

## REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

**Subject: Arts and Culture Policies**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff has prepared Draft Arts and Culture policies for the 2040 General Plan. The policies incorporate feedback from the General Plan Steering Committee as well as an “audit” of the policies in the prior (2020) General Plan and a review of recent plans and best practices.

The proposed 2040 policies are included in this staff report. Attachment A compares the 2040 policies with the 2020 policies in two side-by-side columns, with a third column provided for Steering Committee comments.

### REPORT

#### Background

The Arts and Culture Element is considered an “optional” element of the General Plan. Only about 15 percent of California’s 482 cities have a dedicated element in their plans on this topic. San Rafael added an Arts and Culture Element in 2004, recognizing that the arts were an important aspect of community life, a powerful tool for bridging cultural divides, and a driver of the local economy. The Element also addresses historic preservation and libraries.

General Plan 2040 will continue to include a dedicated element on Arts, Culture, and Historic Preservation. The policy on libraries will be moved to the Community Services and Infrastructure Element. The Draft policies attached to this email update those in General Plan 2020, with several new policies added to reflect future opportunities and challenges. Programs have also been updated and new programs have been added as appropriate.

The attached document is a Working Draft. It will be revised based on feedback from the Steering Committee and City staff, and input from the local arts community. The City convened a discussion group of a dozen representatives of the San Rafael arts community on March 6 to review the proposed policies. Feedback from this group will be reported back to the Steering Committee at the March 11 meeting.

## Overview

The 2040 goal for Arts and Culture is as follows:

**Recognize the potential for the arts to enrich and inspire residents, build a sense of community, attract visitors, revitalize the city, and provide economic opportunity.**

## Policies

The proposed arts and culture policies are contained on the following pages. Several of the “programs” from General Plan 2020 have been restated as “policies” in General Plan 2040. A few policies covering new arts-related topics have been added, and several programs have been added. Some of the policies and programs build on recommendations from the County of Marin’s Arts and Culture Master Plan, which was adopted in 2019.

- Policy 1.1 carries forward an existing policy to promote San Rafael as Marin County’s center of arts and culture
- Policy 1.2 carries forward an existing policy to encourage arts and cultural programs and activities that meet the needs of the whole community
- Policy 1.3 carries forward existing language supporting partnerships between the City and the arts community
- Policy 1.4 emphasizes that arts and cultural programs should reflect San Rafael’s diversity, build bridges between cultures, and be inclusive of all persons
- Policy 1.5 carries forward an existing policy supporting public art
- Policy 1.6 is a new policy supporting arts venues and space for the arts
- Policy 1.7 carries forward an existing policy supporting arts and cultural special events
- Policy 1.8 is a new policy that links arts and culture to economic development
- Policy 1.9 is a new policy that encourages the city to create an environment where artists can thrive
- Policy 1.10 carries forward language about pursuing funding to support the arts.

## Programs

Key programs in this element include:

- Developing a City Arts and Culture Master Plan (this is carried over from the 2020 Plan)
- Evaluating the feasibility of an Art in Public Places Ordinance (also carried over from the 2020 Plan)
- Promoting the Falkirk Cultural Center as an arts venue (also carried over)
- Providing dedicated programming for youth and older adults (also carried over)
- Increasing arts participation among under-represented groups and non-English speaking residents
- Recognizing arts as a community benefit in new development
- Amending zoning codes to encourage temporary use of vacant space for arts activities
- Engaging the arts community in the planning and development process.

## SAN RAFAEL 2040 ARTS AND CULTURE ELEMENT DRAFT GOAL, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

### **GOAL AC-1: ARTS AND COMMUNITY LIFE**

**Recognize the potential for the arts to enrich and inspire residents, build a sense of community, attract visitors, revitalize the city, and provide economic opportunity.** *Arts and culture are integral parts of San Rafael's quality of life and civic identity. Art connects us, expands our awareness of the world, and makes us stronger as a community. San Rafael has a thriving arts, cultural, and literary scene, with services, programs, events and venues that serve a diverse and engaged population.* Goal CA-1

### **POLICY AC-1.1: CULTURAL CENTER OF MARIN**

Continue to promote San Rafael as the center of arts and culture in Marin County. Policy CA-1

***Program AC-1.1B: Arts Facilities.*** Support efforts to improve and sustain local arts facilities such as the Marin Center and Rafael Theater, and recognize their role in making San Rafael a regional arts hub. *New*

***Program AC-1.2A: Falkirk Cultural Center.*** Promote the Falkirk Cultural Center as a venue to support and foster the arts and celebrate local culture. Seek funding to rehabilitate and improve the mansion and sustain its programs through income-producing activities. CA-9, CA-9b, CA-9c

***Program AC-1.1C: Arts and Culture Master Plan.*** Build on the work done by the County of Marin and San Rafael-based arts organizations to create a San Rafael Arts and Culture Master Plan. The Plan should promote participation of the arts community in civic life, enhance arts programming, promote cultural inclusion, and maximize opportunities for arts events. Potential funding sources for a Master Plan should be explored. Policy CA-2, Programs CA-2a and 2b

### **POLICY AC-1.2: ARTS PROGRAMMING**

Encourage an array of cultural arts programs and activities addressing the needs and interests of the whole community. Policy CA-3

***Program AC-1.2A: City Activities.*** Continue to provide City-sponsored arts classes and cultural activities, including arts programs at San Rafael's community centers. Programs should be equitably distributed around the City so that they can be accessed by all residents. Programs CA-3b and 6a

***Program AC-1.2B: Youth Programs.*** Support additional arts programming for children and youth, including City-sponsored activities and activities sponsored by Youth In Arts and other local organizations. Advocate for continued arts programming in public schools. Program CA-3a

***Program AC-1.2C: Programs for Older Adults.*** Ensure that arts programming meets the need of older adults and provides opportunities for intergenerational activities as well as those oriented toward seniors. *New*

**Program AC-1.2D: Public Information.** *Work with local arts organizations to improve public awareness of local venues, galleries, exhibits, events, performances, and opportunities to participate in arts and cultural events in the city. Provide links to such information on the City’s website. New*

**POLICY AC-1.3: PARTNERSHIPS**

Promote and strengthen partnerships and cooperative arts programming with local artists, schools, community-based institutions, Dominican University, the County of Marin, and non-profit arts organizations. Program CA-3c and Policy CA-1

**Program AC-1.3A: Local Programming.** *Allow arts groups, schools, and businesses to use City facilities and public spaces for art exhibits, performances, and programs. Seek opportunities for the City to use County, institutional, and private arts space for its arts activities. Programs CA-1a and 3d*

**POLICY AC-1.4: CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES**

Encourage activities, entertainment and events that reflect San Rafael’s diverse cultural heritage and population. Support participation in the arts by all residents as a way to promote intercultural understanding. All residents should have the opportunity to achieve their creative potential. Policy CA-4 and Program CA-4a

**Program AC-1.4A: Under-represented Groups.** *Support arts organizations and artists to expand their audience in San Rafael, including communities that are currently not well represented in local arts organizations. New*

**Program AC-1.4B: Equitable Programming.** *Explore ways to improve cultural equity and access to arts programming among lower income and non-English speaking residents, including new partnerships, training, outreach strategies, multi-lingual initiatives, and reduced fees for qualifying residents. New*

**POLICY AC-1.5: PUBLIC ART**

Promote a stimulating and engaging environment through the greater display of public art. Policy CA-5

**Program AC-1.5A: Art in Public Places.** *Evaluate the feasibility of an Art in Public Places Ordinance that would establish a funding source and/or mechanism for increasing public art. Strive for solutions that do not increase housing costs and that maximize flexibility in the way funds are used. Program CA-5a*

**Program AC-1.5B: Community-Based Outdoor Art Installations.** *Support participatory public art projects that engage the community, such as murals and street painting. Such projects should foster a greater understanding of local arts, history, and culture and provide an opportunity to express neighborhood identity. Replaces Policy CA-6 and Program 6b on murals*

### **POLICY AC-1.6: SPACE FOR THE ARTS**

Encourage the creation of additional arts space and arts venues in the city, such as galleries, theaters, indoor and outdoor performance spaces, and cultural centers. *New*

***Program AC-1.6A: Art as a Community Benefit.*** *Recognize space for the arts as a community benefit in local zoning and density bonus programs. Expand incentives for incorporating arts space and arts features in new projects.* *New*

***Program AC-1.6B: Reducing Barriers.*** *Amend zoning codes as needed to facilitate the temporary or interim use of vacant ground floor commercial or lobby space for art exhibits, display space, and “pop up” cultural activities.* *New*

### **POLICY AC-1.7: EVENT PARTICIPATION**

Encourage public and private participation in support of arts and cultural events, including neighborhood fairs and gatherings. *Policy CA-7*

***Program AC-1.7A: Sponsorship of Events.*** *Support special events such as the Italian Street Painting Festival, the Farmers Market, the Parade of Lights, the Art and Wine Festival, and the May Madness Car Show, as well as events sponsored by the Downtown BID, Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood associations, and other community groups.* *Program CA-7A*

### **POLICY AC-1.8: ARTS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

Recognize the value of the arts to the economy of the city, and the role of the arts in community revitalization. *New*

***Program AC-1.8A: Cultural Arts District.*** *Leverage Downtown San Rafael’s designation as a Cultural Arts District to support arts activities, attract visitors and business patrons, promote equity and inclusivity, and create a more welcoming and exciting Downtown environment. Encourage “ArtWalk” activities and similar events that showcase local talent and provide opportunities to experience the arts.*

*New*

***Program AC-1.8B: Cultural Tourism.*** *Promote cultural tourism as a way to attract visitors and support and sustain the local arts community.* *New*

### **POLICY AC-1.9: ARTS-SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

Create an environment that is supportive to arts professionals. *New*

***Program AC-1.9A: Communication.*** *Support ongoing communication with local arts organizations. to address and resolve issues of concern.* *New*

***Program AC-1.9B. Engagement in Community Processes.*** *Recognize the arts community as important stakeholders in local community processes and economic development strategies. Support artist engagement in planning and governance.* *New*

**Program AC-1.9C: Showcasing Local Artists.** Consider artist in residence programs, poet laureates, City-sponsored lunch concerts and similar events showcasing the work of local artists and performers.

*New*

**Program AC-1.9D: Reducing Costs.** Explore opportunities to create more affordable space for artistic production, including live-work and studio spaces, public cultural facilities, and affordable performance space. *New*

**Program AC-1.9E: Volunteers.** Provide opportunities for volunteers in art, cultural, and literary events.

*New*

### **POLICY AC-1.10: FUNDING**

Establish a broad range of public and private funding sources to supports arts and cultural programs and activities. Program CA-3e

**Program AC-1.10A: Non-Profit, Private and Community Efforts.** Support the efforts of non-profit, private, and community organizations to apply for grants, raise funds, develop arts endowments, and promote community and business investment in art, cultural, and literary activities. *New*