

REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Subject: Community Services Policies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff has prepared Draft Community Services policies for the 2040 General Plan. The policies incorporate feedback from City staff and the General Plan Steering Committee, as well as an “audit” of the policies in the prior (2020) General Plan. The Community Services policies include schools, libraries, and public safety services, as well as broader governance policies. These policies will appear in the Community Services and Infrastructure Element of General Plan 2040.

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 Community Services and Infrastructure Element is considered an “optional” element of the General Plan. San Rafael added an Infrastructure Element in 2004 when it adopted General Plan 2040. It also adopted an optional Governance Element in 2004 that included policies on libraries and schools, as well as the delivery of public services in general. The Governance Element also covers community engagement, health, and equity issues. Those topics will be dealt with in a separate equity-focused element in General Plan 2040 (to be discussed at the April 8 Steering Committee meeting).

The Steering Committee discussed the Draft Infrastructure policies at its November 2019 meeting. It has not yet discussed the Draft Community Services (CS) policies. The policies are included in the following pages. Attachment 1 compares the 2020 and 2040 policies side by side.

GENERAL PLAN 2040 COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICIES (to be included in the Community Services and Infrastructure Element)

GOAL 1: EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Promote excellent schools and enhanced, equitable education. *The City will support the school districts' efforts to ensure access to quality education for everyone. San Rafael's schools will provide a safe, supportive, and collaborative learning environment that engages all students.*

POLICY 1.1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Collaborate with schools to foster educational programs and opportunities that benefit the community.

Policies G-13 and G-14

Program 1.1A: Communication. *Maintain regular communications with the School Districts, including periodic joint City Council/ School Board meetings, to foster collaboration and address issues of mutual interest. Program G-14a*

Program 1.1B: Partnerships with Schools. *Participate in school initiatives to educate students about local issues and City government. Program G-13a*

Program 1.1C: Higher Education. *Expand partnerships with Dominican University and other nearby colleges and universities to support local education and lifelong learning. new*

POLICY 1.2: SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY HUBS

Collaborate with schools to provide greater public access to school facilities for neighborhood and community activities. Policy G-15

Program 1.2A: Joint Use Agreements. *Develop joint use agreements with the School Districts and other local academic institutions to improve community access to facilities for recreation, child care, and/or community events. Program G-15a*

POLICY 1.3: RELATIONSHIP TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Strengthen the relationships between businesses, non-profits, and schools to enhance the quality of education and support workforce development. Policy G-16

Program 1.3A: Internships. *Provide City-sponsored internships for working-age students and assist with publicity about other internship opportunities. Encourage local businesses and non-profits to provide internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, and vocational programs. Program G-16A*

POLICY 1.4: CITY PROGRAMS

Offer programs and classes that provide the whole community with opportunities for lifelong learning.

Policy G-17

Program 1.4A: City Programs and Classes. *Continue to offer a variety of City-sponsored leisure, educational and personal enhancement courses and programs for all age groups. Regularly assess participation to determine interest and support. Program G-17A*

POLICY 1.5: CAMPUS LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Work with San Rafael City Schools and the Miller Creek School District to address traffic, parking, and land use issues on and around school campuses. *New*

***Program 1.5A: School Construction Projects.** Coordinate with school personnel on campus construction, modernization, and improvement projects, including those financed by local bond measures. *New**

***Program 1.5B: Development Review.** Consult with schools on development applications with the potential to impact enrollment and school facilities. Ensure that impact fees are collected as appropriate to mitigate school impacts. *New**

See the Mobility Element for information on Safe Routes to School Programs

POLICY 1.6: PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Recognize the role of private schools in San Rafael's education system and their potential as community partners and resources. *new*

GOAL 2: LIBRARIES

Library services and facilities that meet the informational and recreational needs of the community. *San Rafael's public library system will provide an expanded collection of materials, increased access to services and programs, and attractive, comfortable facilities for patrons. New and improved facilities will enable the City's libraries to fulfill their role as places to learn, explore, discover, and grow.* *Policy CA-*

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POLICY 2.1: LIBRARY FACILITIES

Improve library facilities to meet the current and future needs and recognize the changing role of libraries in community life. *Policy CA-11*

***Program 2.1A: New Main Library.** Develop and construct a new Main Library designed to provide adequate space for collection materials, City programs, public meeting rooms, seating for visitors, and services for special user groups such as children and teens. *Program CA-11a**

POLICY 2.2: BRANCH LIBRARIES

Expand community-based library services in East and North San Rafael to ensure that library services are accessible to everyone in the community. *Policy CA-12*

***Program 2.2A: Pickleweed and Northgate Libraries.** Modernize and expand the Pickleweed and Northgate Libraries so they are adequately equipped to deliver the services needed in the surrounding communities. *Program CA-12a**

***Program 2.2B: School Libraries.** Consider partnerships with the school district to make high school libraries available to the public. *Program CA-12a**

POLICY 2.3: LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Expand and adapt library collections to meet the changing needs of the community and respond to technological change, while preserving a core collection of materials of continuing value. Program CA-10a

POLICY 2.4: LIBRARIES AS COMMUNITY CENTERS

Promote programs and events that affirm the role of the City's libraries as inclusive community gathering places and a setting for the open exchange of ideas and information. New

***Program 2.4A: Focused Services.** Provide dedicated library programs for children, youth, and older adults. Programs CA-10b and 10c*

***Program 2.4B: Literacy Programs.** Continue to offer literacy and tutoring programs for English learners, as well as support and training for volunteer tutors. Program CA-10d*

GOAL 3: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Provide and maintain exceptional fire, public safety, and paramedic services. *San Rafael's Police Department engages with the community to provide professional, fair, compassionate and dedicated law enforcement services with integrity and respect. San Rafael's Fire Department strives to provide the best public fire services available, and to deliver fire and emergency medical services that are capable, compassionate, predictable, and sustainable. Both Departments work in partnership with the community to enhance San Rafael's quality of life. Safety Goal 1*

POLICY 3.1: INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Continue to invest in police, fire protection, and paramedic facilities, equipment, and staff. Manage increases in costs through effective preventative measures, such as fire prevention and community policing. Policy S-26 and S-28

***Program 3.1A: Capital Facilities.** Complete improvements to essential public safety facilities made possible by voter-approved measures. Conduct periodic evaluations of facility and technology needs in the future to ensure that the Police and Fire Departments are equipped to respond to emergencies and deliver the highest quality services. New*

***Program 3.1B: Public Safety Training.** Provide and encourage ongoing employee training to ensure public safety staff skills remain current. Replaces S-26A*

***Program 3.1C: Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance.** Maintain and upgrade vehicles and equipment as necessary. Program S-26B*

***Program 3.1D: Paramedic Tax.** Continue to support the San Rafael/ Marinwood paramedic tax. Program S-28A*

POLICY 3.2: MITIGATING DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

Engage the Police and Fire Departments in the review of proposed development and building applications to ensure that public safety, fire prevention, and emergency access and response needs are considered and effectively addressed. Replaces Programs S-26C and S-32A

Program 3.2A: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. *Design new public and private development to achieve “eyes on the street,” including site planning, lighting, landscaping, and architectural design features that reduce the potential for crime.* Replaces Policy S-32

Program 3.2B: Emergency Response Time. *Consider the impacts of development-related congestion on emergency response time, as well as direct impacts related to the safety and security of individual projects.* New

POLICY 3.3: COMMUNITY-BASED PUBLIC SAFETY

Support a community-based approach to public safety services. This approach should emphasize a high degree of communication and interaction between officers, residents, neighborhood groups, schools, and businesses. Replaces Policy S-27

Program 3.3A: Community Safety Programs. *Implement community public safety programs such as National Night Out and the Citizens Police Academy to support a safer community and promote positive relationships between law enforcement officials, residents, and businesses.* Replaces Program S-27C

See the Safety Element for a discussion of emergency preparedness and wildfire prevention programs

POLICY 3.4: QUALITY OF LIFE PROGRAMMING

Maintain programs to proactively and humanely address quality of life issues, such as peace disturbances, loitering, littering, and vandalism. Focus on personal contact with residents and businesses and build positive relationships with all segments of the community. New

Program 3.4A: Downtown Footbeat. *Maintain Downtown foot patrol services and continue to work with homeless service organizations, mental health professionals, and the business community to make Downtown a safe, welcoming environment for all.* New

POLICY 3.5: TRAFFIC SAFETY

Maintain traffic enforcement programs to ensure the safety of pedestrians, bicycles, and motorists on San Rafael streets, sidewalks, paths, and bikeways. Evaluate and mitigate potential traffic hazards as changes to the circulation system are proposed, and as new modes of travel are introduced. New

POLICY 3.6: MUTUAL AID

Maintain mutual aid agreements for police and fire service with other jurisdictions and community service districts to ensure that the capacity exists to adequately respond to local emergencies. New

See the Safety Element for policies on communication systems improvements

GOAL 4: FUNDING FOR CITY SERVICES

Maintain sound financial practices and sufficient revenue sources to provide high quality City services. *San Rafael provides a broad range of services to meet diverse community needs. Maintaining and enhancing the City’s revenue base is essential to providing desired services. The City continues to implement sound financial practices to maintain and improve services while minimizing the cost burden to residents and businesses.*

POLICY 4.1: TRANSPARENT BUDGETING

Maintain an open dialogue with the public during the budget process to evaluate and prioritize City services. Policy G-20

***Program 4.1A: Public Involvement.** Continue to involve residents and businesses in the budget process to the extent feasible, through community meetings, focus groups, social media, and other outreach methods. Program G-20A*

POLICY 4.2: PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

Evaluate the performance of City programs and services in achieving their stated goals as part of the City's budget process. Retain, adjust or eliminate programs or services as appropriate. Policy G-22

***Program 4.2A: Program Assessment.** Continue to provide budget and finance progress reports to the City Council. Continue to use benchmarks and quantifiable metrics to monitor performance and determine progress in achieving program goals and objectives. Program G-22a*

***Program 4.2B: Surveys.** Regularly survey residents on their satisfaction with specific City services and programs. Program G-22b*

POLICY 4.3: DIVERSIFYING FUNDING SOURCES

As an alternative to increased taxation, pursue methods to diversify funding sources for public services, including grants, public-private partnerships, user fees for specific services, and development fees. As appropriate, the City should also consider streamlined services that cost less to deliver. Policy G-23

***Program 4.3A: Revenue Monitoring.** Continue to maintain a revenue monitoring system to assist in trend analysis and revenue forecasting. Program G-23a*

***Program 4.3B: Grants.** Actively seek grants and encourage interdepartmental cooperation in preparing grant applications. Program G-23b*

***Program 4.3C: Cost of Services.** Periodically evaluate the cost of providing services and adjust fees accordingly. Program G-23c*

***Program 4.3D: New Revenue Sources.** Consider establishing new revenue sources to adequately fund services, including those that require voter approval. Program G-24b*

POLICY 4.4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Partner with other local governments and organizations to provide community services and resolve shared problems more cost-effectively. Policy G-24

***Program 4.4A: Funding Strategies for Infrastructure and Services.** In cooperation with other jurisdictions, develop funding strategies and joint powers agreements for infrastructure and services that create economies of scale for the contributing parties. Program G-24a*

POLICY 4.5: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Explore public-private partnerships as a way to develop community facilities or achieve other community benefits such as public parking and child care in new development projects. ^{new}