



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date of Mailing: June 24, 2013

TO:	Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212 Sacramento, CA 95814	FROM:	Lisa Newman, Contract Planner Newman Planning Associates <u>Physical Address</u> City of San Rafael Community Development Department Attn: Lisa Newman, Contract Planner 1400 Fifth Ave San Rafael, CA 94901
	Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Utility Providers, Organizations, Neighboring Property Owners, Neighboring Occupants, and Interested Parties		<u>Mailing Address</u> City of San Rafael Community Development Department Attn: Lisa Newman, Contract Planner P.O. Box 151560 San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

The City of San Rafael will be the lead agency and will prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for a proposed new mixed-use housing project at the northwest corner of 2nd and B Streets in San Rafael. This Notice of Preparation is sent pursuant to Section 15082 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines to announce the initiation of the EIR process and to solicit comments from responsible and trustee agencies, utility providers, organizations, neighboring property owners, and interested parties concerning the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIR. Refer to the Probable Environmental Effects listed below to determine whether your concerns have already been identified. Please focus your comments on the project's potential environmental impacts and recommendations for methods to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate those impacts. If you are a governmental agency with discretionary authority over initial or subsequent aspects of this project, describe that authority and provide comments regarding potential environmental effects that are germane to your agency's area of responsibility.

Project Title: Second and B Street: New San Rafael Housing

Project Location: 815 B Street (formerly 809 B Street, 1212 Second Street and 1214 Second Street), San Rafael, Marin County, California, APNs: 011-256-12, 011-256-32, 011-256-14, 011-256-15.

Project Setting: The subject property consists of four adjacent parcels, totaling approximately 0.53 acres in size, located in Downtown San Rafael. The parcels are currently developed with a single-story, approximately 5,000 square foot commercial building, a commercial parking lot with 45 parking spaces and two, two-story Victorian-era residences, located at 1212 and 1214 Second Street that date to the 1890s, one of which is a known local cultural resource listed on the San Rafael Historical/Architectural Survey (dated 1976; updated 1986) and is currently uninhabitable due to fire damage. The subject property has little vegetation and is relatively flat.

The project site also contains five trees: three Carob trees are located at the entrance to the parking lot along B Street, a Canary Island Date Palm is located on the north property line, and an avocado tree located in the rear yard of the residence at 1212 Second Street. The development plan proposes to remove all five existing trees. (Refer to Figure 1, Regional Location Map and Figure 2, Project Vicinity Map)

Project Description: The Second and B Street: New San Rafael Housing project is a mixed-use development located at the northwest corner of Second and B Streets in Downtown San Rafael. The proposed 74,435 square foot building would occupy the entire site and consist of a three-story, wood-frame residential complex over a one-story concrete podium that contains required parking, building lobby, and a retail space. 41 rental apartment units are proposed on the three upper floors consisting of two types: 1) 11 1-bedroom/1-bath units (approximately 800 square feet in area) and 2) 30 2-bedroom/2-bathroom units (ranging from 899 - 1,090 square feet in area). The residential units surround a central courtyard with each unit also providing a balcony (facing either 2nd or B Street or an interior patio). Three of the residential units are proposed without a balcony or patio. The total area of the residential units is 54,055 square feet. The ground floor podium would provide a 20,317 square foot parking garage for 49 cars and 2,095 square feet of retail space.

The landscape design for the 815 B Street project consists of 3 main areas: the streetscape plantings, the infiltration planters, and the podium level courtyard. The streetscape planting provides six new Crimson Spire Oak trees along Second Street. At B Street, two existing Flowering Pear trees would remain and be augmented by two new Flowering Pear Trees. The infiltration zones are planting areas located at the street level along 2nd Street and also on the north side of property on the 2nd level podium. The function of the infiltration planters is to treat storm water run-off from the building roof, which will be collected by gutters and routed to the planters via down leaders. The internal courtyard of the building is located on the 2nd level podium. The courtyard is not visible from the street and would offer a private, comfortable outdoor common space for residents. Other miscellaneous site landscape items include the replacement of the declining Canary Island Palm with a new, younger Canary Island Palm in the same location. Refer to Figure 3, Project Site Plan.

Development of the project involves the demolition of the existing structures on the property. Based upon the 2013 Historic Resource Report prepared by Painter Preservation and Planning, the two Victorian residential structures are historic resources and the proposed demolition would result in a significant adverse impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Initial Study concludes that the project also could have an adverse effect on immediately adjacent historic properties.

Probable Environmental Effects: The purpose of the EIR is to provide full disclosure, in advance, of the potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed project. The EIR will analyze the extent to which the project design and alternatives would result in significant environmental impacts and will identify appropriate project modifications or mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate these impacts. Issues that will be examined include the following:

- Aesthetics – Impact to scenic resources or visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings due to the proposed design of the new building in relation to adjacent historic properties.
- Cultural Resources - Impact to historic resources due to the proposed demolition of two historic structures.

Initial Study: An Initial Study has been prepared on the project, which identified “Potentially Significant Impacts” listed above. Bound copies of the project’s Initial Study are available to review, during operating hours, at the City of San Rafael Public Library (1100 E Street) and the City of San Rafael Community Development Department (1400 Fifth Avenue, 3rd Fl.). In addition, an electronic copy is available on the City’s web site at <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/commdev-planning-proj-815b>. CD-format copies of the Initial Study are also available to purchase at the Community Development Department.

Scoping: The City invites written comments on the scope of the EIR and alternatives that should be considered. Due to the time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent or hand-delivered at the earliest possible date, **but no later than 30 days from the date of this notice**. Written comments should be mailed/hand-delivered to the mailing address/physical location noted above by **5 p.m. on Tuesday, July 23, 2013**. Comments may also be sent by email to lisapnewman@gmail.com with the heading “Second and B Street: New San Rafael Housing” in the subject line.

The City will also hold a public scoping meeting before the City of San Rafael Planning Commission on **Tuesday, July 23, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.** in the San Rafael City Council Chambers, 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA.

Comments should focus on identifying specific environmental impacts to be evaluated during the EIR process and suggesting project modifications or alternatives that would be less environmentally damaging while achieving similar project objectives. Scoping comments should focus on issues and alternatives to be studied, not on expressing a preference for a particular alternative.

For More Information: For additional information on the project or if you wish to be placed on a mailing list to receive further information as the project progresses, please contact Steve Stafford, Associate Planner, at (415) 458-5048, steve.stafford@cityofsanrafael.org or the mailing address above.

Date: June 24, 2013 Signature: _____
 Name/Title: Paul Jensen, *Community Development Director*

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (State CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(A), 15103, 15375

Sign Language and interpretation and assistive listening devices may be requested by calling (415) 485-3085 (voice) or (415) 485-3198 (TDD) at least 72 hours in advance. Copies of documents are available in accessible formats upon request.

Public transportation to City Hall is available through Golden Gate Transit, Line 22 or 23. Para-transit 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.