

REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Subject: Neighborhoods Element On-Line Tool

This item was originally agendized for the October 2019 meeting. Because the discussion of Downtown Options took longer than expected, the Committee was not able to discuss the item.

As the Committee is aware, staff is updating the “Neighborhoods Element” as part of the General Plan Update. In the past, this Element has been an effective tool for providing site-specific or place-based guidance for neighborhoods with large developable sites. For instance, the Neighborhoods Element provided detailed direction for Loch Lomond Marina; this shaped the project ultimately approved on the site. The intent of this Element is not to present neighborhood plans for every part of the city, but rather to address localized issues, express priorities (which differ in each neighborhood), and summarize the recommendations of prior plans that apply to specific locations in San Rafael.

Staff has had a number of meetings with community-based organizations to discuss the best way to update this element and has solicited feedback from key groups such as the Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods, the Point San Pedro Road Coalition, the West End Neighborhood Association, Terra Linda Homeowners Association, and the East San Rafael Working Group.

As we mentioned in the final minutes of the October 2019 meeting, Staff has developed an on-line tool for use by neighborhood groups and has sent a written letter (by US mail) to approximately 50 points of contact for each neighborhood organization in San Rafael asking that they use the tool to help us update the Neighborhoods Element. To date, Staff has heard back from about a half-dozen groups, with a few (Bret Harte, Sun Valley) completing the task. Steering Committee guidance and assistance is requested to “get the word out” and encourage other groups to participate.

To view the on-line tool, Steering Committee members may visit www.sanrafael2040.org, and select the “Share Your Ideas” link. A menu of 30 neighborhoods will appear. A “click” on any neighborhood name will open a survey in which respondents are asked to describe the best qualities of their neighborhood, their concerns for the future, and local improvements they would like to see over the next 20 years. This is followed by the verbatim text from the 2020 General Plan, broken down into individual narrative, policy, and program statements, with a request for input from the neighborhood group on each statement.

Staff is seeking feedback by December 31, 2019.

