

From: Tom Heinz [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:37 AM
To: Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: redwood trees in Gen. Plan 2040 Draft

Dear Lindsay Lara,

I strongly support the preservation of all redwood trees including in San Rafael. Please add the following to the 2040 Draft Plan:

Protect and preserve Redwood trees over 12 inches in diameter. San Rafael is a tree city and the Redwood tree is the California State Tree, designated by the State Legislature in 1937. Redwood trees absorb water run-off, combat climate change by absorbing carbon and provide shade in the summer months. Redwood trees beautify our neighborhoods. Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter.

Sincerely,
Tom Heinz

[REDACTED] San Rafael, CA 94901 Gerstle Park

From: Stacy Clement [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 6:10 PM
To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>;
Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>
Cc: Jonathan Kramer [REDACTED]
Subject: San Rafael Planning Commission Comments

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission,

We strongly support adding the following wording to Chapter 5 Community Design and Preservation and Chapter 6 Conservation and Climate Change of the draft General Plan 2040:

Protect and preserve Redwood trees over 12 inches in diameter. San Rafael is a tree city and the Redwood tree is the California State Tree, designated by the State Legislature in 1937. Redwood trees absorb water run-off, combat climate change by absorbing carbon and provide shade in the summer months. Redwood trees beautify our neighborhoods. Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter.

Thank you,

Stacy Clement & Jonathan Kramer

[REDACTED] San Rafael, CA 94901

From: Susan Bradford [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 10:26 PM
To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: Protect our Redwood Trees!

On 10/26/2020 8:08 PM, Susan Bradford wrote:

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission,

As you draft the General Plan 2040, I want to emphatically express my concern for all the majestic Redwood trees in our city and for the beloved Redwood trees in my neighborhood that bring all of us shade, absorb the water running down the hill during the rains, sequester carbon, give many small animals a home and bring beauty and peacefulness to those that live here and even to those that just are walking by them.

Every single Redwood is a exquisite and miraculous being. Please give our children of the future the opportunity to experience the transformational impact of these awe-inspiring trees, not to be relegated just to "tree museums" but to remain in our neighborhoods.

Thank you, I pray that you do the right thing, are on the right side of history and that you choose well.

Susan Bradford

"Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. They paved paradise put up a parking lot." Joni Mitchell

Chapter 5 Community Design and Preservation and Chapter 6 Conservation and Climate Change of the draft General Plan 2040:

Protect and preserve Redwood trees over 12 inches in diameter. San Rafael is a tree city and the Redwood tree is the California State Tree, designated by the State Legislature in 1937. Redwood trees absorb water run-off, combat climate change by absorbing carbon and provide shade in the summer months. Redwood trees beautify our neighborhoods. Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter.

Susan Bradford

LVN, CCE, CHD, CHT
Birth Ceremonialist

www.thebirthjourney.net

Voted Most Outstanding Childbirth Educator 2017, 2018, 2019

Please join my FB page Birth Journey Marin

From: Diane McCurdy [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 7:15 AM

To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>;
Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Please SAVE OUR REDWOOD TREES!

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission,

As you draft the General Plan 2040, I want to emphatically express my concern for all the majestic Redwood trees in our city and for the beloved Redwood trees in my neighborhood that bring all of us shade, absorb the water running down the hill during the rains, sequester more carbon than any other tree/plant, give many small animals a home and bring beauty and peacefulness to those that live here and even to those that just are walking by them.

Every single Redwood is a exquisite and miraculous being. Please give our children of the future the opportunity to experience the transformational impact of these awe-inspiring trees, not to be relegated just to "tree museums" but to remain in our neighborhoods.

Please add the following wording to Chapter 5 Community Design and Preservation and Chapter 6 Conservation and Climate Change of the draft General Plan 2040:

Protect and preserve Redwood trees over 12 inches in diameter. San Rafael is a tree city and the Redwood tree is the California State Tree, designated by the State Legislature in 1937. Redwood trees absorb water run-off, combat climate change by absorbing carbon and provide shade in the summer months. Redwood trees beautify our neighborhoods. Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter.

Thank you, I pray that you do the right thing, are on the right side of history and that you choose well.

We need to address this urgent matter of the loss of trees in San Rafael!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Diane [McCurdy] Faulkner
[REDACTED]

From: David Mitchell [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 9:45 AM

To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>; Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter

Hello Barry, Alicia and Lindsay,

The coastal Redwoods of California are an iconic part of our history and provide value beyond the trees themselves. They are an inspiration of resilience and their proud nature is awe inspiring.

As you draft the General Plan 2040, I want to emphatically express my concern for all the majestic Redwood trees in this city and for the beloved Redwood trees in everyone's neighborhood that bring all of us shade, absorb the water running down the hill during the rains, sequester carbon at the highest rate of any tree, give many small animals a home and bring beauty and peacefulness to those that live here and visitors to the area.

Every single Redwood is a exquisite and miraculous being. Please give our children of the future the opportunity to experience the transformational impact of these awe-inspiring trees, not to be relegated just to "tree museums" but to remain in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration,
David Mitchell

From: kamila [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:58 AM
To: Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Save the Redwoods

I'm casting my 'vote' to Save the Redwoods!
I live in the West End.

Kamila Harkavy

From: Michael Burch [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 10:32 AM
To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>;
Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Saving Redwood trees

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission,

I neighbor has requested comments from interested parties concerning a change to the General Plan 2040. Her concern is the preservation of redwood trees. I would like to voice my support for preserving redwoods where feasible. They are magnificent trees that provide numerous benefits to people, wildlife and the environment. We are blessed to have the redwood represent us as our state tree.

I would also like to voice my concern that any restrictions on their removal be well considered. Redwoods have no taproot and their shallow root system needs space to spread just below the surface. The lack of taproot coupled with their height makes them susceptible to toppling, especially by wind. They protect each other when they grow in groves but individual or small clusters have a risk of falling. The space requirements for the shallow root system means that asphalt, concrete, and even trails must be distanced from the trunk. When the soil is compacted or covered, the roots do not provide adequate water and nutrients for the massive growth above ground. This is the reason given by naturalists and park rangers for fencing off the base of some redwoods or regularly moving the trails to prevent soil compaction. A poor root system also increases the risk of toppling.

An isolated redwood at 27 Maywood Way, the property adjacent to mine, was removed by the city recently when it suddenly began to show signs of insufficient water and began to lean toward the street and a neighbor's property. We were sad to see it go but we recognize the wisdom of the decision to cut it down for safety.

For these reasons, I believe individual trees within a developed area may provide more risk to life and property than benefit. While protecting groves of redwoods has my full support, I can see unintended consequences to a blanket regulation of preservation that might preclude the removal of a small number of trees. I confess that I am not an expert and cannot make recommendations as to the appropriate height, girth or quantity of trees that make a self-protective grove. Please consider preserving redwoods that represent their natural state, in clusters or groves, with sufficient space for the necessary root systems, when making your decision to modify the General Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

Michael Burch
[REDACTED]

From: Laurene Schlosser [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 11:02 AM
To: Barry Miller <Barry.Miller@cityofsanrafael.org>; Alicia Giudice <Alicia.Giudice@cityofsanrafael.org>;
Lindsay Lara <Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: General Plan 2040

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission:

Too many of our trees are cut down in this city and are either not replaced or if a replacement is planted, it's some dinky little Crepe Myrtle. Redwood trees are exquisite & so beautiful and are only found in a few small pockets of the world. I have two in my backyard – they are not only a haven for many birds & squirrels but bring us much needed shade in the summer months as well as absorb water run-off, and combat climate change by absorbing carbon. Redwoods are also very resilient to fire as well as creating a fascinating and special ecosystem. They are not only Good for the Planet but they beautify our neighborhoods! Prohibit the removal of California Redwood Trees over 12" diameter.

As you draft the General Plan 2040, I would like to plead with you to protect and preserve the majestic Redwood trees. San Rafael is a tree city and the Redwood tree is the California State Tree, designated by the State Legislature in 1937. Please do the right thing, prohibit the removal of Redwoods – for those of us living now and for future generations, so that they may be enjoyed for many years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. It comes from my heart!

Laurene Schlosser
Sun Valley resident since 1997





Marin Audubon Society

P.O. Box 599 | MILL VALLEY, CA 94942-0599 | MARINAUDUBON.ORG

October 27, 2020

San Rafael Planning Commission

Barry.miller@cityofsanrafael.org

c/o alicia.giudice@cityofsanrafael.org

lindsay.lara@cityofsanrafael.org

Att: Barry Miller

RE: Comments on Draft San Rafael General Plan 2040

Dear Commissioners:

The Marin Audubon Society appreciates your consideration of our comments on sections of the Draft San Rafael General Plan 2040 that address wetlands, including Canalways, special status species, and native trees. We will likely provide additional comments during the course of environmental review. Our current comments are:

Canalways

Our primary concern and alarm is about the Canalways site. Policies NH 3.24, Program NH 3.42A and the Spotlight discussion on page 4-49 fail to recognize and acknowledge that there has been close to a 50 years effort on the part of the environmental community to protect this site from being developed. To protect its resource values, Marin Audubon first attempted to purchase the site on tax default sale when it was in the original ownership of the pyramid company, Holiday Magic. Unfortunately, the current developers were able to purchase the property in spite of Marin Audubon's effort which included funding from the State Coastal Conservancy. Since then, Marin Audubon and other organizations have supported efforts by regional agencies to reject development of the property and reported infractions. A second attempt to purchase the property occurred five years ago.

Apparently all of that history has been lost, as the currently proposed policies would allow for increased development. The most shocking statement in Policy NH 3-24 is "Development should be economically viable for the site's owners..." In our more than 40 years of reviewing general plans, we have never seen such a statement in a general plan. That is because providing guarantees for the property owner is completely inappropriate for a general plan and should be deleted.

Regarding the remainder of the policy, any development should protect the site's resources (not just "be responsive to"), and development should be confined to the existing higher elevation areas. A word of caution about the biological assessment and jurisdictional delineation called for in the program. Rainwater has been pumped from the site by the city for at least the past 20 years under threat of legal action by the property owner. This removal of water may have affected the condition of the wetlands on the site. So to rely on a jurisdictional delineation prepared by the applicant's consultant would not necessarily reflect the condition of the site under normal circumstances, i.e. if artificial removal of the water did not occur. There is no shortage of environmental consultants who can promise anything.

Further the invasive plants that have proliferated on the property are the direct result of neglect by the property owners. Neglect and removal of water, are among the approaches taken by property owners in efforts to avoid a property being delineated as a wetland.

We support the protection of the low area of Canalways for its ecological importance, retention of the Wetlands Overlay Zone and Conservation designation. We support policies in the current general plan that all development, whether industrial or housing be confined to the higher elevation lands along the west side of the property only. The Canalways levee has indeed deteriorated and will be the last degraded low area along the waterfront after completion of Marin Audubon's Tiscornia Marsh Project.

Regarding the extension of Kerner, in the past, the city was not supportive of extending this his road. To do so would require filling wetlands, unless the connection were a bridge.

Wetland Preservation Policy C-1-1

We support protection of the city's wetlands and the city should have the first regulatory review. The discussion of the regulatory processes is confusing. It sounds like the city will rely on federal, state and regional agencies instead of their own regulatory powers.

The processes of wetland regulation is more effective if the local jurisdictions implement their own ordinances first. Clear policies send a clear message to project proponents. Regulation by state and federal agencies is required and actually does not need to be mentioned in policies.

Program C-1.1A Agencies have different wetland definitions than that of the Corps of Engineers. This should be broadened to ensure the wetland definitions of the state (RWQCB and BCDC) and federal (ACOE) agencies are considered.

Program C-1.1B We strongly support this policy which supports our Tiscornia Marsh restoration and Seal Level Rise Adaption project on Marin Audubon and city property along the shoreline.

Policy C-1.3 Wetland Protection and Mitigation

This policy offers unacceptable exceptions to protecting wetlands, particularly the exception if the protection is not "practical." This is a very easy standard to meet – it just needs to be undesirable and/or not of interest to the project proponent. It offers an easy out, is far too broad and it does not comply with the intent of the policy.

Program C-1.3B Conditions for Mitigation Waivers. This waiver is for wetlands that are less than 0.1 acre in size. The waiver is contrary to the state's wetland policy, which calls for no net loss of wetlands. It would exempt fill projects from mitigation if:

- 1) The wetland is isolated. This fails to consider that isolated wetlands can be near other wetlands forming a wetland complex and that even isolated wetlands have local value, i.e. to improve water quality, habitat, particularly during migration of movement between larger habitats.
- 2) Wetland experts demonstrate that preservation would not result in a functioning wetland. Often this means that the development would cut-off water supply, which could be avoided by project redesign. As noted above, "wetland experts" can be found to say almost anything.
- 3) The city finds the filling more desirable. This is an arbitrary condition that defies the intent of the policy.

- 4) The applicants have received all required permits. Regulatory agency permits are a necessary step for all wetland fill projects to go forward. It need not be said. However, some agencies, most notably BCDC, require that local permits be obtained first.

Program C-1.3C Revision of Mitigation and Waiver Requirements. Much of this program seems fine, however, bringing “other bay area jurisdictions” into the program opens the door for extensive conflict among policies of the many jurisdictions around the Bay. There is no reason to cast such a broad net. End the sentence at federal agencies.

Program C-1.4C Mitigation Banking. Marin Audubon opposes mitigation banks because they offer an easy out for filling wetlands and the service area is usually far too large.

Policy C-1.5 Wetland Setbacks

Our comment on this policy relates to the exception “if it can be demonstrated that the proposed setback protects the functions of the wetlands to the maximum extent feasible.” See comments above related to experts.

Policy C-1.12 Native or Sensitive Habitat

This policy should specifically call out protecting native trees. If the city wants to protect more tree species than natives, at least the non-native trees protected should be non-invasive. Species such as eucalyptus and acacia are particularly problematic because they increase fire danger in addition to providing minimal habitat.

Protecting native species should be included in policies and programs throughout this habitat section. Program C-1.16A, Program C-1.16A, Policy 1.17A Program C-1.16A a), e), f), and g) and Program C-1.16A are all places where the preference for native trees should be included.

Special Status Wildlife - Marin Northern Spotted Owls typically nest on the tops of tall trees. No one is building platforms for the owls.

Program C.1-13A The CA Natural Diversity Data Base digital maps. The CNDDDB is generally recognized as not being current. In the case of development that could potentially impact special status species, data from additional sources should be provided.

In addition to policies/programs favoring actions to maintain dark sky policy, a policy requiring bird-friendly glass, to avoid or reduce impacts to bird populations from collision with glass windows and doors, should be included. Bird collisions occur when birds cannot distinguish the glass, see the reflection of vegetation and, therefore, perceive that the reflection as habitat, and fly through the glass. There is special bird-friendly glass that can and should be used in developments that are in and near vegetated habitat.

Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,



Barbara Salzman, Co-chair
Conservation Committee



Phil Peterson, Co-chair
Conservation Committee



MARIN COUNTY GROUP

Protecting the Marin environment since 1968

scmaringroup@gmail.com

Oct. 26, 2020

San Rafael Planning Commission
Lindsay Lara, Planning Clerk
1400 Fifth Ave., Rm. 209
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: San Rafael General Plan 2040

Dear San Rafael Planning Commission:

The Sierra Club Marin Group, representing our 6000 members in Marin, is commending and fully supporting the Sept. 2, 2020 letter [Attached] from Kate Powers and the Marin Conservation League to Paul Jensen and Barry Miller on the Draft General Plan 2040. This letter is remarkable in its thoroughness and clarity. We trust the Planning Commission and the City Council will take those specific suggestions to heart and incorporate them as proposed. We also agree with the points of including a glossary of terms and the requested updated maps before the document is approved.

In addition, we would especially draw your attention to the following:

The plan includes many policies and programs that clearly state a directive. It also includes many that do not. I respectfully request that policies and programs in the GP not be passively stated, but rather with direction that intends clear outcomes. Words like "consider", "recognize" and "explore" are too weak and have no clear planning intent. As a visionary document, the GP needs verbs that will move the city forward and will more clearly direct action that will manage both change as well as preservation.

We are in complete agreement that policies and programs need to be more fully fleshed out with words and financing in order to become reality. Setting lofty goals is important; setting a direction to attain them is also critical.

If environmental planning does not happen at the same time and with the same priority as transportation, housing or commercial development, we fear it will be relegated to the back burner, as has happened so often before. With COVID, wildfires, drought, sea level rise and climate change all clearly having an environmental component based on our collective human actions, it is critical that the environment receives more than just a seat at the table. The environment needs a strong voice at every level for every project, or we will have even more serious repercussions threatening humanity and the world.

Sincerely,

Judy Schriebman
Chair, Marin Group Sierra Club

Cc: San Rafael City Council
Kate Powers, Marin Conservation League

September 2nd, 2020



Via email only

Paul Jensen, Community Development Director
Barry Miller, General Plan 2040 Project Manager
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

paul.jensen@cityofsanrafael.org
barry.miller@cityofsanrafael.org

RE: Comments on Draft General Plan 2040

Dear Mr. Jensen and Mr. Miller:

As a Marin Conservation League board member, I have appreciated the opportunity to participate as an environmental stakeholder on the General Plan (GP or the Plan) 2040 Steering Committee. I have also appreciated the quality and depth of the plan update, your leadership of the planning process, and the many stakeholders who have contributed to the process to date.

My comments on the Draft plan have been added to by other MCL board members. They begin with three general comments then become more specific to goals, policies and programs and largely follow the order in which they appear in the plan.

In general

The plan includes many policies and programs that clearly state a directive. It also includes many that do not. I respectfully request that policies and programs in the GP not be passively stated, but rather with direction that intends clear outcomes. Words like “consider”, “recognize” and “explore” are too weak and have no clear planning intent. As a visionary document, the GP needs verbs that will move the city forward and will more clearly direct action that will manage both change as well as preservation. (See specific suggestions in addendum.)

175 N. Redwood Dr., Ste. 135, San Rafael, CA 94903 | 415.485.6257 |
mcl@marinconservationleague.org

Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.

Please include a glossary in the plan that defines terminology and provide hyperlinks throughout the Plan to specific references and to the other San Rafael plans and documents referenced. A glossary will make the GP more transparent and accessible to the general public. (See suggested glossary list in letter addendum.)

The public should have an opportunity to review updated maps before Final GP 2040 is adopted. With San Rafael's GIS technology and expanded sources of available data, the following improvements to GP 2020 maps are requested:

- Watersheds and Creeks map should include not only all perennial and intermittent creeks but also ephemeral creeks and drainage networks.
- On Major Biotic Landscapes map, urbanized areas should be left white (no pattern) and predominant plant communities in biotic areas should be differentiated.
- In addition to the map of Endangered, Rare or Threatened Species, provide a map with areas dominated by invasive species also.
- Finally, Sea Level Rise Projection map should delineate areas that will be impacted by rising groundwater due to sea level rise.

More specific

Environmental planning is often framed in terms of mitigating against impacts. San Rafael's GP should lay the groundwork for integrating environmental, land use, and transportation goals. Environmental protection should be integrated early in the planning of development and transportation projects. This may require identifying goals and policies that conflict and improving their coordination. In *Land Use* **Goal LU-1: Well-Managed Growth**, add "Protecting environmental quality will be an objective in land use planning." In *Mobility Element* **Goal M-1: Regional Leadership in Mobility**, add "Protecting environmental quality will be an objective in planning transportation projects." Change **Goal M-3: Cleaner Transportation**, to "Protect environmental quality by coordinating transportation and land use decisions in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutants, noise, pollution from stormwater runoff and other environmental impacts related to transportation."

Wherever possible, back policy priorities with funding. For example, in *Land Use* **Policy LU-1.1: Balancing Growth with Infrastructure**, replace "Plan local circulation and infrastructure systems to provide capacity for development" with "Plan and fund local circulation and infrastructure systems to provide capacity for development". In addition, replace "The City's plans should" with "The City's plans and capital improvement budgets should prioritize". In **Policy LU-1.2: Development Timing**, "Allow new development only when adequate infrastructure is available," add "or a projected need for infrastructure and services is linked with the ability to pay for them".

Wherever the plan refers to infrastructure, such as “Sewer, water, and other infrastructure improvements” (**Policy LU-1.2c**) include “stormwater” with “sewer” and “water”. GP policies and programs should manage stormwater as a resource and move the city forward in

obtaining its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage for stormwater discharge. In *Conservation and Climate Change* **Policy C-3.4: Green Streets** as well as *Community Services and Infrastructure* **Policy CSI-4.10: Storm Drainage Facilities** add “Whenever infrastructure improvements are planned on streets and roads, evaluate improvements needed for stormwater infrastructure, treat stormwater as a resource, and determine where watershed restoration improvements can be made simultaneous to infrastructure improvements.”

In *Land Use* **Policy LU-1.3: Land Use and Climate Change**, replace “Focus future housing and office development . . . around transit stations” to “Focus future housing and office development . . . around stations with high frequency and high capacity transit”. High density should be designed in areas with transit capable of moving high numbers of riders to job centers or other common destinations. Increasing density around stations alone is ineffective as an environmental policy unless it impacts travel behavior away from auto ownership and use. A lack of effective and established high quality transit options would cause congestion in high density development areas and lead to greater greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Transit-oriented development (TOD) as a land use and transportation strategy lacks efficacy if it is not context-sensitive.

Under *Land Use* **Program LU-1.7A: Development Adjacent to San Rafael**, assign Community Development as the City’s department charged with working with “the County and other jurisdictions to review applications from areas of interest adjacent to City limits or within the Sphere of Influence.” Particular focus should be paid to the San Rafael Rock Quarry, and the County’s responsibility in overseeing compliance with permits and reclamation plans. The Quarry’s request to extend its operating permit sets a new expiration date slightly beyond San Rafael’s 2040 planning horizon. However, policies and programs for reuse at the Quarry site, once it ceases operation, will be governed, in part, by possible future San Rafael annexation. If the Quarry’s pace of operations picks up, it may reach its maximum mining depth prior to 2044. It’s in San Rafael’s interest that quarry reclamation activities, including marsh restoration, not be delayed and are backed by long-term financial assurances. Since completion of the 2009 Final EIR, conditions and legal requirements have changed. Science and technology of mining and mitigating environmental impacts along with measures for protecting the health and safety of San Rafael’s neighboring communities have advanced. Traffic on 2nd and 3rd Streets has substantially increased and will be further impacted by the relocation of San Rafael’s Transit Center and other downtown development. Sea level rise planning and potential impacts to neighboring coastline adaptations must be

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mcl@marinconservationleague.org

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considered in planning future development of the site. The feasibility of breaching the side of the quarry and filling it with recirculating bay water needs additional study.

Land Use **Policy LU-1.8: Density of Residential Development** and **Policy LU-1.10: Intensity of Non-Residential Development** raise several questions:

- b) How will “the adequacy of infrastructure” be determined? Will there be objective standards for water, sewer, and stormwater? Will Level of Service (LOS) or Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) determine adequacy of road, pathway and transit options?
- c) How does the GP anticipate state-mandated development bonuses and incorporate strategies to retain some level of local planning control? Will Objective Design and Development Standards be a tool?
- d) Are there limits to the number of accessory and/or junior accessory dwelling units on one site or allowable percent of parcel coverage by development? Are there off-street parking requirements especially in transit-rich areas?

Land Use **Policy LU-1.18: Height Bonuses** states, “The bonuses are intended *to be used in tandem with (and not in lieu of)* those offered through state and local affordable housing density bonus program.” It seems the City would want to limit height bonuses in General Plan 2040 and use other incentives or planning tools where additive city and state height bonuses would not allow an area to keep within character of existing structures or align with designated land uses since the State is creating its own mandated bonuses. Include language protecting views, privacy, and solar access of existing buildings and uses both here and in **Policy LU-3.2: New Development in Residential Neighborhoods**.

In *Land Use* **Policy LU-1.9: Clustering** add “Encourage wildlife corridors and habitat preservation in areas where adjacent properties share environmentally sensitive areas.” after end of paragraph.

As a result of *Land Use* **Policy LU-2.6: Lot Consolidation**, retaining unique individual buildings on small lots should not be disincentivized. San Rafael would benefit from a mix with opportunities for local builders and small developers to rehabilitate and redevelop buildings that add character to downtown and to neighborhoods. See *Community Development and Preservation* **Policy CDP-5.5: Adaptive Reuse**.

In *Land Use* **Program LU-1.8A: Codifying Residential Density Limits** and as new bullet in **Policy LU-3.2: New Development in Residential Neighborhoods**, add “Limit impacts to views, privacy and solar access of neighboring properties.”

In *Community Development and Preservation Program CDP-1.5A: Evaluating View Impact*, replace “Consider the impact of proposed development on views” with “Require proposed development four stories or more to show how scenic views, sightlines, and visual character may be impacted or preserved”.

Replace *Program CDP1.5B: Guidance on View Protection* with “Establish clearer guidance in City guidelines and standards protecting views, privacy and solar access for existing buildings from new development, additions, and alterations.”

Under *Policy CDP1.5: Views*, create an additional *Program: (Solar access or) Shadow ordinance* “Develop new shadow ordinance that specifically limits impacts from new development or from modification to existing structures or properties that might negatively impact neighboring properties.”

In *Mobility Program M-7.4E: Design Standards for Parking Garages*, add “Limit intrusions into view corridors and require shadow impact analysis to limit shading of neighboring properties including shopping streets, open space, parks.”

In *Conservation and Climate Change Policy C-1.6C: Creek Protection*, add “Treat sediment from stream flow and deposition as a resource.” after “permitted.”

Change the last sentence in *Program C-1.6C: Creek and Drainageway Mapping* to “Evaluate the potential for restoration of natural hydrologic function of creeks and drainageways wherever possible.”

In *Policy C-1.9: Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways* insert “and hydrologic function” after “habitat value” in beginning of sentence, “Conserve or improve the habitat value of creeks”. Add “Treat sediment from stream flow and deposition as a resource.” after “feasible.”

Add an additional *Policy and Programs*, following *Conservation and Climate Change Program C-1.9A Watercourse Protection Regulations*:

Policy C-1.9: Reduce marine pollution from plastics

Reduce and remove plastics in stormwater runoff from entering creeks, marshes and the Bay to reduce marine pollution from plastics. See *Program C-3.6A: Water Quality Improvements*.

Program C-1.9: Creek and coastal cleanups. Coordinate volunteers for, sponsor, or participate in a series of repeated creek and coastal cleanups in the Fall prior to the rainy season. (Once is not enough.) Support neighborhood adoption of stormwater drains for regular cleaning similar to Mill Valley’s Adopt-a-Spot program.

Program C1.9: Street sweeping. Plan and mobilize street sweeping prior to predicted major storm events.

Program C1.9: Enforcement of City bans. Enforce City plastic bag and polystyrene foam bans and support the City’s plastic utensils “Ask First” campaign.

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mcl@marinconservationleague.org

Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.

Include under **Program C-1.10A: Hillside Management and Design Guidelines**, Hillside Management and Design Guidelines should implement actions described in San Rafael's "Wildfire Prevention and Protection Action Framework".

Change **Program C-1.14: Integrated Pest Management Policy** to a *Policy* and adopt as a *Program* an IPM ordinance to implement the *Policy*:

Policy C-1. : Integrated Pest Management Policy

Maintain and update Integrated Pest Management Policy (IPMP) to minimize pesticide application in the city and encourage nontoxic methods to control vegetation. The IPMP should be updated to reflect changes in regional stormwater control requirements, data on pesticide toxicity, feasibility of new and less toxic methods for controlling invasive plants and build on Marin County's IPM policy and ordinance successes.

Program C-1. : IPM Ordinance Adopt an IPM ordinance to implement SR IPM policy. Changes to San Rafael's IPM policy and ordinance should be made through a transparent public process and should ensure that the use of any chemicals of concern is publicly noticed.

In **Goal C-3: Clean Water**, add "The City will continue to participate with North Bay Watershed Association and the One Water approach."

Insert "Pollution Protection" between "Stormwater" and "Program" in **Program C-3.2A: County Stormwater Program**. Add "Meet State Water Quality Control Board requirements for stormwater permits by prioritizing Trash Reduction Implementation Plan measures."

Policy C-3.5: Groundwater Protection should include a statement about planning for rising groundwater due to sea level rise and protecting shoreline properties. In **Safety Goal S-3: Resilience to Flooding and Sea Level Rise** and in all *Safety Element S-3 Policies and Programs* where relevant, add ", rising groundwater," after "flooding" and before "and sea level rise".

In *Conservation and Climate Change* **Policy C3.9: Water-Efficient Landscaping**, insert "Bay Area native species" between "Encourage the use of" and "vegetation and water-efficient landscaping that is naturalized".

Add **Program C-4.4B: Low Carbon Concrete Code Standards**. Follow Marin County's lead in adopting standards that establish cement and embodied carbon limit allowances in concrete.

In *Climate Change Crosswalk* text box, under *Land Use Element*, add “creating walkable neighborhoods close to retail and services.”

Insert “while protecting natural resources” between “Encourage linear parks and trails” and “along the Bay shoreline” in *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policy PROS-1.8: Linear Parks and Trails*. In *Policy PROS-3.1: Open Space Framework* replace “Framework” with “Network” as referred to in *Policy PROS 1.9: Role of Open Space*. What actually exists is a “network” of open spaces without obvious cohesion. The opportunity to establish a “framework” for both maintaining existing and identifying future open spaces comes under *Policy PROS-3.3: Open Space Management and Program PROS-3.3A: Open Space Management Plan*. The Plan should be the focal point of the entire *Goal PROS 3: Protected, Well-Managed Open Space* section, for it is the missing link. Everything that precedes should become part of the Management Plan. The last sentence of paragraph under *Program PROS-3.3A* should read “It should include six areas of focus:” and a sixth bullet should be added to include public education (as described in *Policy PROS-3.10: Public Education* and *Programs PROS-3.10A: Public education* and *10B: Interpretive Facilities*). Education and interpretation should receive formal recognition as an essential area of focus in the Management Plan. It is important to pin down private open space to conditions and monitoring. In *Policy PROS-3.5: Private Open Space* replace “Encourage the long-term stewardship” with “Ensure the long-term stewardship”. *Program PROS-3.5A: Appropriate Use of Private Open Space* should be tied to conditions placed on the development of the property. Replace “identify use limitations such as” with “specify use limitations in a maintenance agreement as a condition, including restrictions on” and add “subject to enforcement” at the end.

In *Mobility Policy M-2.2: Safety*, replace “convenient for all modes of travel” with “that serves people using all modes of travel”. It’s important to plan for people and from the perspective of usage when planning for transportation, not just from the perspective of systems and modes.

In *Program M-2.5B: Level of Service (LOS) Exceptions (d)*, insert “objective” between “substantial” and “evidence” in first sentence and determine how objective criteria will work in determining LOS exceptions.

In *Policy M-2.11: Sea Level Rise*, replace “Consider” with “Actively plan for”. After “transportation system” in the first sentence, add “and its components”. Add these additional sentences. “All future transportation infrastructure improvements should be based on latest (at the time plans are made) sea level rise projections for the year 2040 and beyond. All infrastructure improvements should support or be able to adjust to future sea level adaptation efforts in a cost-effective manner.”

In **Program M-3.2A: Screening Criteria for VMT Analysis**, strike last sentence, “The criteria should include exemptions for projects . . .” State VMT legislation and CEQA will determine criteria for exemptions.

Under **Policy M-3.8: Land Use and VMT**, create a **Program M-3.8A**.

Work closely with Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) to analyze and predict probable job destinations for those living in planned walkable communities – where will they commute to and what will be the most time-efficient and cost-effective way for them to get there? Use this analysis to plan for appropriate housing density/ intensity and supporting transportation infrastructure for new development and redevelopment sites within the City. Housing in walkable neighborhoods needs to be near high frequency transit that goes directly to job centers in order to meet VMT and Plan Bay Area GHG reduction goals. Plan from a user perspective.

Under **Policy M-5.4: Meeting Local Circulation Needs around Highway Interchanges**, add **Program M-5.4B: Highway crossings**. Work with Caltrans and TAM to provide safe and separated highway underpass or overpass pathway crossings where needed, and whenever possible, to improve community access across highways and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. See **Program M-6.3A: Implementation of Pathway Improvements**.

In **Program M-6.2D: Safe Routes Programs**, after last sentence, include “Explore identifying Safe Routes for Seniors.”

From a bicycle and pedestrian safety perspective, under **Program M-6.3A: Implementation of Pathway Improvements**, replace in bullet #3, “multiuse path” with “separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities”. Replace in bullet #5, “Additional Class I and II lanes,” with “Additional Class I, II and IV lanes,”.

And, include these bullets:

- A northern bikeway through North San Rafael connecting Terra Linda with Marinwood and Lucas Valley
- East-west improvements along North San Pedro Road and Freitas Parkway (Listed as major routes or highest priority projects in “Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan”. North San Rafael projects tend to receive less attention but are important to include.)

In **Program M-7.4B: Assessment District Expansion**, add “Use revenue from parking district assessments for district maintenance such as street cleaning or desired district improvements.” after “improvements in the expanded area.”

In **Program M-7.7A: Residential Permit Parking**, add “to limit amount of parking in residential neighborhoods, to reduce possible parking spillover from nearby commercial areas, or alternately, to allow paid commercial parking in neighborhoods if revenues pay for community benefits or improvements.”

Under **Policy M-7.9: Parking for Transit Users**, add **Program M-7.9B: SMART Civic Center Station Parking**. “Plan for SMART Civic Center Station parking east of the station area.”

In **Policy M-7.10: Curbside Management**, add “Enable curb space allocation for allowed use to change as needed throughout the day.” after “drop-off, cycling, and other activities.”

In *Community Services and Infrastructure* **Goal CSI-4: Reliable, Efficiently Managed Infrastructure**, insert “Environmentally-friendly” before “Infrastructure”.

After **Policy CSI-4.3: Public Involvement in Infrastructure Planning**, insert, “Establish an Infrastructure and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (IEPAC).” before “Encourage public participation . . .” An IEPAC could be comprised of community members and stakeholders familiar with infrastructure needs and local utility service provider interests as well as those representing environmental protection, equity, and public health interests. IEPAC meetings would provide the public opportunity for discourse on the planning and design of City infrastructure projects. IEPAC would either inform design review or provide design review of City projects and complementary design review for major projects by other public agencies as outlined in **Program CSI-4.3A: Design Review**.

In **Policy CSI-4.7: Street Maintenance**, add “Safe, well-maintained neighborhood streets are an important component of the public realm and of San Rafael’s local transportation network.” after “programs.”

In **Program CSI-4.7A: Pavement Management**, link “Pavement Management Program” to the program (it’s not easily found in a search). Prioritize major streets based both on pavement condition and traffic safety. Prioritize local streets based on both pavement condition and equity. Create a fair process for community input. Update newly repaved streets with designs that accommodate more users and meet highest standards for safety wherever and whenever possible.

Under **Program CSI-4.7C: Sidewalk Repair**, City should monitor and analyze success of current cost-sharing program. City should regularly update sidewalk inventory, prioritization for repair, and funding sources and should include equity analysis in sidewalk repair prioritization. City should continue to track possible funding sources for sidewalk improvements and should consider other funding and cost-sharing approaches,

175 N. Redwood Dr., Ste. 135, San Rafael, CA 94903 | 415.485.6257 |
mcl@marinconservationleague.org

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such as City pays to maintain sidewalks as public ROW and property owner pays to maintain curbscuts such as driveway aprons.

In **Program CSI-4.7D: Street Lighting Program**, add “Install streetlight shields on LED streetlights per resident request.” after “environmental objectives.” And before “See also **Policy C-1.19** and **Program 1.19A** on night lighting and dark skies.”

In **Policy CSI-4.10: Storm Drainage Facilities**, add “Treat sediment from stream flow and deposition as a resource. Evaluate the potential for restoration of natural hydrologic function of creeks and drainageways wherever possible.” See **Policy C-1.9: Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways** recommendations above. Add “Treat sediment from stream flow and deposition as a resource.” to **Program CSI-4.10B: Silt Removal**.

In **Policy CSI-4.11: Canal Dredging**, add “Dispose of any contaminated dredge materials in an environmentally-sensitive way and prevent the spread of contaminated materials from entering the waters of San Francisco Bay.”

Add “When considering options, weigh cost and reliability with possible impacts to public and environmental health.” in **Policy CSI-4.16: Telecommunication Improvements**. There seem to be an increasing number of scientific studies mounting concerns about 5G.

In **Policy CSI-4.17: Reducing Landfilled Waste Disposal** and **Program CSI-4.17D: Waste Reduction Programs** add “Enforce City plastic bag and polystyrene foam bans and support the City’s plastic utensils “Ask First” campaign.” See suggested addition to **Policy C-1.9: Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways** above regarding reducing marine pollution from plastics.

Insert “Public” after “Inclusive” in *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* **Goal EDI-1: Authentic and Inclusive Participation**. After “family status” add “to ensure community priorities and values guide future public decision-making.” After “a more just and equitable city.” add “San Rafael strives to achieve clarity and transparency in City planning processes and promotes opportunities for effective public participation.”

Assign a City staff position the responsibility of empowering those traditionally marginalized or disenfranchised to effectively participate in local planning and public processes. Update San Rafael’s 2015 “Community Engagement Action Plan” to implement *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Element Programs*.

Please see Addendum for additional language (mostly active verb) suggested edits.

Thank you for the time and expertise with which you have guided this important document update and thank you for considering these comments. Marin Conservation League intends to participate in the public review of the draft Plans and the associated Environmental Impact Report as the public process continues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Powers
MCL Board member
San Rafael General Plan 2040 Steering Committee member

Comments on San Rafael's Draft 2040 General Plan Update
ADDENDUM
Kate Powers

As mentioned in letter, please define the plan's planning terminology in a glossary. For example, define:

- Development standards
- Development review process
- Community standards
- Performance standards and define how they are determined
- Land Use categories
- Uses – density/intensity standards
- Use permit requirements – link to where to find those
- Development rights
- Planned development zoning process – is it related to specific or precise plans and only to those plans?
- Planned development zoning districts
- Zoning ordinances vs applicable standards established by City's zoning regulations – are there public review opportunities as zoning changes?
- Significant public benefit and significant community benefit
- Floor Area Ratio limits (FAR)
- Short term rental standards vs short term rental regulations? Link to standards for eligibility, parking, # of guests
- Code enforcement program
- Define somewhere in document the design review process, vs planning review/ approval vs City Council approval
- Objective measurable design standards
- LAFCO
- Urban Service Area
- Entitlement process
- Parking District
- Downtown Parking Assessment District

[This list of examples is what came to mind while reading the Elements I provided comment on. I request staff add other planning terminology to list as appropriate. Thank you.]

Below are statements where verbs are requested to more strongly reflect clear planning intent as well as a few other edit or link suggestions.

OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Land Use Element

Page 1

Program LU-1.2A

Change “Implement Policy LU-2” to “Implement Policy LU-1.2”

Policy LU-1.3

Link “the City’s climate action goals” to SR’s CCAP.

Link “See the Mobility Element” to Mobility Element in GP 2040 document.

Page 2

Policy LU-1.5

Link “areas outside of San Rafael’s Urban Service boundary” to a full list of those areas (ie St. Vincent/Silveira?, San Rafael Rock Quarry?)

Policy LU-1.8

- a) Link “maximum indicated by General Plan” to where that info is located.

Page 3

Program LU-1.8A

Link “allowable lot sizes and densities in the zoning ordinance” and “height limits and a dwelling unit cap” to where defined.

Community Design and Preservation Element

Page 15

Policy CDP-1.6

Insert “while maintaining consistent graphic conventions and logos.” after “for individual districts”

Program CDP-3.1B

Replace “Explore potential” with “Create”.

Program CDP-4.1B

Replace “higher density” with “multifamily”.

Policy CDP-4.5

[Wouldn’t “Higher Density Design” and “new higher-density housing and mixed use projects” be subject to ODDS as in Program CDP-4.1B?]

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Conservation and Climate Change Element

Page 29

Policy C-1.2

Replace “Recognize” with “Optimize”

Page 30

Policy C-1.5

Link “See Goal S-3” to Goal in Safety Element

Policy C-1.9

After “habitat value”, insert “and hydrologic function”

Program C-1.9A

Replace “Consider adding” with “Add”.

Page 33

“See also Policy C-2.10 on conservation of nearshore waters,” Replace C-2.10 with C-3.6.

Program C-1.13A

Change “Data Base” to “Database”.

Page 34

Program C-1.14C

Replace “Consider using” with “Coordinate”.

Program C-1.14D

Replace “2019” with “2020”.

Program C-1.16C

Replace “Consider” with “Create and/or maintain”

Page 35

Program C-1.19A

Replace “Investigate the merits of adopting” with “Adopt”

Page 36

Program C-2.4B

Remove “associated”.

Program C-2.6B

Replace “Explore actions to encourage” with “Encourage”

Page 37

Program C-3.2A

Insert “Pollution Protection” between “Stormwater” and “Program”.

Page 42

Policy C-5.2

Replace “take into consideration consistency with” with “are consistent with”.

Safety Element

Page 55

Program S-1.3A

Change “is” to “are”.

Page 62

Program S-4.1A

Add “Protection” between “and” and “Action”. Replace (March 2019) with (August 2020).

CONNECTING THE CITY

Mobility Element

Page 73

Program M-1.1A

Replace “Continue to participate in the activities of” with “Actively participate in the planning activities of”

Policy M-1.3

Replace “Participate” with “Actively participate”

Program M-1.3A

Replace “Collaborate” with “Continue to collaborate”
[Project planning is already underway.]

Page 74

Change Policy T-1.5 to **Policy M-1.5**

Replace “Encourage” with “Support and utilize”

Goal M-2

Replace “provides” with “continuously improves”
[Goal is aspirational and something to work toward.]

Program M-2.1

Replace “consider” with “plan for”.

Program M-2.3

Replace period at end of sentence with “of all users.”

Policy M-2.3

Replace “Consider” with “Analyze”.

Page 75

Program M-2.5A

Replace “The City Traffic Engineer may” with “The City Traffic Engineer shall” in first sentence. Replace “Such studies may” with “Such studies should” in second sentence.
[However, I agree with others who have previously commented that this determination should not reside in the decision-making of one DPW staff member.]

Program M-2.5C

In second sentence, replace “City Traffic Engineer may” with “City Traffic Engineer will”.
[Similar to comment above, I agree with others that this determination should not reside in the decision-making of one DPW staff member.]

Policy M 2.6

In second sentence, insert “and lessen impacts of a project especially in the project area” between “improvements” and “as”.

Page 76

Policy M-2.8

Replace “Consider” with “Plan”.

Policy M-2.10

Replace “plans” with “planning”.
[Plans often end up on file. Planning is an ongoing action.]

Policy M2.12

Replace “Consider” with “Look for”.

Page 78

Policy M-3.4

It’s not clear how San Rafael will “encourage”, influence or impact (a), (b), or (c).

Program M-3.4A

What tools does San Rafael have available to “encourage” telecommuting?

Page 80

Goal M-4

Insert “efficient” after “affordable” and before “alternative” in first sentence.

Policy M-4.1

Remove “as”.

Page 81

Program M-4.3A

Replace “continue” with “improve”.

[SMART train collisions continue to cause fatalities.]

Page 85

Program M-6.1A

Replace “Maintain a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan” with “Maintain San Rafael’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan”.

Page 87

Program M-6.8C

Insert “and Bicycle” in program title between “Pedestrian” and “Facilities”.

Community Services and Infrastructure Element

Page 101

Program CSI-4.17E

Replace “Consider” with “Support”.