathway and the future SMART Pathway beginning at North San Pedro Drive/Los Ranchitos Road. If the pathway were extended from Civic Center Drive to Los Ranchitos Road, the result would be a continuous, completely-separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway loop which would essentially circle the SMART Station Planning Area and that would provide a safe connection to transit, shopping and residential areas located on both sides of Highway 101. (MCBC Letter) • MCBC strongly recommends that the SAP include recommendation of Class II bike lanes along North San Pedro Road from Civic Center Drive northward to Woodoaks Drive, allowing for safe passage from Venetia Valley to the SMART Station. At minimum, the SAP should propose Class II bike lanes from Civic Center Drive to Golf Avenue, as is proposed in the BPMP. (MCBC Letter) 	<p>bikepath classifications can be upgraded if actual construction design plans show that it is feasible. Stating specific community desires for upgrades can be included in a plan and be consistent with the BPMP. Suggest: Add to section 3.4: <i>When feasible and in alignment with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, upgrades to bicycle facilities are desirable. Class I facilities are desired on Civic Center Drive between North San Pedro and McInnis Parkway, and North San Pedro Road between Los Ranchitos Road and Civic Center Drive. Class II facilities are desired on North San Pedro Road between Civic Center Drive and Woodoaks Drive.</i></p>
19	Bikepath Merrydale Overcrossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the existing significance of Civic Center Drive, and the increased usage anticipated within this corridor once SMART is in operation, MCBC strongly recommends that instead of, or in addition to, Class II bike lanes, the SAP propose a separated multi-use pathway along Civic Center Drive from the Merrydale Overcrossing to North San Pedro Road in the near-term. This would meet the goals of the City’s BPMP and the Bay Trail Plan and Guidelines. It would also support the SAP’s goal to encourage non-motorized access to the SMART Station and would further contribute to the creation of a bicycle/pedestrian friendly environment and “sense of place” within the Plan area. (MCBC Letter) • MCBC recommends that a separated, multi-use pathway be proposed 	<p>The Plan includes a recommendation for the Promenade to extend from the Mall to the SMART station and Civic Center Drive via Merrydale Rd. Improvements to Civic Center Drive between McInnis Parkway and Merrydale Overcrossing are limited due to right-of-way constraints with Caltrans. Improvements to the Merrydale Overcrossing are severely constrained due to the width of the bridge. For the connection between the Mall and the train station, the Plan recommends directing bicyclists to use the Promenade. In general, substantial changes to the</p>

		<p>along the Merrydale Overcrossing. This Class I facility could then connect to the existing section of Promenade on Los Ranchitos (Class I multi-use pathway from Las Gallinas to the Merrydale Overcrossing), resulting in a continuous, separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway that serves to connect the SMART Station, the existing and proposed bicycle/pedestrian Promenades, and the Northgate Shopping Center, effectively closing the gap in Class I facilities in this area and creating a continuous multi-use pathway loop within an area that is already highly utilized by cyclists/pedestrians and will likely become more so once SMART is in operation. (MCBC Letter)</p>	<p>Bike and Ped plan are beyond the scope of the Station Plan. No change proposed.</p>
20	Bikepath Puerto Suello	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the obstacles identified above related to future bike/ped improvements along Merrydale Road, MCBC urges that the SAP include the proposal for a separated, multi-use pathway beginning at Puerto Suello Hill/Los Ranchitos Road, running through the canyon west of and parallel to Merrydale Road and connecting to the SMART Pathway at North San Pedro Drive/Los Ranchitos Road, as is proposed in the BPMP. The result would be a seamless, safe-and-separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway from Downtown San Rafael to Northern San Rafael, the SMART Station and Pathway, the Civic Center, and to commercial, shopping and residential areas located on both sides of Highway 101. (MCBC Letter) 	<p>The area referred to is unclear, and staff has requested a specific citation in the Bike and Ped Plan. A response will be developed before the meeting.</p>
21	Bus Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a missed opportunity for a bus connection at the station. A bus could exit 101 and cross the tracks at Merrydale to get back onto 101. This might be a better transfer point than the Downtown Transit Center. (BOS) Have City work with SMART to explore a transit (bus) only crossing of the rail tracks on the west side of the station platform (west of Highway 101) to connect Merrydale at the south side of the tracks with the street on the north in order to encourage a direct bus connection easily accessible from the freeway. (County of Marin Letter) Consider a Larkspur Ferry connection from Station via a direct express bus on the freeway. For the return have a bus only freeway entrance and exit at Frietas (SMNA) The term “bus hub” should not be used as that implies a greater 	<p>The main bus hub, train station and transfer point is the Downtown Transit Complex (Bettini Transit Center and Downtown San Rafael SMART station) which provides local and regional connections to multiple destinations. Vehicular crossings of Merrydale are inconsistent with the North San Rafael Vision. No change proposed.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Suggest: Throughout the document, change the</p>

		amount of bus service than is proposed for this area.	term “bus hub” to “transfer point.”
22	Bus Drop offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the Station will increase if bus and car drop off provided; should be close to Station if not inside station next to platform (TLHOA) • Increase quick connections like auto drop off areas (SMNA) • Only have a bus pull-out on Civic Center Drive as shown by SMART in their public presentation at the San Rafael Corporate Center around May 2010, not the complete turnaround as shown on the draft plan. (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>Cars can use the turn out area provided on Civic Center Drive. Additional drop off are shown at ends of Merrydale North and South; see figure 6. No change proposed.</p> <p>Suggest: Change graphics to show bus pull-out in place of complete turnaround. (This change was discussed with SMART)</p>
23	Bus School buses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic on San Pedro Road backs up in the a.m. peak beyond level of service FFF; this is not safe and improvements are not easy. A solution would include school buses to reduce parent drop off traffic (TLHOA) 	<p>School buses are under the jurisdiction of the School District and out of the scope of this Plan. No change proposed.</p>
24	Design Guidelines Endorsement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Guidelines are essential (PC) • The successful application of the new zoning will depend upon good architectural design, coupled with robust public improvements such as the proposed “complete street” treatment of Merrydale and natural enhancements of Las Gallinas Creek. The Plan suggests design guidelines for this area, which will go a long way towards calming the understandable concerns of residents of Rafael Meadows that additional development be appropriately scaled, detailed and buffered in relation to existing neighborhoods. The fact apartments of similar size already exist in the area, and are far from imposing upon the residences, gives confidence that these objectives can be achieved—especially with sensitive oversight by the Design Review Board and your Commission. (SSR) 	<p>Comments noted.</p>
25	Design Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design guidelines that protect views conflict with General Plan – we don’t protect private views (PC) 	<p>Suggest: Add to section 5.11.2 East of US 101 Area, second bullet, pg. 67 –... not block views <i>from public streets, parks and public pathways</i> whenever possible, and to provide views.... And on pg. 61 Preservation Consideration of views from hillside residences.</p>
26	Design Guidelines Redwood Highway Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A design guideline should be added to the Redwood Highway Area that indicates building heights and layouts should be designed to avoid people in these buildings from being able to look down into the private yards of adjacent neighborhood homes . (NSRC Letter) 	<p>Suggest: Add to Section 5.11.2. Merrydale Road, first bullet, pg. 76 – <i>Care should be taken to preserve the privacy of the rear yard areas of single family residences backing on to Merrydale.</i></p>
27	Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscaping guidelines should call for the preferred use of native 	<p>The landscaping guidelines refer to the public</p>

	Guidelines Landscaping	<p>plant species and they should specifically call for the use of palm trees and perhaps some other, sometimes popular exotics to be avoided. (NSRC Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area needs signature statement in the form of landscaping or buildings (PC) 	environment (street trees, sidewalks).. palm trees are not in the City street tree program. No change proposed.
28	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insure that there is flexibility in allowing trade offs to impacts on creeks and wetlands (PC) • Infill development has tradeoffs in terms of open space (PC) • Allow more flexibility in the language about restoring and protecting the environment to stay consistent with General Plan (PC) • Loosen info in plan to keep consistent with General Plan approach of evaluating trade offs (PC) • Section 5.10: The Natural Environment Actions are too general and seem unlikely to lead to any specific, on the ground, actions. The Plan should identify and recommend specific sites and habitats to be pursued for restoration or enhancement, all of which are habitats associated with Gallinas Creek and its tributaries, such as those depicted in the photos of the creek along Merrydale and the wetlands along McInnis Parkway and the train tracks. (NSRC Letter) • In section 5.10 on page 65, add the policy that there may be no filling or covering over of any creeks or wetlands in the area. Also specify the use of green building materials and energy efficiency measures. (NSRC Letter) • In section 5.10 on page 65, add the policy that there may be no filling or covering over of any creeks or wetlands in the area. Also specify the use of green building materials and energy efficiency measures. (MEHC Letter) • The Plan should also identify organizations for the City to partner with for environmental restoration, such as Marin County, the Friends of Gallinas Creek, and perhaps Marin Audubon and Marin Conservation League. The Plan should indicate that the City will take the lead in promoting environmental restoration, such as pursuing grants and other opportunities to fund projects. (NSRC Letter) • Recognize the watershed as a stakeholder in the redevelopment process and put Gallinas Creek distributaries on the maps. Include language about water quality protection, habitat restoration and resilience to sea level rise. (GWC Letter) 	This response addresses all the comments made in this section. Visions and area plans should be consistent with General Plan 2020 to insure a consistent and equal treatment of City wide issues. Provisions for flexibility, habitat protection, and restrictions on filling are addressed in the Conservation Element and in Zoning Ordinance Section 14.13. The use of green building materials and energy efficiency measures are addressed in the City's Climate Change Action plan and in the adopted green building ordinance. Runoff and impervious surfaces are Addressed in the Countywide MCSTOPP program. No changes proposed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in the plan, the desire to not increase square footage of impervious surfaces, by instead using materials and design that will not increase runoff. Plant additional native riparian vegetation around creek channels to absorb toxins before they flow out to the bay. Require that no increases in sediment from construction or post construction activities end up in the creek. (GWC Letter) 	
29	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diesel train fumes are a health risk for high density residential use near it (SMNA) • High density residential next to freeway has health risk due to freeway pollution (SMNA) • Need soundwalls along freeway to protect proposed residential development (TLHOA) 	SMART has evaluated the train exhaust and determined that there is no health risk. As projects are proposed, they will be subject to the provisions of the Noise Element and the Air and Water Quality Element of General Plan 2020, and mitigated is necessary.
30	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 – Implementation This chapter gives no indication of how the Land Use recommendations would be implemented. During Advisory Committee meetings, it has been indicated that this Plan would lead to zoning changes. The Plan needs to present information on the process of how recommendations will move forward and the role and authority of the City to implement the Plan. (NSRC Letter) • Bike/ped improvements should be priority (PC) • When will the sidewalks be built to reach the Civic Center from the train station? How will they be funded? (Carolyn Lenert) 	<p>Suggest: Add to section 6.2 pg. 75 – <i>Zoning changes and the associated CEQA review could be done collectively as a unit, or individually, as City priorities, as determined by the City Council, budget and staffing permits.</i></p> <p>This is reflected in the Implementation Section. The implementation chapter lists this as a near-term priority. Ultimately, improvements such as sidewalks are determined by funding and the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).</p>
31	Land Use Marin Ventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned above, the Plan does a good job of recognizing existing neighborhoods and expressing the desire to protect the neighborhoods. The Plan should also acknowledge those existing institutions that serve the community. Guide Dogs for the Blind and Marin Ventures are examples. Both facilities walk through Rafael Meadows and they are a part of the character of the neighborhood. The Marin Ventures facility serves a population that has found its location on Merrydale Road to be a very safe area and they would like to remain there. The Plan should support these institutions staying in the area and not be forced to relocate. (SRMIA letter) • Concerned that population served by Marin Ventures are not being served and will be impacted; want the population at Marin Ventures to remain here; rush hour traffic and additional development impacts on Marin Ventures population should be considered (SRMIA) 	No recommendations in the Plan can force any use to relocate. Any zoning changes made as a result of the Plan will allow property owners to develop differently, but will not mandate relocation. No change proposed.

32	Parking Residential uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High density housing occupants should not use SMART or on-street parking (SMNA) • Encouraging 4 stories of residential will make parking worse (SRMIA) • Require structured parking for residential not surface lots (SRMIA) • In addition, the Plan should recommend that parking structures should be considered for the second story of any building 2 or more stories tall. Constructing a parking structure on the second story of some buildings would still allow the property to offer train and residential serving retail on the first floor and reduce the demand for on street parking. (SRMIA letter) 	<p>Multi-family residential development is required to have on site parking and does not rely on street parking. Increasing densities and height will result in structured parking.</p> <p>Parking can be located on the ground floor behind a retail component on the street. Section 5.11.1 Ground Level Uses calls for active uses along the street and sidewalk. No change proposed.</p>
33	Parking Spillover into neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't think parking will be problematic; can't see people parking here to take train north (PC) • Not enough parking for SMART patrons (SMNA) • SMART has indicated that it will charge for parking. Free on-street public parking will be a threat to that revenue source. (BOS) • Concerned with SMART parking overflowing into residential neighborhoods (NSRC) • Increase parking (SMNA) • Park on Redwood Highway instead of pushing it into neighborhoods (SRMIA) • We are extremely concerned about the potential for spill-over parking in our neighborhood and it is clear that the Advisory Committee genuinely attempted to address this concern. We also realize that there are limited provisions the Plan can include to remedy spill-over parking. (SRMIA letter) • Permit parking is a bad idea (SRMIA) • We have close to 300 feet of frontage on Los Ranchitos and I see a sidewalk is proposed for our area. We are not in favor any parking along the proposed sidewalk if it is installed. This would be detrimental to the esthetics of our neighborhood and create even more traffic conditions to the all ready busy street. (Janet & Bob Phinney) 	<p>Keeping Station related parking out of residential neighborhoods was a major consideration by the Committee, and a multi-faceted parking approach was developed in the Plan. This includes: on street parking time limits, residential permit programs at the request of neighborhoods, the identification of 230 spaces in addition to the 130 spaces under consideration for the estimated 60 spaces that would be necessary, coordinated parking regulations among SMART, the County and the City, with annual monitoring by the City, identification of transit use incentives, and regulations for parking reductions. No change proposed.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The inclusion of on street would be studied in the design phase of any sidewalk project.</p>
34	Parking Storage lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea of a parking permit program is not appealing to the residents of San Rafael Meadows. We understand that the Plan states a permit program only be pursued if requested by the residents. (They suggest use of the Storage Lot as parking; see land use sections) (SRMIA letter) 	<p>SMART has planned the Civic Center as a destination station where train users come in from the north to work in the morning, following the existing commuting pattern. The Committee considered that the area around the Station should</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4.3.3 and Section 4.4: Include the self-storage lot (Public Storage) on Merrydale Road, south of the station, as an additional potential parking area for the station. (NSRC Letter) 	be an active, mixed use area rather than a parking lot. No change proposed.
35	Parking Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4.3.5: Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing developments. The draft plan describes good ideas such as shared and unbundled parking, but they would be allowed on a case-by-case basis, after discretionary review. This uncertainty is a real burden especially for affordable housing developers and would create a disincentive for investing in the area. The Plan should recommend more specific guidelines for implementing reduced parking measures and it should recommend the City develop an ordinance that gives clarity and certainty for when and how reduced parking requirements can be implemented. (NSRC Letter) Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing developments. The draft plan describes good ideas such as shared and unbundled parking, but they would be allowed on a case-by-case basis after discretionary review. This uncertainty is a real burden especially for affordable housing developers and would create a disincentive for investing in the area. The City should specify what parking requirements will be, and how they will apply to which below market rate levels. (MEHC Letter) 	<p>The Committee's position was that certainty can be provided by the developer's consideration and incorporation of parking reducing programs and design into their project proposals. No change proposed.</p> <p>The committee discussed parking requirements and decided to retain existing standards by right. No change proposed.</p>
36	Parking ADA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA accessible parking should be planned and included on the strip of City-owned land north of the tracks and west of Civic Center Drive in the amounts required by law, as identified in the SAP, since that would be the closest parking to the SMART station platform. (County of Marin Letter) 	This is recommended in the Plan. No changes proposed.
37	Parking SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If County provides any parking to SMART on County-owned property, then the County or SMART should charge for parking. Coordinate with City for parking plan on any City property or streets such as McInnis Parkway. (County of Marin Letter) 	SMART's parking policy is out of the project's scope. The Plan recommends that the County, SMART and City coordinate their parking management strategies. No changes proposed.
38	Pedestrian Complete streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make multi-use path as leafy green as possible to encourage its use (SMNA) We concur with the recommendations in the Plan for complete streets and bicycle and pedestrian access. (SRMIA) 	Street trees and other amenities are encouraged in the Section 5.11.3 Public Environment Design Pg. 69.
39	Pedestrian Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to Station by pedestrians, bikes, bus, and drop off (SMNA) Farmers Market at Civic Center is an amenity; increase access to it as 	The Plan improves pedestrian, bike and bus access throughout the Plan Area including the Farmers Market and the Station and provides drop off

		much as possible (SMNA)	access.
40	Sidewalks Los Ranchitos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Figure 8, the unincorporated section of Los Ranchitos Road, roughly from Glenside Way to Walter Place, is shown with proposed sidewalks on both sides of the road, in addition to a multiuse path that parallels the same stretch of road. The proposed sidewalk improvements are not part of the Marin County Unincorporated Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. In addition, the adjacent multi-use path would be able to serve pedestrians in the area. We recommend removing the proposed sidewalk along Los Ranchitos and showing connections to the multiuse path at North San Pedro Rd., Walter Place and the northern end of Circle Drive (where there is existing stop control intersection and transit stop). (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>Accessing the multi-use path will not be difficult from the road, as the path would be right up against the road along this segment and installing sidewalks may involve the removal of some trees.</p> <p>Suggest: Delete recommendation for sidewalks on this section, note in the text why none are recommended and amend Figure 8.</p>
41	Sidewalks Civic Center Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Figure 8, a proposed sidewalk is shown on the north side of Civic Center Drive adjacent to an existing multiuse path near the Lagoon shoreline. Although not on a County maintained road, it is unlikely that a sidewalk would be built adjacent to an existing multiuse path. A connection between Memorial Drive and Civic Center Drive intersection to the multiuse path is a more likely improvement scenario. (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>Accessing the multi-use path around the Lagoon is difficult to access from Civic Center Drive. No change proposed.</p>
42	Sidewalks Peter Behr Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because of the limited internal circulation patterns it is unlikely that sidewalks would be built on both sides of Peter Behr Drive between Civic Center Drive and Vera Schultz Dr. More than likely any sidewalk constructed would be along the Christmas Tree / General Services Building side of the road only (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>The recommendation for sidewalks on both sides of the street between Civic Center and Vera Schultz Drive merely closes gaps in the existing network. It would not preclude the solution suggested. No change proposed.</p>
43	Sidewalks Pilgrim Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing pathway improvements along Pilgrim Way are not shown on Figure 8. (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>Suggest: Amend Figure 8 to show improvements.</p>
44	Sidewalks Merrydale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure 8 indicates a sidewalk along the freeway between Merrydale Avenue Overcrossing and the relatively high speed of US 101 off ramp (with no stop control at the proposed pedestrian crossing). Although not in our jurisdiction, this scenario seems very unlikely and we would encourage contacting City of San Rafael Public Works to discuss. (County of Marin Letter) 	<p>This is an older version of the figure. This was corrected in the Public Draft.</p>
45	Pedestrian only crossing at Walter Place and west of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footpath at Corrillo/Walter Place – continue pedestrians ability to cross tracks (SRMIA) Explicitly state no vehicle crossing at Merrydale or Walter Place; peds and bikes only (SRMIA) 	<p>Suggest: pg.28 – Add sentence to the end of section on Walter Place: <i>Maintain the Walter Place crossing of the tracks as pedestrian and bicycles only, with no auto traffic.</i></p>

	Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We request that the Plan specifically state that there should not be a vehicle crossing of train tracks at Merrydale Road or at Walter Place. While the Plan describes the difficulties in securing a pedestrian and bicycle crossing at Merrydale, this is a 25-year Plan and future opinions of track crossings could change. There needs to be security that there will never be any vehicle crossings of the tracks as this would dramatically and adversely impact the neighborhood. This restriction is included in the North San Rafael Vision and it is important to reinforce it in this Plan. (SRMIA letter) Section 3.3.2 and Section 3.7: For the Walter Place description, add a statement that Walter Place should only be enhanced for bicycle and pedestrian access and should not be developed as a vehicular connection between Las Gallinas and Los Ranchitos Road (crossing the railroad tracks). Similarly, for the Station West Side Crossing description, add a statement to clarify that the proposed at-grade crossing at the west end of the station is intended to only be a pedestrian and bicycle crossing and not a vehicular crossing of the tracks (not a vehicular extension of Merrydale Road across the tracks). (NSRC Letter) Must have an at grade pedestrian crossing of the tracks at the station (LRNA) 	<p>Suggest: pg. 28 – Add sentence to the end of the second paragraph; <i>Consistent with the Vision of North San Rafael, terminate Merrydale Road at the tracks with no thru auto access.</i></p> <p>Suggest: pg.28 ...this Plan strongly endorses the construction of a <i>pedestrian and bicycle</i> crossing on the west end of the Civic Center Station...</p>
46	Safety at Pedestrian crossing west of Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about safety at the pedestrian crossing west of station (PC) Safe pedestrian access will require fences and security at crossings; concerned about pedestrian crossing and access on west side due of people rushing to catch trains (PC) Concurs with concerns about pedestrian crossing and access from west of station (PC) Not as concerned about safety at proposed pedestrian crossing west of platform because train will be stopped at station (PC) 	Pg. 28 Station West Side Crossing discusses the lights and gates that would be required by Federal and state agencies for an at-grade crossing. The pedestrian only path on the south of the tracks offers a route to Civic center Drive and the protected crossing at the street. No change proposed.
47	Public Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a notable absence of public spaces in the Plan. A park-like area or plaza for community gathering immediately east and south of the SMART Station would create a focal point, as well as increased public identity and amenity, easing the perception of increased densities in the Merrydale area. Such a space would also reinforce the concept of a transit village, anchored by the station and connected to the larger community by the convergence of 	<p>Suggest: section 5.11.3 Public Environment Design pg. 69 <u>Public Spaces</u> <i>Public spaces in the form of small plazas or community gathering spaces should be well lit and located in areas that maximize visibility and access.</i> <u>Informal Gathering Places</u></p>

		<p>thematically-landscaped multi-use pathways along the North San Rafael Promenade, SMART right-of-way and “complete street” treatment of Merrydale. Such a network of public spaces is key to reclaiming this auto-dominated landscape for human use and establishing a strong community identity throughout the area. (SSR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan lacks ‘sense of place’ like a park or plaza to be used by neighborhoods (PC) • Public spaces are missing; there is no place to mill about or hang out (DRB) • Want to see parks for children in residential development (TLHOA) • Minimize plazas – proximity to freeway makes the area unpleasant; may not be an enjoyable place to hang out; question how much use it will get (PC) • Public space should be minimal, small (PC) • Public space should be small, maybe just seating at a cafe, Civic Center Lagoon and Oak Plaza are nearby, well used public spaces. (PC) 	<p><i>Restaurants, cafes, and other commercial establishments are encouraged to provide outdoor seating.</i></p>
48	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will growth in a small area mean an increase in crime? (TLHOA letter) • Residential development can upgrade the area (TLHOA) • The Station Plan should address crime concerns from a transit hub that may have no station security, routine pedestrian traffic, and infill housing units with parking garages/alleyways. Some members fear the area will become a slum instead of vitalized. (TLHOA letter) 	<p>SMART will provide security at the Station. Safety considerations are part of all project reviews for new development.</p>
49	Sea level Rise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan defers the very real fact of sea level rise to a reference in the CCAP to “monitor sea level rise.” This is inadequate. Planning for this area needs to consider both long and short-term inevitabilities, including increased flooding and potential private maintenance of levees. These concerns should be clearly noted in the body of the Plan. (SSR) • Section 5.7: It may be worth noting the FEMA flood zoning for this East of US 101 Area, especially in the context of future sea level rise (which is mentioned in Section 5.10.1). (NSRC Letter) • Consider sea-level rise (FSRN) 	<p>The impacts of sea level rise are potentially relevant to a large area of San Rafael and the County and were addressed in the City’s Climate Change Action plan (CCAP). Actions that are being taken include planning for shoreline defense, developing a program for levee analysis, participation in the County wide vulnerability assessment. No change proposed.</p>
50	Shuttle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the text on shuttles – it seems too definitive (NSRC) • Interested in shuttles to move people (NSRC) • Shuttles are important to move people in to Station. Employers could have their own shuttles. (LWV) • Allow for private shuttles for business (Kaiser especially) to take 	<p>Suggest: Section 3.5.2 pg. 36 – Add sentence to first paragraph: <i>The proposed SMART shuttle service is contingent on funding and service demand.</i></p>

		<p>employees to Station (TLHOA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a map of the shuttle routes; they are crucial (MEHC) • Proper loading facilities for shuttles are important (PC) 	The Plan supports and allows for public and private shuttles and includes a map of proposed shuttle routes as Figure 12. No change proposed.
51	Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Station Plan should address traffic concerns such that level of service of nearby intersections should remain at the level they are now and that safety of the at grade crossings will be addressed for all users (pedestrians, bicycles, cars and trains). Some members fear increased traffic will compound an already bad problem at Civic Center Drive and North San Pedro Road (TLHOA email) • Additional development will make the traffic situation infeasible (TLHOA email) • How will growth affect Speeding & Traffic in the area? (TLHOA email) • Traffic from new residential will all exit the same way – is not logical (SRMIA) 	The Plan does not propose that development exceed the amounts that have been assumed in the approved traffic improvements of General Plan 2020. As individual development projects are proposed, they will be subject to the City’s development review process that includes an analysis of specific project impacts on intersection operations, and the implementation of mitigation measures. No change proposed.
52	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-use the existing commercial structures for residential (MEHC) 	Suggest: Add to section 5.6 item 2 <i>The conversion of existing commercial buildings to residential uses could also increase residential uses.</i>
53	Miscellaneous “transitioned”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please find another word, other than “transitioned” in the last line of the vision statement. The area is already enjoyable and doesn’t need to be “transitioned” into that. Perhaps it would be best to say “enhanced.” (SRMIA letter) • Agrees with the word change in the vision requested by Rafael Meadows (PC) 	Suggest: pg 15 - The changes made to this neighborhood center around North San Rafael’s new train center have transitioned the area into an exceptionally <i>made it an even more enjoyable place.</i>
54	Miscellaneous Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “remnant creek” to “creek” (LRNA) • The Plan describes the section of the creek and a drainageway easement/parking strip along Merrydale as a buffer between the San Rafael meadows neighborhood and buildings along Merrydale (see Section 5.8.1). The Creek and drainage easement are both narrow and really do not provide any buffer so please remove this statement. (SRMIA letter) 	Suggest : Pg 61 A remnant <i>branch of the Gallinas Creek south fork</i> and parking strip on the west side of Merrydale Road partially buffer <i>separate</i>
55	Miscellaneous SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.1.2: Please indicate the hours of operation of the SMART train schedule, if known. (NSRC Letter) 	Suggest: <i>At this time, the hours have not been set, but are generally anticipated to be between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. weekdays during morning and evening peak periods, with one midday service. Four trains are expected to run on weekends.</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I object to 18th Century technology (heavy-diesel fuelled engines 	Comments noted.

		<p>pulling imported passenger cars) through our beautiful neighborhoods and sensitive wetlands. (Carolyn Lenert)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I object to any form of maintenance or repair facility in Marin County. This function should be centralized and provided elsewhere. (Carolyn Lenert) • I do support lightweight, driverless, solar-powered on-demand 20-passenger cars that do not block street traffic for loading and unloading, see www.cybertran.com. (Carolyn Lenert) 	
56	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.2: Clarify the distinction between the City and SMART jurisdictions, for planning and implementation of train services and for coverage of this Plan. (NSRC Letter) 	Suggest: <i>SMART will plan and operate the train and construct the adjacent multi-use path. Public improvements, such as sidewalks, in the surrounding area are under City or County jurisdiction.</i>
57	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.5: Please elaborate on what, if any, authority does the Joint Project Team have in relation to this Plan? Is it simply an information-sharing, coordination group or will the City look for any approval from this Team before moving forward with the Plan; will this Team have any ability to modify the Plan? (NSRC Letter) 	Suggest: <i>add to section 1.5 - among the partner agencies during the plan development process.</i>
58	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 3 is not very clear; please clarify what the numbers in the table are meant to represent. (NSRC Letter) 	Suggest: <i>Add to Section 5.4 pg. 54 - ...shown in Table 3. traffic mitigations over those identified in General Plan 2020 are not proposed by this Plan, to the total amount of development assumed will not exceed the General Plan assumptions in Table 3.</i>
59	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.5: Please clarify if the allowable densities in Table 4 are specific to the Study Area or if these are zoning designations that are applied City-wide. (NSRC Letter) 	Suggest: <i>Add to Section 5.5 pg. 54 - ...zoning regulations and the General Plan throughout the City including the Study Area.</i>
60	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.3: Does Guide Dogs and Mt. Olivet really pose any greater barrier to circulation than any other private property in the area? Also, what “future town center” is being referred to here? Where will this center be located? (NSRC Letter) 	<p>The only properties between the Mall and the Station are the cemetery and Guide Dogs.</p> <p>Suggest: <i>Delete future town center.</i></p>
61	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn’t accept premise that residents in area will use train; more likely that people will commute in for existing jobs (PC) 	SMART is assuming this will be a destination Station accessing existing jobs.
62	Miscellaneous Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus people to access site from Civic Center Drive; concentrate development and parking opportunities on this side as well; make it a transit place (PC) • Agrees with suggestion of access and development concentration on east side but don’t prohibit access on the west (PC) 	SMART has designed the station to be primarily accessed from the east side with the initial patron parking area. Pedestrian access is encouraged from the west.

63	Miscellaneous Station Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move Station out from under the Freeway to the east (SMNA) • I do not understand how a passenger “station” under a freeway can be kept safe, cleaned or maintained. (Carolyn Lenert) • This station location is along a creekbed, across from a wetland and is historically subject to flooding. Watershed impacts aside, this location may not be seismically safe. (Carolyn Lenert) 	Comments noted.
64	Miscellaneous Green Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builders should have photovoltaic panels on roofs for energy generation (LRNA) • The proposed projects must be Green certified and locally-sourced and produced. (Carolyn Lenert) 	Beyond the scope of the plan. No change proposed.
65	Miscellaneous Labels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure 2: Label Merrydale Road on the site plan. (NSRC Letter) • Figures 5, 6, and 7: Label Merrydale Road, Merrydale Overcrossing, Civic Center Drive, and the MUP on these site plans, as appropriate. (NSRC Letter) 	Comment noted.
66	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Figure 17, why does the northern-most portion of the East of US 101 Area not extend up to the ½ mile radius line, to the north of the medical offices? (NSRC Letter) 	Because of the slope, the area in question was less suitable for TOD.
67	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.9: The descriptions of existing conditions and zoning should also mention the single-family neighborhoods encompassed within this Northgate portion of the Study Area. (NSRC Letter) 	The focus of the description was on the commercial portion of Northgate. No change proposed.
68	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.11: The Plan should provide clarity on the recommendation of setbacks. It would be helpful to give more information why large setbacks are undesirable. There are some seemingly conflicting statements about setbacks that should be addressed; Section 5.8 calls for setbacks while Section 5.11 indicates setbacks should be modest or even minimal. (NSRC Letter) 	Section 5.11.1 includes general transit oriented guidelines, and the setbacks referenced are setbacks from the street.
69	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 5.12: Modify this summary of recommendations as needed to incorporate changes in the Plan reflecting the comments made above. (NSRC Letter) 	A complete edit of the document will occur after Committee direction is given.
70	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning for more office space at the Civic Center Station fails to recognize that there is a glut on the market now and for the foreseeable future. (Carolyn Lenert) 	The Plan recommends the exploration of zoning changes to increase residential opportunities in the area. There are no recommendations for increases in office. No change proposed.
71	Miscellaneous Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing built near the station needs to be selected for quality, including public spaces; respect for and integration with (rather than imposition on) the natural environment; and needs to be such that the residents of that housing are safe and well protected from the 	The City’s current development review process addresses these concerns. No change proposed.

		<p>traffic noise and fumes endemic to that area. They also need to be near to necessary essential services or have additional good public transportation to those services. (GWC Letter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support housing development near Northgate Mall and Northgate 3, as the most advantageous areas, both for people who will live there and for merchants who will thrive on the increase in demand for their services. The Civic Center Station would be within walking distance from these areas along the proposed extension of the Promenade. (GWC Letter) 	Comment noted.
72	Miscellaneous Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees, fines or stormwater taxes for new developments could help fund protections to the watershed and financial participation of the County's Watershed Program for Gallinas Creek. (GWC Letter) 	Comment noted.

Changes requested by the Committee at the May meeting:

- Section 3.4.3: "... (each of which can accommodate at least two bicycles..."
- Section 4.3.5: "Exceptions or reductions are subject to review..."
- Section 5.3: "...increases to the City's affordable housing stock could..."
- Implementation Plan, number 4: "- Improve access to Walter Place crossing from west side of Los Ranchitos Road by installing high-visibility crosswalk with flashing yellow beacons (HAWK signal or Rapid Flashing Beacon), advance yield lines and signage, a median pedestrian refuge, and ADA-compliant ramps on either end."

Height Discussion

The Draft Plan describes the proposed height changes in text but does not contain an exhibit showing the changes. This has caused some confusion, especially in the Redwood Highway Area. Staff recommends that an exhibit be included that clarifies the Committees intent. Following is the current Draft Plan text; information on existing building heights in the area; 3 alternatives on the Redwood Highway Area; and a base map for sketching other alternatives.

Draft Plan Text

The Draft Plan height text recommendations are summarized on pgs. 72 and 73, and are restated here:

East of Highway 101

- On development sites close to the station... increase height limits to 4 stories for residential and mixed-use development only, subject to design requirements. Allow an additional story (for a total of 5) for developments that propose a significant benefit or amenity in the planning area.

Redwood Highway

- Increase height limits on Redwood Highway to 4 stories where residential is constructed over ground floor retail.

Northgate Area

- Amend the General Plan and zoning for Northgate III to allow 4 stories for residential over retail uses.
- Amend the General Plan and zoning to allow height increases to 5 stories for residential development at Northgate Mall.

Height Measurements

The Plan describes heights in stories; the Zoning Ordinance uses feet.

In general 3 stories = 36 ft. 4 stories = 48 ft. and 5 stories = 60 feet.

Macy's = 57 ft., Sears = 54 ft. Mervyn's = 43, Auto Desk = 38 ft. and Embassy Suites = 57 ft.

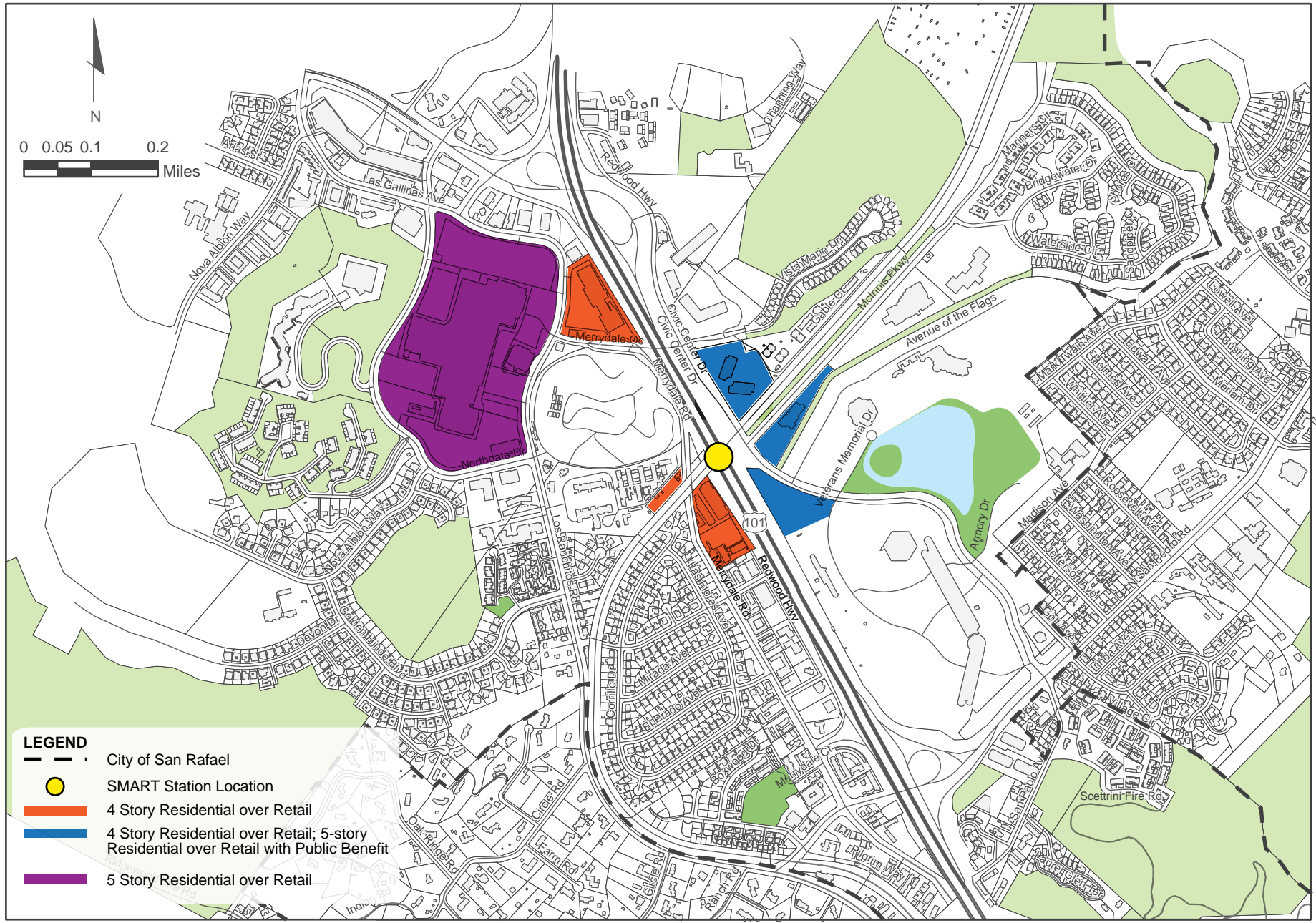
Outside the Downtown area of the City, the height limit is generally 36 ft.

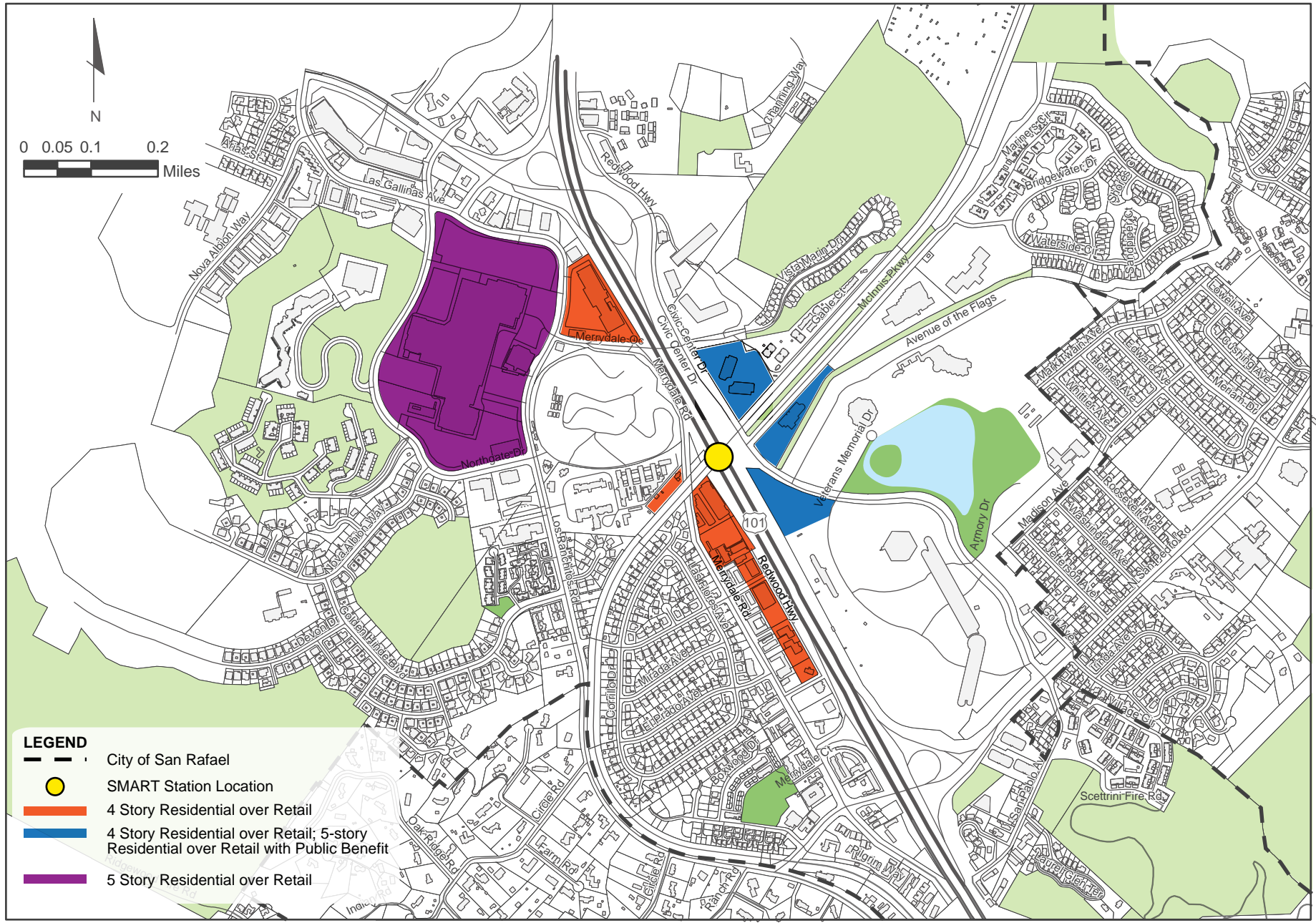
Alternatives

Alternative One has 4 story residential over retail for all of the storage lot and Marin Ventures parcels and extends from Redwood Highway to Merrydale Road.

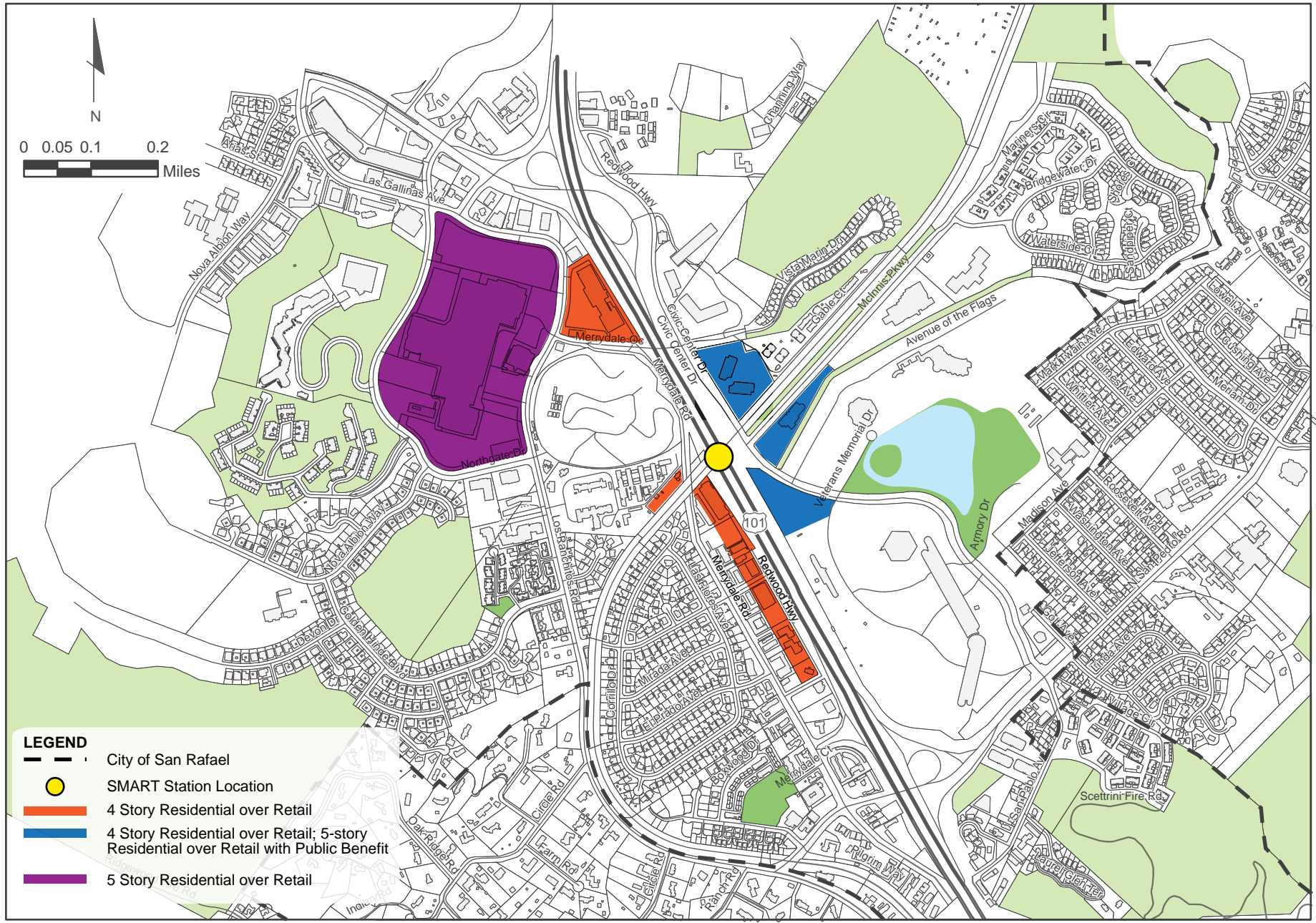
Alternative Two is Alternative One with the extension of 4 story residential over retail down the Redwood Highway frontage. Note that several of these lots extend from Redwood Highway to Merrydale, so the 4 story height provision would apply to only part of the lot.

Alternative Three has the 4 story height provision on just the Redwood Highway frontage and would apply to only part of the storage lot, Marin Ventures and the lots which extend from Redwood to Merrydale.










- LEGEND**
- City of San Rafael
 - SMART Station Location
 - 4 Story Residential over Retail
 - 4 Story Residential over Retail; 5-story Residential over Retail with Public Benefit
 - 5 Story Residential over Retail



- LEGEND**
- City of San Rafael
 - SMART Station Location
 - 4 Story Residential over Retail
 - 4 Story Residential over Retail; 5-story Residential over Retail with Public Benefit
 - 5 Story Residential over Retail



- LEGEND**
-  City of San Rafael
 -  SMART Station Location
 -  4 Story Residential over Retail
 -  4 Story Residential over Retail; 5-story Residential over Retail with Public Benefit
 -  5 Story Residential over Retail

Appendix

Public comments submitted for Draft Civic Center Station Area Plan

1. San Francisco Bay Trail (letter)
2. Santa Margarita Neighborhood Association (community meeting)
3. Terra Linda Homeowners Association (community meeting)
4. Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative (community meeting)
5. Terra Linda Homeowners Association (email)
6. North San Rafael Collaborative (community meeting)
7. San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association (community meeting)
8. San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association (letter)
9. Design Review Board (community meeting)
10. Los Ranchitos Neighborhood Association (community meeting)
11. North San Rafael Collaborative (letter)
12. League of Women Voters (community meeting)
13. Board of Supervisors (community meeting)
14. Planning Commission (community meeting)
15. County of Marin (letter)
16. Carolyn Lenert (email)
17. Sustainable San Rafael (letter)
18. Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative (letter)
19. Marin Bicycle Coalition (letter)
20. Janet and Bob Phinney (email)
21. Gallinas Watershed Council (letter)



May 15, 2012

Rebecca Woodbury
Management Analyst
City of San Rafael
P.O. Box 151560
1400 Fifth Avenue, Room 203
San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

Subject: San Rafael Civic Center Station Area Plan

The Bay Trail Project is a nonprofit organization administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) that plans, promotes and advocates for the implementation of a continuous 500-mile bicycling and hiking path around San Francisco Bay. When complete, the trail will pass through 47 cities, all nine Bay Area counties, and cross seven toll bridges. To date, slightly more than half the length of the Bay Trail alignment has been developed. 36 of Marin's 95 miles of Bay Trail are complete. Over the past decade, ABAG's Bay Trail project has provided the City of San Rafael with \$688,000 in grant funds for planning, design, and construction of this important regional trail system.

The Bay Trail and SMART Civic Center Station Area

Near the San Rafael SMART Civic Center Station, the Bay Trail alignment is on North San Pedro Road, Civic Center Drive/Redwood Highway, and McInnis Parkway. An existing multi-use path (MUP) currently exists on McInnis Parkway, and a Bay Trail grant is providing assistance to SMART for final design of the MUP heading north across Las Gallinas Creek.

While the Bay Trail is mentioned in passing in the Civic Center Station Area Plan, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight desired conditions in the study area. As shown on the attached map, we would like to see the following improvements incorporated into the Plan:

1. Civic Center Drive: Class I from North San Pedro to McInnis Parkway

A multi-use path on Civic Center Drive meets the goals of the San Rafael Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, the Bay Trail Plan and Guidelines, aligns with SMART's overall plan for a 70-mile MUP, and is the best possible way to encourage SMART riders

to access the Civic Center via non-motorized transportation. Please include a Class I facility in near term planning for the Civic Center Station.

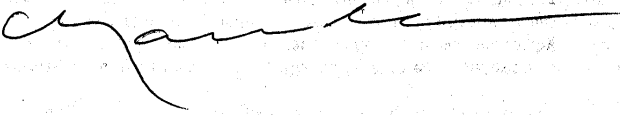
2. **Civic Center Drive/Redwood Highway Class II:** Between McInnis Parkway and Smith Ranch Road, the Bay Trail is pleased to see the SAP's plans for a Class II bike lane.

All of the documents referenced section 1.4 "Relationship to Other Plans" illustrate a strong desire by the community for the completion of a bicycle and pedestrian pathway in this area—an important part of the larger North-South Greenway as well as the regional San Francisco Bay Trail. In future drafts of the document, it would be helpful to include the actual station on the figures, as well as the location of SMART's MUP and how the City's proposed bike and pedestrian facilities will link up with this important new infrastructure. For ease of reference, street names should also be included on figures.

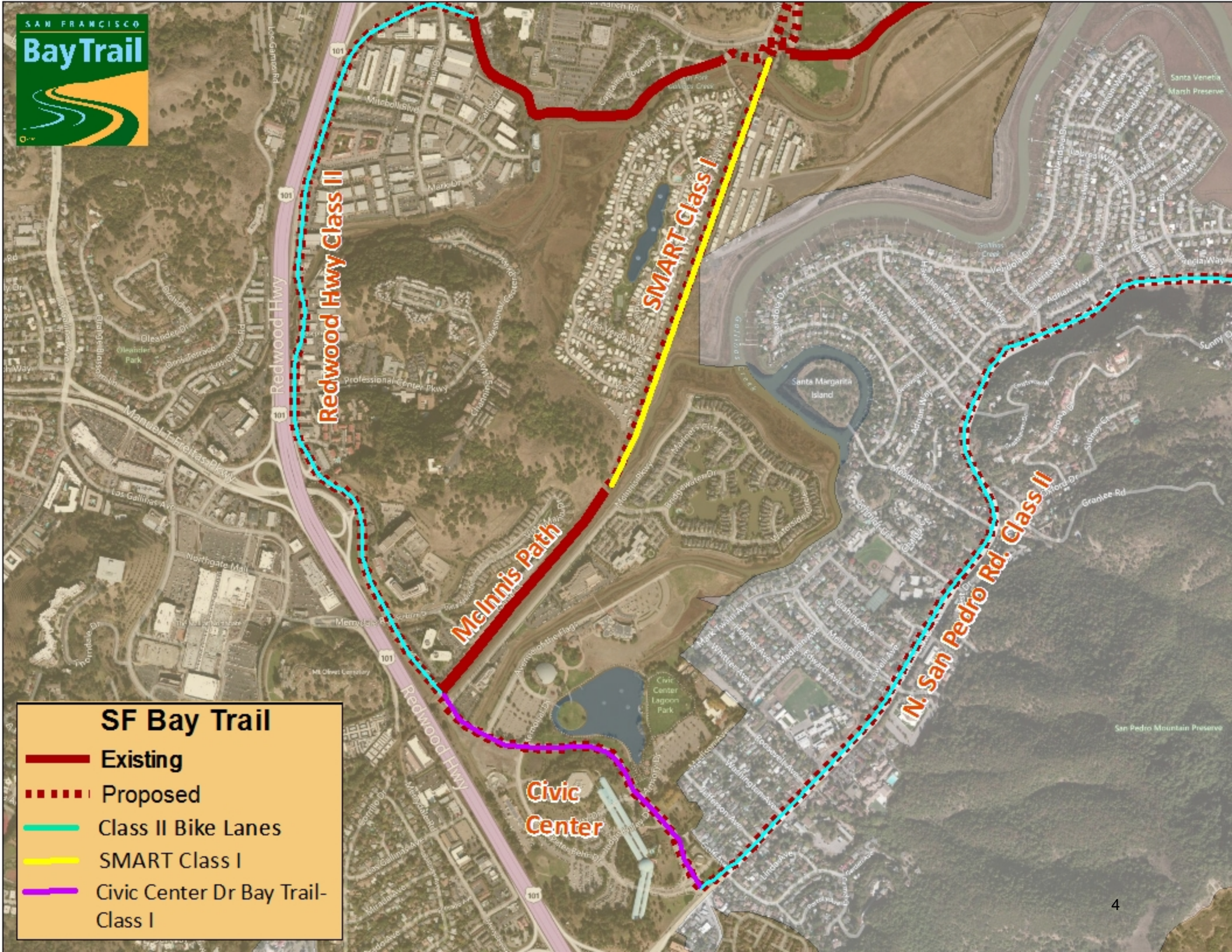
Thank you for considering our comments on this process. A Class I path on Civic Center Drive may be eligible for Bay Trail grant funds. Encouraging train riders to access the station and surrounding workplaces and communities by means other than private vehicle will not only alleviate some of the parking need, but will also create the vitality the City and its residents are looking for in the Civic Center Station Area.

If you have any questions regarding the San Francisco Bay Trail, please do not hesitate to call me at (510) 464-7909 or e-mail me at maureeng@abag.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Maureen Gaffney
Bay Trail Planner



Redwood Hwy Class II

SMART Class I

Melnnis Path

N. San Pedro Rd. Class II

Civic Center

SF Bay Trail

- Existing
- Proposed
- Class II Bike Lanes
- SMART Class I
- Civic Center Dr Bay Trail-Class I

Santa Margarita Neighborhood Assoc. (SMNA)
May 16

- High density housing occupants should not use SMART or on-street parking
- Not enough parking for SMART patrons
- Multi-use path is excellent idea
- Make multi-use path as leafy green as possible to encourage its use
- Farmers Market at Civic Center is an amenity; increase access to it as much as possible
- Diesel train fumes are a health risk for high density residential use near it
- High density residential next to freeway has health risk due to freeway pollution
- Increase access to Station by pedestrians, bikes, bus, and drop off and reduce need for parking
- Move Station out from under the Freeway to the east.
- Increase quick connections like auto drop off areas
- Increase parking
- Consider a Larkspur Ferry connection from Station via a direct express bus on the freeway. For the return have a bus only freeway entrance and exit at Frijoles

Terra Linda Home Owners Association (TLHOA)
May 17

- Need soundwalls along freeway to protect proposed residential development
- Residential development can upgrade the area
- Residential development could become blighted
- Allow for private shuttles for business (Kaiser especially) to take employees to Station
- Use of the Station will increase if bus and car drop off provided; should be close to Station if not inside station next to platform
- Traffic on San Pedro Road backs up in the a.m. peak beyond level of service FFF; this is not safe and improvements are not easy. A solution would include school buses to reduce parent drop off traffic
- Additional development will make the traffic situation infeasible.
- Don't see the connection of the viability of SMART to additional development
- Want to see parks for children in residential development
- Thoughtful building on the Promenade plan – good idea!

Marin Environmental and Housing Collaborative (MEHC)
May 21

- County Christmas Tree lot is the prime site in the Planning Area for residential development
- List the constraint of the required County-wide vote for any development on the County Christmas Tree lot in the Plan
- Impressed with the Committee's work
- Strengthen the Affordable Housing Section by:
 - Explaining the current policies
 - Explicitly include a policy endorsing Affordable Housing
 - Some sites in the area are especially good for affordable housing
 - Include an Overlay Zone where there can be no increases in density without an increase in Affordable Housing
 - Include more details on Affordable Housing – the affordability levels, how Affordable Housing will be encouraged
 - Re-use the existing commercial structures for residential
- Mention that a development agreement with Northgate on Affordable Housing is in the works
- Include a map of the shuttle routes; they are crucial

From: Reuel Brady [1hero1@terralindahoa.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2012 10:05 AM
To: Rebecca Woodbury
Cc: coleman.susan@comcast.net; murray.craig@comcast.net; beautifulbugs@att.net;
sfischer_94903@comcast.net
Subject: Draft Civic Center Station Area Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

Rebecca,

Thank you for arranging our presentation last week. I have two items I would like to pass on to be included with the items recorded at the meeting. These items (Traffic & Crime) are the two major concerns within the TLHOA and should be evaluated with any proposed development. These items may be included in the many page document, but I didn't hear them directly mentioned at the meeting.

How will growth affect Speeding & Traffic in the area?

The Station Plan should address traffic concerns such that level of service of nearby intersections should remain at the level they are now and that safety of the at grade crossings will be addressed for all users (pedestrians, bicycles, cars and trains). Some members fear increased traffic will compound an already bad problem at Civic Center Drive and North San Pedro Road.

Will growth in a small area mean an increase in crime?

The Station Plan should address crime concerns from a transit hub that may have no station security, routine pedestrian traffic, and infill housing units with parking garages/alleyways. Some members fear the area will become a slum instead of vitalized.

Reuel Brady
Terra Linda Homeowner's Association President
P.O. Box 6405
San Rafael, CA 94903

North San Rafael Collaborative (NSRC)
May 23

- Concerned with SMART parking overflowing into residential neighborhoods
- Interested in shuttles to move people
- This opportunity for affordable housing
- Look at the text on shuttles – it seems too definitive
- 4 stories on both the storage lots and Marin Ventures is too high
- Question is there was Committee consensus on Merrydale heights
- 4 stories on Redwood Highway frontage is ok
- The Public Storage and other storage lots should be SMART parking lots
- The affordable housing sections are too weak; a default to the general plan is not enough
- Specific FAR and density on Marin Ventures and the storage lots is too specific; have general guidelines instead
- Section 5.1 what does “support transit mean”?

San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association (SRMIA)
May 29

- Footpath at Corrillo – continue pedestrians ability to cross tracks
- Permit parking is a bad idea
- Park on Redwood Highway instead of pushing it into neighborhoods
- Place a parking garage on east side of freeway and/or at the north end of the Christmas tree lot
- There is less of a need to travel north than to come south so don't see the need to construct residential especially at 4 stories
- Encouraging 4 stories of residential will make parking worse
- Require structured parking for residential not surface lots
- Don't allow 4 stories west of 101 south of tracks
- Existing apartments and amount of development is sufficient; adding housing and people is too tight
- Maximum 3 stories on Merrydale for its entire length; 4 stores on Redwood
- Consider 2 stories on Merrydale and 4 on Redwood Highway – problem is looking into backyards; home values will decrease
- Traffic from new residential will all exist the same way – is not logical
- Explicitly state no vehicle crossing at Merrydale or Walter Place; peds and bikes only
- Nothing over 3 stories, including Redwood Highway
- Concerned that population served by Marin Ventures are not being served and will be impacted; want the population at Marin Ventures to remain here; rush hour traffic and additional development impacts on Marin Ventures population should be considered

San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association



June 5, 2012

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
c/o Rebecca Woodbury, Management Analyst
City of San Rafael
P.O. Box 151560
San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

Re: Draft Civic Center Station Area Plan

Dear Civic Center Station Area Advisory Committee,

The San Rafael Meadows Improvement Association (SRMIA) is pleased to submit comments on the Draft Civic Center Station Area Plan. In addition to being fortunate to have had Meadows resident Emily Davis on the Advisory Committee, residents Gregory Andrew and Stuart Shepherd have participated in the public process of developing the Plan. On May 29th, we had an excellent meeting at Marin Ventures where Katie Korzun, Rebecca Woodbury, and Emily Dean present the draft Plan. The 20+ residents who attended the meeting appreciated being provided a thorough review of the draft Plan and the opportunity ask questions and voice their opinions and concerns about the Plan.

On behalf of the SRMIA, please accept these comments on the Draft Plan.

General Impression of the Draft Plan

We appreciate how the Plan emphasizes the objective of protecting and enhancing the residential neighborhoods around the station and this comes across repeatedly in the Plan. It appears that the Advisory Committee generally shares a similar vision for the area as the residents of San Rafael Meadows. We want to ensure that the Plan doesn't lead to undesired effects.

Our concerns about the Draft Plan are focused on three issues: intensity of development; parking; and building heights. Our suggestion is to temper the recommendations in the Plan that will achieve the vision in the Plan and reduce potential adverse impacts to our neighborhood and property values.

Vision Statement

Please find another word, other than "transitioned" in the last line of the vision statement. The area is already enjoyable and doesn't need to be "transitioned" into that. Perhaps it would be best to say "enhanced."

Access

We concur with the recommendations in the Plan for complete streets and bicycle and pedestrian access.

We request that the Plan specifically state that there should not be a vehicle crossing of train tracks at Merrydale Road or at Walter Place. While the Plan describes the difficulties in securing a pedestrian and bicycle crossing at Merrydale, this is a 25-year Plan and future opinions of track crossings could change. There needs to be security that there will never be any vehicle crossings of the tracks as this would dramatically and adversely impact the neighborhood. This restriction is included in the North San Rafael Vision and it is important to reinforce it in this Plan.

Parking

The Plan should include the Public Storage lot, at the end of Merrydale Road, as a potential parking area for the station. We are extremely concerned about the potential for spill-over parking in our neighborhood and it is clear that the Advisory Committee genuinely attempted to address this concern. We also realize that there are limited provisions the Plan can include to remedy spill-over parking. The idea of a parking permit program is not appealing to the residents of San Rafael Meadows. We understand that the Plan states a permit program only be pursued if requested by the residents. However, the alternative of allowing parking at the Public Storage lot has been suggested and may be a more feasible solution. People who want to access the station from the southbound lane of Highway 101 will most likely seek out parking from Merrydale, after exiting the highway, and a parking area at the Public Storage lot would provide that parking, a stone's throw from the station.

In addition, the Plan should recommend that parking structures should be considered for the second story of any building 2 or more stories tall. Constructing a parking structure on the second story of some buildings would still allow the property to offer train and residential serving retail on the first floor and reduce the demand for on street parking.

Basis for the Development Intensity

The Plan does not provide any information that warrants the development intensity the Plan promotes. While we understand that the Plan is meant to enhance a transit-oriented community around the Civic Center station, there is no basis provided to support the level of increased density that could occur from the implementation of this Plan. What information is there that the San Rafael or Marin County population will grow to support the housing density proposed in the Plan? The Plan does not give any such information. The economy shows few signs of recovering to the level that would provide the demand for housing and retail in the Plan. Projections by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) have been questioned and debated and, unfortunately, may not be a reliable source of data for the Advisory Committee and City to rely on. As noted in this link to an April Marin IJ article:

http://www.marinij.com/novato/ci_20443173/marin-county-queries-abag-jobs-housing-projections

the Marin County Board of Supervisors recently questioned ABAGs job and housing forecasts and have asked for a peer review of those projections. This is hardly an

endorsement for dramatically increasing housing densities. Aside from growth projections, where is the information that would support a flux of people who will actually move to within walking distance of the Civic Center station? Certainly there may be some but what information is there that there would be anything close to the numbers that the Plan seemingly anticipates? The Plans lack any of this basic information and as such the Plan may be fatally flawed. A wholesale evaluation of growth projections should be conducted and included in the Plan.

The Plan itself presents a conflict regarding the development potential it seemingly promotes. Table 3 in the Plan indicates that there is a maximum capacity for 620 residential dwelling units that could be added in the entire Plan area. At the same time, the Plan recommends multi-story housing units be built throughout the area. If there were full build out, as proposed in the Plan, the number of housing units would likely far exceed maximum capacity available. The Plan does not provide a basis for this amount of housing development and it does not even analyze how many units could be built per the recommendations in the Plan. The Plan should provide this information and scale the development recommendations to fit within what might realistically be built over the next 25 years. While the Plan might still want to recommend housing in a variety of locations, the size and density of that housing should not overwhelm the capacity.

As mentioned above, the Plan does a good job of recognizing existing neighborhoods and expressing the desire to protect the neighborhoods. The Plan should also acknowledge those existing institutions that serve the community. Guide Dogs for the Blind and Marin Ventures are examples. Both facilities walk through Rafael Meadows and they are a part of the character of the neighborhood. The Marin Ventures facility serves a population that has found its location on Merrydale Road to be a very safe area and they would like to remain there. The Plan should support these institutions staying in the area and not be forced to relocate.

Building Heights

The Plan should recommend a maximum of 3 stories for buildings along both Merrydale Road and Redwood Highway. Taller buildings would look down on Rafael Meadows properties, adversely effecting privacy and property values. Currently the majority, the majority of buildings along Merrydale and Redwood Highway are 1- or 2-stories tall, with only two buildings being 3-stories tall. The goals of the Plan could still be met with buildings along both streets limited to no more than 3 stories.

The Plan must not recommend 4 story buildings on the Marin Ventures, Public Storage, or Northgate Storage lots and it would be unacceptable if the Plan were to allow such massive structures. This would be the equivalent of constructing the Extended Stay Hotel (on E. Francisco Blvd.), the 33 North Building (between N. San Pedro and San Pablo Ave.), or the Whole Foods building (on DeLong in Novato) across the street from the single-story, residential properties along Las Flores Ave. or Corrillo Road in San Rafael Meadows. Such tall buildings would be completely out of character with the neighborhood and would destroy the privacy and values of those properties. No amount of design modifications would mitigate those impacts. When the Advisory Committee drafted its Land Use statement, the consensus was that all buildings along Merrydale should not be any more than 3-stories tall; there was no consensus for 4-story buildings at the Marin Ventures, Public Storage, or Northgate Storage lots; any inference to this should be removed from the Plan.

The Plan should recommend that no more than a single-story building be allowed on the Danny Market site on Merrydale Road. The existing, single-story building backs up to the Rafael Meadows properties along Las Flores Ave. A 2- or 3-story building would look down into the back yards of these properties.

The Plan should recommend that no more than a 2-story building be allowed on the Casa de Rafael apartments parcel at 171 Merrydale Road. The existing 2-story building backs up to the Rafael Meadows properties along Corrillo Drive and El Prado Ave. A 3-story building would adversely impact these residences.

The Plan should recommend no taller than 3-story buildings along Redwood Highway. If there were 4-story buildings along Redwood, they would not be blocked by the buildings along Merrydale and they would still look down onto our neighborhood.

The Plan describes the section of creek and a drainage easement/parking strip along Merrydale Road as a buffer between the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood and buildings along Merrydale (see Section 5.8.1). The creek and drainage easement are both narrow and really do not provide any buffer so please remove this statement.

We are attaching several photographs to show the perspective of constructing 4-story buildings along Redwood Highway or at the Public Storage, Marin Ventures, or Northgate Storage parcels on Merrydale. In addition is a photo of the obvious impact to privacy that residential properties on San Pedro Road have experienced from the 4-story 33 North building. The comparison photos were selected to be as close to scale and vantage point to one another as possible. They provide a visual representation of the impacts that would result from 4-story buildings in our neighborhood.

Thank you for giving these comments consideration and please include this letter as an attachment to the final Plan, to retain our comments for future reference. We appreciate the process and your own time and effort that has gone into preparing this Plan. We look forward to continuing to engage with the Advisory Committee and City on this Plan as it moves to conclusion.

Sincerely,



Scott Urquhart,
SRMIA President

cc: San Rafael City Council
San Rafael Planning Commission
San Rafael Design Review Board

encl.

**Building Height Comparison – Comparing a 4-story building to a parcel on Redwood Highway
Note the sidewalks show that the two photos are of a similar perspective of the buildings**



1-story Hudson Design building on Redwood Highway



4-story Extended Stay hotel, on East Francisco, San Rafael

Building Height Comparison & Impacts – Superimposed 4-story building indicating that a 4-story building on Redwood Highway would likely rise above Merrydale Road buildings and be visible to San Rafael Meadows



2-story apartment building along Merrydale Road



4-story Whole Foods building, Novato, in background, rising above the Marin Color building in the foreground

Building Height Comparison & Impacts – Superimposed 4-story building onto the Public Storage parcel, showing the perspective and impact to a residential home in San Rafael Meadows



Rafael Meadows home back yard on Las Flores, across from the Public Storage parcel



Public Storage building on Merrydale Road



4-story, 33 North residential property on San Pablo Ave., San Rafael

Building Height Comparison & Impacts – Superimposed 4-story building onto the Marin Ventures parcel, showing the perspective and impact to a residential home in San Rafael Meadows



Marin Ventures building on Merrydale Road

4-story Extended Stay hotel building

Rafael Meadows home, on Las Flores, across from the Marin Ventures parcel

Building Height Comparison – Superimposed 4-story building onto the Northgate Storage parcel on Merrydale Road (North) and across the train tracks from the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood

Note: Both photos were taken from approximately the same distance from the buildings



**Northgate Storage parcel, on Merrydale Road (north),
across the train tracks from Rafael Meadows;**

4-story Whole Foods building, Novato

tracks in foreground, Guide Dogs for the Blind building in background

Building Height Impacts – Photo of the 4-story 33 North residential building, San Pablo Ave., San Rafael, showing the residential homes (on San Pablo Ave.) in the foreground and the obvious impacts to privacy of those homes



Design Review Board (DRB)
June 5

- Same comment as Downtown, 4 and 5 stories are too tall
- Density is fine
- Suggest “hub” as alternate to “Bus Hub”
- 5 stories is too tall
- Vertical plan is too tall
- Appreciate bike and parking recommendations
- Surprised at height, is out of character
- Public spaces are missing; there is no place to mill about or hang out
- 4 stories is too tall
- For height, need to look at site specific architecture

Los Ranchitos Neighborhood Association (LRNA)
June 7

- 5 stories is too tall
- 4 stories are questionable
- Must have an at grade pedestrian crossing of the tracks at the station
- Builders should have photovoltaic panels on roofs for energy generation
- Changes “remnant creek” to “creek”



To: Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
cc: San Rafael City Council; Planning Commission; and Design Review Board
From: North San Rafael Collaborative
Marge Macris, Mill Valley, Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative
Elaine Lyford-Nojima, Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative
Stuart Shepherd, Flood Zone 6, San Rafael
Gregory Andrew, 213 Las Gallinas Ave., San Rafael
Paul Burks, 574 Woodbine Dr., San Rafael
Date: Draft June 11, 2012
Re: Comments on the Draft Civic Center Station Area Plan

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the May 2012 public review draft of the Civic Center Station Area Plan. The report incorporates many improved policies, especially for protection of existing neighborhoods, natural resources, bicycle and pedestrian access, parking, and land use. We appreciate that the Advisory Committee has taken into consideration the recommendations that we have previously submitting, in our December 2011 and March 2012 letters. It is clear that public input has been given serious consideration by the Advisory Committee and City, through the two-year process that went into developing the Draft Plan.

Following are comment on the Draft Plan, along with additional recommendations that we believe will further strengthen the Plan.

General Comment

The Draft Plan sets out a good vision for the Civic Center Station area. The focus on pedestrian and bicycle access lays out a very user-friendly system for local access around the area. The Plan needs to provide much more specific guidance to promote affordable housing and environmental enhancement. Further coordination with the County and SMART is needed.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Section 1.1.2:

- Please indicate the hours of operation of the SMART train schedule, if known.

Section 1.2:

- Clarify the distinction between the City and SMART jurisdictions, for planning and implementation of train services and for coverage of this Plan.

Section 1.5:

- Please elaborate on what, if any, authority does the Joint Project Team have in relation to this Plan? Is it simply an information-sharing, coordination group or will the City look for any approval from this Team before moving forward with the Plan; will this Team have any ability to modify the Plan?

Figure 2:

- Label Merrydale Road on the site plan.

Section 1.3:

- Does Guide Dogs and Mt. Olivet really pose any greater barrier to circulation than any other private property in the area?
- Also, what “future town center” is being referred to here? Where will this center be located?

Chapter 3 – Station Access and Connectivity

Figures 5, 6, and 7:

- Label Merrydale Road, Merrydale Overcrossing, Civic Center Drive, and the MUP on these site plans, as appropriate.

Section 3.3.2 and Section 3.7:

- For the Walter Place description, add a statement that Walter Place should only be enhanced for bicycle and pedestrian access and should not be developed as a vehicular connection between Las Gallinas and Los Ranchitos Road (crossing the railroad tracks). Similarly, for the Station West Side Crossing description, add a statement to clarify that the proposed at-grade crossing at the west end of the station is intended to only be a pedestrian and bicycle crossing and not a vehicular crossing of the tracks (not a vehicular extension of Merrydale Road across the tracks).

Chapter 4 - Parking

Section 4.3.3 and Section 4.4:

- Include the self-storage lot (Public Storage) on Merrydale Road, south of the station, as an additional potential parking area for the station.

Section 4.3.5:

- Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing developments. The draft plan describes good ideas such as shared and unbundled parking, but they would be allowed on a case-by-case basis, after discretionary review. This uncertainty is a real burden especially for affordable housing developers and would create a disincentive for investing in the area. The Plan should recommend more specific guidelines for implementing reduced parking measures and it should recommend the City develop an ordinance that gives clarity and certainty for when and how reduced parking requirements can be implemented.

Chapter 5 – Land Use and Urban Design

Section 5.1:

- A fundamental component of the transit-oriented developed is stated as “sufficient densities to support transit,…” What does that mean and more specifically, how much density is that in the case of the Civic Center Station Area Plan? Is that even known? This component, as stated, is very broad and could open the door to densities that are far beyond what may actually be envisioned. This statement should be clarified, tempered, or more clearly articulated. Perhaps the paragraph that follows the statement and Section 5.2 is what is intended and could simply be referenced.

Section 5.3:

- Expand this section. What are the City’s current requirements? The Civic Center Station area is especially appropriate for affordable housing because of its proximity to jobs, transit, and other services. The plan should establish goals and incentives for developing affordable housing, such as an overlay zone that permits an increase in density only when a minimum

share is below market rate. Prioritize housing for households earning less than 65% of Area Median Income for Marin, which reflects the incomes of many employees working in and near the station planning area. Specify sources of funds for affordable housing. Retain existing affordable units even as they are improved.

- Encourage workforce housing throughout the area. Particularly appropriate locations are Northgate Mall and also the public storage and Marin Ventures sites, which should be designated for 50% affordable units, unless they are used for parking for the SMART station.

Section 5.4:

- Table 3 is not very clear; please clarify what the numbers in the table are meant to represent.

Section 5.4.7:

- The recommended uses and densities in section 5.7.4 on page 60 are not clear. Describe the restrictions on development on the Civic Center grounds; a countywide vote is required for any building larger than a storage shed. The Plan should recommend the City and County engage in planning for this site, which has a potential for residential use.

Section 5.5:

- Please clarify if the allowable densities in Table 4 are specific to the Study Area or if these are zoning designations that are applied City-wide.

Section 5.6:

- Consideration #4 has a typo with the word maintain used twice.
- In Figure 17, why does the northern-most portion of the East of US 101 Area not extend up to the ½ mile radius line, to the north of the medical offices?

Section 5.7:

- It may be worth noting the FEMA flood zoning for this East of US 101 Area, especially in the context of future sea level rise (which is mentioned in Section 5.10.1).

Section 5.7.3:

- It would be helpful to refer to the “vacant County site,” as the Christmas Tree Lot, which it is commonly known by.
- Using the term “public benefit,” in this section is ok but given the long-term, land use implications of this Plan, this term should be very specifically defined to mean what the Advisory Committee intends it to mean, in order to limit future confusion over and potential misrepresentation of this term.
- The plan would allow buildings up to 5 stories east of Highway 101 in some cases. We support this but only with the provision for the public benefit of affordable housing and it should only be considered on a limited basis, after consideration of sensitivity to the adjacent areas.

Section 5.8.3:

- Tighten the language in this section to clarify that building heights for all properties along Merrydale Road should be limited to 3 stories, including the Marin Ventures and Public Storage parcels and also for Northgate Store (on the north side of the tracks). All three parcels are opposite homes in the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood and allowing 4 story buildings would loom over these homes, having an adverse effect on the character of the neighborhood. During the May meeting of the Civic Center Advisory Committee, City staff indicated that the language in the draft plan was meant to allow for up to 4 stories at these three parcels

mentioned but there was not consensus amongst Committee members on this point. It is important that all of three parcels should be limited to no more than 3 stories for any future development, in order to protect the neighborhood.

Section 5.8.4:

- The recommendations for the Public Storage and Marin Ventures properties are much more specific and detailed than the Advisory Committee discussed during any of their meetings; these recommendations call for more intense development in FAR and density than the general guidelines discussed by or agreed to by the Advisory Committee; there is no basis for increasing the FAR and density above the highest limits of any parcel within the entire study area (higher than any indicated on Table 4). These parcels certainly have been a focus of discussions by the Advisory Committee but this recommendation should be modified to reflect the more general guidelines that the Committee has discussed and it should recognize the limits on development that would help to protect the character of the neighborhood.

Section 5.9:

- The descriptions of existing conditions and zoning should also mention the single-family neighborhoods encompassed within this Northgate portion of the Study Area.

Section 5.9.4:

- Specify a 3-story building height limit for the Northgate Storage site, to prevent any taller buildings from bearing down on the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood, which is just across the railroad tracks.

Section 5.10:

- The Natural Environment Actions are too general and seem unlikely to lead to any specific, on the ground, actions. The Plan should identify and recommend specific sites and habitats to be pursued for restoration or enhancement, all of which are habitats associated with Gallinas Creek and its tributaries, such as those depicted in the photos of the creek along Merrydale and the wetlands along McInnis Parkway and the train tracks.
- In section 5.10 on page 65, add the policy that there may be no filling or covering over of any creeks or wetlands in the area. Also specify the use of green building materials and energy efficiency measures.
- The Plan should also identify organizations for the City to partner with for environmental restoration, such as Marin County, the Friends of Gallinas Creek, and perhaps Marin Audubon and Marin Conservation League. The Plan should indicate that the City will take the lead in promoting environmental restoration, such as pursuing grants and other opportunities to fund projects.

Section 5.11:

- The Plan should provide clarity on the recommendation of setbacks. It would be helpful to give more information why large setbacks are undesirable. There are some seemingly conflicting statements about setbacks that should be addressed; Section 5.8 calls for setbacks while Section 5.11 indicates setbacks should be modest or even minimal.
- A design guideline should be added to the Redwood Highway Area that indicates building heights and layouts should be designed to avoid people in these buildings from being able to look down into the private yards of adjacent neighborhood homes.

- The landscaping guidelines should call for the preferred use of native plant species and they should specifically call for the use of palm trees and perhaps some other, sometimes popular exotics to be avoided.

Section 5.12:

- Modify this summary of recommendations as needed to incorporate changes in the Plan reflecting the comments made above.

Chapter 6 – Implementation

- This chapter gives no indication of how the Land Use recommendations would be implemented. During Advisory Committee meetings, it has been indicated that this Plan would lead to zoning changes. The Plan needs to present information on the process of how recommendations will move forward and the role and authority of the City to implement the Plan.

We appreciate the Committee's consideration of these recommendations and we look forward to continuing to work with you on the completion of the Civic Center Station Area Plan.

Thank you,

**League of Women Voters
June 12**

- Looks great
- Christmas tree is the elephant in the room.
- There is the possibility of blending uses on the Christmas tree lot. It could accommodate residential as well as the County uses.
- Shuttles are important to move people in to Station. Employers could have their own shuttles.
- Bike parking is important too.

County Board of Supervisors (BOS)
June 12

- The Plan should reflect the County's Renaissance Plan which indicates the use of the Christmas Tree Lot for civic purposes or a farmer's market.
- There is a missed opportunity for a bus connection at the station. A bus could exit 101 and cross the tracks at Merrydale to get back onto 101. This might be a better transfer point than the Downtown Transit Center.
- This area has a lot of land use constraints (i.e. Civic Center, cemetery). There may be opportunities to increase densities in the single-family neighborhood near the station to allow for duplexes.
- SMART has indicated that it will charge for parking. Free on-street public parking will be a threat to that revenue source.

Planning Commission (PC)
June 12

Robertson

- Let the market dictate demand for development; the market will drive intensity; zoning doesn't mean development will actually happen
- Minimize plazas – proximity to freeway makes the area unpleasant; may not be an enjoyable place to hang out; question how much use it will get
- Don't forego commercial development if there is a market for it
- Density and heights are OK as proposed, but there may be opportunity for 5 stories at Northgate III and the Christmas Tree Lot as there are fewer privacy issues
- Concerned about safety at the pedestrian crossing west of station

Sonnet

- Likes connectivity and complete street ideas
- Concerned about height and densities
- Doesn't accept premise that residents in area will use train; more likely that people will commute in for existing jobs

Lang

- Safe pedestrian access will require fences and security at crossings; concerned about pedestrian crossing and access on west side due of people rushing to catch trains
- Focus people to access site from Civic Center Drive; concentrate development and parking opportunities on this side as well; make it a transit place
- Design Guidelines are essential
- Four stories is OK if correctly done

Colin

- Concurs with Lang's comment about pedestrian crossing and access from west of station
- Insure that there is flexibility in allowing trade offs to impacts on creeks and wetlands
- Likes complete streets
- Loosen info in plan to keep consistent with General Plan approach of evaluating trade offs
- Protect single-family neighborhoods & open space
- Infill development has tradeoffs in terms of open space
- Design guidelines that protect views conflict with General Plan – we don't protect private views
- Allow more flexibility in the language about restoring and protecting the environment to stay consistent with General Plan
- Public space should be minimal, small
- Explore the idea of "affordable-by-design" which usually means allowing smaller units
- Agrees with the word change in the vision requested by Rafael Meadows
- General Plan is overall guiding document
- Residential increases only is too restrictive
- Bike/ped improvements should be priority

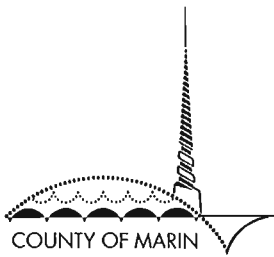
Paul

- Success of vision is dependent on success of SMART; there is a symbiotic relationship

- Opportunities for more intensity at Northgate III and Autodesk
- Developers need incentives
- Neighborhoods don't need to be so concerned; City process (DRB, Planning Commission, etc ensure sensitivity to impacts, neighborhood concerns
- Concerned about success of SMART – it needs intensification around stations to be successful
- Doesn't think parking will be problematic; can't see people parking here to take train north
- Plan lacks 'sense of place' like a park or plaza to be used by neighborhoods
- Not as concerned about safety at proposed pedestrian crossing west of platform because train will be stopped at station
- Area needs signature statement in the form of landscaping or buildings
- TOD takes a long time to happen; look how long it has taken BART, but helps transit succeed
- Make no small plans

Wise

- Supports extension of promenade
- Supports complete streets
- Bike parking at station should be a priority
- Concerned about the bikepath interface with North San Pedro freeway on/off ramps
- Agrees with suggestion of access and development concentration on east side but don't prohibit access on the west
- Generally comfortable with proposed densities and heights, but it is important to have good design guidelines including step backs and articulation
- Public space should be small, maybe just seating at a cafe, Civic Center Lagoon and Oak Plaza are nearby, well used public spaces.
- Proper loading facilities for shuttles are important



OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Matthew H. Hymel
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mona Miyasato
CHIEF ASSISTANT
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Marin County Civic Center
3501 Civic Center Drive
Suite 325
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 473 6358 T
415 473 4104 F
CRS Dial 711
www.marincounty.org/cao

June 21, 2012

City of San Rafael
Rebecca Woodbury
P.O. Box 151560
San Rafael, CA 94915

Subject: Comments to City of San Rafael, Civic Center Station Area Plan

Dear Ms. Woodbury:

Thank you and other San Rafael staff for the presentation made to the Marin County Board of Supervisors on June 12, 2012 about the *Civic Center Station Area Plan* ("SAP"). This letter outlines the County of Marin's comments and response to it and the SAP report. In addition, there are some technical comments made by our Department of Public Works, also included below but which you have previously received.

1. Remove showing or mentioning anything now or in future about housing on the Christmas Tree lot (County property) from the SAP as it is a public facility now and planned to be so in the future.
2. ADA accessible parking should be planned and included on the strip of City-owned land north of the tracks and west of Civic Center Drive in the amounts required by law, as identified in the SAP, since that would be the closest parking to the SMART station platform.
3. If County provides any parking to SMART on County-owned property, then the County or SMART should charge for parking.
4. Coordinate with City for parking plan on any City property or streets such as McInnis Parkway.
5. Have City work with SMART to explore a transit (bus) only crossing of the rail tracks on the west side of the station platform (west of Highway 101) to connect Merrydale at the south side of the tracks with the street on the north in order to encourage a direct bus connection easily accessible from the freeway.
6. Only have a bus pull-out on Civic Center Drive as shown by SMART in their public presentation at the San Rafael Corporate Center around May 2010 (copy attached), not the complete turnaround as shown on the draft plan.

The comments below are from the Marin County Department of Public Works.

- 1) On Figure 8, the unincorporated section of Los Ranchitos Road, roughly from Glenside Way to Walter Place, is shown with proposed sidewalks on both sides of the road, in addition to a multiuse path that parallels the same stretch of road. The proposed sidewalk improvements are not part of the Marin County Unincorporated

Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. In addition, the adjacent multi-use path would be able to serve pedestrians in the area. We recommend removing the proposed sidewalk along Los Ranchitos and showing connections to the multiuse path at North San Pedro Rd., Walter Place and the northern end of Circle Drive (where there is existing stop control intersection and transit stop).

2) On Figure 8, a proposed sidewalk is shown on the north side of Civic Center Drive adjacent to an existing multiuse path near the Lagoon shoreline. Although not on a County maintained road, it is unlikely that a sidewalk would be built adjacent to an existing multiuse path. A connection between Memorial Drive and Civic Center Drive intersection to the multiuse path is a more likely improvement scenario.

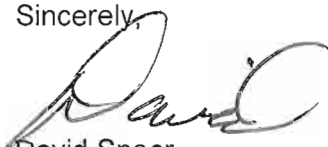
3) Because of the limited internal circulation patterns it is unlikely that sidewalks would be built on both sides of Peter Behr Drive between Civic Center Drive and Vera Schultz Drive.

4) The existing pathway improvements along Pilgrim Way are not shown on Figure 8.

5) Figure 8 indicates a sidewalk along the freeway between Merrydale Avenue Overcrossing and the relatively high speed US 101 off ramp (with no stop control at the proposed pedestrian crossing). Although not in our jurisdiction, this scenario seems very unlikely and we would encourage contacting City of San Rafael Public Works to discuss.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

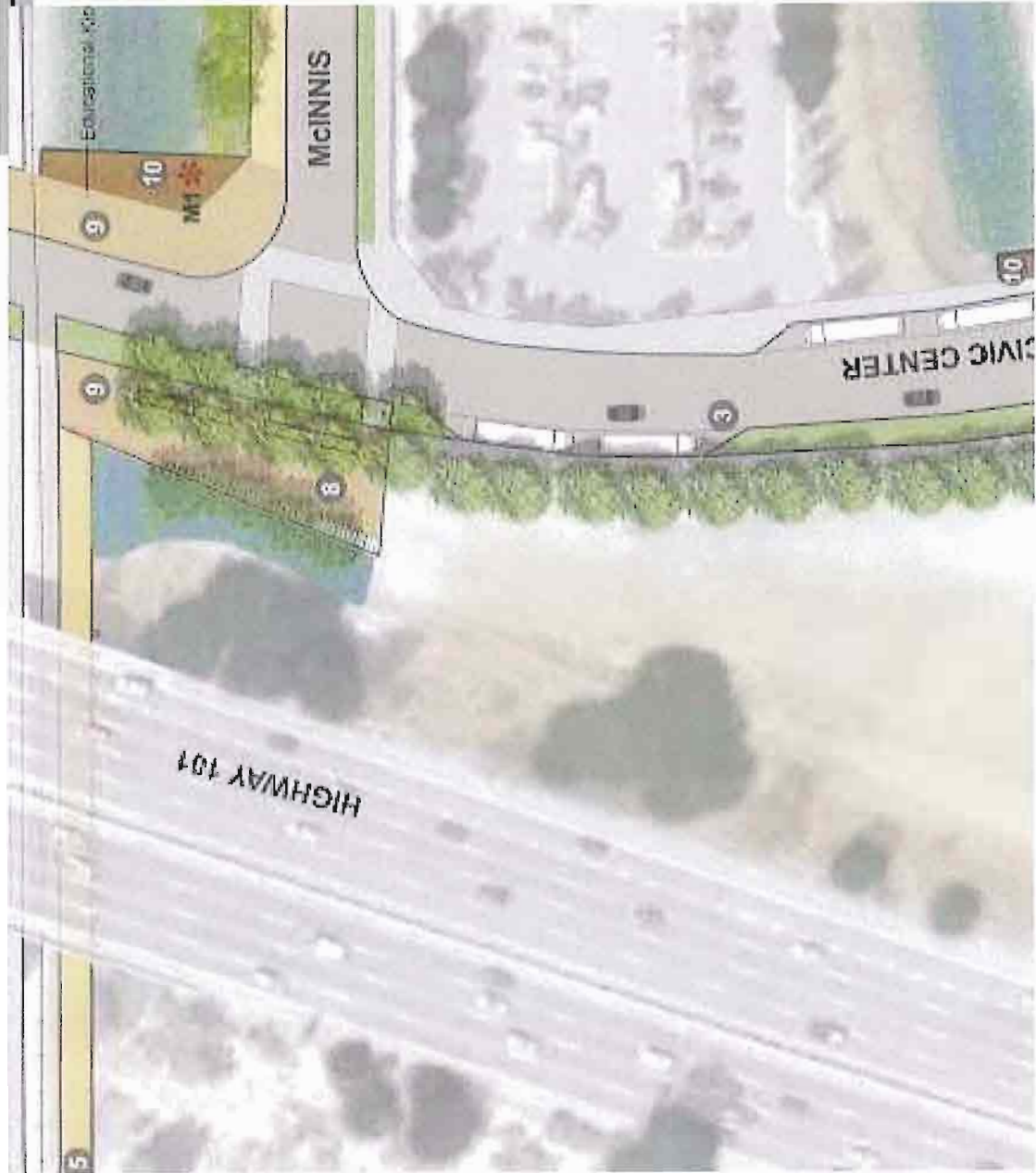


David Speer
Facilities Planning and Development Manager

Attachment

cc: Matthew Hymel, County Administrator
Eric Steger, Assistant Director, Public Works

Civic Center Drive Bus Drop Area



From: Carolyn Lenert [mailto:CAROLYNREALESTATE@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 2:23 PM
To: Rebecca Woodbury
Subject: Comments due 7/1/12

Re: SMART: Civic Center Station Area Planning

Dear Rebecca:

SMART is not what it appears to be. Restored rail lines through Marin are, however, a profitable way to remove the vast amount of garbage residents generate (esp. since our regional landfills are full), a private enterprise that will be unfairly subsidized by the unSMART taxpayer.

General Comments.

1. I object to 18th Century technology (heavy-diesel fuelled engines pulling imported passenger cars) through our beautiful neighborhoods and sensitive wetlands.
2. I object to any form of maintenance or repair facility in Marin County. This function should be centralized and provided elsewhere.
3. I do not understand how a passenger "station" under a freeway can be kept safe, cleaned or maintained.
- 4 This station location is along a creekbed, across from a wetland and is historically subject to flooding. Watershed impacts aside, this location may not be seismically safe.

Station Area Plans.

5. I object to placing affordable or other homes near rail or freeways or major roads. The adverse health impacts are well-documented.
6. Zoning for more office space at the Civic Center Station fails to recognize that there is a glut on the market now and for the foreseeable future.
7. The proposed projects must be Green certified, and locally-sourced and produced.
8. When will the sidewalks be built to reach the Civic Center from the train station? How will they be funded?

Feedback.

9. I applaud all efforts to incorporate past planning such as the long-anticipated Promenade from the Terra Linda Recreation Center to the lagoon at the Civic Center.
10. I do support lightweight, driverless, solar-powered on-demand 20-passenger cars that do not block street traffic for loading and unloading, see www.CyberTran.com.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Carolyn Lenert



June 28, 2012

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William Carney, President
Bob Spofford, Vice President
Jerry Belletto, Secretary
Tamara Hull, Treasurer
Greg Brockbank
Bob Brown
Jim Geraghty
Katherine Jain
Kay Karchevski
Kiki La Porta
Lisa Max
Jeff McCullough
Gail Napell
Sue Spofford

166 Greenwood Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

415.457.7656

Citizens Advisory Committee
Civic Center Station Area Plan
c/o San Rafael Community Development Department
City Hall
1400 5th Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear Committee Members,

Sustainable San Rafael has been pleased to participate with you in planning for the Civic Center SMART Station Area. We feel the resulting draft Plan ably embraces the goals of sustainability and transit-oriented development, which are necessary both for reducing carbon pollution and for creating a more livable community. The brevity of our comments below reflects the well thought-out quality of the Plan, and we appreciate your efforts in achieving that result.

Heights and Density – SSR strongly supports the heights and densities in the Plan, especially the increases in the immediate area of the SMART station. The suggested zoning changes are consistent with the original intent of designating this area as a Preferred Development Area, with increased densities in tandem with increased transit. The changes accomplish important implementation actions specified in the City’s Climate Change Action Plan, consistent with SB 375 and the Sustainable Communities Strategies. They also make good common sense, backed by a thorough planning process, increasing the range of housing options in our community, reducing car dependence, and animating the station area with more people.

That said, the successful application of the new zoning will depend upon good architectural design, coupled with robust public improvements such as the proposed “complete street” treatment of Merrydale and natural enhancements of Las Gallinas Creek. The Plan suggests design guidelines for this area, which will go a long way towards calming the understandable concerns of residents of Rafael Meadows that additional development be appropriately scaled, detailed and buffered in relation to existing neighborhoods. The fact that apartments of similar size already exist in the area, and are far from imposing upon the residences, gives confidence that these objectives can be achieved—especially with sensitive oversight by the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission.

Public Spaces – There is a notable absence of public spaces in the Plan. A park-like area or plaza for community gathering in the

immediate vicinity of the SMART Station would create a focal point, as well as increased public identity and amenity, easing the perception of increased densities in the Merrydale area. Such a space would also reinforce the concept of a transit village, anchored by the station and connected to the larger community by the convergence of thematically-landscaped multi-use pathways along the North San Rafael Promenade, SMART right-of-way and “complete street” treatment of Merrydale. Such a network of public spaces is key to reclaiming this auto-dominated landscape for human use and establishing a strong community identity throughout the area.

Sea Level Rise – The Plan defers the very real fact of sea level rise to a reference in the CCAP to “monitor sea level rise.” This is inadequate. Planning for this area needs to consider both long and short-term inevitabilities, including increased flooding and potential private maintenance of levees. These concerns should be clearly noted in the body of the Plan.

SSR urges the Committee to consider further strengthening the Plan with these adjustments as you forward it to the City Council for acceptance. We commend the CAC, City staff and consultants, and other advocacy groups who have provided valuable insights in fashioning this vision for North San Rafael.

Sincerely,

Jerry Belletto,
SSR Secretary



To: Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee

From: Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative
Marge Macris and Mike Daley, Co-Chairs

Date: July 11, 2012

Re: COMMENTS ON DRAFT CIVIC CENTER STATION AREA PLAN

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the May 2012 public review draft of the Civic Center Station Area Plan. The report incorporates many improved policies, especially for protection of existing neighborhoods, natural resources, bicycle and pedestrian access, parking, and building height.

Following are additional recommendations that we believe will further strengthen the plan.

1. Affordable Housing

Expand this section, 5.3 on page 54. What are the City's current requirements? The Civic Center Station area is especially appropriate for affordable housing because of its proximity to jobs, transit, and other services. The plan should establish goals and incentives for developing affordable housing, such as an overlay zone that permits an increase in density only when a minimum share is below market rate. Prioritize housing for households earning less than 65% of Area Median Income for Marin, which reflects the incomes of many employees working in and near the station planning area. Specify sources of funds for affordable housing. Retain existing affordable units even as they are improved.

Encourage workforce housing throughout the area. Particularly appropriate locations are Northgate Mall and also the public storage and Marin Ventures sites, which should be designated for 50% affordable units, unless they are used for parking for the SMART station.

2. Parking

Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing developments. The draft plan describes good ideas such as shared and unbundled parking, but they would be allowed on a case-by-case basis after discretionary review. This uncertainty is a real burden especially for affordable housing developers and would create a disincentive for investing in the area. The City should specify what parking requirements will be, and how they will apply to which below market rate levels.

3. Christmas Tree Lot

The recommended uses and densities in section 5.7.4 on page 60 are not clear. Describe the restrictions on development on the Civic Center grounds. (A countywide vote is required for any building larger than a storage shed.) The County should engage in planning for this site, which should be designated as mixed-income residential, with a high percentage of affordable units.

4. Building Heights

We recommend height limits that protect the character of existing single-family neighborhoods. In some cases and in some locations buildings could be up to 5 stories, provided the developer offers public benefits such as affordable housing or creek restoration.

5. Natural Environment

In section 5.10 on page 65, add the policy that there may be no filling or covering over of any creeks or wetlands in the area. Also specify the use of green building materials and energy efficiency measures.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on the completion of the Civic Center Station Area Plan. Thank you.



www.marinbike.org

V 415 456 3469

F 415 456 9344

733 Center Blvd.

Fairfax, CA 94930

Board of Directors

Maureen Gaffney, *President*

Scott Klimo, *Vice President*

Don Magdanz, *Secretary*

Ian Roth, *Treasurer*

Matt Adams

Phil Brewer

Mark Comin

Vince O'Brien

Scott Penzarella

Tom Woolley

Advisors

Mark Birnbaum

Joe Breeze

Tom Hale

Deb Hubsmith

Jim Jacobsen

Patrick Seidler

Julia Violich

Staff

Kim Baenisch

Executive Director

Tom Boss

Membership Director

Bob Trigg

Administrator

Kristin Nute

Volunteer Coordinator

Andy Peri

Advocacy Director

Alisha Oloughlin

Advocacy Coordinator

Deb Hubsmith

Advocacy Advisor

Wendi Kallins

Safe Routes to Schools Director

Laura Kelly

Safe Routes Volunteer Liaison

Peggy Clark

Safe Routes Project Coordinator

Share the Road Program Manager

Gwen Froh

Safe Routes Teen Coordinator

James Sievert

Safe Routes Teen Coordinator

and Instructor

Frances E. Barbour

Safe Routes Instructor

June 29, 2012

Rebecca Woodbury
Management Analyst

City of San Rafael

P.O. Box 151560

1400 Fifth Avenue, Room 203

San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

Subject: Draft San Rafael Civic Center SMART Station Area Plan

Dear Ms. Woodbury and Citizens Advisory Committee Members:

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) would like to thank you for your time and effort in preparing the Draft San Rafael Civic Center SMART Station Area Plan (DSAP). We respectfully request that the Committee consider the following comments and ask that they be included in the Civic Center SMART Station Area Plan (CCSAP).

The Promenade (Pgs. 18-24 & 30)

MCBC strongly agrees with the Plan's determination that the completion of the Promenade will be a crucial step in improving connectivity between the east and west sides of the North San Rafael area and to provide direct access from both areas to the new Civic Center SMART Station.

Promenade-South (Civic Center Drive)

In the near-term, the SAP proposes a Class II bicycle lane along the southern section of the Promenade, located between the SMART Station and the Civic Center. In the long-term, the SAP proposes a Class I multi-use pathway along this same stretch.

Table 5-I "Proposed Class I/II Facilities" (page 42) in the City of San Rafael Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) proposes a Class I/II along Civic Center Drive from North San Pedro Road to the Merrydale Overcrossing. The BPMP figure titled "San Rafael Bicycle Plan Existing and Proposed Bikeways North" (page 17) goes further to propose a Class I multi-use pathway *only* along this same stretch of Civic Center Drive.

An alternatives analysis conducted in 2008 by Alta Planning and Design for the Northgate Bikeway Gap Closure and Terra Linda-North San Rafael Projects concluded that "while Civic Center Drive could be widened for a short section between the SMART tracks southward for bike lanes, the road is too constrained to provide bike lanes south of Peter Behr Way." The analysis went further to recommend that "a wide sidewalk/path, which is a minimum of 13 feet wide from the edge to curb, be developed from the Civic Center to the SMART station/pathway."

MCBC RECOMMENDATION: Given the existing significance of Civic Center Drive, and the increased usage anticipated within this corridor once SMART is in operation, MCBC strongly recommends that instead of, or in addition to, Class II bike lanes, the SAP propose a separated multi-use pathway along Civic Center Drive from the Merrydale Overcrossing to North San Pedro Road in the near-term. This would meet the goals of the City’s BPMP and the Bay Trail Plan and Guidelines. It would also support the SAP’s goal to encourage non-motorized access to the SMART Station and would further contribute to the creation of a bicycle/pedestrian friendly environment and “sense of place” within the Plan area.

Merrydale Overcrossing (Pgs. 17 & 30)

Figure 10 of the SAP, “Proposed Bicycle Connections” (page 30), identifies existing Class II bicycle lanes along Merrydale Overcrossing from Los Ranchitos Road to Civic Center Drive. The SAP does not propose any changes to these existing facilities.

Table 5-I “Proposed Class I/II Facilities” (page 42) of the BPMP proposes a Class I/II along Merrydale Overcrossing from Los Ranchitos Road to Civic Center Drive. The figure titled “San Rafael Bicycle Plan Existing and Proposed Bikeways North” (page 17) goes further to propose a Class I multi-use pathway *only* along the Merrydale Overcrossing.

As is noted in the SAP, the Merrydale Overcrossing connects the Northgate Shopping Center, Las Gallinas/Los Ranchitos Road, and a number of employment centers and residential neighborhoods located on both sides of Highway 101. The overcrossing’s existing westbound Class II bicycle lane is the minimum allowable width of four feet and provides no buffer from fast moving vehicles. As such, this facility can be challenging for younger, less experienced, and/or physically disadvantaged cyclists. The existing 52-foot width roadway could potentially be reconfigured to accommodate a Class I multi-use pathway.

MCBC RECOMMENDATION: MCBC recommends that a separated, multi-use pathway be proposed along the Merrydale Overcrossing. This Class I facility could then connect to the existing section of Promenade on Los Ranchitos (Class I multi-use pathway from Las Gallinas to the Merrydale Overcrossing), resulting in a continuous, separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway that serves to connect the SMART Station, the existing and proposed bicycle/pedestrian Promenades, and the Northgate Shopping Center, effectively closing the gap in Class I facilities in this area and creating a continuous multi-use pathway loop within an area that is already highly utilized by cyclists/pedestrians and will likely become more so once SMART is in operation.

Figure 10: Proposed Bicycle Improvements

North San Pedro Road (Los Ranchitos to Civic Center Drive)

The SAP proposes a Class II bicycle lane along North San Pedro Road from Los Ranchitos Road to Civic Center Drive.

Table 5-I “Proposed Class I/II Facilities” (page 42) of the BPMP proposes a Class I/II along North San Pedro Road from Los Ranchitos to Civic Center Drive. The BPMP figure titled “San Rafael Bicycle Plan Existing and Proposed Bikeways North” goes further to propose a Class I multi-use pathway *only* along this same stretch of roadway.

MCBC RECOMMENDATION: MCBC strongly recommends that instead of a Class II bike lane, the SAP propose a separated, multi-use pathway along North San Pedro from Civic Center Drive to Los Ranchitos Road, or at minimum, to Merrydale Drive. This would

result in a continuous, separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway from Civic Center Drive to the west side of Highway 101, allowing for safe, convenient access from the Civic Center and SMART Station to the existing Puerto Suello Hill Pathway and the future SMART Pathway beginning at North San Pedro Drive/Los Ranchitos Road. If the pathway were extended from Civic Center Drive to Los Ranchitos Road, the result would be a continuous, completely-separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway loop which would essentially circle the SMART Station Planning Area and that would provide a safe connection to transit, shopping and residential areas located on both sides of Highway 101.

North San Pedro Road (Civic Center Drive to Northern City Limits)

Figure 10 of the SAP, “Proposed Bicycle Connections” (page 30), identifies an existing Class III shared roadway facility along North San Pedro Road from Civic Center Drive to Washington Avenue. The SAP does not propose any changes to these existing facilities.

Table 5-2 “Proposed Class II/III Facilities” (page 44) of the BPMP proposes a Class II along North San Pedro Road from the existing Class II bike lanes at Civic Center Drive to Golf Avenue.

The portion of North San Pedro Road that runs through Venetia Valley is a highly utilized corridor that is often bustling with activity. Some of the nearby establishments include Venetia Valley Elementary School, Osher Marin Jewish Community Center, and Brandeis Hillel Day School. In addition, there are numerous residential areas close by. Safe bicycle/pedestrian passage along North San Pedro Drive from this populous area to the Civic Center and the SMART Station is critical.

MCBC RECOMMENDATION: MCBC strongly recommends that the SAP include recommendation of Class II bike lanes along North San Pedro Road from Civic Center Drive northward to Woodoaks Drive, allowing for safe passage from Venetia Valley to the SMART Station. At minimum, the SAP should propose Class II bike lanes from Civic Center Drive to Golf Avenue, as is proposed in the BPMP.

Los Ranchitos/Puerto Suello Hill Pathway to Los Ranchitos/SMART Pathway

Figure 10 of the SAP, “Proposed Bicycle Connections” (page 30), proposes Class II bicycle lanes along Merrydale Road from the Puerto Suello Hill Pathway to North San Pedro Road and beyond. The SAP does not propose any multi-use pathway facilities in this area.

Table 5-1 “Proposed Class I/II Facilities” (page 43) of the BPMP proposes that a portion of the Class I SMART pathway should extend from Civic Center Drive to the existing Puerto Suello Hill Pathway. The BPMP figure titled “San Rafael Bicycle Plan Existing and Proposed Bikeways North” (page 17) identifies this pathway as beginning at Puerto Suello Hill/Los Ranchitos Road, running through the canyon west of and parallel to Merrydale Road and connecting to the SMART Pathway at North San Pedro Drive/Los Ranchitos Road.

The Puerto Suello Hill Pathway provides a vital connection from Downtown San Rafael and Central/Southern Marin to Northern San Rafael, the SMART Station and beyond. As indicated in the SAP, “Merrydale Road will serve as the primary access route to the Station from the southwestern portion of the Study Area and... with the opening of the SMART Station, pedestrian volumes on this roadway will likely increase.” The constrained right of way, drainage and parking considerations, and limited opportunity for substantial multi-modal improvements that were identified in the SAP within this important multi-modal corridor causes us great concern about the adequacy of the SAP’s future bike/ped facilities planned within this important multi-modal corridor and facilities connector.

MCBC RECOMMENDATION: Given the obstacles identified above related to future bike/ped improvements along Merrydale Road, MCBC urges that the SAP include the proposal for a separated, multi-use pathway beginning at Puerto Suello Hill/Los Ranchitos Road, running through the canyon west of and parallel to Merrydale Road and connecting to the SMART Pathway at North San Pedro Drive/Los Ranchitos Road, as is proposed in the BPMP. The result would be a seamless, safe-and-separated-from-traffic multi-use pathway from Downtown San Rafael to Northern San Rafael, the SMART Station and Pathway, the Civic Center, and to commercial, shopping and residential areas located on both sides of Highway 101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alisha Oloughlin".

Alisha Oloughlin, Advocacy Coordinator
Marin County Bicycle Coalition
P.O. Box 1115
Fairfax, CA 94978

From: rphin@comcast.net [mailto:rphin@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 1:51 PM
To: Rebecca Woodbury
Subject: smart station concerns

CONCERNING RELEVANT CHANGES THAT WILL HAVE IMPACT ON our property located at 165 Los Ranchitos Road this in reference to the **SMART STATION.**

We have close to 300 feet of frontage on Los Ranchitos and I see a sidewalk is proposed for our area. We are not in favor any parking along the proposed sidewalk if it is installed. this would be detrimental to the esthetics of our neighborhood and create even more traffic conditions to the all ready busy street.

Originally it took some time to get the stop sign on Ranchitos road and Circle along with the no parking signs. Preceding this action there were injuries even a horse got hit by a car we made a sled and pulled the horse back to the barn where she could not be saved.

We have lived here for about 50 years and like the area that we live in but if parking is going to be allowed in this area we would put our home up for sale.

Janet and Bob Phinney



GALLINAS WATERSHED COUNCIL

68 Mitchell Blvd., Suite 240, San Rafael, CA 94903

Rebecca Woodbury
Planning, City of San Rafael
1400 Fifth Ave
San Rafael, CA 94915

RE: Civic Center SMART station area plan Committee

Dear Committee:

The Gallinas Watershed Council is dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Gallinas Creek Watershed. Our mission is to support sound, nature-sensitive decisions that promote quality of life in our watershed.

GWC recognizes that the SMART train and development of a Civic Center station are coming and that area redevelopment is being planned. Our community is concerned with the streamlining of environmental review of the plans as a result of the Priority Development Area designation given to the site driven by ABAG's projections and SB375. Those are top-down decisions and that needs to be clearly recognized.

That the Marin community needs more workforce housing; we concur.
That Nature and the watershed need to be protected is non-negotiable. The community has spoken loudly and clearly that the environment is vitally important—and that is a bottom up decision. Decisions made by the residents and members of the community most impacted by this top down planning need to be recognized and given equal validity and weight if not more.

Watersheds are complex natural systems and understanding these *systems* is critical for us as a community as we plan for the opportunity for redesign our future. Assessing our existing watershed conditions, using up-to-date tools for greater understanding, and looking for opportunities for integrating the natural environment, along with its geologic, hydrologic and ecological parameters into the redevelopment plans is vital. To this end, it is our hope that the City of San Rafael will adopt a Watershed Approach to planning promoted by the State of California Resources Agency and become an active stakeholder in the Gallinas Creek Watershed Program established by the County of Marin. This effort would put the City in a proactive position in preparing for anticipated Phase II tightening of State stormwater permitting regulations.

www.gallinaswatershed.org
gallinasvalley@gmail.com
(415) 578-2580

Transit oriented development is the new buzzword in planning; however, as a successful approach it is still unproven. Large scale housing near transit stations has not been proven to be liveable. It has not been proven to get people out of their cars, which are still needed to get people to services, grocery stores, schools, doctors, etc. *Liveable communities—not just housing--is a value we hold dear.*

We wish the following points in the draft plan to be changed:

- No 4 or 5 story buildings in the neighborhoods near the station or adjacent to the creek. They will create a bleak, unaesthetic wall out of character with the surroundings.
- Housing built near the station needs to be selected for quality, including public spaces; respect for and integration with (rather than imposition on) the natural environment; and needs to be such that the residents of that housing are safe and well protected from the traffic noise and fumes endemic to that area. They also need to be near to necessary essential services or have additional good public transportation to those services.
- Recognize the watershed as a stakeholder in the redevelopment process and put Gallinas Creek distributaries on the maps. Include language about water quality protection, habitat restoration and resilience to sea level rise.
- Include in the plan, the desire to not increase square footage of impervious surfaces, by instead using materials and design that will not increase runoff. Plant additional native riparian vegetation around creek channels to absorb toxins before they flow out to the bay. Require that no increases in sediment from construction or post construction activities end up in the creek.
- We support housing development near Northgate Mall and Northgate 3, as the most advantageous areas, both for people who will live there and for merchants who will thrive on the increase in demand for their services. The Civic Center Station would be within walking distance from these areas along the proposed extension of the Promenade.
- Fees, fines or stormwater taxes for new developments could help fund protections to the watershed and financial participation of the County's Watershed Program for Gallinas Creek.

Sincerely,



Alex Kahl,
President, Gallinas Watershed Council