
DATE: January 10, 2012

TO: Chairman Sonnet and Planning Commissioners

FROM: Stephanie Lovette, Acting Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: **Draft Station Area Plan for Downtown San Rafael; P10-002**

On January 10, 2012, the Commission will be receiving a presentation on the Draft Station Area Plan prepared for Downtown San Rafael. The City received a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for two station area plans. The City of San Rafael is the lead agency for the station area plans. The other public agency partners are Golden Gate Transit, Marin Transit, TAM, SMART and the County of Marin. All partners provided some financial contribution to the planning process. The second station area plan is for the Civic Center area in North San Rafael, which is currently being prepared by a separate advisory committee. The Planning Commission previously received updates on the subject Downtown Station Area Plan on December 12, 2010 and March 15, 2011.

As indicated above, the City Council has appointed two separate citizen committees to prepare these plans. For the Downtown area, the City's existing Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) on Redevelopment was appointed to also serve as the Committee for developing the plan.

The purpose for the plan is to create a land use "vision" for the area that would surround the proposed Downtown SMART station. This type of planning effort is significantly different from a specific plan document, in that it does not implement any zoning or General Plan policy changes. Rather, it identifies a vision from which future land use, zoning or General Plan policy decisions can be considered, analyzed and studied by the City. If the City ultimately determines to implement all or portions of the vision plan, changes to zoning regulations and/or General Plan policies may also be required at that time.

The Draft Plan is being presented to various stakeholders and partner agencies, including the City Planning Commission and Design Review Board. Following this presentation, the draft plan will be presented to the Design Review Board on January 18, 2011. The CAC will review any Planning Commission, Design Review Board and public comments received on the plan on February 2, 2011, and provide its recommendations for the Final Plan. The City Council will be asked to accept the Final Plan in March 2012. The plan, as a study document, will not require an action by resolution. Further, the plan does not require, nor does staff's analysis provide a detailed analysis of the plan for consistency with the General Plan 2020 policies.

The Commission is being asked to review the draft plan and provide comments. At the hearing, vice-chair of the CAC, Bill Carney, will make a presentation to the Commission to explain the draft plan and the work of the Committee. You will be asked to accept the presentation at the meeting, accept public comments, and provide Commission comments.

Please review the executive summary and recommendations. The full report can be found at www.cityofsanrafael.org/stationareaplans.