



Historic Resources

CHAPTER

5

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5.1 Downtown San Rafael: Historic Context

Downtown San Rafael has evolved dramatically over the past two hundred years, reinforcing San Rafael's prominence as a cultural, civic, and economic center of Marin County. Downtown is unusual in having significant parts of its Main Street and surrounding historic urban fabric intact and well-preserved. This unique context can influence and shape future built form.

Introduction

The area that is now the City of San Rafael was once the site of several Coast Miwok villages, including the village of Nanaguani along San Rafael Creek, part of a salt marsh flat, inhabited by the Aguasto¹ tribe. Originally planned as an asistencia (hospital) for Native Americans who became ill at Mission Dolores in present day San Francisco, San Rafael Arcángel gained full mission status in 1822². The Mission was largely abandoned by 1840, and ruins of the buildings were removed in 1870³.

San Rafael grew gradually after California gained statehood in 1850, and was named seat of Marin County in 1851. Over the following decades San Rafael entered a period of accelerated growth.

The North Pacific Coast Railroad (NPC) was established in 1871, connecting San Rafael to San Quentin, and in 1884 a new passenger depot was constructed on Tamalpais Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets. The depot building that stands today is in the original station location

Figure 5.1 (Left) Mission San Rafael Arcángel, circa 1949

The buildings that stand today include reconstructions from 1919 and 1949. Image source: Marin History Museum.

Figure 5.2 (Right) The 1929 depot replaced the original structure shown here, built in 1884.

Image source: Northwestern Pacific Railroad Depot, 1976 (Historical/ Architectural Survey Form, Charles Hall Page & Associates, Inc., 1976)



and still orients to the active rail lines running north and south through San Rafael.

Spurred by advances in transportation and train service to San Rafael, hotels and saloons were constructed to host a vibrant hospitality industry of summer and weekend visitors⁴. In the early 1870s wealthy “captains of industry” began building estates in San Rafael as a result of better access to the city by rail and ferry. These “railroad suburbs” continued to develop through the beginning of the 20th century.

By 1900, Fourth Street had developed into a premier shopping center, with numerous businesses opening on B and C Streets in the blocks below Fourth Street. These early commercial corridors contained a mix of one-story single-business establishments and multistory mixed-use buildings. Commercial buildings aligned with turn-of-the-century regional trends of Victorian-period residential architectural styles, including bay windows, narrow storefronts, and decorative architectural features⁵.

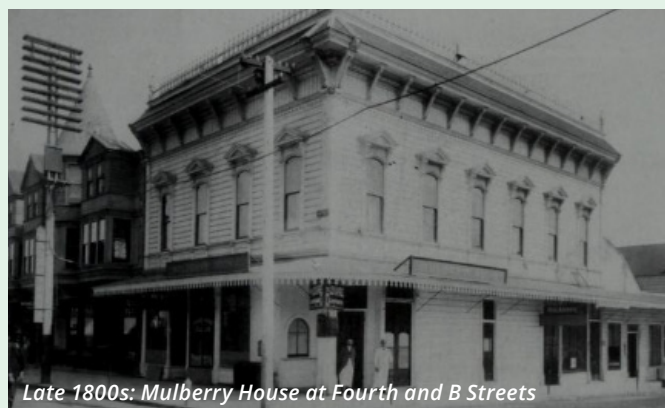
Starting in 1903, the NWP Interurban electric trains, an invention by the short-lived North Shore Railroad, connected San Rafael to the Sausalito Ferry terminal,

now allowing a less affluent population to also commute regularly to jobs in San Francisco. An influx of new residents came to San Rafael following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, triggering new residential development surrounding the Downtown core. The expansion of these neighborhoods created a foundation for the mixed residential and commercial areas in what is now the West End Village, and into the Forbes Addition to the west and Gerstle Park to the south. This era also saw an increase in civic development, including the Classical Revival Victrola Pavilion/ San Rafael Improvement Club (1917) and the San Rafael Public Library (1919) at the corner of Fifth and E Streets⁶.

The opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937 and the increasing popularity of the automobile created new connectivity between Marin County and San Francisco, effectively ending the rail transit era. The last electric commuter train departed from San Rafael in 1941, the same year a viaduct for US-101 was completed over San Rafael Canal⁷. This raised freeway alignment through the heart of San Rafael alongside the railroad tracks created a visual and physical barrier between east and central San Rafael. Though San Rafael was still a satellite of San



Late 1800s: Building at Fourth and C Streets



Late 1800s: Mulberry House at Fourth and B Streets

Figure 5.3 Historic photos tracing Downtown's evolution: 1800s
Image source: Marin County History Museum.

Francisco, it had now entered a period of increasing prosperity with the town's first high rise building, the Albert Building, completed in 1920. San Rafael was also now home to several opera houses and theaters including El Camino Theater, Gordon's Opera House, and the Rafael Theatre.

During World War II the Bay Area became a major hub for wartime industry, bringing waves of migration to San Rafael. This stark increase in population necessitated new housing development, resulting in the construction of housing tracts and subdivisions outside of Downtown and into the eastern and northern portions of San Rafael. These events refocused Downtown development to provide locally oriented goods and services to many working families now residing in San Rafael. Even as the automobile became more ubiquitous, neighborhoods such as the West End developed a "village" like character of small shops and residences. This period also saw the beginnings of larger auto-focused commercial developments, like those seen east of the freeway at Montecito Plaza⁸. Following WWII, housing started to increase, and the Sun Valley, Terra Linda, Glenwood, Peacock Gap and Marinwood neighborhoods were developed on former ranch lands from 1953 through the 1970s.

In the years immediately after the war, Fourth Street fortified its place as the commercial and cultural center of Marin County. Downtown San Rafael continued to prosper, as department stores, restaurants, the County Courthouse, City Hall and even the first Kaiser

Permanente clinic in town, combined with churches, nearby residences, and emerging postwar industries started defining the modern city. The explosive growth occurring in San Rafael at the time can be seen in shifts of building materials, techniques, and styles, extant in the facade of the Crocker (now Wells Fargo) Bank building at the south-west corner of Fourth and B Streets. The built environment of Downtown has continued to evolve with the changing commercial and residential needs of San Rafael, facilitated by the formation of the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency which influenced street improvements, a building facade restoration program, and the development of parking structures and multifamily housing developments.

From the mid-twentieth century to the present, Downtown San Rafael continues to be centered on the Fourth and B Street commercial corridors, which still display a great variety of period architecture from the 1860s through the mid-twentieth century embodied in store, bank and restaurant buildings. Initially centered on the Mission and maritime routes to San Francisco, San Rafael became, in turn, a railroad suburb, a regional wartime economic center, an auto-oriented county seat, and the commercial and cultural center of Marin County. The changing character of Downtown is embodied in its varied architectural forms which continue to demonstrate the course of San Rafael's development.

Additional information may be found in Appendix V: Historic Resources - Additional Information.

Endnotes for Section 5.1:

1. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 9.
2. "History of San Rafael," San Rafael Chamber, website. Accessed April 24, 2019. <http://srchamber.com/history-of-san-rafael/>; and, "History of Mission San Rafael Arcángel," California Missions Foundation, website. Accessed April 24, 2019. <http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission-san-rafael/>.
3. California Missions Foundation. (2017, September 03). San Rafael Arcángel. Retrieved July 29, 2020, from [http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission-](http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission-san-rafael/)

[san-rafael/](#)

4. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, 37.
5. City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Neighborhood Commercial Buildings: Historic Context Statement 1865-1965-Draft for Public Review*, February 17, 2016.
6. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, 47.
7. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Modern San Rafael: 1940-2000*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 14.
8. *Images of America: Modern San Rafael: 1940-2000*, 9.



Figure 5.4 Historic photos tracing Downtown's evolution: early to mid-1900s

Image source: Marin County History Museum



5.2 Existing Historic Preservation Policies and Regulations

To protect historic resources, the City of San Rafael has developed several policies outlined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance adopted in 1978, and reflected in the General Plan 2040.

Historic Preservation Ordinance and policies

The General Plan and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines goals and policies for Historic Preservation.

Adopted in 1978, the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 2.18 of the San Rafael Municipal Code) establishes guidelines regarding remodeling or demolishing historic buildings listed as landmarks, and those within a historic district. The ordinance is implemented by the Design Review Board and Planning Commission, and the City Council has the authority to add or eliminate properties or districts to the Historical/Architectural Survey.

While comprehensive, the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance lacks several ordinance provisions that are recommended by the California Office of Historic Preservation, including:

- A provision for the creation of a local historic preservation commission and the responsibilities and powers given to that commission;
- Preservation incentives; and
- Definitions of key terms used in the ordinance.

Key issues

The following issues were identified as part of the Downtown Precise Plan effort:

- Prior to the Downtown Precise Plan, the City lacked a formal historic context statement which made it difficult to determine the historic significance of properties. Since the completion of the survey and subsequent evaluations, the City has developed an historic context statement which can be used for further or future study.
- Past surveys had also lacked clarity about the status of historic resources and had not been updated in the recommended five-year interval.
- Several resources in past surveys were listed as requiring additional research, and listed structures' disposition was not maintained.
- The Historic Preservation Ordinance (dating to the late 1970's) is not fully aligned with current procedures. The ordinance is also not aligned with current CEQA Guidelines defining historic resources.
- The Planning Commission's past review of historic projects has been hampered from a lack of formal training on the subject.

- The Historic Preservation Ordinance does not formally require the use of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR) when evaluating projects, resulting in less predictable outcomes. Discretionary projects that comply with the SISR are often categorically exempt from CEQA.
- The Historic Preservation Ordinance lacks incentives for historic preservation.
- There may be cases when a building or structure is of local historic or cultural importance but is not eligible under the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historic Resources. The City lacks incentives and funding sources encouraging the renovation and adaptive reuse of such buildings.
- The application process for establishing local landmark status is outdated, and should be updated by the City, along with information about applicable fee.



Figure 5.5 *San Rafael Public Library*
Image source: City of San Rafael

5.3 Survey and Inventory of Historic Resources

This section summarizes the updated survey of Downtown's historic resources and key findings.

2019-2020 Survey and inventory update

In 1976-1977, the City of San Rafael (City) conducted a survey of older, architecturally significant buildings to determine the number and quality of historic structures within the City. Known as the "Historical/Architectural Survey, Final Inventory List of Structures and Areas", it was prepared by Charles Hall Page and Associates, Inc. and City staff and published in 1978. The work was completed using the California Office of Historic Preservation standards and criteria. The survey was last administratively updated in 1986.

As part of the Precise Plan process, the consultant team updated the 1977/1986 survey. This included properties that are now over 50 years old or were excluded from the 1978/1986 survey and inventory. While the preservation standards have not changed significantly from the time the previous surveys were conducted, the number of buildings up for consideration did increase, as the City has grown older. With volunteer assistance from members of San Rafael Heritage, a local advocacy group for the identification and protection of historic resources, survey field work was conducted for 572 properties, including:

- 79 properties already listed in the 1978/1986 Survey, 41 of which were determined to need re-evaluation;

- 344 properties with listed construction dates of 1969 or earlier; and
- 149 properties without listed construction dates, for which additional research was required.

A field assessment was made for each property, documenting its apparent build date, condition and level of integrity. The survey focused on areas having a high probability of having potential resources, and a higher likelihood of seeing redevelopment in the near future. Based on the 2019-2020 survey's findings, the City made determinations to further investigate 159 surveyed properties that demonstrated potential as local historic landmarks or district contributors.

Of these, 90 properties were determined to be eligible historic resources, and two potentially eligible historic districts were identified. In addition to resources identified in the survey, there are seven historic structures previously designated as individual historic landmarks and two previously designated historic districts within the Plan Area. Figure 5.6 shows the newly identified historic resources in the Plan Area and their status. More information on the surveyed resources is in Appendix V: Historic Resources - Additional Information.

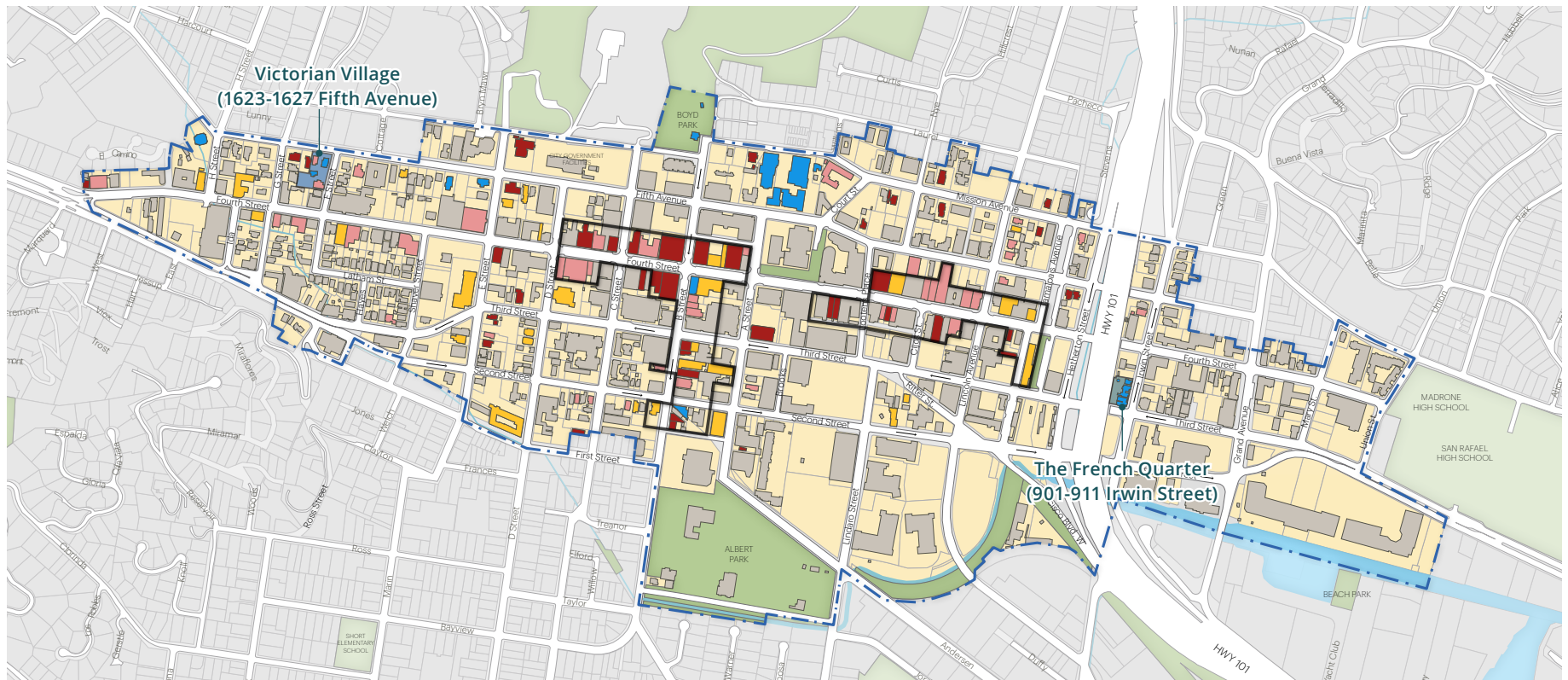
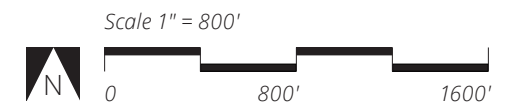


Figure 5.6 Existing Downtown historic resources and newly identified resources (2019-2020 survey)

Source: City of San Rafael, 2020

- Existing historic landmarks designated prior to 2019-20 survey
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 survey
- Potentially eligible historic districts
- Eligible as an individual resource in 2019-20 survey
- Eligible as a contributing resource in 2019-20 survey when inside a Historic District. When located outside a Historic District, considered a secondary resource
- Potential resource needing further study

Note: The "secondary resources" include buildings that would be eligible as contributing resources in the event the surrounding area is deemed eligible as a historic district in the future. Areas where such resources are concentrated should be monitored for future eligibility as historic districts.



Downtown Sub-Areas: Existing Historic Character and Role in Downtown's Evolution

This section analyzes each of the four Downtown sub-areas in terms of how existing historic resources influence neighborhood character, in order to guide recommendations for future development in each sub-area.

Downtown Gateway sub-area

The Downtown Gateway sub-area is bounded on the east by Irwin Street and on the west by Lootens, Lindaro and Nye Streets. The area runs north-south from the offices and residences on Mission Avenue, to the auto-oriented businesses on Second Street, and the Biomarin office campus south of Second Street.

Centered on the rail line, this area contains some of the oldest structures in San Rafael. The area developed almost simultaneously with the denser Downtown Core to its west. The high number of commercial storefronts mixed with wood and stucco residences further north give the area its transitional character, between the commercial buildings to the west and the residential neighborhoods north of Mission Avenue.

The south-east section of the sub-area is centered on the SMART Station itself, abutting the freeway. It consists mostly of one to two-story block-form structures with some three-story structures scattered along Fourth street. Newer construction is seen along the Third and Second Street couplet, which abuts the five and six-story developments just outside the area to the south. Lot sizes

in this area are generally larger than in the other, older parts of Downtown.

The northern section of this sub-area has residential house-form buildings on larger lots, set back from the street with ample setbacks between homes. Fourth Street bisects the neighborhood east to west, with house-form residential and office spaces to the north and mixed commercial block-form buildings with retail and services to the south.

The Downtown Gateway sub-area overlaps with the eastern portions of the potentially eligible East Downtown historic district. Figure 5.8 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status, including potential resources that need further study.

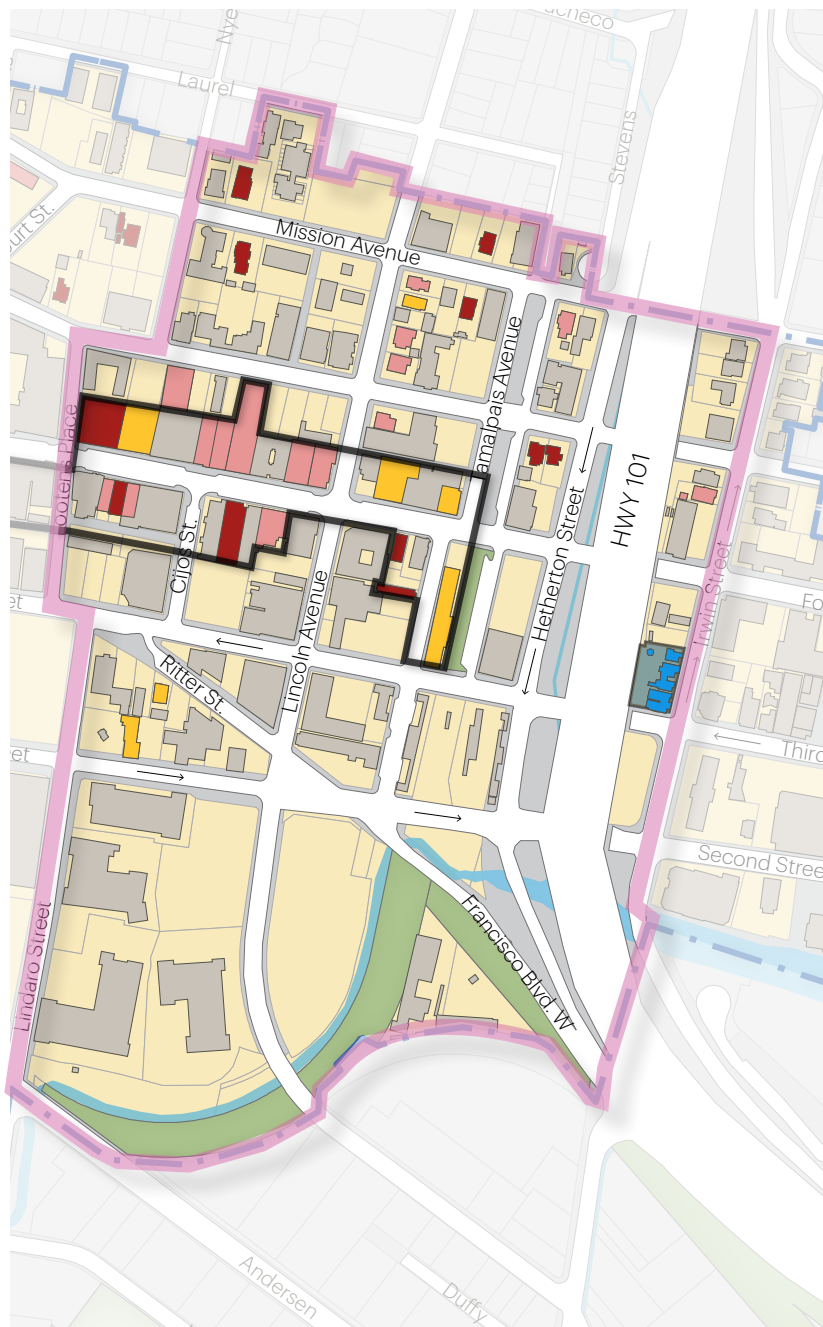


Figure 5.7 Examples of historic resources in the Downtown Gateway sub-area (right)

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1 1110 Lincoln Avenue
- 2 1010 Lootens Street
- 3 634 Fifth Avenue
- 4 907 Mission Avenue

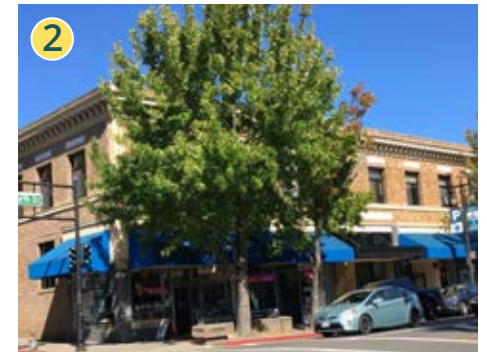


Figure 5.8 Status of historic resources in the Downtown Gateway sub-area (left)

Source: City of San Rafael, 2020

- Downtown Gateway sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20
- Potentially eligible historic district
- Eligible as an individual resource
- Eligible as a contributing resource within a historic district, and as a secondary resource outside a historic district
- Potential resource needing further study

Downtown Core sub-area

The Downtown Core is bounded on the north by Mission Avenue, in the south by First Street and extends from Lootens, Lindaro and Nye Streets in the east to E Street on the west.

Centered on the intersection of Fourth and B Streets, this is the oldest and most heavily developed area within Downtown, with a mix of house and block-form structures on smaller lots, with commercial frontages and few setbacks between buildings. Stucco and brick storefronts predominate, with few front yards or family residences.

Moving west along Third and Fourth Streets, building heights shift to one- and two-story mid-century block-form buildings with storefronts. Parts of the Downtown Core were affected by the 1957 fire, where we now see mid-century block-form construction on larger lots.

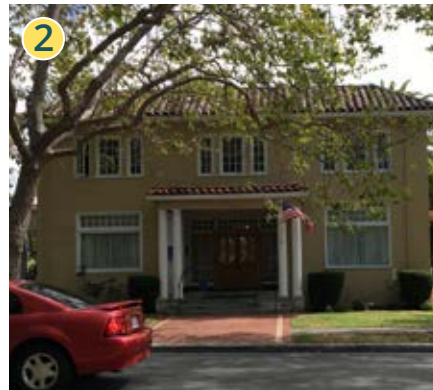
The former San Rafael - San Quentin Railroad tracks ran from Anderson Drive onto what is now Second Street. While the tracks are now gone, they are reflected in the footprints of buildings along Second and B streets. This portion of the Downtown Core is less dense and is made up of mixed residential and commercial spaces with a number of single-family homes.

The Downtown Core contains the potentially eligible West Downtown historic district as well as the western end of the potentially eligible East Downtown historic district. Figure 5.10 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status, including potential resources that need further study.

Figure 5.9 *Examples of historic resources in the Downtown Core sub-area*

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1 1307 Second Street
- 2 1022 E Street
- 3 1244 Fourth Street
- 4 1118 Fourth Street



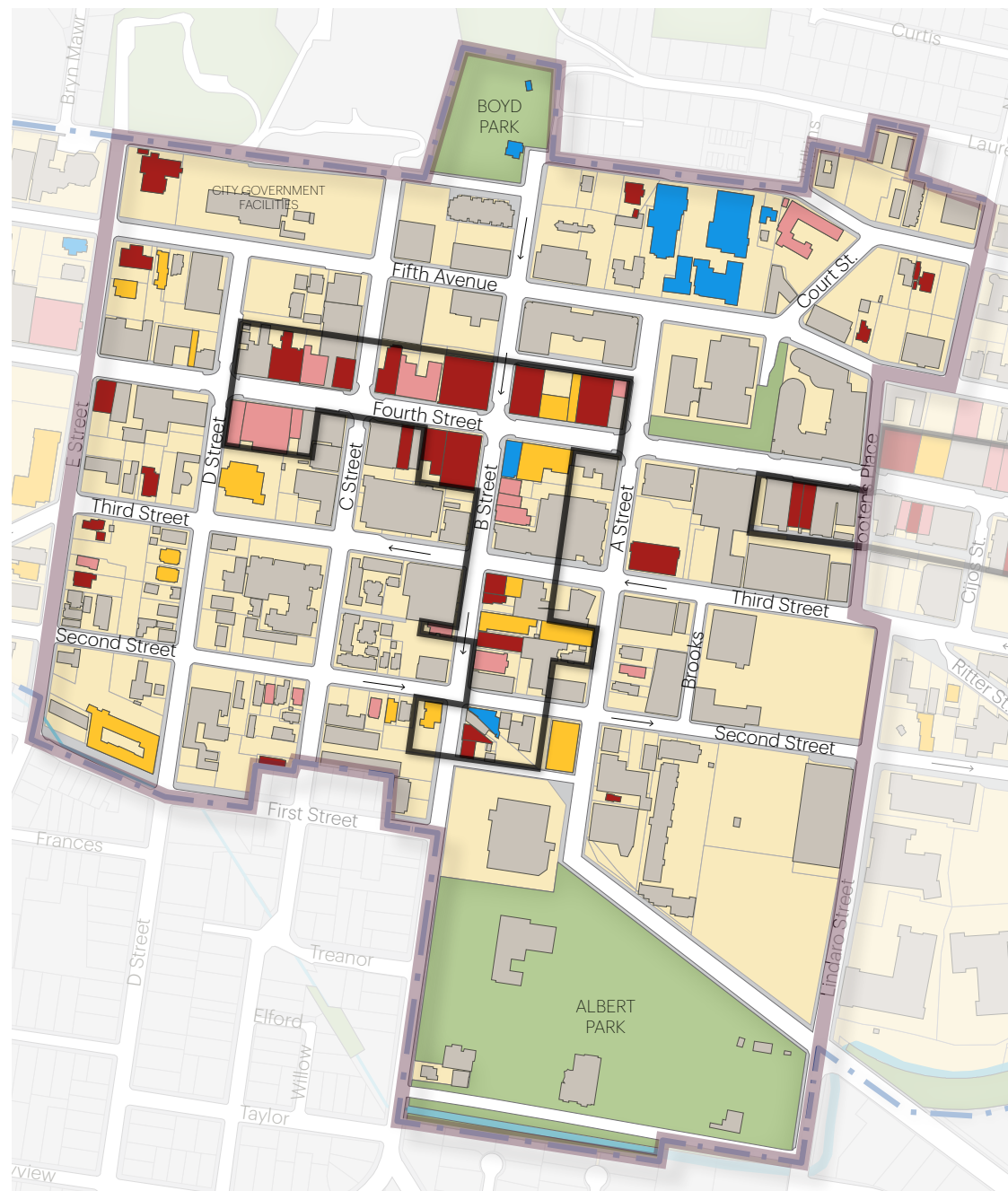


Figure 5.10 Status of historic resources in the Downtown Core sub-area

Source: City of San Rafael, 2020

- Downtown Core sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20
- Potentially eligible historic district
- Eligible as an individual resource
- Eligible as a contributing resource within a historic district, and as a secondary resource outside a historic district
- Potential resource needing further study

West End Village sub-area

The West End Village extends along Fourth Street from E Street on the east to the intersection of Fourth Street and West End Avenue. Its southern border runs along Second Street.

The West End Village is characterized by a wide range of building ages and styles, including many buildings along Fourth Street with facades at the front property line. A number of buildings date from the late 1800s and early 1900s. The area also includes single-family residences and mid-century retail storefronts and centers, some with dedicated off-street parking.

The retail areas along Fourth Street are largely contiguous with portions of the Downtown Core to the west, dominated by one- and two-story block-form buildings. Interspersed are some smaller house-form buildings as well some larger, three-story buildings.

The West End Village is not covered by either of the potentially eligible historic districts. Figure 5.12 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status, including potential resources that need further study.

Montecito Commercial sub-area

The Montecito Commercial Area is bounded on the west by Irwin Street and on the east by Union Street. The area extends north to Fifth Avenue and is bordered by San Rafael Canal to the south.

Because of its location east of the former railroad tracks and modern highway, the area is much less dense than the Downtown areas to the west. Most structures are built on large lots with large surface parking lots. The north end of the sub-area along Fifth Avenue begins to transition to the more residential neighborhoods to the north and east, containing smaller retail spaces, some restaurants, and some single-family residences. The eastern most portions are mixed-use and abut San Rafael Fire Station 52. Figure 5.13 shows the extents of the Montecito Commercial sub-area. The 2019-20 survey did not find any potential resources in this sub-area, and it does not overlap with any of the potentially eligible historic districts.

Figure 5.11 Examples of existing historic structures in the West End Village

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1 1533 Fourth Street
- 2 1617 Fourth Street
- 3 1848 Fourth Street



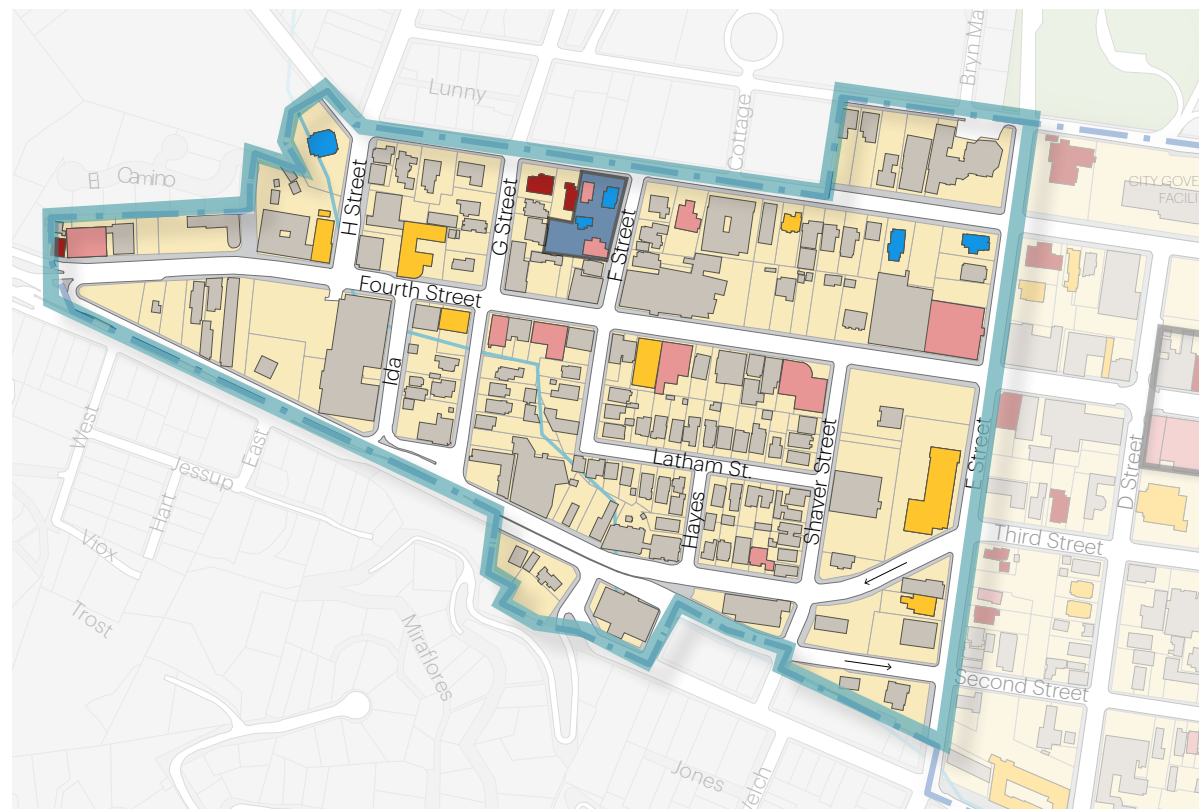


Figure 5.12 Status of historic resources in the West End Village sub-area

Source: City of San Rafael, 2020

- West End sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20
- Potentially eligible historic district
- Eligible as an individual resource
- Eligible as a contributing resource within a historic district, and as a secondary resource outside a historic district
- Potential resource needing further study

Note: Additional historic resources exist along Latham Street and G Street, but these areas were excluded from the 2019-2020 survey.

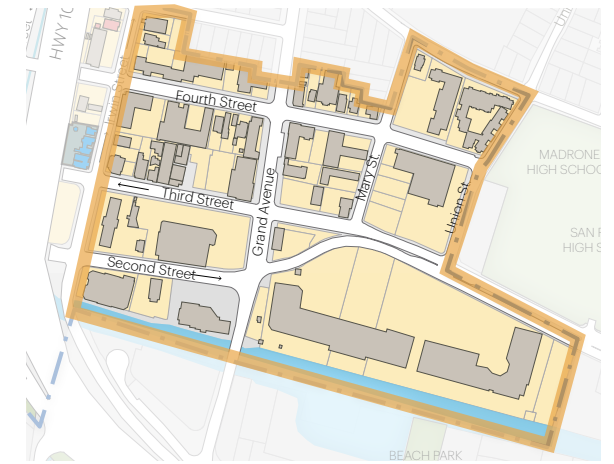


Figure 5.13 Montecito Commercial: the survey revealed no potential historic resources in this sub-area

Source: City of San Rafael, 2020

- Montecito Commercial sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20
- Potentially eligible historic district
- Eligible as an individual resource
- Eligible as a contributing resource within a historic district, and as a secondary resource outside a historic district
- Potential resource needing further study

5.4 Potentially Eligible Historic Districts

The 2019-2020 survey of Downtown's historic resources identified two areas that meet state and federal eligibility criteria as historic districts.

In California, historic districts are defined as a group of structures assembled around unifying historical significance with a defined boundary of contributing structures. Per guidelines established by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and United States National Park Service (NPS), an eligible historic district can be considered a historic resource for CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) analysis. All properties within a historic district are subject to some level of review depending on the type of project, the building in question, and its location within the district. As a result of the current 2019-2020 survey, two areas were identified that meet CEQA criteria as eligible historic districts for the Plan Area. These are shown in Figure 5.6 and described below.

West Downtown Historic District

Description

The West Downtown historic district lies within the Downtown Core sub-area, and runs along Fourth Street from D Street to A Street and along B Street from Fourth to Second Street. This potentially eligible historic district is characterized by heavy foot traffic and a high density of retail and dining businesses, and is centered on the intersection of B and Fourth Streets, an area of major historic significance. This area now contains many banking institutions, retail shops and restaurants along B Street,

and is the most built-up portion of the historic district with several multistory structures on Fourth Street, and intact stretches of block-form, two-story structures. The southern portion of this district extends down B Street to the site of the first station for the San Rafael - San Quentin Railroad. The track footprint can still be seen at the intersection of B and Second Streets.

This potentially eligible historic district is an area of mixed-use retail, financial, commercial, and dining structures that embodies the development of Downtown San Rafael over the last century and more.

Character-defining features

- Predominantly block-form buildings;
- Ground floor retail with occupied upper floors;
- Full lot coverage, creating a continuous street wall;
- Ground floors generally taller than upper stories;
- Recessed entryways;
- Transoms and awnings;
- Street-fronting fenestration, with a high number of bay windows and corner turrets; and
- Limited landscaping.

East Downtown Historic District

Description

The East Downtown historic district covers portions of the Downtown Gateway and Downtown Core sub-areas. It runs along Fourth Street, from a few parcels west of Lootens Place to the rail line on the east, and extending south to Third Street.

This potentially eligible district covers the eastern end of the nearly contiguous Fourth Street corridor. It is broadly similar in character to the larger West Downtown historic district, containing a mix of one and two-story commercial block-form buildings. It also contains several house-form structures featuring wooden facades and bay windows above commercial storefronts.

Similar to the rest of Fourth Street, this potentially eligible historic district is pedestrian-oriented with auto traffic directed south along the Second and Third Street couplet. Traffic becomes heavier near Lincoln Avenue and beyond in the proximity of US-101 and the SMART station, giving it a transitional character that can be seen in the larger lots and transit-oriented businesses bordering the district.

Character-defining features

- Predominantly block-form buildings;
- Ground floor retail, with limited upper floor occupancy;
- Full-lot coverage, creating a continuous street wall;
- Recessed entryways;
- Stucco, wood panel, and brick storefronts;
- Awnings, canopies, some transoms;
- Street-fronting fenestration, with a high number of bay windows;
- Rounded parapets, cornices; and
- Limited landscaping.



Figure 5.14 *Examples of historic resources in the potentially eligible historic districts*

- 1** 881 Fourth Street
- 2** 925 Fourth Street

5.5 Recommendations for Historic Preservation Ordinance

This section outlines recommendations and additions to San Rafael's Historic Preservation Ordinance, in accordance with the guidelines provided by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP).

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) serves as the governing body for federal and state mandated historic preservation programs. OHP oversees incentive programs for historic preservation, and provides tools and guidelines for local municipalities to further the identification and protection of historic resources. It does not have direct purview over local preservation ordinances, but provides guidelines based on proven effective processes and procedures for California cities with goals to protect historic resources.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance of the San Rafael Municipal Code (Chapter 2.18) follows a majority of the OHP recommended guidelines, but is lacking in a few provisions. The Precise Plan recommends the following improvements to the ordinance.

■ Project review

The OHP recommends the establishment of a Historic Preservation Commission, outside of the Planning Commission. However, this may not be feasible in all cases. In San Rafael, the powers and duties over historic resources are currently assigned to the Planning Commission, but does not include provisions for proper education or training on historic resources. The Precise

Plan recommends that the City pursue one of the following, as feasible:

- A full Historic Preservation Commission as recommended by OHP; or
- An advisory committee made up of a Design Review Board member, a Planning Commission member and an Architectural Historian who has up-to-date training on current preservation standards; or
- An on-call professionally qualified Architectural Historian familiar with CEQA compliance, for additional analysis required for projects related to historic resources.

■ Incentives

Incentives should be included in the Historic Preservation Ordinance that encourage stewardship of historic resources, including recognition. Preservation incentives should be structured to apply to all designated and potential historic resources, including lower-rated buildings and contributors to historic districts, where sensitive restoration or rehabilitation would achieve Downtown's urban design and placemaking objectives. Possible incentives include:

- Use of the California Historical Building Code (CHBC);
- National Trust Preservation Funds;
- Government agency grants and loans such as revolving loans, Community Development Block (CDBG) grants, and HUD programs;
- Historic Rehabilitation Financing Program;
- Preservation easements and facade easements for additions to existing historic resources to minimize impacts to the resource;
- Permit fee waivers: reduction or elimination of building plan check or permit fees where feasible;
- Tax credits such as Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, Mills Act credits, certified district, seismic, ADA, etc.;
- Transfer of Development Rights program tailored to preservation and restoration provisions including maintaining stepbacks; and
- Official recognition of landmark properties, historic districts, and other resources.

■ Historic designation process

To simplify and streamline the designation and identification of historic resources for the purposes of CEQA, the criteria outlined in the Ordinance to designate landmarks and historic districts could better align with those of the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), which are:

- **Criterion 1:** Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- **Criterion 2:** Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;

- **Criterion 3:** Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values;
- **Criterion 4:** Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

The Plan recommends that the criteria for designation should be aligned with state standards, to make the Ordinance more predictable, consistent with state and federal law, and legally defensible.

■ Historic Districts

Designation of larger historic districts should include the determination of “contributing” versus “non-contributing” properties. Properties that are contributing would fall within the period(s) of significance identified for the District, and present character-defining features unique to the property and district.

The Precise Plan effort requires that all affected properties in the Plan Area older than 50 years be evaluated for their potential eligibility as historic resources. The identification of the two new potential historic districts only establishes their eligibility and are not designations. If some of the associated incentives are desired; or the City/ residents/ property owners determine that it is in the best interest of long range planning, these eligible districts can be designated as either local or National Register Historic Districts, allowing the various incentives that are available to be utilized.

In addition, the Plan recommends that additional survey and review be carried out in areas that could not be included in the 2019-2020 survey, to identify potential historic resources.

5.6 Procedures for Additions, Alterations and Demolition

This section outlines the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR).

Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR)

The intent of the SISR is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The SISR pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy, and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. These standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment, as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. To comply with CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act), a rehabilitation project must be determined by a qualified architectural historian to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s) and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The following standards are to be applied comprehensively to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or

alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired¹.

Allowed modifications

In the following pages are tables that provide guidance for modifications to historic resources in the Plan Area. Tables 5A and 5B provide guidance about the types of projects that may be undertaken on historic resources or on properties directly adjacent to historic resources, based on SISR and on the Downtown Form-Based Code standards detailed in Chapter Nine. Table 5C lists procedures to be followed for different project types related to historic resources in the Plan Area.

Please note that where compliance with a specific standard is required, a qualified architectural historian must evaluate the project for its level of compliance with the applicable standard. Very basic compliance questions and repairs can be approved by staff without requiring the services of a qualified historian. The potentially eligible historic districts are not discussed in Tables 5A and 5B.

This is because, as historic resources in their own right, the SISR standards apply to all eligible historic districts. Demolition and relocation of entire historic districts are not compatible with the SISR nor generally feasible. Alterations, however are possible as long as they comply with the SISR, especially #2, #9, and #10. When applying the standards to a district, the district must be considered as a whole.

Demolition of a contributing resource should be considered as an alteration to the historic district and must be evaluated for its impact on the district as a whole. As contributing resources are removed from an historic district, additional cumulative impacts may also occur. While each individual alteration may not cause a significant overall impact, taken together they may begin to alter the defining characteristics of the historic district. It is therefore essential that the City monitor cumulative impacts to the eligible historic districts while allowing alterations to occur. A qualified architectural historian must evaluate both the impact of each removed resource and consider the overall cumulative impact made by all alterations to the historic district over time.

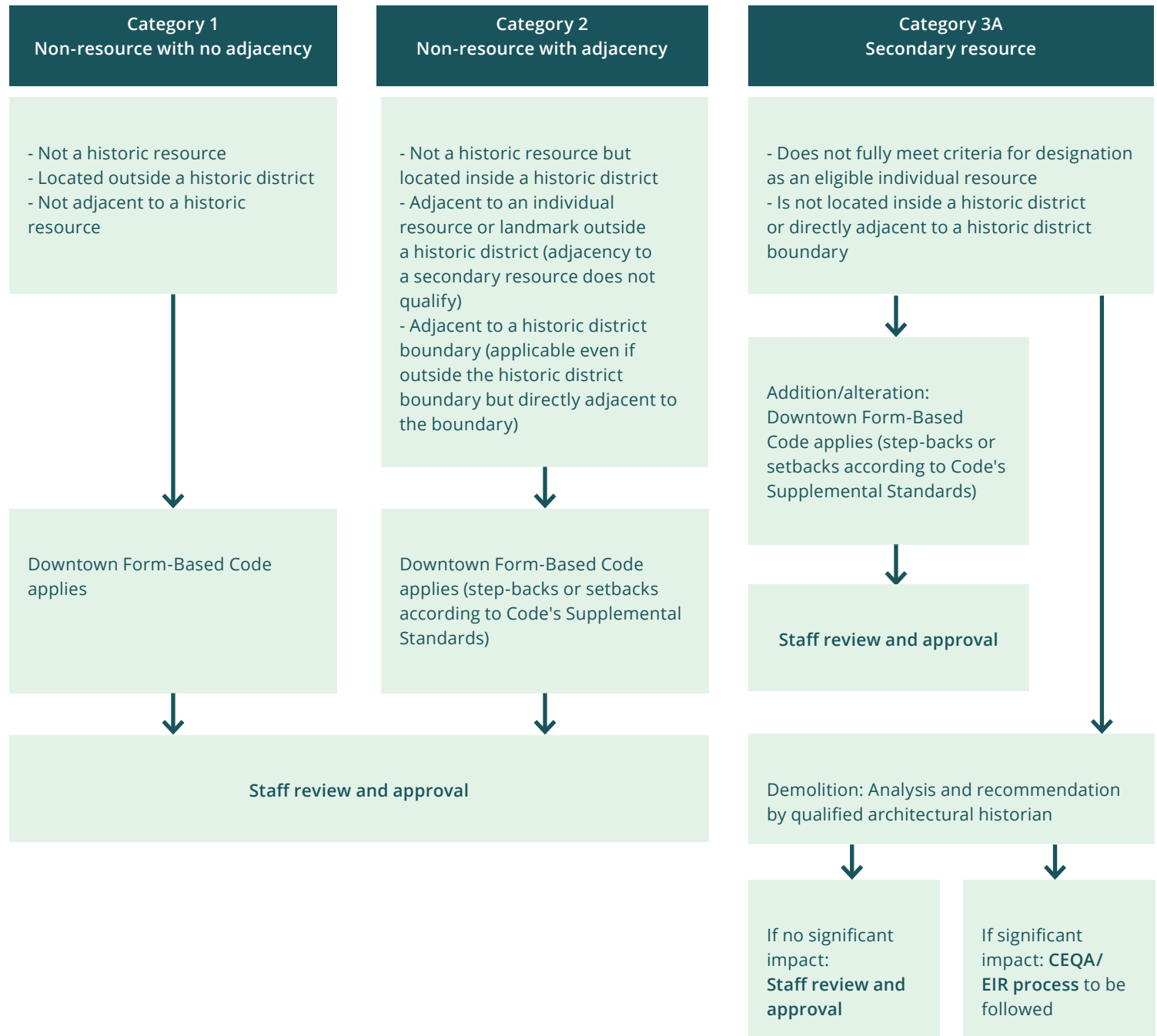
Additionally all new construction within an historic district is considered adjacent to an historic resource, being within one; and is therefore subject to the standards defined in the Downtown Code. "In-district" project designs not relating to historical resources that do not follow the Code will need qualified architectural historian evaluation. Finally, properties within the Plan Area that are not historic resources and are not adjacent to a resource are not bound by SISR standards and must follow the standards defined in the Downtown Code.

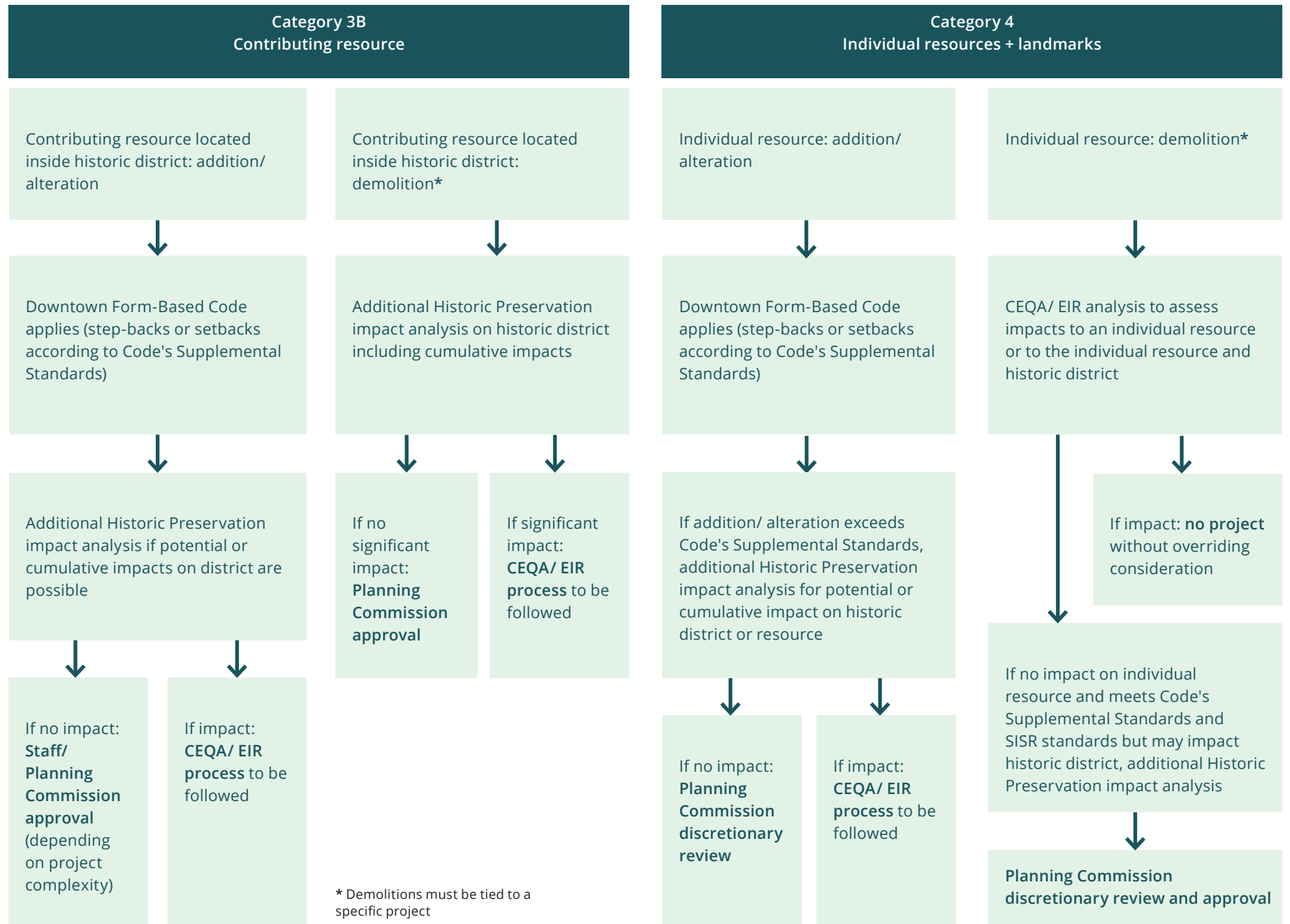
¹ U.S Department of the Interior. "Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines-Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service." Accessed November 5, 2020. <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>.

Table 5A. Allowed modifications to Downtown historic resources (block-form and house-form) based on historic status			
Type of modification	National Register/ state/ local landmark	Individually eligible resource	Contributing resource to a historic district and a secondary resource (outside a historic district)
Demolition	Not permitted	Not permitted	Permitted. In the case of contributing resources, must avoid a cumulative or significant impact to the district, to be determined by a qualified architectural historian. For secondary resources, analysis and approval required from a qualified architectural historian.
Relocation	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian’s approval.	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian’s recommendation.	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified architectural historian’s recommendation.
Alterations	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2; and avoid altering defining features. Alterations must not render the resource ineligible for listing as a National Register/ state/ local landmark.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features. Alterations must not render the resource ineligible for listing as a National Register/ state/ local landmark.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features. Alterations must not render the resource ineligible for listing as a National Register/ state/ local landmark.
Additions	<p>Permitted up to 10 feet* for house-form resources and 20 feet* for block-form resources, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9.</p> <p><i>* Note that the height limitation for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. Additional height is allowed if recommended by a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property.</i></p>	<p>Permitted up to 10 feet* for house-form resources and 20 feet* for block-form resources, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9.</p> <p><i>* Note that the height limitation for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. Additional height is allowed if recommended by a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property.</i></p>	<p>For contributors within a historic district: Permitted up to 10 feet* for house-form resources and 20 feet* for block-form resources, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9.</p> <p><i>* Note that the height limitation for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. Additional height is allowed if recommended by a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property.</i></p> <p>For secondary resources outside a historic district, no height limitations apply.</p>
Repairs	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain Integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.

Table 5B. Allowed modifications to Downtown non-historic structures (non-resources) adjacent to an individual resource/landmark/historic district	
Type of Modification	Note: Applicable to all non-resources within a historic district, and all non-resources outside of a historic district that are either adjacent to a historic district or adjacent to an individual resource. Adjacency to a secondary resource does not qualify.
Demolition	Permitted. Any demolition must avoid potential damage to the adjacent historic resource through vibration or otherwise.
New Construction or Additions	<p>Permitted. Any new construction must avoid potential damage to the historic resource. New construction/ additions permitted up to maximum heights for the relevant zone, but require a minimum building setback as per the zone requirements at no more than 20 feet* above the height of the adjacent historic resource*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards (refer Section 3.2.070: Historic Resource Adjacency Standards of Chapter Nine).</p> <p><i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i></p>
Alterations	Permitted. Must comply with Downtown Form-Based Code including Supplemental Standards.
Repairs	Permitted.

Table 5C. Procedural options for different categories of projects in the Plan Area









Transportation + Parking

CHAPTER

6

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6.1 Multimodal Approach and Intent



Figure 6.1 Complete Streets and modal priority

Complete Streets prioritize space in the order of how space-efficient the travel modes are.

This chapter sets forth strategies and recommendations that pertain to the transportation system and related infrastructure within the Precise Plan Area. An essential aim is to establish and maintain a transportation system that supports safe and comfortable access for all travel modes.

Future transportation vision

The future transportation vision for Downtown is one in which the network provides improved access, both internal to Downtown and to surrounding areas; improves the interaction of transportation modes, protects residential neighborhoods, and supports an appropriate amount of parking at the appropriate price levels. Key transportation projects will help to create gateways, strengthen linkages to the city-wide and regional network, and enhance accessibility.

Downtown San Rafael has experienced a decade of growth and transition, and will continue to evolve in the coming decades. The transportation system, accordingly, will need to keep pace with emerging national and regional trends and technologies such as autonomous vehicles, and adapt to meet the needs of all who travel to the Downtown area.

Multimodal approach

Streets are the preeminent elements of the public realm in Downtown. Accordingly, their role within the built environment is complex and varied. This Plan utilizes the following framework adapted from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide, and is consistent with State-specific standards.

■ A layered network

Roadway systems planning has historically centered on creating a hierarchical classification of roadway function based on vehicle capacity. The Precise Plan takes a broader view in creating a future network that aims to accommodate more trips using multiple travel modes. This plan identifies enhancements to Downtown streets through a “layered network” approach, in which travel modes are prioritized or enhanced on certain streets to provide a safer and more efficient transportation system. The layered network approach recognizes that while a transportation system serves a variety of users, it is not always practical, feasible, or desirable for a single street

to accommodate all transportation modes equally at all times.

In the case of San Rafael, this is particularly true of Fourth Street in the Downtown core, where the street width varies between 27 feet at intersections to 44 to 49 feet at mid-block locations. Moreover, in constrained operating environments, attempting to equally serve competing modes on individual streets can result in substandard conditions for all users.

Instead, the layered network approach envisions streets as individual components of a system and identifies modal priorities for each street. Guided by these modal priorities, each street is designed to create a high-quality environment for its intended users. The resulting transportation system establishes a network of Complete Streets that improves comfort, attractiveness and safety for all users.

■ Streets for all users

A common desired goal for Downtown streets is that they should be multimodal and have the attributes of Complete Streets. Since streets are civic spaces of limited width, the concept of Complete Streets prioritizes

travel modes based on how space-efficient they are, and allocates space accordingly. An important part of Complete Street design is to consider universal access and design features that make streets safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

The transportation system serves a variety of users, including people traveling by foot, bicycle, bus, train, and automobile, as well as delivery trucks serving Downtown businesses. Travel to and from Downtown marks the beginning and end of a person's experience, establishing vital first and last impressions. Moreover, convenient access to Downtown restaurants, shops, and services is important not only for regular daily errands and activities, but also for the livelihood of those businesses.

As such, a well-connected and effective multimodal transportation network with an emphasis on space-efficient forms of transportation – from walking and bicycling to fast, frequent, and reliable transit – can support a thriving Downtown while managing traffic congestion.



Figure 6.2 Streets should be designed as places for people, serving both as corridors for movement as well as places for people to linger.

Complete Streets are...

- 1. Multimodal.** Each street serves all users by balancing the needs of automobiles, buses, and trucks with those of pedestrians and cyclists. This is done using a different combination of strategies depending upon the use of the street and prioritization.
- 2. Context sensitive.** Each street is designed to work within the existing or intended physical context of the area.
- 3. Physically appealing.** Each street is designed integrally with the public realm, keeping in mind the needs of different user groups.

For additional information on Complete Streets, visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets

Principles for street design and operations in Downtown San Rafael

In order to implement the layered network approach and for Downtown streets to serve all users well, the following attributes should be considered in the design and operation of Downtown streets:

1. Design to provide both mobility and accessibility

Mobility is the movement of people and goods from one location to another. Accessibility refers to the ability to reach a desired location. Both mobility and accessibility encompass all travel modes. Given the nature of land uses and activities in Downtown, its transportation network should emphasize convenient accessibility (i.e., easily reaching a desired destination) over efficient mobility (i.e., moving a large number of people quickly). Downtown streets should be designed to ensure that they are readily accessible to and usable by all users, especially individuals with disabilities.

2. Design streets as civic spaces

Beyond their role as conduits for the movement of people and goods, streets are "places" for social interactions, community gatherings, and experiencing public life. Downtown streets play a critical role in shaping urban environments, and should be designed as civic spaces where people want to spend time, and thus maximize their contribution to a vibrant, active public realm.

3. Design streets to support economic development

Streets should be designed to efficiently move and transfer goods to serve Downtown businesses while attracting and serving customers.

4. Design streets to be adaptable

A multitude of configurations are possible within a given street envelope, and street designs should be able to change as the needs of its users evolve over time. Interim design treatments can be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of design concepts while gradually adjusting user travel behaviors.

Figure 6.3 Streets can be flexible.

Fourth Street in the heart of Downtown San Rafael is an important transportation corridor, but is also a valuable civic space for community events such as the Thursday evening Farmers Market.



5. Design streets for safety

Conflicts between people walking, driving, and bicycling are inherent on multimodal streets. The design of Downtown's streets should consider sources of multimodal conflicts to prioritize safety and minimize the potential for collisions. Protecting human life and health should be paramount in the design and operation of streets, and take priority over mobility and other transportation objectives.

Streets should incorporate the needs of emergency service providers in street design to the satisfaction of the City Public Works Director and the City Fire Marshal in accordance with applicable emergency response standards. The design of the public realm should not impact nor restrict access to fire hydrants and building fire protection systems and connections.

6. Design streets as ecosystems

Downtown streets should be designed as ecosystems where man-made systems interface with natural systems, and maximize opportunities to incorporate pervious pavements, bioswales, street trees, and other green infrastructure elements into street design.

7. Follow best practices for design guidance

The Precise Plan recommends following industry best practices for street design, and recommends the following as guides:

- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide and Urban Bikeway Design Guide;
- The United States Access Board Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG);

- The California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA-MUTCD); and
- The Caltrans Highway Design Manual.

The City may also consider innovative and experimental design concepts from around the world.



Figure 6.4 (Above) Narrow, low-speed streets can help create family-friendly civic spaces such as Octavia Boulevard, San Francisco.

Figure 6.5 (Below) Dedicated bicycle lanes make bicycling safe for all ages. Image source: www.metaefficient.com

6.2 Multimodal Street Prioritization Network

The multimodal street network design for Downtown is closely linked with current land uses and the vision for the Plan Area. Individual street segments are designed to serve the anticipated use and form of adjacent properties, as well as the broader mobility needs for Downtown.

Figure 6.6 illustrates the multimodal network plan for Downtown San Rafael. Generally, individual street segments are prioritized for typically one travel mode while accommodating most other travel modes, to maximize the effectiveness of the transportation system as a whole.

The planned multimodal network for Downtown focuses on maintaining a high-quality pedestrian network on Fourth Street and intersecting streets. Preserving a safe, attractive, and comfortable environment for pedestrians is critical to the continued livability and economic vitality of Downtown. Access to Downtown via bicycling and transit is promoted through prioritization measures along key corridors.

The network will continue to accommodate mobility and auto access on vehicular priority streets such as Second and Third Streets as well as Irwin and Hetherington Streets that function as regional arterials and connect to US-101 and I-580. While the traffic volumes on these major streets pose challenges to resolving issues such as congestion, improvements can play a notable role in enhancing safety and efficiency. Ongoing Downtown transportation improvements, particularly projects

related to the recommendations of the Third Street Rehabilitation Study, will continue to be implemented.

Multimodal improvements should also take care to not hinder access by emergency response vehicles, particularly on emergency response routes.

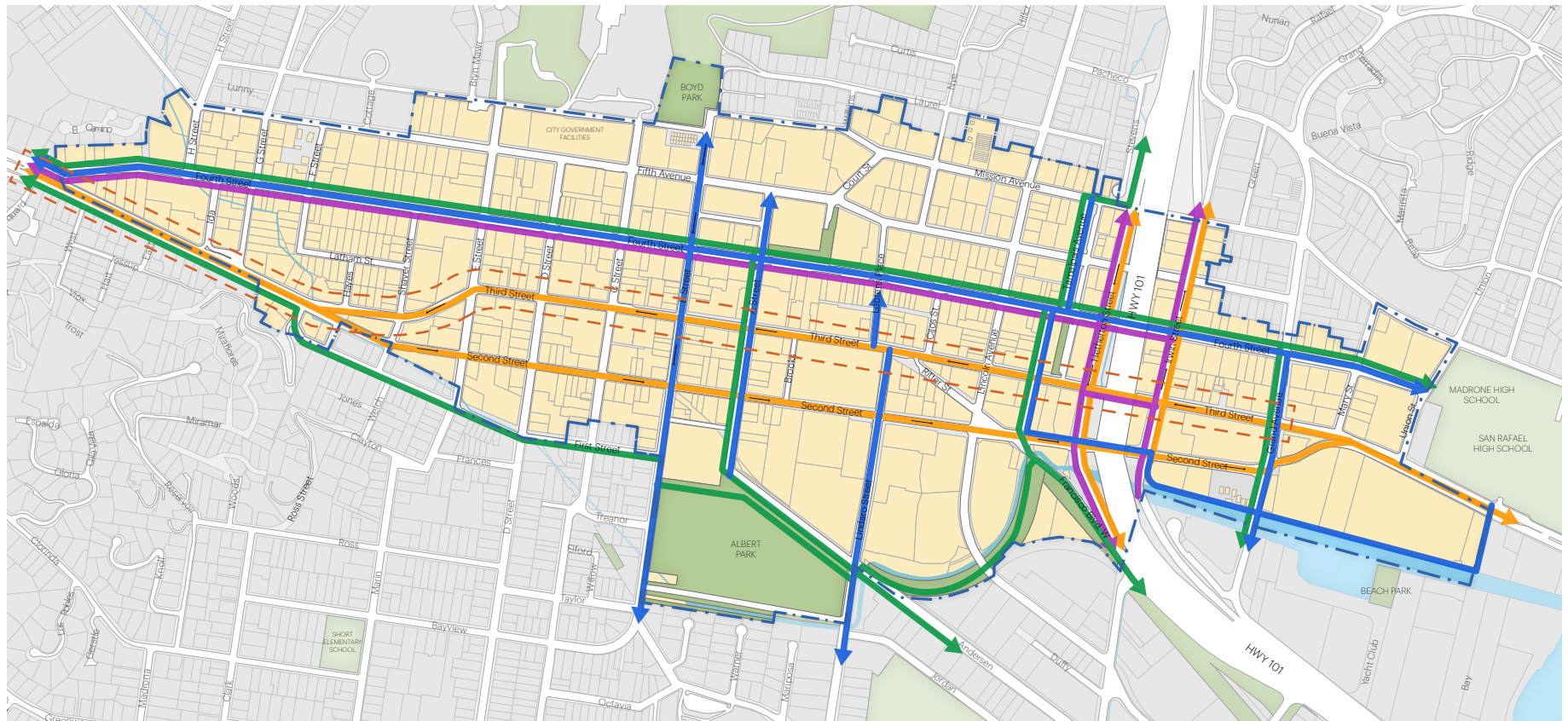








Figure 6.6 Street hierarchy and multimodal network

Note: Only the priority streets are shown colored in this diagram. However, the Multimodal Network considers all streets within the Plan Area.

Source: Fehr and Peers, May 2021

-  Plan Area boundary
-  Pedestrian priority network
-  Bicycle priority network
-  Transit priority network
-  Vehicular priority network
-  Extents of the Third Street Rehabilitation Study (implementation ongoing)

Scale 1" = 800'



Pedestrian Network Improvements



Figure 6.7 Universal design elements improve accessibility for all users.

Image source: ADA Solutions

Streetscape improvements, widened sidewalks, and green infrastructure enhances the pedestrian environment along key Downtown streets.

Downtown San Rafael is defined by its grid network of highly walkable, pedestrian-friendly streets, centered along Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue and the intersecting north-south streets in the City's core. The pedestrian experience is an important part of the overall Downtown environment, since every visitor is a pedestrian for at least some portion of their trip. A high-quality pedestrian environment is an essential component of achieving the Plan goals related to universal design, placemaking, public health, and economic development.

A variety of factors influence the quality of the pedestrian environment, including sidewalk width, crossing treatments, intersection traffic controls, driveway interruptions, sidewalk quality (e.g., the presence of cracks or uneven pavement), and streetscape elements (e.g., lighting, seating, etc.). The development program identified in the Plan will increase the number of residents, employees, and visitors in the Plan Area. Accordingly, the number of pedestrians and the demand for pedestrian facilities is expected to increase.

The Plan recommendations include a variety of pedestrian network enhancements to maintain a high-quality pedestrian environment and to encourage travel by foot.

Sidewalk improvements

The sidewalk refers to the entirety of the pedestrian realm between a building and a curb, and can be divided into four distinct zones. The dimensions of the four sidewalk zones vary depending on the level of pedestrian activity and the role of an individual sidewalk segment within the broader pedestrian network, as described in Table 6A.

In the Plan Area, sidewalk widths vary, with available space for walking varying from four feet to ten feet. The width of this "through zone" (i.e., the actual capacity for pedestrian throughput) is influenced by other abutting sidewalk elements such as fencing, bicycle parking, outdoor dining, and building frontages. The Plan recommends increasing the sidewalk width where feasible on key streets, to accommodate the anticipated increase in pedestrian traffic, and to accommodate a wider variety of functions and pedestrian needs. The recommended changes are illustrated in Section 6.3: Street Transformations of this chapter.

Table 6A. Design considerations for sidewalk design

Source: NACTO Urban Street Design Guide, www.nacto.org

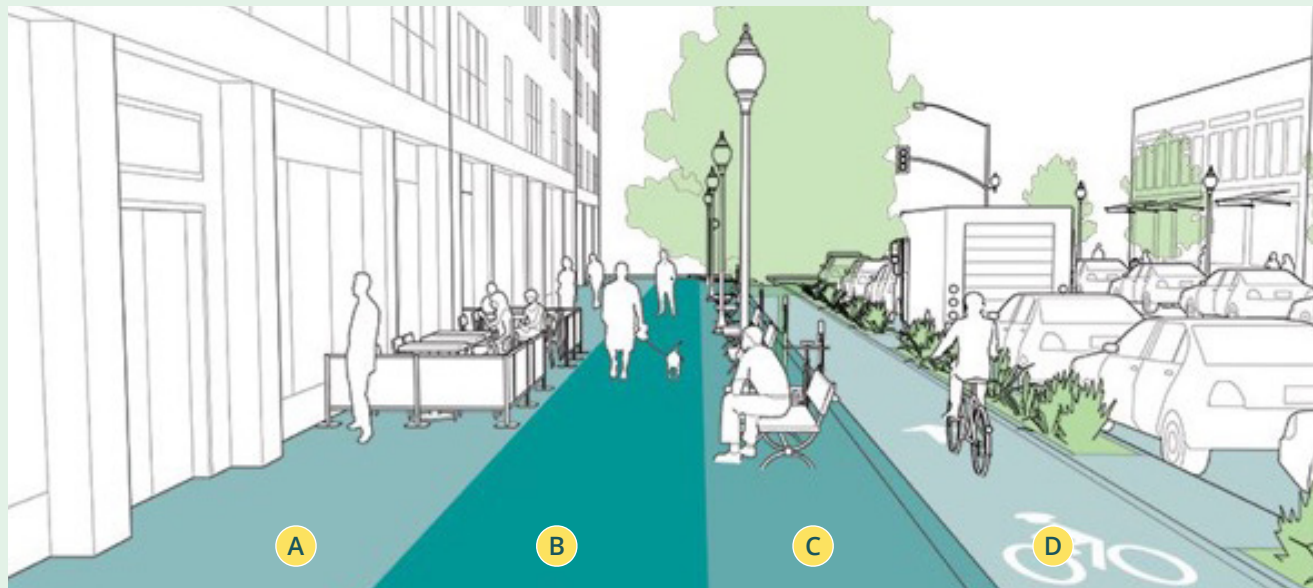


Figure 6.10 Sidewalk design elements that determine the quality of the public realm

A sidewalk includes the distance between a building and a curb, and can be divided into four distinct zones. Each zone serves a distinct function, and sidewalk width should be allocated accordingly. The location and number of the zones may vary depending on the context.

A) Frontage zone. The space immediately adjacent to a building that serves as functional space, such as building entryways, outdoor dining, signage, etc.

B) Pedestrian through zone. The primary pedestrian travel way running the length of the sidewalk. This zone should be kept clear of obstructions (both within and immediately adjacent to the zone) to ensure that pedestrians have a safe and adequate place to walk. Through zones in downtown settings typically provide a minimum of five feet of clear area, however, wider

through zones (10 to 15 feet) are preferred in locations with higher pedestrian volumes.

C) Furniture zone. The space between the through zone and the curb. This zone typically accommodates street furniture and amenities, as well as green infrastructure elements.

D) Enhancement zone. The space immediately next to the sidewalk. It can accommodate many uses including parklets, bicycle facilities, and green infrastructure.



Figure 6.8 Wide pedestrian through-zones accommodate high levels of pedestrian activity in a downtown environment.



Figure 6.9 Furniture zones are ideal locations for streetscape elements such as bicycle racks and street trees.

Universal design

Universal design emphasizes the design of the transportation system to ensure that it is readily accessible by all users, particularly the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and those reliant on mobility devices such as walkers and scooters.

The Plan recommends that street design projects resulting from the Plan should incorporate universal design features whenever feasible. The attributes of universal design are described in Table 6B.

Figure 6.11 *Guidance for universal design in a shared street environment*
Image source: FHWA Accessible Shared Streets

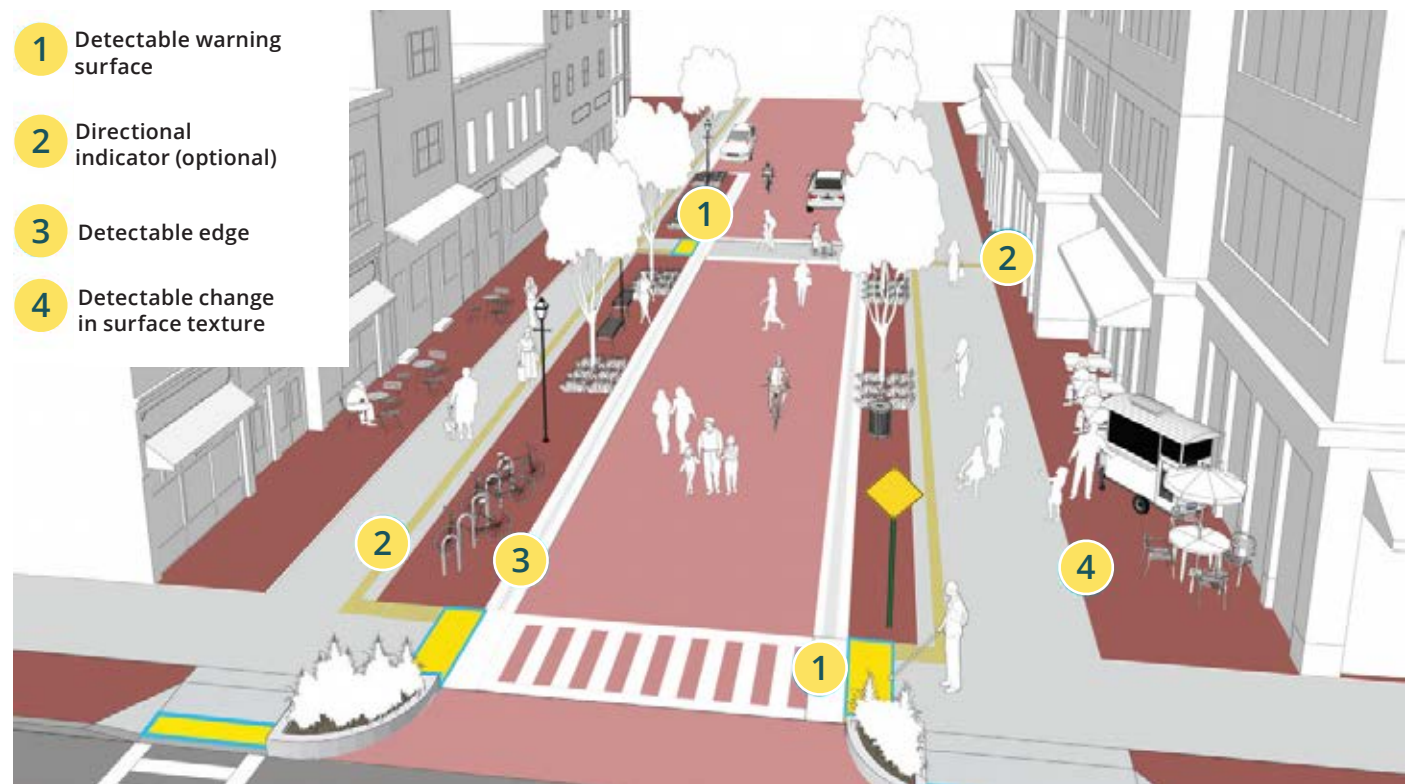


Table 6B. Design considerations for universal design

Source: NACTO Urban Street Design Guide, www.nacto.org

■ Pedestrian access routes

Pedestrian access routes provide a minimum accessible route of passage within sidewalks and other pedestrian circulation paths, including sidewalks, crossings, overpasses, tunnels, curb ramps, elevators, and entrances. They must connect to other transportation elements including pedestrian signals and push buttons, street furniture, transit stops, and accessible on-street parking and loading zones. For Universal Design, the physical design should consider width, clearance, grade, cross slope, and surface material, among others.

■ Tactile cues

Tactile cues notify pedestrians of transitions in the thoroughfare operating environment through the sense of touch. Typically, tactile cues are provided by detectable warning surfaces installed on a walking surface such as small truncated domes or similar textures applied directly to surface materials that are detectable underfoot or by cane. Detectable warning surfaces are required at all curb ramps, as well as other locations where pedestrians cross into another modal zone (e.g., transitions to bicycle lanes, travel lanes, and level transit boarding platforms). Similarly, directional indicators provide tactile cues for wayfinding, guiding pedestrians to designated crossings equipped with detectable warning surfaces. Vibrotactile pedestrian push buttons provide tactile cues for pedestrians crossing at signalized intersections.

■ Audible cues

Audible cues include accessible pedestrian signals at signalized intersections, which notify pedestrians

of changes in signal phases using announcements or rapid percussive tones. Similarly, transit stops and stations can be equipped with real-time arrival information with audible announcement capabilities.

■ Visual cues

Visual cues utilize colors, visual contrast, and pattern repetition to inform pedestrians of transitions in the operating environment. Examples of visual cues include green-backed bicycle lanes with skip-stripe green coloring through conflict zones (e.g. driveways). Color contrast is required at curb ramps to supplement the tactile cues provided by detectable surfaces.

■ Consistency and predictability

Consistency reinforces the effectiveness of tactile, audible, and visual cue elements of universal design. Repetitive use of colors, patterns, sounds, surface treatments, and dimensions further enhances the simplicity and legibility of the pedestrian environment for all users. For example, a sidewalk with a uniform width, even surface, and straight alignment is easier to navigate than a curvilinear pathway with frequent directional and grade changes. In addition to the accessibility benefits, this improves the safety and comfort of the transportation system for all users.

■ Best practices and guidelines

Street design projects resulting from the Plan should reference the United States Access Board Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG). The Federal Highway Administration Accessible Shared Streets document identifies accessible design strategies specifically for shared street environments.

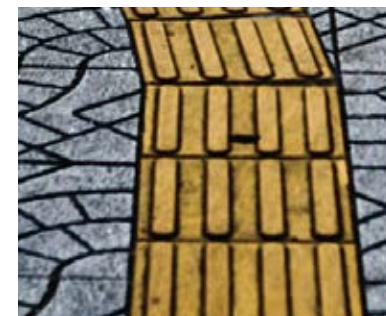


Figure 6.12 (Above) Tactile crosswalk materials, and

Figure 6.13 (Below) Audio crosswalks
Universal Design features such as tactile crosswalk materials and audio crosswalks can easily be integrated into street design at little additional cost.

Proposed Plan Area Pedestrian Priority Network

The Precise Plan recommends the following improvements to enhance pedestrian movement and access in the Plan Area.

Figure 6.14 on the facing page shows the proposed pedestrian priority streets. Fourth Street is the key pedestrian priority street that spans the entire Plan Area. Key proposed north-south pedestrian priority streets that connect with Fourth Street include A Street, B Street, Lindaro Street and Lootens Place, Tamalpais Avenue and Grand Avenue. The Plan also calls for a continuous pedestrian promenade along the north side of the San Rafael Canal that would connect the Montecito Plaza to the SMART station area via Second Street. Figure 6.14 also shows key projects defined for the Plan Area in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), indicated as numbers from one through seven on the map.

The recommended pedestrian improvements for the Plan Area include:

- **Fourth Street streetscape improvements.** Sidewalk widening, enhanced crosswalk treatments, lighting and wayfinding for the segment of Fourth Street from the SMART Station to B Street.
- **Tamalpais Avenue paseo.** Pedestrian and bicycle path improvements along Tamalpais Avenue for the gap in the north-south connector between Mission Avenue and Second Street.
- **Alley improvements.** Walter Lane, Julia Street, and Commercial Street are proposed for improvement as pedestrian-friendly paseos and civic space.
- **West End pedestrian crossing improvements.** Intersection and pedestrian crossing treatment improvements for the segment of Second Street from West Street to Miramar Avenue.
- **B Street improvements.** B Street has the potential to be a primary pedestrian street connecting Albert Park to Boyd Park and is one of two streets that frame a potential Downtown historic district. It should be promoted as a "walking street."
- **Downtown Gateway sub-area pedestrian access improvements.** Sidewalk widening, enhanced crosswalk treatments, lighting and wayfinding on streets connecting to adjacent destinations.
- **US-101 freeway connector street enhancements.** Improvements to east-west streets are proposed, to mitigate the barrier that US-101 presents to pedestrian travel between the Montecito Plaza area and Downtown. Strategies may include wider sidewalks, crosswalk enhancements, improved lighting and signage, and public art.

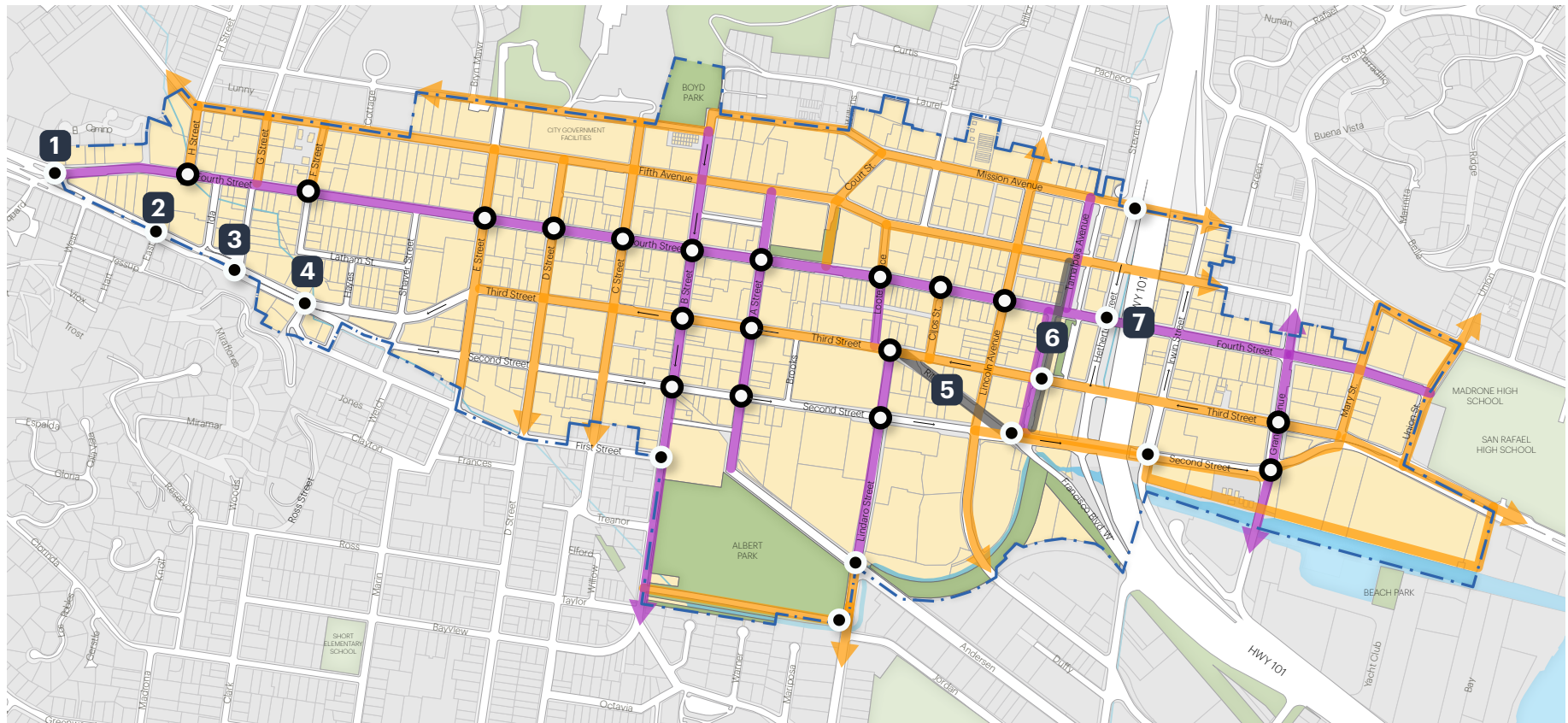








Figure 6.14 Pedestrian priority network

Source: Fehr and Peers, May 2021

-  Plan Area boundary
-  Pedestrian priority street
-  Key pedestrian corridor
-  Special study segment
-  Pedestrian crossing safety treatments (see BPMP for details)
-  Pedestrian crossing safety treatments

- 1** BPMP Projects C-2, C-3, C-5, C-7, C-8 include intersection reconfiguration, channelization, and pedestrian crossing improvements
- 2** Study pedestrian crossing improvements. BPMP Project C-8 includes installation of a raised crosswalk, which is likely infeasible given speeds, volumes, priorities for Second Street traffic
- 3** BPMP Project C-10 includes study of pedestrian intersection improvements at G Street and Ida Street
- 4** BPMP Project C-9: study pedestrian crossing improvements on Second Street
- 5** Study converting to paseo/pedestrian path, or relinquish to develop parcel and construct improved, standardized pedestrian crossings at intersections
- 6** Study appropriate pedestrian facilities and connections as part of San Rafael Transit Center Relocation project
- 7** BPMP Project D-20 includes lighting and art improvements to address pedestrian safety and experience

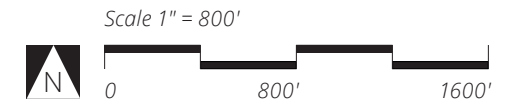


Table 6C. Pedestrian network: recommended strategies

The strategies listed below are industry "best practice" standards for street design. These are provided here to be considered when implementing street design improvements in the Plan Area.

■ Pedestrian crossings

The Plan recommends that, to the extent feasible, existing pedestrian crossings should be upgraded to reduce pedestrian exposure to competing travel modes and increase pedestrian visibility in conflict zones. Potential crossing enhancements include high-visibility crosswalk markings, textured pavement treatments, pedestrian crossing warning systems, bulbouts, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, and leading pedestrian intervals at signalized intersections. For pedestrian crossing enhancements, the locations identified in Figure 6.14 should be prioritized.

■ Sidewalk width

Generally, pedestrian through-zones within sidewalks should provide a minimum of five feet of clear area. However, wider through-zones (10 to 15 feet) are preferred in locations with higher

pedestrian volumes such as Fourth Street. Elements such as street trees, vegetation, utilities, sign poles, sandwich boards, outdoor seating/dining, trash cans, and other streetscape amenities should be contained within the sidewalk frontage or furniture zones so as to not obstruct the through zone.

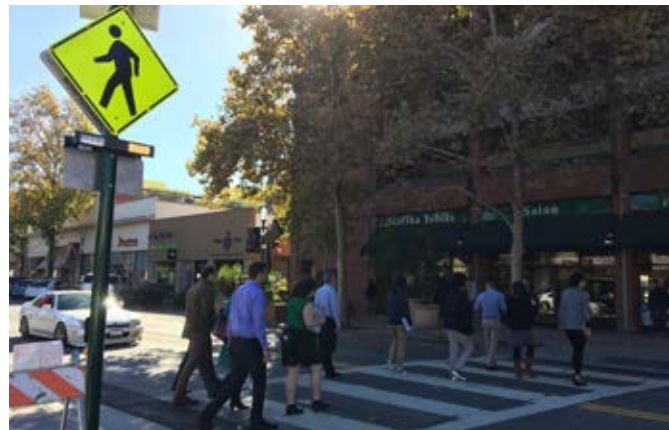
■ Sidewalk quality

Retrofitting of existing substandard sidewalks within the Plan Area should be undertaken on an ongoing basis. Potential improvements include remediating uneven pavement and constructing ADA-compliant curb ramps.

■ Driveways

All efforts should be made to eliminate existing, and minimize future driveways and curb cuts along the pedestrian priority thoroughfares identified in Figure 6.14. At driveways, sidewalks should be maintained at-grade to enable easier crossing by pedestrians.

Figure 6.15 Examples of pedestrian strategies recommended for Downtown San Rafael: (right) a pedestrian crossing with a flashing beacon, and (far right) an enhanced mid-block pedestrian crossing with a high-visibility crosswalk.



■ Seating

Where seating in the furnishing zone is oriented parallel to the curb, it should face towards the buildings lining the sidewalk when located in the furnishings zone. Where sidewalk width permits, seating in the furnishing zone should be perpendicular to the curb.

■ Wayfinding and signage

Pedestrian-scale wayfinding signage should be used throughout the Plan Area. Signage should be added to reinforce the image of the Plan Area, mark edges or entry points, and give information about directions, destinations, or the Plan Area in general. Potential types of signage include gateway markers, neighborhood orientation signs, interpretive signs, directional and wayfinding signs, and standard street and transit signs.

■ Lighting

Pedestrian-scale street lighting is recommended along all Plan Area streets to improve pedestrian safety and invite more pedestrian activity after dark.

■ Waste receptacles

Waste receptacles should be provided throughout the Plan Area, with concentrations near high activity generators. Waste receptacles should be placed as near to block corners as practical unless there is a location mid-block with a high-volume of waste that is generated, such as an outdoor restaurant/café, ice cream shop, etc.



Figure 6.16 *Examples of pedestrian strategies recommended for Downtown San Rafael: (far left) an example of comfortable "through zones" and "furniture zones" as part of a sidewalk [image source www.nacto.org]; and (left) wide sidewalks.*

Bicycle Network Improvements

Development of new east-west bicycle facilities and filling in gaps in the north-south connector between Mission Avenue and Second Street will enhance the Plan Area's bicycle environment.

Safety, connectivity, and universal design are the key design-related goals of the San Rafael Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP). Reducing collisions involving cyclists is a key purpose of these improvements, as one in ten collisions in San Rafael involves a bicyclist, with most such incidents occurring in the Plan Area. The quality of the bicycle environment will be influenced by the provision of continuous dedicated bicycle facilities, intersection safety measures, special treatments through conflict areas, and bicycle parking near major destinations. Bicycle facilities proposed for the Precise Plan will be coordinated with pedestrian facilities and improvements, to ensure that Downtown's environment benefits all users.

Bicycle facilities

The Precise Plan envisions expanding and enhancing the Downtown bicycle network to provide safe and efficient connections to Downtown destinations. To serve a range of cyclists, four classifications of bicycle facilities are recommended for implementation in the Plan Area.

■ **Class I facilities (bikeways/bicycle paths)** are facilities separated from automobile traffic for the exclusive use of bicyclists. When Class I facilities are designed to accommodate other modes of transportation, including pedestrians, they are referred to as Shared Use Paths.

■ **Class II facilities (bicycle lanes)** are dedicated facilities for bicyclists adjacent to automobile traffic. Class II facilities are identified with striping, pavement markings, and signage. When a striped buffer can be installed between the bicycle lane and the adjacent travel lane, these facilities are referred to as buffered bicycle lanes.

■ **Class III facilities (bicycle routes)** are on-street routes where bicyclists and vehicles share the road. These are identified with pavement markings and signage, and are typically assigned to low-volume and/or low-speed streets. When there can be additional traffic-calming measures for motorized traffic, these facilities can be referred to as bicycle boulevards.

■ **Class IV facilities (protected bicycle lanes/cycle tracks)** are facilities that combine elements of Class I and Class II facilities. They offer an exclusive bicycle route in the roadway similar to a Class II facility, but provide a physical separation from traffic including soft (e.g. striping and delineators) or hard (e.g. curbs and on-street parking) barriers between the bicycle lane and the motorized travel lane.

Figure 6.17 on the facing page illustrates the bicycle facility classifications discussed above.

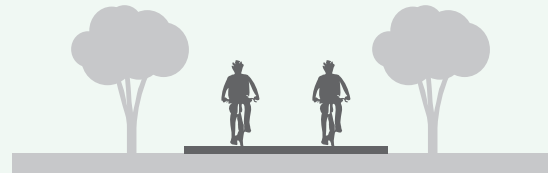
Figure 6.17 Illustrations of bicycle facility classifications

Image source: Fehr and Peers



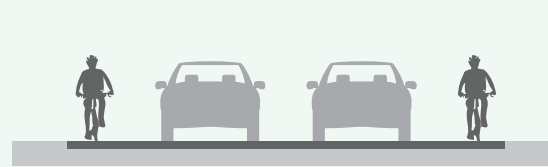
Class I: Bike Route

Provides a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicyclists and pedestrians



Class II: Bicycle Lane

Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a roadway



Class III: Bike Route

Provides for shared use with motor vehicle traffic



Class IV: Cycletrack

Provides a separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicyclists adjacent to a roadway



Proposed Plan Area Bicycle Priority Network

The Precise Plan recommends the following improvements to enhance bicycle usage and access in the Plan Area.

Figure 6.18 shows the proposed bicycle priority streets in the Plan Area. This includes the provision of new bicycle facilities in both east-west and north-south directions. Figure 6.18 also shows key projects defined for the Plan Area in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), numbered one through seven on the map.

The proposed bicycle improvements for the Plan Area include:

■ **Tamalpais Avenue north-south gap connector.**

Pedestrian and bicycle path improvements along Tamalpais Avenue are proposed to close the gap in the north-south connection between Mission Avenue and Second Street. Additional study is warranted to connect this north-south bikeway with the east-west bicycle facilities described below.

■ **Downtown east-west connection.** The BPMP calls for an east-west connection in Downtown San Rafael that can comfortably accommodate people of all ages and bicycling ability. This is most commonly accomplished by providing a protected (i.e., dedicated and buffered) bicycle lane, which would require either elimination of on-street parking or conversion of a vehicle travel lane. Fifth Avenue is identified as a special study segment to monitor and evaluate as a location for potential future east-west bicycle improvements, particularly

if parking demand declines over time due to changes in travel behavior. Peak weekday parking demand on Fifth Avenue, east of E Street, is much lower than along Fourth Street, with over a third of the blocks having vehicle parking occupancy levels less than 50 percent.

■ **Grand Avenue bicycle track.** A two-way bicycle track on the east side of Grand Avenue from Second Street to Fourth Street.

■ **West End multi-use path.** A two-way bicycle track, or alternately a Class I multi-use path, on the south side of Second Street between Fourth Street/Marquard Avenue and Miramar Avenue. This would require parking removal and construction of a retaining wall. An alternative to providing an on-street bicycle lane on Fourth Street west of E Street, as described above, would be to provide on-street bicycle facilities on Second Street/Third Street from Miramar Avenue east to E Street, and on E Street from Second Street to Fourth Street. This may require parking removal and/or a lane removal. This alternative alignment is identified as a special study segment as more detailed design studies are required to determine the feasibility of implementing these bikeway facilities.

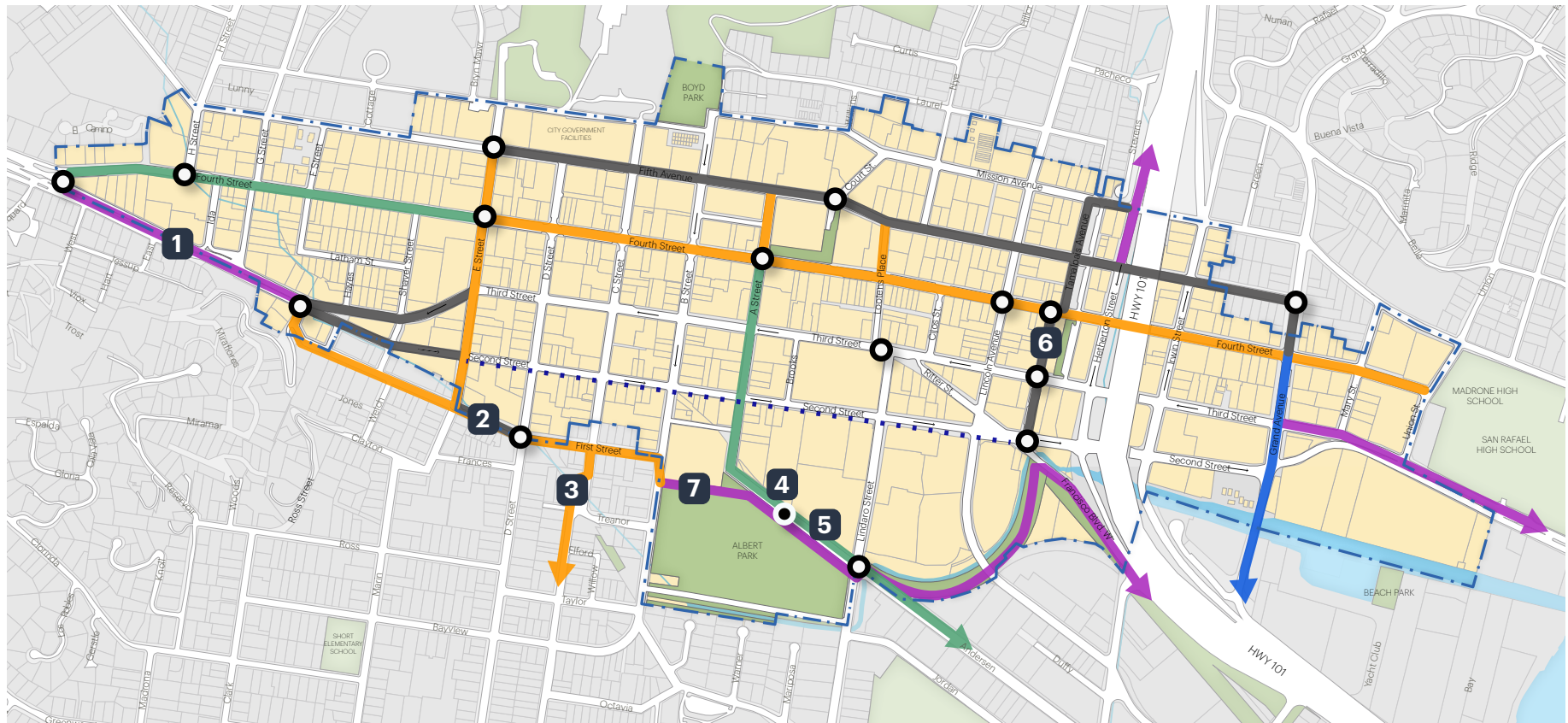


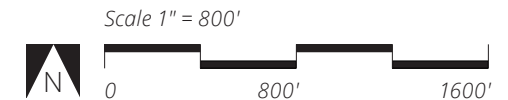
Figure 6.18 Bicycle priority network

Source: Fehr and Peers, May 2021

- Plan Area boundary
- Class I Bicycle Facility (separated bicycle path)
- Class IV Bicycle Facility (protected/ separated bicycle lane)
- Class II Bicycle Facility (striped/ buffered bicycle lane)
- Class III Bicycle Boulevard (shared street, low speed)
- Bicycles may use sidewalk on south side

- Intersection treatments to accommodate bicycle circulation
- Special study segment | study intersection (areas where multiple potential projects have been identified, but final recommendations have not been made, and need further study)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 BPMP Project C-6: convert to Class I multi-use path with retaining wall, or two-way protected cycle track with parking removal 2 BPMP Project C-14: convert to one-way eastbound, install a contra-flow bicycle lane or maintain one-way westbound, and install advisory bicycle lanes 3 BPMP C-12: study feasibility for a one-way cycle track couplet on C and D Streets, or bicycle boulevard on both streets. Due to auto volumes and connectivity, the Precise Plan recommends a bicycle boulevard only on C Street, with considerations for Class III signage and wayfinding on D Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Consider mid-block crossing between Albert Park and the BioMarin campus 5 Consider Class I connection from B Street to Anderson Drive/ Lindaro Street to complete Class I network 6 BPMP Project D-2: study appropriate bicycle facility (Class I or Class IV) and connections as part of Transit Center Relocation Project 7 BPMP Project D-7: Class I multi-use path connecting Albert Park with transitions to existing Class II bicycle lanes on Andersen Drive |
|---|--|



- **A Street bicycle lanes.** Installation of on-street bicycle lanes from south of Second Street to Fourth Street. This would require parking removal on one side of A Street.
- **First Street bicycle boulevard improvements.** Installation of signing and striping to create a bicycle boulevard from Miramar Avenue to B Street.
- **Albert Park multi-use path.** A multi-use path along the north and east sides of Albert Park.

Figure 6.19 *Examples of bicycle facilities and strategies recommended for Downtown San Rafael: (clockwise from top left) Protected bicycle lanes shielded from travel lanes by a lane of street parking; bicycle intersection crossing; bicycle share programs; and street markings to delineate bicycle priority streets.*



Table 6D. Bicycle network: recommended strategies

The strategies listed below are industry "best practice" standards for street design. These are provided here to be considered when implementing street design improvements in the Plan Area.

■ Comprehensive "Low Stress" bicycle network

The Plan recommends that, to the extent feasible, the priority bicycle network should be implemented as a "low stress" network intended to be comfortable for all types of bicycle users (from experienced to novice users), and constructed as illustrated in Figure 6.18. The Plan Area priority bicycle network should also be connected with neighboring districts to establish a continuous bicycle network with safe and efficient connections to destinations within the Plan Area and throughout the City.

■ Bicycle crossings

Existing bicycle crossings should be upgraded, to the extent feasible, to reduce exposure for bicyclists to competing travel modes and to increase bicycle visibility in conflict zones. Potential bicycle crossing enhancements include protected intersections, bicycle signals, bicycle detection, bicycle crossing warning systems, high-visibility intersection crossing markings, bicycle boxes, and median refuge islands. When implementing bicycle crossing enhancements, priority should be given to the locations identified in Figure 6.18.

■ Quality of bicycle facilities

Bicycle facility improvements within the Plan Area should be made on an ongoing basis to maintain the quality of bicycle facilities.

■ Driveways

To the extent feasible, eliminate existing, and minimize future driveways and curb cuts along bicycle priority streets identified in Figure 6.18.

■ On-street vehicle parking

Angled on-street vehicle parking should not be provided along bicycle priority streets. Cycle tracks located adjacent to parking lanes should be physically separated from parked vehicles by a parking buffer with a minimum width of three feet.

■ Bicycle parking

Demand for bicycle parking should be regularly monitored and short- and long-term bicycle parking supply in the public realm should be increased as warranted. Opportunities for secured long-term bicycle parking supply should be explored at key locations within the Plan Area.

■ Bicycle share program

Opportunities to provide bikeshare programs within the Plan Area should be explored, and pipeline programs implemented, such as the bikeshare program along the SMART rail line expected to launch in the near future.

Vehicular Network Improvements and Proposed Priority Network

The future roadway network in the Plan Area will be improved and managed using smart technology.

Arterial streets including Second Street, Third Street, Irwin Street, Hetherton Street, and Andersen Drive will continue to serve as primary vehicular routes in and out of Downtown.

Irwin and Hetherton Streets will continue to be the primary access routes for motorists traveling to US-101. Vehicular access to on and off-street parking facilities and passenger and goods loading zones within Downtown will be available via minor north-south and east-west streets. The Plan does not include the construction of new streets or the addition of vehicular through-lanes within existing rights-of-way. The implementation of the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network enhancements may require the re-purposing of the existing rights-of-way, as shown in the street sections in Section 6.3: Street Transformations.

Proposed vehicular network improvements

Figure 6.20 shows the proposed vehicular priority streets. Second Street and Third Street are the key vehicular priority streets that span the entire Plan Area. Key proposed north-south vehicular priority streets that connect with Second and Third Streets include Anderson Drive/A Street, Hetherton Street, and Irwin Street between Second Street and Mission Avenue.

The following vehicular improvements are proposed for the Plan Area:

■ US-101/ Downtown San Rafael interchange.

Intersection and ramp operational improvements to Second Street, Third Street, Hetherton Street, Irwin Street, and/or ramps including potential traffic signal synchronization at the rail crossings.

■ **One-way street conversion.** Convert the one-way segment of B Street to two-way operation. The one-way segments of C Street and D Street were recently converted from one-way to two-way operation, in large part to help with emergency response time for the new Public Safety Center located across from City Hall. Other benefits of converting one-way streets to two-way operation include ease of access, as well as a reduction in the number and severity of collisions because of traffic calming (resulting from decreased vehicle speeds, as shown by studies). B Street is the only remaining one-way north-south street in Downtown other than Hetherton Street and Irwin Street that are high volume streets serving as frontage roads to US-101.

■ **Two-way street conversion.** Convert the two-way segment of Francisco Boulevard West to one-way (southbound) operation from Second Street to Rice Drive to accommodate the north-south bikeway.

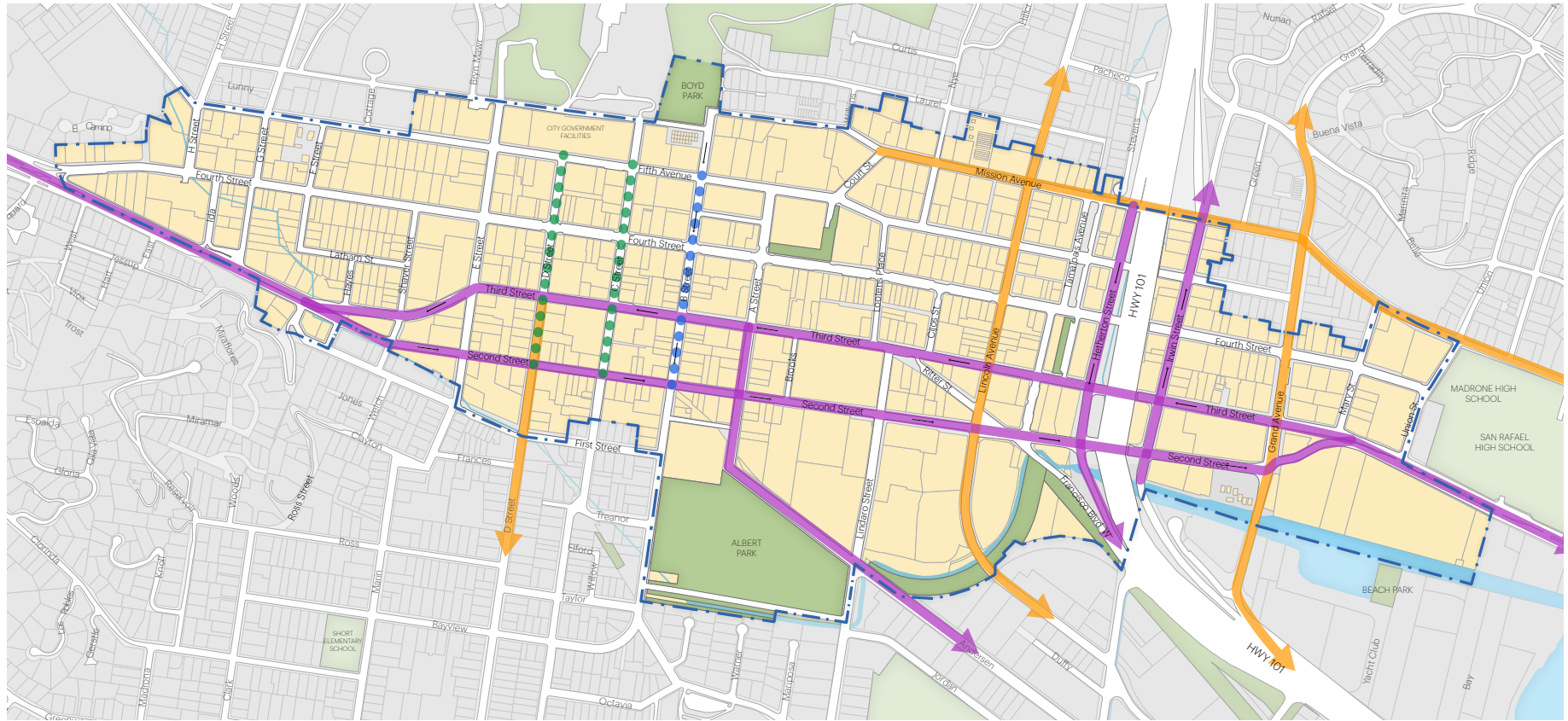
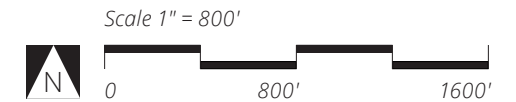


Figure 6.20 Vehicular priority network

Source: Fehr and Peers, May 2021

- Plan Area boundary
- Major arterial/ priority auto route
- Minor arterial/ city-wide connector
- Convert from one-way to two-way
- Designated Police and Fire Department emergency response route



- **West End gateway intersection.** Realignment of the intersection of Second Street, Fourth Street, and Marquard Avenue to improve safety and functionality, and reduce pedestrian crossing lengths.
- **Lincoln Avenue peak period lanes/parking restrictions.** Extend the existing PM peak period parking restrictions, to allow for two lanes in each direction during both AM and PM peak periods, from Hammondale Court/US-101 ramps to Mission Avenue. Provide additional parking in the corridor.
- **Complete Streets projects.** Modifications of streets to enhance multimodal access. These projects would not change the number of through lanes identified in the General Plan.
- **Intersection improvements.** Traffic signal modifications, roundabouts, and/or turn lane modifications (e.g. prohibiting left turns, implementing protected left turn phasing, implementing “no right on red” restrictions). Improvements should be designed taking into account existing conditions and unique design needs of each intersection.
- **Transportation system technology improvements.** Traffic signal system upgrade, monitoring equipment, emergency vehicle detection, and other technology enhancements to facilitate smart management of the transportation system.

Figure 6.21 *An example of a Complete Street: Bancroft Avenue, Berkeley, CA*



Table 6E. Vehicular network: recommended strategies

The strategies listed below are industry "best practice" standards for street design. These are provided here to be considered when implementing street design improvements in the Plan Area.

■ Grid network

The existing grid network within the Plan Area will be maintained to maximize routing options for transportation users.

■ Intersection improvements

Intersection traffic controls, geometrics, and crossing facilities should be modified to physically separate competing travel modes where feasible and minimize the potential for multimodal conflicts at intersections.

■ Gateways

New gateway elements at key vehicular entry locations along Fourth Street (SMART Station area and West End), Third Street (Montecito Plaza area), Lincoln Avenue (north of Mission Avenue), and Andersen Drive (south of Second Street) would reinforce the unique imagery and identity of Downtown. These gateway features could include

streetscape elements such as public art and murals, monuments, and signage.

■ Target speeds

The concept of target speed should be used to determine design speeds for all streets based on the modal priority and land use context.

■ Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

TDM strategies could help manage vehicle travel and parking demand in the Plan Area. Partnering with local businesses and other organizations to explore TDM strategies would decrease peak hour vehicle trips throughout the Downtown vehicular network.

■ Infrastructure for future mobility

To encourage a transition to alternate fuels and modes of transport, supporting infrastructure should be planned and implemented, such as EV charging stations, bicycle and scooter rental stations, etc.



Figure 6.22 *Examples of strategies recommended for Downtown's vehicular network: (far left) a high visibility crosswalk with a traffic circle, and (left) a protected left turn and separated bicycle path at a rail crossing.*

Transit Network Improvements and Proposed Transit Priority Network

Focused investment on transit priority corridors will expedite transit operations, improve travel times, and enhance the quality of service for riders.

Downtown is served by several transit service types, ranging from SMART commuter rail to fixed route bus service by Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit to paratransit service for older adults and people with disabilities.

At the Downtown San Rafael train station, SMART provides 19 daily round-trips during the week with service from Santa Rosa to Larkspur. Over 500 buses pass through the San Rafael Transit Center each weekday, serving a total of 9,000 boardings and alightings.

North-south transit priority streets include Hetherington Street and Irwin Street adjacent to US-101 as well as the blocks of Second Street, Third Street, and Fourth Street under the freeway as these streets are used by buses that access the San Rafael Transit Center.

Fourth Street, from the West End east to Irwin Street, is the primary east-west transit priority street as it is used by most east-west fixed route service provided by Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit through the Downtown core.

Proposed transit improvements

The following transit improvements are proposed for the Plan Area. Figure 6.23 shows the proposed transit priority streets.

- **SMART station/San Rafael Transit Center multimodal access improvements.** Sidewalk widening, bicycle facilities, enhanced crosswalk treatments, lighting and wayfinding on streets connecting to adjacent destinations.
- **Downtown shuttle.** Shuttle service connecting to the SMART Station, San Rafael Transit Center, major Downtown destinations, and/or adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Transit priority measures.** Potential measures include transit-only lanes, queue jumps, transit signal preemption, and enhanced bus stop amenities. The location and type of transit priority measures will be determined once a final location for the San Rafael Transit Center is selected.
- **Transit technology improvements.** Transit priority treatments, monitoring equipment, and other technology enhancements to facilitate smart management of the transportation system.

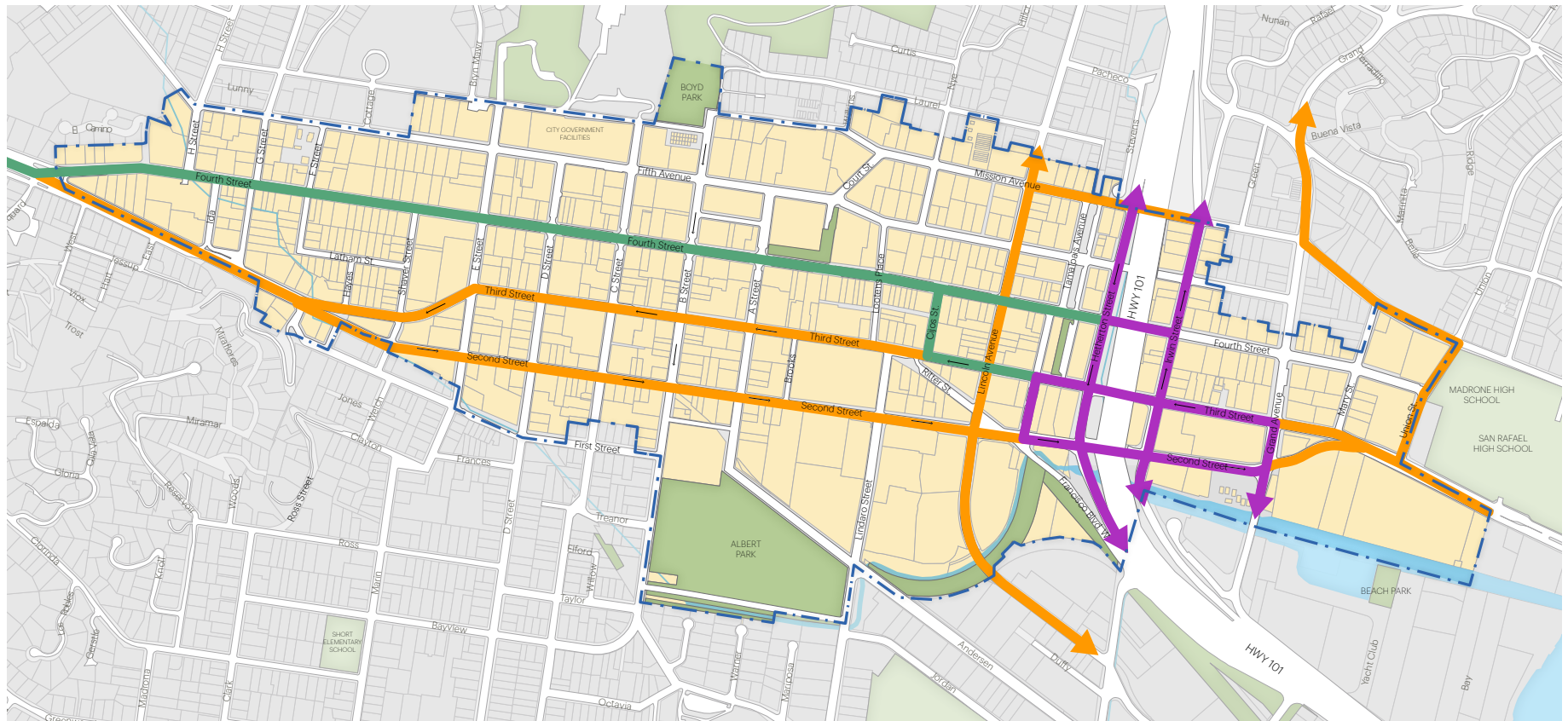


Figure 6.23 Transit priority network

Source: Fehr and Peers, May 2021

- Plan Area boundary
- High frequency bus route
- Moderate frequency bus route
- Low frequency bus route

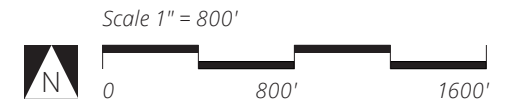


Table 6F. Transit network: recommended strategies

The strategies listed below are industry "best practice" standards for street design. These are provided here to be considered when implementing street design improvements in the Plan Area.

■ Transit priority corridors

To the extent feasible, the transit priority measures should be implemented and constructed along the priority corridors identified in Figure 6.23. Potential measures include transit-only lanes, queue jumps, transit signal preemption, and bulb-outs with in-street passenger loading. Transit-only lanes and queue jumps should be evaluated when vehicle operations degrade to levels where the provision of such treatments would allow buses to bypass queues near US-101 as they travel to access the San Rafael Transit Center.

■ Enhanced transit stop amenities

Transit stops should be enhanced with amenities to include benches, shelters, and real-time arrival information.

■ Transit network

As Downtown evolves over the next decade or so, transit network strategies should be explored as needed to improve travel times and service quality for bus routes serving the Plan Area.

■ Elevated SMART tracks

Undertake feasibility studies for elevating the SMART tracks as a long-term strategy to further improve circulation on Downtown streets.

■ Transit connections

Initiate measures to provide seamless connections between the SMART trains, buses and other modes of travel in Downtown, including micromobility improvements for "last mile trips" from the station.

6.3 Street Transformations

Key streets can be reconfigured to reflect their intended role in Downtown's circulation network.

To make Downtown truly multimodal, the role of existing streets was analyzed and phased transformations recommended to the existing rights-of-way. The street cross sections presented in the following pages illustrate potential configurations for several priority segments. The illustrative cross-sections in the vicinity of the SMART station, for segments of Fourth Street and Tamalpais Avenue West, are designed to be compatible with the "Under the Freeway" concept, one of three options being considered for the San Rafael Transit Center relocation. The other two design concepts being considered would implement different cross-sections in the segments of

Tamalpais Avenue West between Second and Fourth Streets. The dimensions presented with each cross section are based on typical applications of each design element and are provided for illustrative purposes only. The cross sections are intended to serve as guidelines, and the ultimate configuration, placement, and dimensions of each element will be determined during subsequent detailed design processes, resulting in refined street designs based on the context of the surrounding built environment. Figure 6.24 indicates the locations of the street sections analyzed.

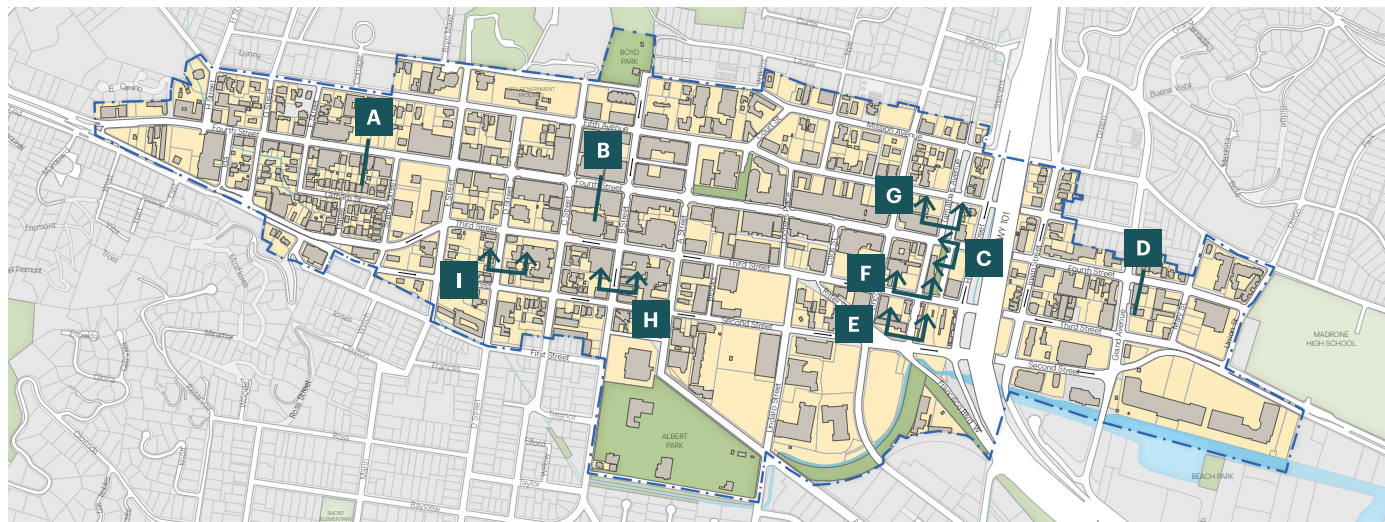
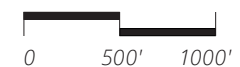


Figure 6.24 Locations of street sections analyzed for near-term changes and long-term transformation



Scale 1" = 1000'



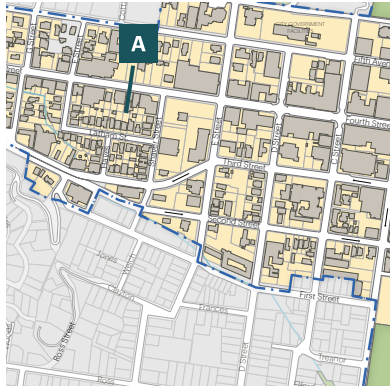


Figure 6.25 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.26 (Right) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

Fourth Street between H Street and E Street, facing east or west



Existing condition (42' Curb-to-Curb)



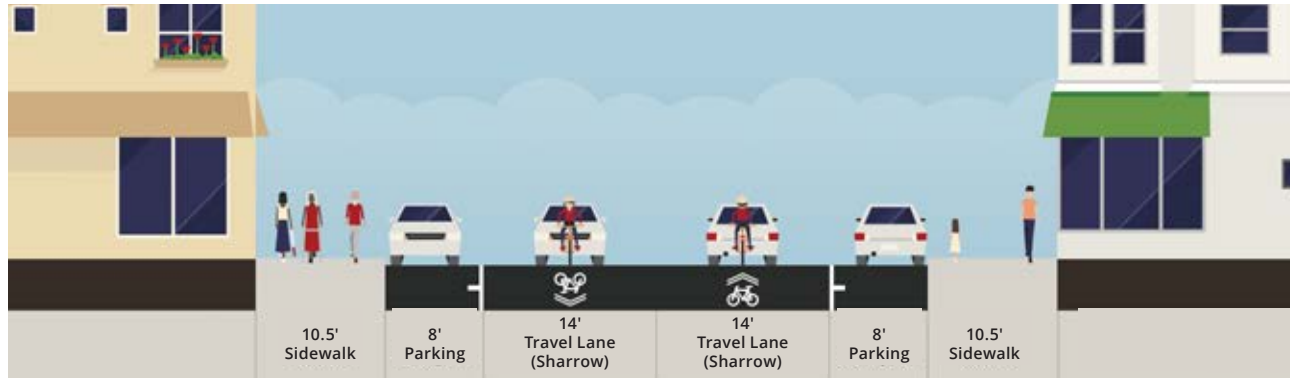
Near-term transformation (42' Curb-to-Curb)



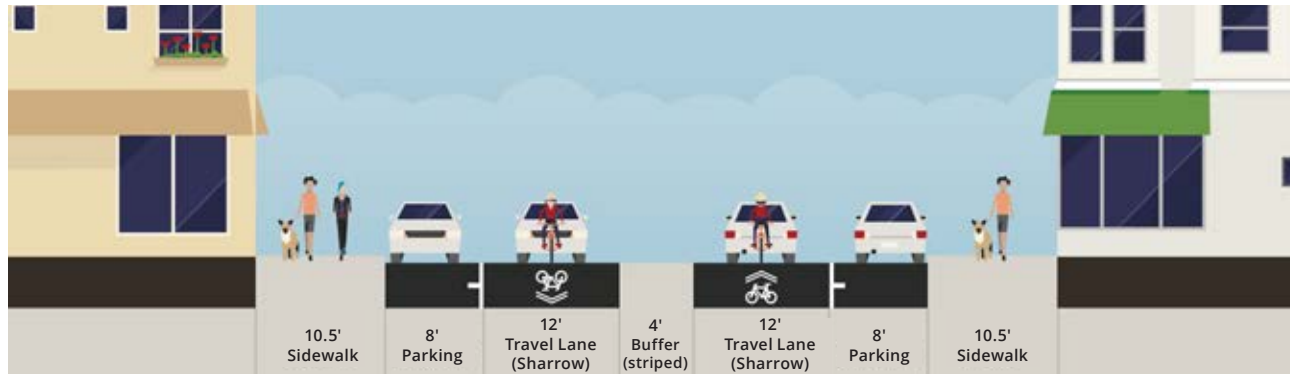
Long-term transformation (42' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

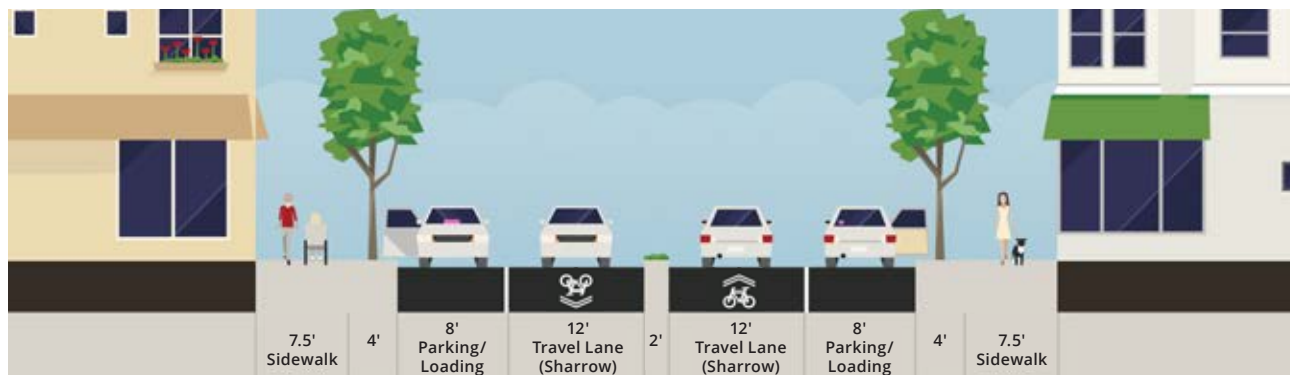
Fourth Street between E Street and Lincoln Avenue, facing east or west



Existing condition (44' Curb-to-Curb)



Near-term transformation (44' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (42' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

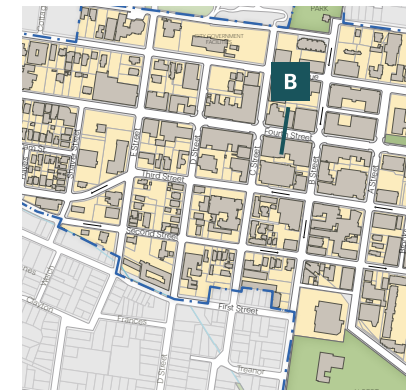


Figure 6.27 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.28 (Left) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

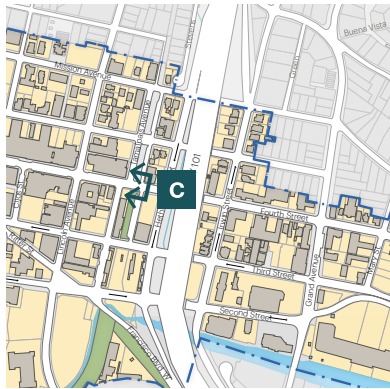


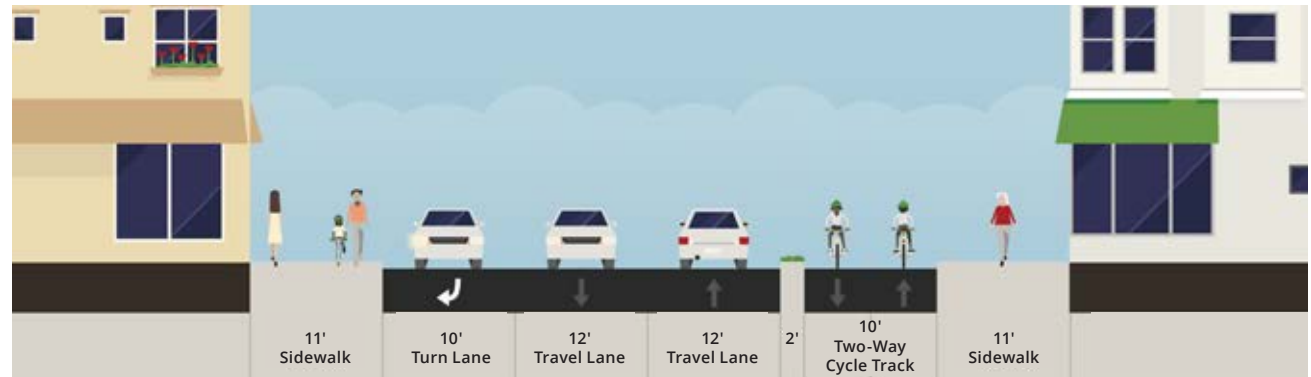
Figure 6.29 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.30 (Right) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

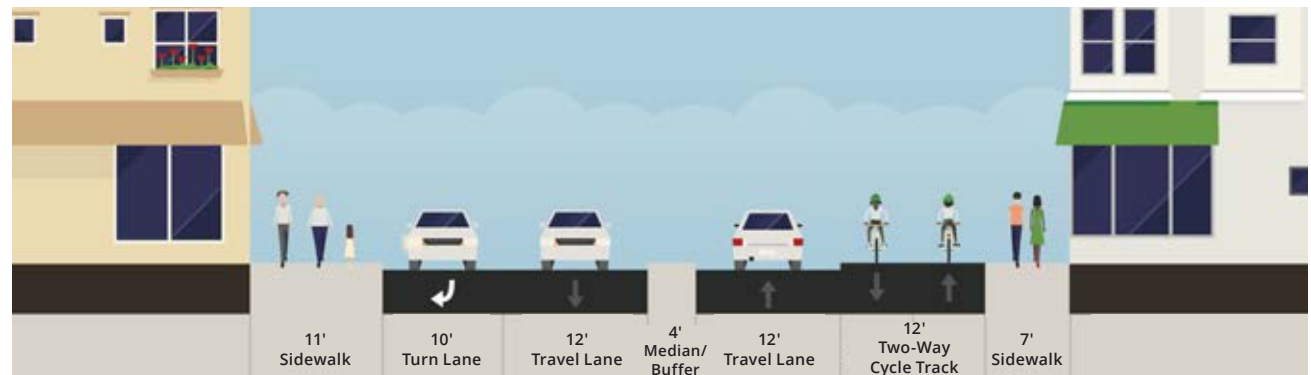
Fourth Street between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton Street, facing west



Existing condition (46' Curb-to-Curb). Note: Mostly "red curb" condition (no street parking allowed)



Near-term transformation (46' Curb-to-Curb)



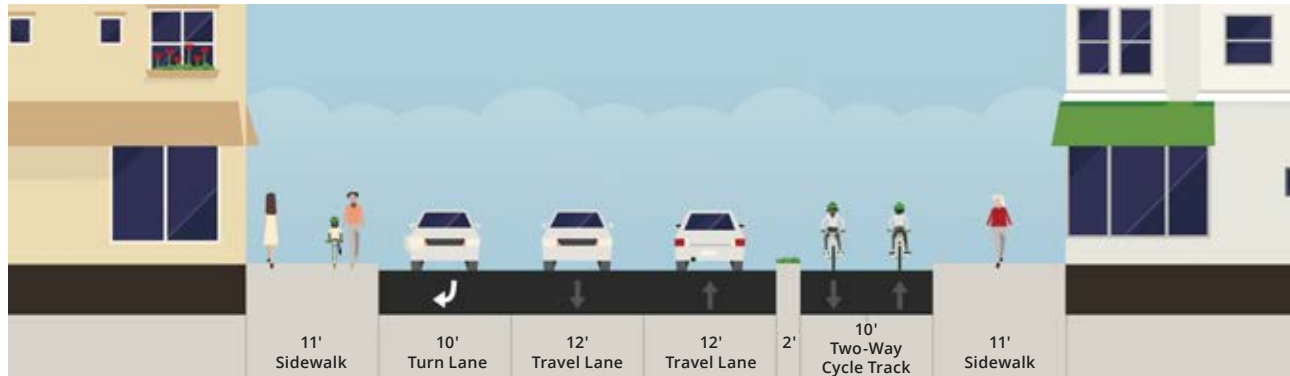
Long-term transformation (50' Curb-to-Curb including raised cycle track)

Sections created using Streetmix

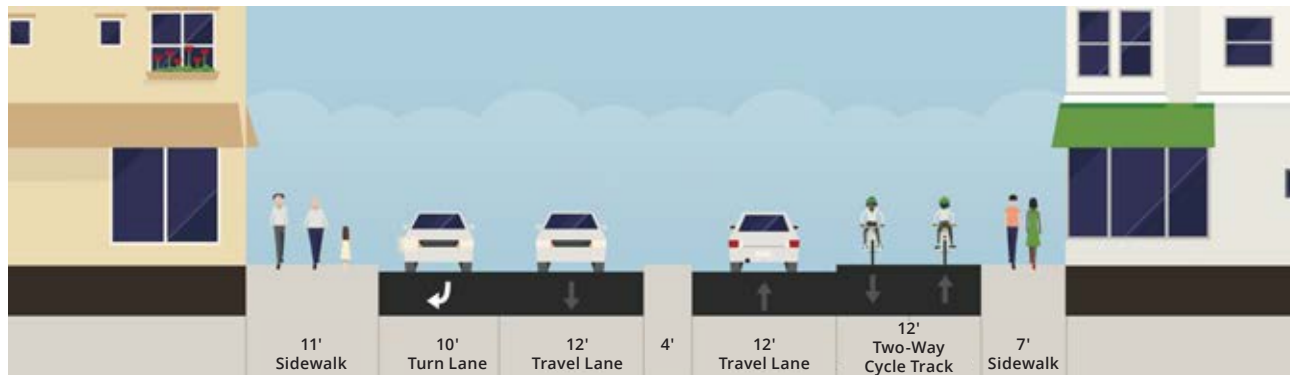
Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue, facing east or west



Existing condition (46' Curb-to-Curb)



Near-term transformation (46' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (50' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

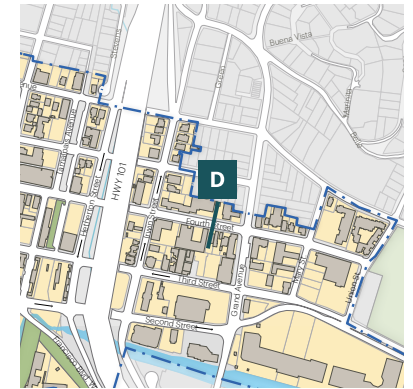


Figure 6.31 (Above) Key map of street section location

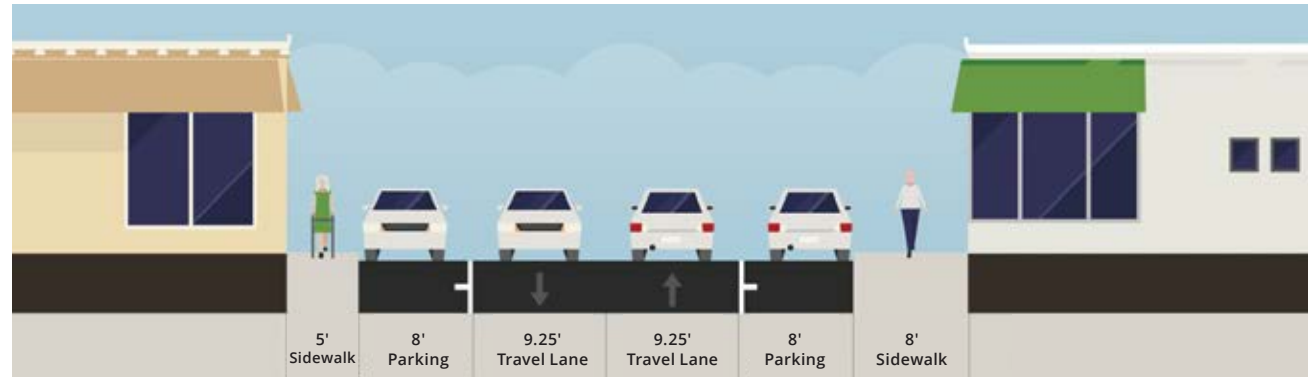
Figure 6.32 (Left) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment



Figure 6.33 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.34 (Right) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

Tamalpais Avenue between Second Street and Third Street, facing north



Existing condition (34.5' Curb-to-Curb)



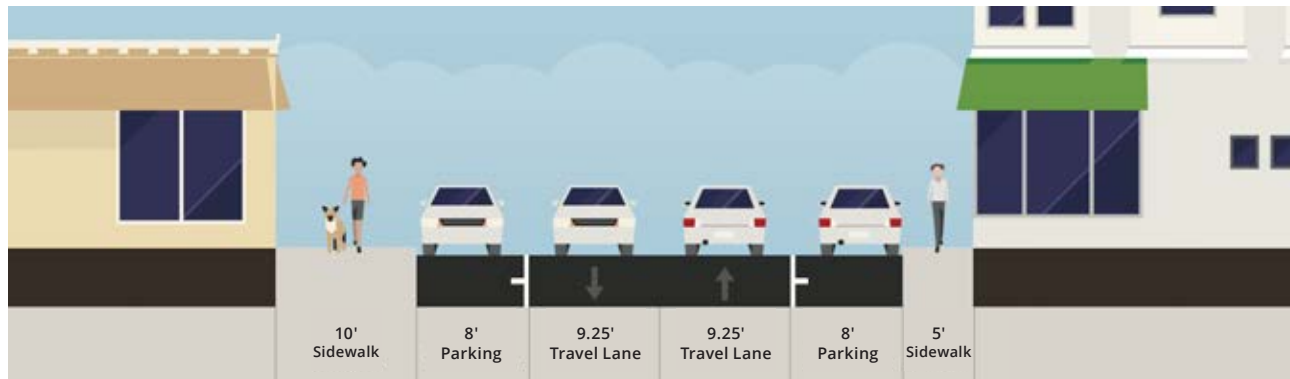
Near-term transformation (34.5' Curb-to-Curb)



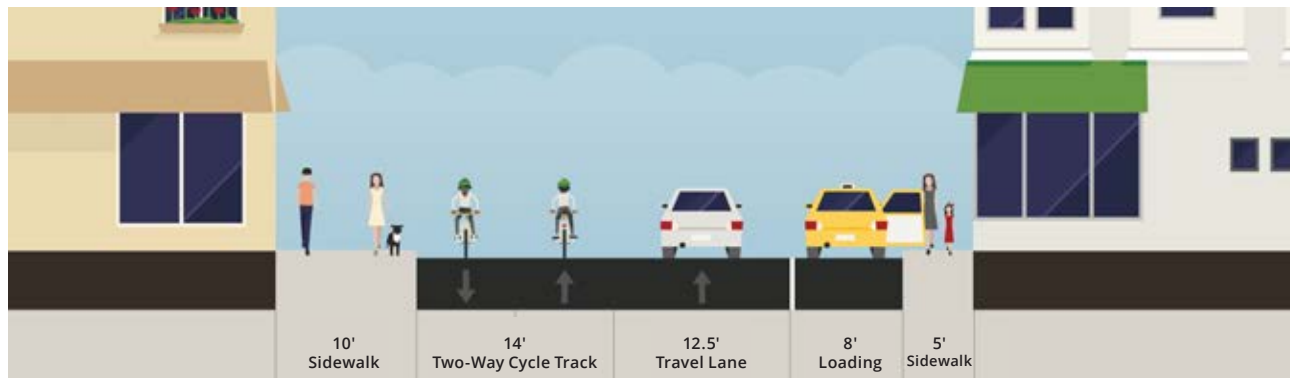
Long-term transformation (33.5' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

Tamalpais Avenue between Third Street and Fourth Street, facing north



Existing condition (34.5' Curb-to-Curb)



Near-term transformation (34.5' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (31' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

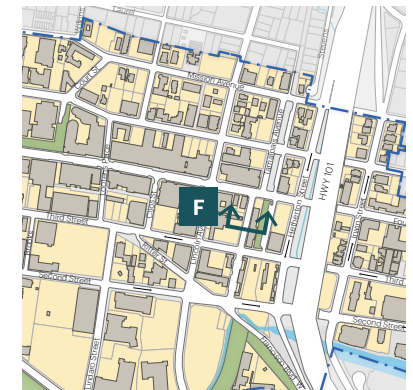


Figure 6.35 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.36 (Left) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment



Figure 6.37 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.38 (Right) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

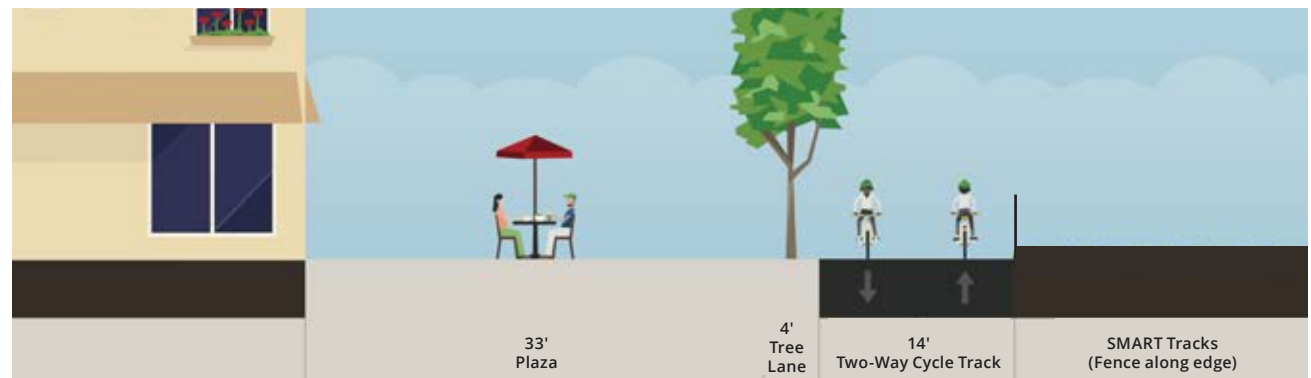
Tamalpais Avenue between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue, facing north



Existing condition (36' - 38' Curb-to-Curb)



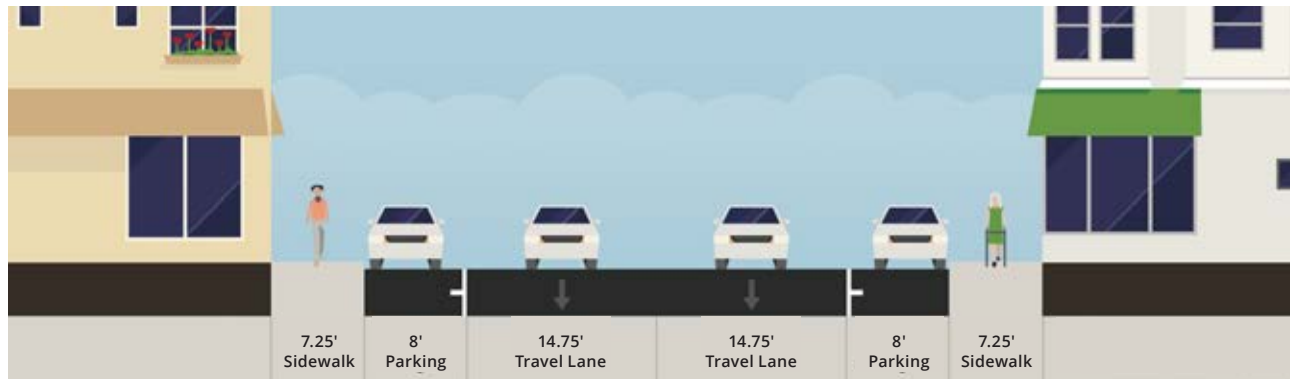
Near-term transformation (34' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (Plaza with Cycle Track)

Sections created using Streetmix

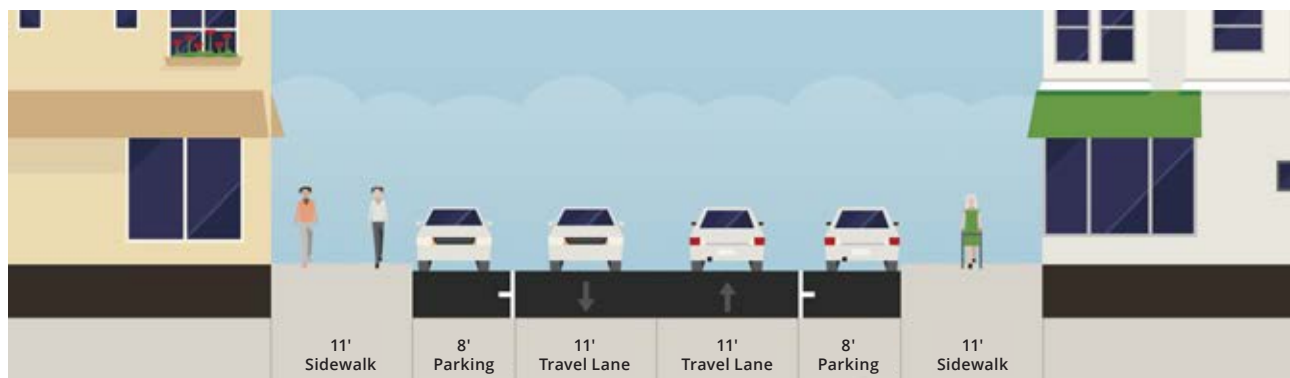
B Street between Second Street and Mission Avenue, facing north



Existing condition (45.5' Curb-to-Curb)



Near-term transformation (45.5' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (38' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

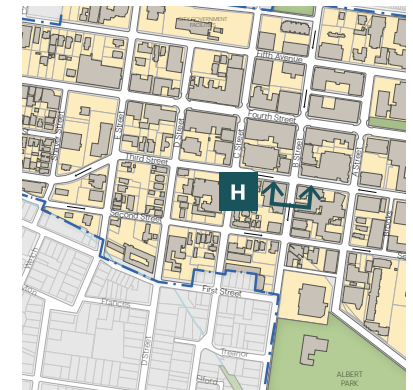


Figure 6.39 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.40 (Left) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

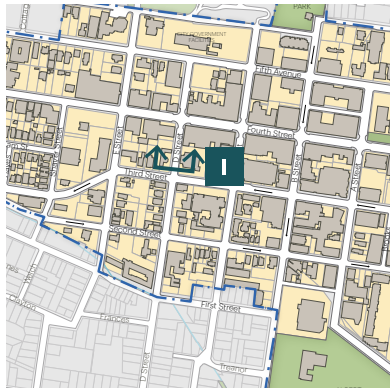
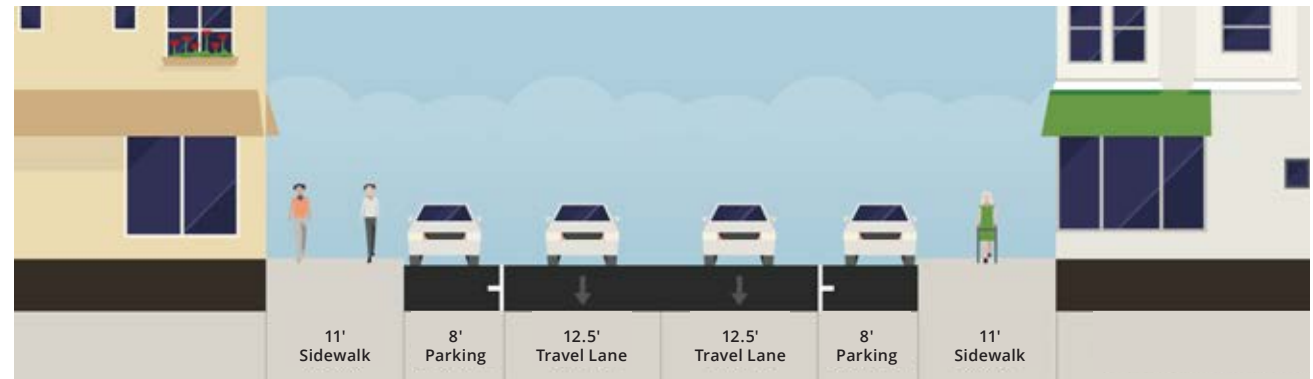


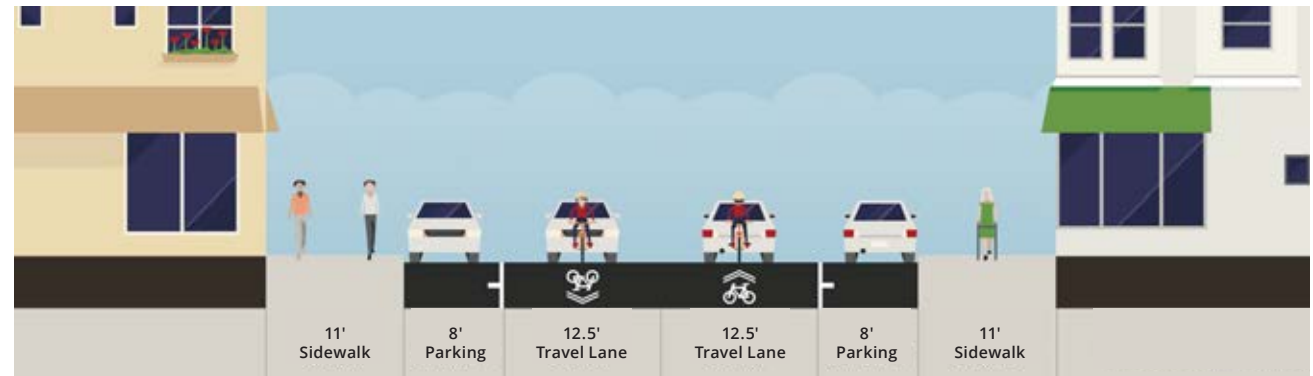
Figure 6.41 (Above) Key map of street section location

Figure 6.42 (Right) Street sections illustrating existing conditions, near-term changes, and long-term transformation of this street segment

D Street between First Street and Fifth Avenue, facing north



Existing condition (41' Curb-to-Curb)



Near-term transformation (41' Curb-to-Curb)



Long-term transformation (40' Curb-to-Curb)

Sections created using Streetmix

6.4 Parking

Parking demand in Downtown San Rafael is highly variable based on location, parking facility type, and the given point in time. Current and evolving transportation trends need to be considered when providing parking for the future.

Approach

Parking demand has declined in cities with high adoption rates of emerging technologies such as ride-hailing services and micromobility devices. Similar parking demand reductions are forecast with the future adoption of self-driving cars. Given these recent and anticipated trends, the Plan recommends maximizing the use of existing parking supply and adjusting parking requirements to “right size” parking for new development. The objective is to create a “park once” district, actively facilitating shared use of private off-street parking facilities, and variably price on-street parking in high demand areas. This “park once” district would be focused in the area between E Street and US-101, where most of the off-street public parking facilities are located, and could be implemented by expanding the existing Downtown Parking Assessment District to extend from E Street to Hetheron Street.

The Plan also recommends adjusting parking standards based on access to transit facilities. This translates to reducing parking requirements for new development in areas that are within half a mile (walking distance) of the SMART station and the future San Rafael Transit Center. In addition, the parking exemption currently allowed for the

first 1.0 FAR of non-residential uses within the Downtown Parking Assessment District will remain. The West End Village, with lesser access to transit, will continue to have comparatively higher parking needs in the near-term, and parking standards will need to be calibrated accordingly.

Parking recommendations described in this section are consistent with the key recommendations of the Downtown Parking and Wayfinding Study (2017) that are included for reference in Appendix VI: Transportation and Parking - Additional Information. Parking standards for new development are described in Chapter Nine: Downtown Form-Based Code).

The parking recommendations for Downtown are grouped into the following overall strategies.

- 1. Maximize use of existing parking**
- 2. Parking information and technology**
- 3. Zoning and development standards**
- 4. Parking administration and operations**
- 5. Additional public parking**

1. Maximize use of existing parking

In a “park once” district, people are encouraged to park in one place and walk from one destination to another rather than driving and parking again. This approach requires sufficient off-street parking near high-demand destinations, parking and information technology to direct drivers to available parking, pricing to encourage the use of off-street facilities, and a safe, high-quality pedestrian environment from parking facilities to and from destinations. The following are recommended strategies.

- **Pedestrian access to parking.** Improvements to pedestrian routes to key parking facilities that create safe and comfortable conditions.
- **Shared parking program.** Implement a City program to encourage private property owners to share all or a portion of their parking. The role of the City could range from technical assistance with shared parking agreements and adding facilities to the City’s parking guidance/ information system to a full management agreement where the City provides signage, facility management, revenue collection, and enforcement with revenue sharing considerations. The City of Sacramento currently has an active shared parking program that manages more than 10,000 private parking spaces. By maximizing the use of private parking that was previously underutilized, the City has saved more than \$40 million in capital costs for new parking.
- **Dynamic parking pricing.** Set higher parking prices in high demand areas and lower prices in low demand areas. The objective, by charging the right price for on-street parking, is to make sure there are a few spaces available on every block. This strategy also encourages the use of off-street parking for long-term parkers. Additional parking revenue generated through dynamic pricing could be dedicated to pay for added public services on high demand blocks.

- **Innovative design solutions.** Allow the use of automated parking systems or similar mechanical parking devices for existing or new parking facilities.

- **Downtown Bike Share stations.** Work with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) to implement a new Marin County Bike Share Program including placing new bike share stations at major parking and transit facilities both to facilitate the “park once” district and to encourage the use of transit and cycling to reduce overall parking demand.

2. Parking information and technology

Implementing parking and information technology to direct drivers to available parking is a key aspect of successful “park once” districts. The following are recommended strategies.

- **Comprehensive parking information and technology system.** Implement technology that provides real-time information on parking availability in city-operated parking facilities. This technology can also provide smart parking signs at major Downtown gateways and along routes to parking facilities showing availability and directions. Consider digital parking short-term or long-term reservation systems, and integrate electric vehicle charging information and payment systems.
- **Parking technology strategy.** Develop and continually update a parking technology strategy that addresses parking and mobility goals and evolving conditions.

3. Zoning and development standards

Adjusting parking requirements to “right size” off-street parking will both support the “park once” district and support Downtown development goals. Some strategies are recommended below. These have been considered in

framing the parking standards in Chapter Nine: Downtown Form-Based Code.

- **Simplified parking requirement categories.** The Downtown Parking and Wayfinding Study (2017) recommended reducing the current 50 designations to five land use types for the Downtown area. The Precise Plan supports this approach, and the Downtown Form-Based Code addresses this in its parking standards.
- **Reduced, flexible parking requirements.** Section 14.18.040.G of the zoning code allows a 20 percent reduction for non-residential uses in Downtown and in addition, provides waivers for off-street requirements up to the first 1.0 in FAR. In addition to current allowed reductions in the Plan Area, additional parking reductions could be explored. Stacked parking is allowed and encouraged (but not mandated) and should be used where appropriate.
- **Shower and locker facilities.** The City can consider developing incentives for new commercial projects to provide showers and lockers to encourage bicycle commuting that will reduce parking demand.

4. Parking administration and operations

The active management of information, operations, and pricing of parking facilities are critical to the efficient use of parking. The following are recommended strategies.

- **Strategic guiding principles.** Adopt clear and strategic guiding principles for the operation and management of city-operated parking. It is recommended that this be a performance-based management approach that adjusts rates and regulations to make it as easy as possible to find a parking space.
- **Performance metrics for parking rates.** As part of the Strategic Guiding Principles, adopt performance metrics to implement and manage variable parking pricing.

- **Shared parking operations.** Modify the zoning code to allow for shared use parking arrangements. The Downtown Form-Based Code incorporates this recommendation.

5. Additional public parking

Given the cost and long-term commitment associated with providing additional public parking, all efforts to maximize use of existing parking should be undertaken before building new parking facilities. The following are recommended strategies.

- **Expand the Downtown Parking Assessment District.** Expand the current Downtown Parking Assessment District west to E Street and east to Hetherton Street. New funds generated would be used for a variety of purposes including pursuing partnerships with private developers and/or other agencies to add parking in new facilities being planned by others.
- **Public-private collaborations.** Work with major new developments to include public parking spaces in new private garages, particularly near the SMART station.
- **Parking facility dimensions.** Reduce the minimum parking space and aisle dimensions for parking facilities city-wide. The Downtown Form-Based Code provides updated parking standards for the Plan Area.
- **Parking garage design standards.** New parking structures should complement the architectural integrity of the surrounding area, provide ground floor active uses on the street frontage, align elevator/ pedestrian plazas towards transit and retail, provide opportunities for the parking to be shared by different land uses, and encourage public access. The Downtown Form-Based Code addresses these recommendations in its parking standards for the Plan Area.

6.5 Other Transportation Considerations for Downtown

Other topics that are relevant to Downtown's transportation network are listed below. General information on these topics have been provided in Appendix VI: Transportation and Parking - Additional Information, including background information, industry best practices and recommended strategies.

Curbside management

As competition for limited curb space will increase, a Downtown Curbside Management Strategy could be considered to help optimize available resources in Downtown.

Vehicle trip reduction measures

Vehicle trip reduction measures include strategies to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), traffic congestion levels, and greenhouse gas emissions. Applied as an inter-related, Downtown-wide set of strategies, Vehicle Trip Reduction measures will improve the performance of the Downtown transportation network and yield direct benefits to its users.

Ride-hailing, self-driving vehicles, and micromobility

A key Plan objective is to prepare Downtown for the future of mobility. Emerging technologies are discussed in this section, to provide relevant background information that could inform the design and management of streets and parking in the future.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding is integral to the effectiveness of the Downtown transportation and parking system. Well-designed and placed signs anticipate circulation needs, provide clear direction, and minimize confusion. Signage also plays a part in shaping identify, creating neighborhood or district character, and expressing community values. Best practices and strategies (discussed in Appendix VI) can further enhance Downtown's existing wayfinding improvements and ongoing implementation of the recommendations of the Downtown Parking and Wayfinding Study.

Please refer to Appendix VI: Transportation and Parking - Additional Information for a detailed discussion of these topics.

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Image credit: Fee Munson Ebert

Affordable Housing + Anti-Displacement

CHAPTER

7

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7.1 Introduction

The Bay Area is facing a housing crisis, and San Rafael is not an exception. Homelessness has been and continues to be an issue of concern, particularly in Downtown. This chapter assesses housing needs and includes recommendations to achieve the Plan goals of increasing housing affordability and preventing gentrification. The complete Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy is available in Appendix VII.

Background

The Downtown Precise Plan Area (Plan Area) is currently home to approximately 2,300 residents (2018 figures). The one-half mile radius around the SMART station and Transit Center has been designated a Priority Development Area (PDA) by the City Council, with recognition by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). As a PDA, the area has been identified as an infill development opportunity where there is both a local and regional commitment to developing more housing, along with amenities and services to meet the needs of residents in a pedestrian-friendly environment served by transit. This projected growth has implications for existing and future affordable housing within the Plan Area.

General Plan context

The City's Housing Element provides the policy framework for establishing the Precise Plan Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy. San Rafael's Housing Element sets forth housing policies to incentivize both market-rate and affordable development in Downtown, and to address

displacement of existing residents. Some of the relevant policies and programs are:

Policy H-7. Protection of the existing housing stock.

Continue to protect existing housing from conversion to non-residential uses. Ensure that affordable housing provided through government subsidy programs, incentives, and deed restrictions remains affordable over the required time period, and intervene when possible to help preserve such housing.

Policy H-15. Infill near transit.

Encourage higher densities on sites adjacent to a transit hub, focusing on the Priority Development Area surrounding the San Rafael Transit Center and future Downtown SMART station.

■ **H-15a. Downtown Station Area Plan.** *The extension of SMART rail service to Downtown is an opportunity to create a variety of transportation and housing options, economic stability, and vibrant community gathering places in the heart of San Rafael. General Plan 2020, adopted in 2004, allowed for higher residential densities and reduced residential parking standards to encourage*

housing development within the heart of Downtown that would support local businesses and allow people to live close to their place of work. The Downtown Station Area Plan, accepted by City Council in June 2012, establishes a series of implementing actions, the following of which specifically serve to facilitate higher density residential and mixed-use infill in the area.

Similarly, General Plan 2040 includes an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Element that addresses housing and anti-displacement issues, and a Neighborhoods Element that recognizes displacement as an issue in certain parts of San Rafael, including Downtown and the Canal neighborhood. Relevant policies include:

Policy EDI-3.1. Preventing displacement

Prevent the displacement of lower income residents from their homes due to rising costs, evictions without cause, and other economic factors that make it difficult for people to stay in San Rafael.

Program EDI-3.1a. Anti-displacement strategies.

Evaluate anti-displacement strategies in future plans or programs that could result in the direct removal of affordable housing units, the displacement of tenants, or economic hardships due to rapid rent increases.

Program EDI-3.1b. Renter protection measures.

Continue to explore and promote measures to protect San Rafael renters and facilitate positive communication between landlords and tenants.

Program EDI-3.1c. Climate-related displacement.

Consider measures to address the potential for loss or displacement of affordable or lower cost housing in the City’s climate change adaptation planning.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

Under California State Housing Law, each city and county is required to adopt a Housing Element that demonstrates how the jurisdiction plans to meet existing and projected housing needs during the Housing Element cycle. The projected housing need is identified through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process, which specifies the quantity of housing units needed distributed among four income levels.

Through the Housing Element update process, each jurisdiction must show that it has zoned sufficient sites to provide the development capacity necessary to accommodate its RHNA. This “fair share” allocation concept seeks to ensure that each jurisdiction accepts

Table 7A. San Rafael Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) 2015-2023

Income Level	Percent of AMI*	Units	Permits Issued 2015-2019	Pipeline Residential Units	Remaining RHNA Need
Very Low	0-50%	240**	3	88	149
Low	51-80%	148	52	98	0
Moderate	81-120%	181	11	18	152
Above Moderate	120%+	438	171	322	0 (exceeded by 5)
Total		1,007	237	526	301

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) 5th Cycle RHNA.

* AMI: Area Median Income for Marin County

** Of San Rafael's allocated 240 Very Low Income units, half is allocated to Extremely Low Income households and half to Very Low Income households

responsibility for the housing needs of not only its resident population (i.e., young adults leaving home and forming new households, or larger households splitting up to form smaller ones), but also for the jurisdiction's projected share of regional household growth across all income categories. Such non-resident household growth occurs primarily when new job opportunities attract new residents to the region.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has adopted RHNA for San Rafael for the 2015-2023 Housing Element cycle. San Rafael was allocated 1,007 total new housing units, of which 24 percent are Very Low Income and 15 percent are Low Income, as shown in Table 7A on the previous page. These RHNA figures are linked to San Rafael's allocation of regional housing growth under the Sustainable Communities Strategy (tied to SB 375), and are influenced by factors including planned employment growth and proximity to transit. While the current RHNA allocation runs through 2023, the next allocation covers 2023-2031 and is substantially higher. San Rafael's RHNA for 2023-2031 is increasing by 220 percent to 3,220 units, making it much more critical to provide housing opportunities in Downtown.

The City prepares an Annual Housing Element Progress Report (APR) for submittal to the State which includes an assessment of progress towards meeting the RHNA allocation. Based on the APR for calendar year 2019, San Rafael issued a total of 237 residential building permits during the first four years of the current Housing Element cycle (2015-2019), including 45 accessory dwelling units that help to address the City's low and moderate income housing needs.

Relative to the eight year RHNA goal of 1,007 units, construction was modest, particularly in the Very Low and Moderate Income categories. However, between 2017 and 2020, San Rafael saw an uptick in development

activity, including several residential projects. As of 2020, a number of projects need to be considered when evaluating San Rafael's progress towards meeting its RHNA allocation within the current Housing Element cycle.

These are projects that are either entitled or under construction in Downtown. Some of the major developments are described in Figure 7.1 on the facing page.

San Rafael is currently lagging behind its housing goals. These projects would contribute an additional 526 units city-wide towards San Rafael's RHNA goals, including 88 Very Low Income and 98 Low Income units. As presented in the final column of Table 7A, adding these proposed projects to the 237 building permits already issued puts the City on track to be able to address most of its RHNA goals during the planning period.

Although Table 7A still shows the City underperforming in its future production of Moderate Income units, the affordability analysis in the following section (refer to Table 7C) shows that many market-rate apartments are in fact affordable to Moderate Income households without subsidy.

Figure 7.1

Major residential and mixed-use projects in the Downtown development pipeline in 2020



1. 815 B Street is a four-story, mixed-use building with 41 apartments above approximately 1,900 sq. ft. of commercial retail space located on four adjacent Downtown lots. The project was granted a 35 percent density bonus, and includes six below-market rate (BMR) units: three

Very Low Income and three Low Income.

Project status (2020): Under construction



2. BioMarin and Whistlestop/Eden Housing (999 Third Street) has two, four-story buildings for laboratory/R&D and general office space, with a third building housing a "healthy aging" center on the first two floors and 67 affordable senior housing units above, to be constructed by Whistlestop/Eden

Housing. The project will allow Whistlestop to provide affordable housing to seniors and continue to offer a wide array of services (fitness classes, health screenings, etc.) in a central Downtown location.

Project status (2020): Approved

3. 1628 Fifth Avenue: 9 units
Project status (2020): Approved

4. 104 Shaver Street: 7 units
Project status (2020): Approved



5. Aegis San Rafael (800 Mission Avenue) is a four-story assisted living facility building with 77 assisted living suites (studio and one-bedroom units) over a 40 space subterranean garage. The building will house 25 units dedicated to memory care and

52 assisted living units. While none of the units in the project are affordable, a commercial in-lieu fee of approximately \$500,000 was paid to the City's Affordable Housing In-Lieu Fee Fund.

Project status (2020): Approved, submitted for building permits



6. Seagate at 703 Third Street is a six-story, mixed-use project with ground level retail and apartments above. It includes a total of 120 studio, one and two-bedroom units, including nine BMR units (five Very Low Income and four Low Income). The project is seeking a density bonus above the

35 percent by-right density increase under State statutes based on proximity to transit and to increase the project's economic viability.

Project status (2020): Approved

7. 21 G Street: 9 units
Project status (2020): Under construction

8. Wilkens Hotel, Fourth Street: 12 units (rehabilitated)
Project status (2020): Under construction

7.2 Existing Housing Characteristics

The majority of the existing housing units in Downtown are renter-occupied. Several approved and pipeline projects will deliver additional housing units in the near future.

According to the Downtown Economic and Market Profile (included in Appendix II: Downtown Area Profile Report), there are approximately 1,250 existing housing units in the Plan Area. 89 percent of the housing stock is renter-occupied, significantly higher than the corresponding city-wide figure of 50 percent. The risk of economic displacement from redevelopment tends to be higher in areas with high numbers of households in rental housing.

Table 7B summarizes the 329 housing units in the Plan Area currently in the development pipeline.

San Rafael is expected to experience a steady increase in population resulting from regional employment growth trends and housing demand. The Precise Plan recommends 2,200 new housing units (including pipeline projects that have been approved). According to the 2018 market analysis, the demand for all residential

Table 7B. Downtown Precise Plan pipeline residential projects

Address	Project Type	Housing Units	Status
815 B Street	Mixed-use (residential over retail)	41 condominiums (3 VL/ 3 L when rented, 6 L when sold)	Under construction
1628 Fifth Avenue	Condominiums	9 units (1 VL/ 1 L)	Approved
104 Shaver Street	Apartments	7 units (1 VL)	Approved
703 Third Street (Seagate)	Apartments	120 apartments (5 VL, 4 L)	Approved
800 Mission Avenue (Aegis San Rafael)	Senior assisted living	77 suites with 88 beds	Approved (planning entitlements approved, in building permit submittal stage)
999 Third Street (Whistlestop/ Eden)	Senior housing above new senior center	67 low income apartments	Approved (planning entitlements approved, in building permit submittal stage)
21 G Street	Townhomes	8 condos (1 L)	Under construction

Source: City of San Rafael, Planning Division of the Community Development Department, April 2019.
VL = Very Low Income, L = Low Income, M = Moderate Income

development types is high, and overall build-out is likely be constrained by the availability and cost of buildable sites more than by market demand.

Rental costs and affordability

Rental costs in the Plan Area (and for comparison purposes, San Rafael and Marin) were obtained from CoStar, a real estate service that provides information on asking rents in properties containing five or more units. A total of 545¹ units were included in CoStar's Q1 2019 rent survey within the Plan Area, documenting average asking rents of \$2,605, and reflecting rents higher than both the city-wide average (\$2,194) and Marin County as a whole (\$2,492). Vacancy rates for rental units in Downtown were documented at 4.2 percent. Typically, a vacancy rate of 5 percent is considered "healthy" as it indicates that the market is evenly balanced between landlords and renters, and there is mobility of renters within the market.

Table 7C presents the maximum affordable rents for Very Low, Low and Moderate Income households by household size, and compares this with average apartment rents in the Plan Area, the City, and the County. The Marin County

Housing Authority defines a Very Low Income household as one earning less than \$69,600 a year for a two-person household. Using this definition and recent Census data, the data in Table 7C indicates that more than half of all Downtown households are Very Low Income. Market rate rents for a one-bedroom apartment in Downtown San Rafael are 63 percent higher than the amount considered "affordable" for Very Low Income households. Plan Area rents are well above the level of affordability for Very Low and Low Income households, with the affordability gap increasing with household size. In contrast, households earning moderate incomes are still able to afford average market rents in Downtown. The 2013 city-wide rent survey conducted for San Rafael's Housing Element presents similar results. Increasing rents, combined with low vacancy rates, indicate a strong demand for multifamily rental units in Downtown.

At-Risk affordable housing

San Rafael has facilitated the development of affordable and special needs housing using a variety of public financing mechanisms from federal, state, and local

Figure 7.2 Summary of affordable housing units in Downtown (2018)

- 286 publicly-assisted affordable rental units
- 228 BMR rental units (inclusionary program)

¹ The actual number of multifamily rental units in Downtown is higher than the 545 units tracked by CoStar, and includes subsidized units, smaller market-rate projects (<5 units) and rental units built above ground floor retail.

Income Level	Maximum Affordable Rent After Utilities Allowance		
	Studio (1 person)	1 Bedroom (2 person)	2 Bedroom (3 person)
Very Low Income (50% AMI)	\$1,320	\$1,511	\$1,683
Low Income (80% AMI)	\$2,170	\$2,483	\$2,775
Moderate Income (120% AMI)	\$2,781	\$3,181	\$3,563
Downtown Precise Plan Area Average Rents	\$2,003	\$2,467	\$3,259
San Rafael Average Rents	\$1,499	\$1,997	\$2,473
Marin County Average Rents	\$1,514	\$2,138	\$2,726

Sources: HCD Income Limits 2018; CoStar Q1 2019 (rentals 5 units and above); BAE, 2019. Utility costs based on Marin Housing multifamily utility allowance schedule: \$91 for studios, \$101 for 1 bedrooms, \$131 for 2 bedrooms.

resources. Table 7D presents an inventory of publicly assisted rental housing within the Plan Area to evaluate whether any of the current supply is at risk of transitioning to market-rate housing. The Plan Area currently contains 286 publicly assisted affordable rental units within 12 residential developments. Most of these properties have long-term affordability controls, though four properties - Carmel Hotel, Marin Center for Independent Living, Fourth Street Center, and One H Street Apartments, are potentially at risk of conversion during the next 10 years.

Fortunately, the actual risk of conversion seems low, as they are owned and managed by non-profit organizations that have a public purpose to develop and maintain affordable housing for low income and special needs populations. Potentially at more imminent risk of conversion to market-rate are privately owned rent-restricted units produced under the City's inclusionary program. The Marin Housing Authority monitors these below-market rate (BMR) units on behalf of the City, and has identified a total of 228 BMR rental units in San Rafael (source: Marin County Affordable Housing Inventory, February 2019).

When the City started its program in 1986, BMR units were required to be affordable for a 30-year term, meaning that affordability controls on many of these earlier projects may expire soon. At present, under AB 2222 (effective since January 2015) the City requires BMR projects to be affordable for 55 years, or in some cases in perpetuity. In addition to the rent-subsidized units, there is also a supply of market-rate units which are priced at levels making them affordable "by design." Some of the occupants of these units could be displaced as private redevelopment occurs.

Displacement may also occur if redevelopment increases the market value of the existing housing stock, and rents become unaffordable. Rents have increased rapidly in the

City and throughout the Bay Area in recent years, and a significant amount of economic displacement has already occurred within and beyond the Plan Area.

Table 7D. Publicly assisted affordable rental housing within Downtown Precise Plan Area			
Project	BMR Units	Housing Type	Potential Conversion Date
1103 Lincoln Avenue	12	Disabled	Perpetuity
Apartments at 822 B Street	6	Permanent Supportive Housing	2041
Carmel Hotel at 831 B Street	36	26 Supportive / 10 Transitional units	2028
Centertown at 855 C Street	60	Family	2064
Gordon's Opera House at 1137 Fourth Street	17	General	2039
Lone Palm Apartments at 840 C Street	24	Family	2047
Marin Center for Independent Living at 710 Fourth Street	5	Disabled	2027
Fourth Street Center (Marin Hotel) at 111 Fourth Street	20	Permanent Supportive Housing	Perpetuity as long as owned by Homeward Bound
One H Street Apartments	20	Family	2028
San Rafael Commons at 302 Fourth Street	83	Senior	Sec 236: 2056 Sec 8: 2031
1700 Fourth Street	1	Family	2071
1200 Irwin Street	2	Student Housing/Family	2071
Total Units	286		
Source: Marin County Affordable Housing Inventory, December 2019			

7.3 Existing City Programs and Resources

San Rafael currently implements a number of city-wide programs intended to support the production of affordable housing and to protect existing tenants from displacement.

Existing City programs for production of affordable housing

Between 2018 and 2021, the San Rafael City Council convened a number of special meetings to address obstacles to housing production and ways to remedy those obstacles through revised regulations and programs. There were several public meetings and workshops on the topic, culminating in specific recommendations to encourage housing development and streamline the approval process. Among the proposed changes were reducing inclusionary housing requirements and providing more flexibility in how and where those requirements were met; updating the density bonus laws; modifying the role of the Design Review Board; streamlining the appeals process; and modifying regulations for small lots. At the time the Draft Downtown Precise Plan was published, the City had adopted some of these regulations.

■ Inclusionary housing program

San Rafael began implementing its inclusionary requirements in 1986 (codified in Section 14.16.030 of the Zoning Code), and the program has become one of the City's most successful methods to create permanent affordable housing. The City's primary intent is the

construction of below-market rate (BMR) units on-site so that the inclusionary units are integrated within the project and throughout the community. In February 2021, City Council expanded options for meeting the affordable housing obligation beyond on-site development, including off-site development, land donations, or payment of a housing in-lieu fee (see Resolution 14890).

The changes established a “primary” requirement for all projects with two units or more and a “secondary” requirement only applicable to projects with 15 units or more. The net effect would be a reduction in the affordable set-aside from 20 percent to either 10 percent or 15 percent for larger projects, depending on the affordability level of the units.

From the inception of the BMR program, a number of BMR rental and for-sale units have been developed city-wide. Because the structure of the City's inclusionary requirements almost always trigger eligibility for some level of a State housing density bonus, a significant number of development applicants elect to take advantage of density bonus incentives.

Table 7E. Inclusionary requirement by project size	
Project size	% BMR units required
2 – 15 housing units*	Primary requirement: 10% of proposed units**
15 or more housing units*	Primary requirement: 5% of proposed units**
Secondary requirement for projects with 15 or more units:	
Additional on-site affordable units	Provide 5% of the proposed units** as Low Income affordable units in addition to the primary requirement; or 10% of the proposed units** as Moderate Income affordable units in addition to the primary requirement.
In-lieu fee option	Equivalent to 5% of the total proposed units**, paid prior to the issuance of building permits.
Off-site affordable units	Must be provided within a half-mile of the market rate project and provide the same level of public benefit as an on-site project; should include a partnership with an experienced affordable housing developer; and must provide a cash deposit or equivalent guarantee to the City.
Donation of land to the City	The land must be appraised to be at a value equal or greater than the in-lieu parameters, should be located in an area of high need for affordable housing, and be suitably zoned.
* Refer to Section 14.16.030 of the San Rafael Municipal Code for allowed exemptions. Refer also to Resolutions 14890 and 14891.	
** Excluding density bonus units	

Density bonus and affordable housing incentives

As with Inclusionary Housing requirements, density bonus regulations were amended by City Council in February

2021. Pursuant to State Density Bonus law (Government Code Section 65915), developers of residential projects may apply for a density bonus and additional incentive(s) if the project includes one or more of the following:

- At least 10 percent of the units for lower income (up to 80 percent AMI) households;
- At least five percent of the units for Very Low Income (up to 50 percent AMI) households;
- A senior citizen housing development or mobile home park that limits residency based on age requirements for housing for older persons;
- At least 10 percent of the total dwelling units in a condominium development for Moderate Income (up to 120 percent AMI) households.

The amount of density bonus varies according to a sliding scale set forth in State law, depending on the level of affordability and percentage of affordable units proposed of total residential units (see Resolution 14891).

In addition to the density bonus, eligible projects in the City of San Rafael may receive one to four additional development incentives, depending on the proportion of affordable units and level of income targeting. Among these additional incentives is a height bonus program allowing additional building height ranging from six to 24 feet, that has been used in several recent projects. Applicants are also eligible to utilize the State’s parking ratio (inclusive of handicapped and guest parking), which requires one space for studios and one-bedroom units, and two spaces for units with two or more bedrooms.

In addition, pursuant to AB 744, density bonus projects which include the maximum percentage of Very Low or Low Income units and units located within one-half mile of a major transit stop with unobstructed access are eligible for further parking reductions. According to City staff, the

majority of recent housing projects reviewed by the City have included the approval of a density bonus, with most of the bonuses granted ranging between 20-35 percent. However, the Planning Division recently processed and approved two projects with considerably higher bonus requests than the 35 percent established by the State: the Whistlestop/EDEN housing project at 999 Third Street, and the 703-723 Third Street housing development.

The City has also adopted requirements established by AB 1763, which extends the density bonus to 80 percent for 100 percent affordable residential and mixed-use projects. It also provides a fourth concession in addition to the three allowed under the State density bonus law. If the project is located within half a mile of a major transit stop, it eliminates any restrictions on density and allows an additional height of 33 feet. For housing projects that qualify as a special needs or supportive housing development. This law is anticipated to influence development in Downtown in the coming years.

■ In-lieu fees for affordable housing

Effective February 2021, San Rafael allows the payment of fees equivalent to five percent of the total proposed units (excluding density bonus units) in lieu of providing those units on-site. The amount may be amended in the future. In-lieu fees are also collected for fractional units. In other words, if the number of units required is not a whole number, the share below 0.5 (i.e., the "fractional" unit) is covered by a fee. If the fraction is above 0.5, the number of affordable units is rounded up to the next whole number.

Affordable Housing In-Lieu fees generated from non-residential development and fees generated from residential developments pursuant to San Rafael Zoning Code Section 14.16.030 are placed in a city-wide housing

in-lieu fee fund to be used to increase the supply of housing affordable to Very Low, Low, and Moderate Income households². As of the end of 2018, San Rafael's Housing In-Lieu Fee Fund had a balance of approximately \$1.3 million, with several pipeline projects to generate additional funds. Given this relatively limited amount of funding, the City intends to focus these resources on projects which emphasize leverage with outside funds and maximize the number and affordability of units provided. Funded activities may include acquisition and rehabilitation of housing through non-profits, new construction of affordable housing, and provision of rehabilitation funds to privately owned rental housing in exchange for affordability covenants. Pursuant to the City's Housing Element, a portion of these in lieu fees is used for housing Extremely Low and Very Low Income households to help address its unmet RHNA needs.

■ First-Time Home Buyer program

The below-market rate (BMR) ownership housing program is administered by Marin Housing Authority with assistance and policy direction from City staff. The program offers low and moderate income, first-time home buyers the opportunity to purchase specified new and previously owned condominium units in Marin County at less than market value. Since the inception of the program, over 150 San Rafael households have been assisted with first-time home purchases at affordable prices, with a current inventory of 117 BMR ownership units within the City. All of the units have long-term "resale restrictions" that restrict the sale price to keep the unit affordable to low and moderate income buyers. The Marin Housing Authority also assists BMR purchasers in obtaining Federal Mortgage Credit Certificates (MCCs) to further reduce homeownership costs.

² In-lieu fees are charged based on an individual project's affordable housing unit requirement, and are \$334,967.47 (as of February 2019) per affordable unit. The fee amount is adjusted annually, taking into consideration inflation, the local median sales price for a home, and average annual building cost index.

■ Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Second Units (JSUs)

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), also referred to as second units and "in-law" units, have been regulated and encouraged in San Rafael since 1983. ADUs typically rent for less than apartments of comparable size, and can offer affordable rental options for seniors and single persons. They can also be a source of supplementary rental income, enabling elderly homeowners and those with modest incomes to be able to remain living in their homes. In 2016, the City adopted regulations to support in the creation of "junior second units" (JSU) of less than 500 square feet in size, created through the repurposing of existing space, such as a bedroom, within a single-family home to create a semi-private living situation for a renter or caregiver in conjunction with the owner-occupied unit. Up until recently, the City received approximately four to six ADU applications per year. In 2017, the State adopted several new pieces of legislation designed to further promote the production of ADUs, including ministerial review requirements, elimination of parking requirements for properties near transit, and elimination of utility connection fees for attached ADUs. Since operating under the State model ADU ordinance, the number of ADU applications in San Rafael has increased significantly, with 30 applications in 2017, 30 in 2018, 18 in 2019, and 36 in 2020.

■ Minimum densities

To encourage the efficient and sustainable use of land, the City prohibits residential development below minimum designated General Plan densities, unless physical or environmental constraints preclude its achievement. Residential projects are to be approved at the mid- to high-range of the zoning density. If development on a site is to occur over time, the applicant must show that the proposed development does not prevent subsequent

development of the site to its maximum density and guarantees that the remaining phases will be developed.

Existing tenant protection programs

■ Condominium conversion regulations

Apartment projects proposed for conversion to condominium ownership are subject to the City's Condominium Conversion regulations (Section 15.12.080 of the Zoning Code). These regulations set forth a series of tenant protections, including noticing requirements and relocation provisions, and prohibit conversions unless the City's rental vacancy rate is above five percent (as determined by the State of California Finance Department's annual population estimates). San Rafael's rental vacancy rate has remained below five percent, and thus the City has not received any Condominium Conversion applications in recent years. Should the rental vacancy rate increase, any proposed condominium conversion would be required to comply with the City's affordable housing (inclusionary) requirements, meet current zoning and building codes, and meet other requirements of the Condominium Conversion ordinance.

■ Fair housing program

As part of the Cooperative Agreement with the County on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, San Rafael directs a portion of the City's allocation to Fair Housing of Marin and Marin Mediation Services, and refers discrimination and tenant/landlord complaints to these agencies. The City provides written materials regarding fair housing law and posts information about fair housing agencies and phone numbers on the City's website, at City Hall, the Public Library, and other public places. The City is currently assessing and pursuing adoption of renter protection policies, practices and programs.

■ Source of Income Discrimination Ordinance

State law prohibits housing discrimination based on a person's source of income, but does not protect individuals or families who rely on rental subsidies paid by a third party directly to the landlord rather than to the tenant for payment to the landlord. Examples of such rent subsidies include Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers. Every year more than 100 voucher holders are not able to find a unit in Marin because they cannot find a landlord willing to accept a voucher. In November 2016, the Marin County Board of Supervisors adopted a Source of Income Fair Housing Ordinance intended to eliminate this limitation in State law by recognizing these third-party housing subsidies as a source of income and prohibiting rental discrimination against persons relying on them. The ordinance does not, however, prevent property owners from screening renters and retaining freedom of choice based on other factors, such as total income, credit scores, rental history, references, etc. In December 2018, the San Rafael City Council passed a Source of Income Discrimination Ordinance.

■ Relocation assistance

Section 14.16.279 of the San Rafael Municipal Code requires applicants to provide certain limited relocation assistance for low income tenants displaced by new development or property improvements that require vacating the unit. A notice of displacement must be given at least 60 days before the property is to be vacated.

■ Mandatory mediation

Mediation is a process in which a neutral third party facilitates mutually acceptable resolution to a dispute between parties. With “mandatory” mediation, if a triggering event occurs (e.g. rent is increased above a certain percentage), then the tenant is able to request

mediation services and the landlord needs to participate in the mediation process, though the parties cannot be compelled to reach a resolution. San Rafael has adopted a mandatory mediation program under which mediation can be requested for rent increases of greater than five percent during a 12-month period.

■ Just Cause eviction

Under California law, landlords have the legal right to terminate a rental agreement without reason so long as they furnish the tenant proper written notice: 30 days for tenants residing in a unit for less than one year, and 60 days for tenants residing in a unit for one year or more. Just Cause ordinances state that renters can only be evicted for a certain list of pre-established “causes” (failure to pay rent, nuisance behavior, etc.), or other reasons that are “no cause” of the tenant (unit being removed from rental market, substantial rehabilitation, etc.). Just Cause ordinances retain the rights of landlords to terminate a lease for valid reasons, but they also help prevent evictions of responsible tenants. In conjunction with its Mandatory Mediation Program, the City's Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance went into effect on July 17, 2019.

Existing social services

There are approximately 15 social service institutions within Downtown that serve the Greater San Rafael area, 10 of which fall within the Plan Area (Figure 7.3); providing services related to Aging, Disability, Disaster, Domestic Violence, Employment, Food, Health, Homelessness, Housing, Rehabilitation, and Youth. Downtown San Rafael has more homelessness-related services than most Marin communities. A full list of these institutions is included in Appendix VII: Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy.

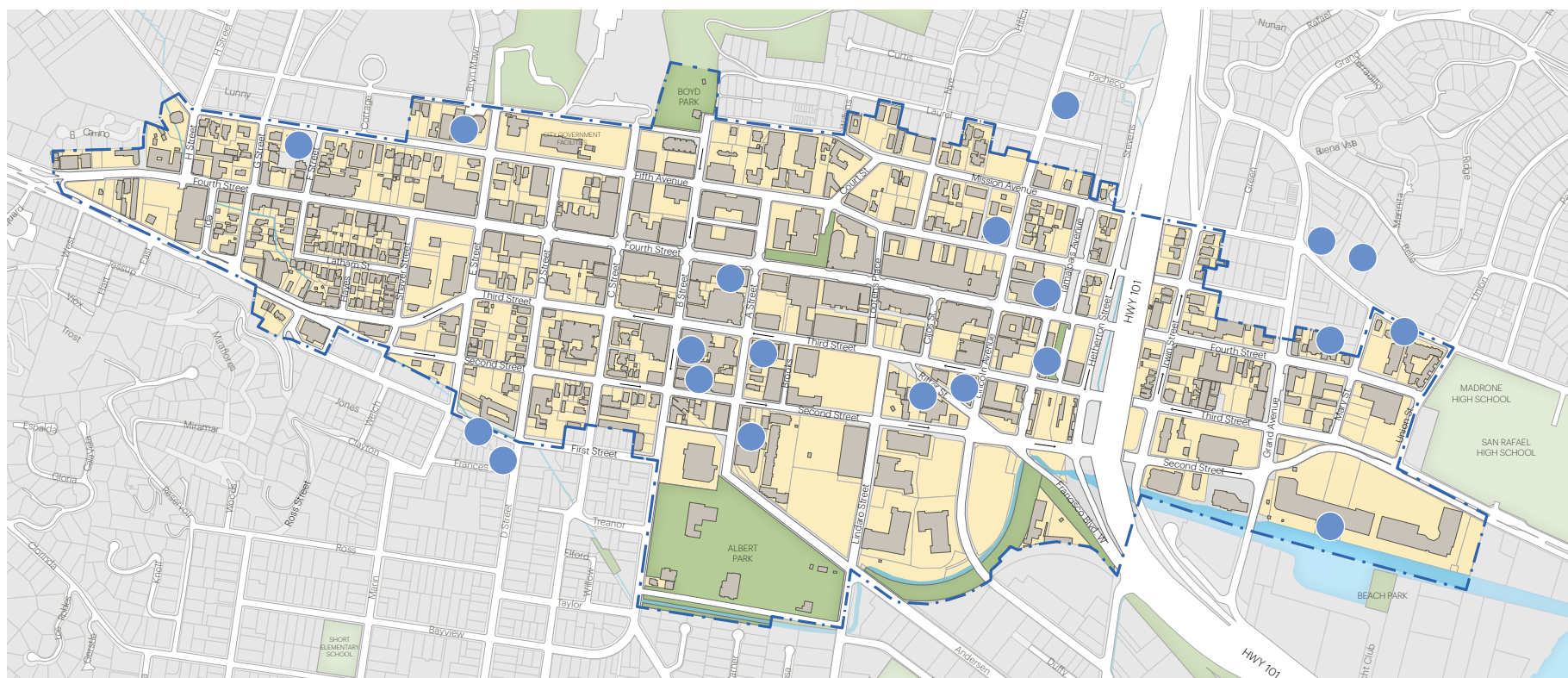


Figure 7.3 Social service institutions within or near the Precise Plan Area

Source: Plan to Place, 2020.

● Existing social service institutions

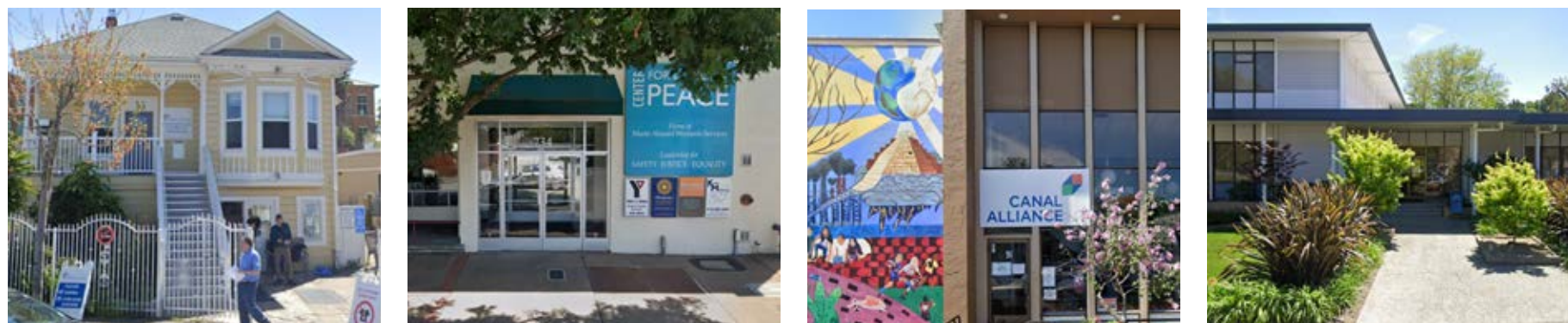


Figure 7.4 Examples of social service institutions within or near the Plan Area: (from left to right) Ritter Center [image source: www.marinij.com]; Center for Domestic Peace, Canal Alliance, Community Action Marin

7.4 Implementation Strategies

Building upon San Rafael's existing programs and initiatives, this section identifies additional new strategies to promote affordable housing production and anti-displacement in the Plan Area.

As discussed in the previous section, San Rafael has implemented a number of successful programs to facilitate the production of affordable housing and protect existing tenants from displacement. In addition, several new strategies can be implemented in Downtown, summarized in Table 7F, and discussed below.

Table 7F. Potential affordable housing production and anti-displacement strategies for San Rafael	
Housing Production Strategies	Tenant Protection Strategies
Downtown height bonus	Tenant Relocation and Protection Ordinance
Potential zoning strategies	No Net Loss/ One-for-One replacement
Parking reductions	Preservation of affordable housing
Streamlined development review	
Air rights development/land write-downs	
Outside funding resources and applications	
Community Land Trusts/ Cooperatives	

Housing production strategies

■ Downtown height bonus

As discussed in Section 7.3: Existing City Programs and Resources, San Rafael implements a successful height bonus program. As of January 2021, State density bonus law allows jurisdictions the discretion to grant bonuses of up to 50 percent for mixed income projects. Recent projects in the Plan Area have availed of state density bonuses and allowed concessions.

Through adoption of the Downtown Precise Plan, the City is creating its own "local" density bonus program to further incentivize affordable housing production and creation of other community benefits. In this case, the "density" bonus is expressed as a height bonus and it is available to all residential and mixed use projects meeting the City's inclusionary housing requirements on-site. The local height bonus may only be used by applicants who do not use the State density bonus - the two programs may not be combined. Projects that exceed the City's inclusionary housing requirements and are located in the Tier 2 area shown on Figure 4.8 of this Plan are granted a 20-foot height bonus. Also, as noted earlier, AB 1763 allows even higher bonuses (33 feet) for 100 percent affordable projects within half a mile of the San Rafael Transit Center/ SMART station.

Since the Precise Plan uses height and form-based standards as a metric to measure intensity of development rather than density, projects seeking to apply a density bonus under state density bonus law must calculate the number of units in a “base project” (based on the allowable zoning envelope) and then apply the percentage bonus to calculate the additional number of units (and floor area) to be accommodated. The City has developed administrative procedures (i.e. not formally adopted) explaining how these calculations are made.

AB 2222 (effective January 2015) made important changes to the State Density Bonus law in an effort to help address potential displacement of existing tenants and the City has incorporated relevant provisions into its density bonus regulations. The City's new regulations now prohibit an applicant from receiving a density bonus (and related incentives and waivers) unless the proposed housing development or condominium project would, at a minimum, maintain the number and proportion of any existing affordable housing units located within the proposed development site, including affordable dwelling units that have been vacated or demolished in the five-year period preceding the application. The City also increases the required affordability from 30 years or longer to 55 years or longer for all affordable rental units that qualified an applicant for a density bonus, and requires replacement rental units to be subject to a recorded affordability restriction for at least 55 years.

■ Potential zoning strategies

As part of the General Plan process, several strategies were evaluated to increase densities in the Plan Area. One proposal was to eliminate residential density standards within the Precise Plan and instead use building height limits as the metric for evaluating residential and mixed-use development. Regulating development through height provides greater flexibility in the design and use of

buildings, and the number of units that can be achieved. The General Plan includes a "Downtown Mixed-Use" zone as a land use designation that corresponds to the Plan Area, and has allocated a sliding scale for maximum FAR ranging from 3.0 to 6.0 that corresponds to Precise Plan height limits, exclusive of density bonuses. The Downtown Form-Based Code organizes this "Downtown Mixed-Use" zone into form-based zones with clear expectations for new development. It sets overall height limits for each form-based zone depending on its location within Downtown, and clarifies allowed maximum heights as a base case and with height bonuses. Switching to these standards is expected to yield more housing units in Downtown.

■ Parking reductions

To reduce development costs, the City could consider reducing parking requirements for projects in the Plan Area, with deeper reductions for affordable projects eligible for alternative parking standards under State density bonus law. With typical podium parking costing approximately \$60,000 per space, a project that provides 100 spaces would save at \$2.5 million over one that provides 150 spaces.

The City adopted a Downtown Parking and Wayfinding Study in early 2018. The study recommended a 20 percent reduction in current parking requirements for non-residential uses in Downtown, allowing developers to pursue more shared parking; and incorporating other strategies, such as automated parking lifts, to maximize the efficient use of public parking. The City has recently adopted some of these recommendations, and is evaluating areas within Downtown potentially suitable for parking reduction. It has recently allowed projects to be submitted with a 20 percent reduction in parking requirements subject to a provision for monitoring.

To help make reduced parking a viable alternative for developers and residents, it may be advisable to encourage new housing projects to incorporate parking and travel demand management techniques. For example, some cities have required “unbundling” of parking so that occupants must pay separately for a parking space, but can achieve lower rents or sales prices if they require less parking. Similarly, projects that provide residents with transit passes or incorporate carshare programs can yield lower parking demands, and may be encouraged through a density bonus program.

Market forces will determine whether units with reduced parking availability can be competitive for renters, but providing an option for developers to reduce development costs and/or increase densities in exchange for affordable housing units is a proven approach to realizing affordability. The Downtown Form-Based Code sets parking requirements that align with the recommendations of the Downtown Parking and Wayfinding Study. For additional information, refer to Chapter Nine: Downtown Form-Based Code.

■ Streamlined development review

Lengthy permit processing can add substantial costs to development, constraining production of both market-rate and affordable housing. San Rafael has been awarded an SB 2 Planning Grant from the State, and will be undertaking the following activities in an effort to streamline the development review process:

- **Objective design and development standards.** Staff has been working on the development of an objective design and development standards toolbox and manual to allow for “by right” development in compliance with the SB 35 law.
- **By-right affordable housing overlay zone.** The City plans to develop a “by-right” zoning process and

overlay zone for the review and approval of affordable housing development projects located within the HR-1 (High Density Residential) Zoning District. The intent is to streamline the review of such projects, which will significantly reduce soft costs and the process timing for developers/applicants.

- **Online permit guide.** The City will be developing an online portal which will guide residents and contractors through a customized application checklist of steps and forms required for their specific project. This guide will help add transparency to permitting requirements and expedite the time it takes to complete an application.
- **Permit management system.** The City intends to develop a web-based permit management system to streamline approvals for Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Division projects, and make housing and mixed-use development easier.

■ Air rights development/land write-downs

One of the primary constraints to the provision of affordable housing in the Plan Area is the lack of access to suitable sites for redevelopment by housing developers. In addition, when privately-owned development sites do come on the market, non-profit developers are often unable to compete with market-rate developers, who can pay higher prices for land and/or close on deals faster.

To address this issue, San Rafael has had a policy on the books to encourage developers of affordable housing to utilize air rights, such as above public parking lots or commercial uses in Downtown. The City had its first inquiry for an air rights development in 2018 and is currently working with the applicant. In addition, the City has identified six Downtown public parking lots as potential candidate sites for mixed-income and affordable housing, shown in Figure 7.5.

- Fifth Avenue at Lootens Street;
- Third and Cijos Streets;
- Second Street between D and E Streets;
- Menzies Lot - Mission Avenue north of E Street;
- Fifth Avenue and Garden Lane; and
- 519 Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue (temporary Fire Station 52).

The City plans to conduct a feasibility study of these six parking lots for potential development, retaining the ground floor parking for public use (either retained by the City or privatized). The feasibility study will also explore, as an incentive for the developer, the City offering the site free of charge and possibly a waiver of parking requirements for housing.

■ Outside funding resources and applications

San Rafael's Housing Element includes programs to identify potential funding resources for affordable housing, and as funding becomes available, to support applicants in preparing competitive funding submittals. In

2017, the State Legislature passed and Governor Brown signed into law two key new funding measures in support of affordable housing: SB 2 and SB 3.

- **SB 2 (Atkins)** imposes a new \$75-\$225 real estate recording fee to fund affordable housing-related activities on a permanent, ongoing basis. First year proceeds are to be split evenly between planning grants to local governments to streamline housing production, and HCD's programs that address homelessness. Thereafter, 70 percent of the proceeds will be allocated to local governments to support affordable housing, home-ownership opportunities, and other housing-related programs. The fee is estimated to generate \$200 to \$300 million annually.
- **SB 3 (Beall)** placed a \$4 billion general obligation bond on the November 2018 general election ballot, which was subsequently passed by voters. The bill allocates \$3 billion in bond proceeds among existing state affordable housing programs, including programs that assist affordable multifamily developments,

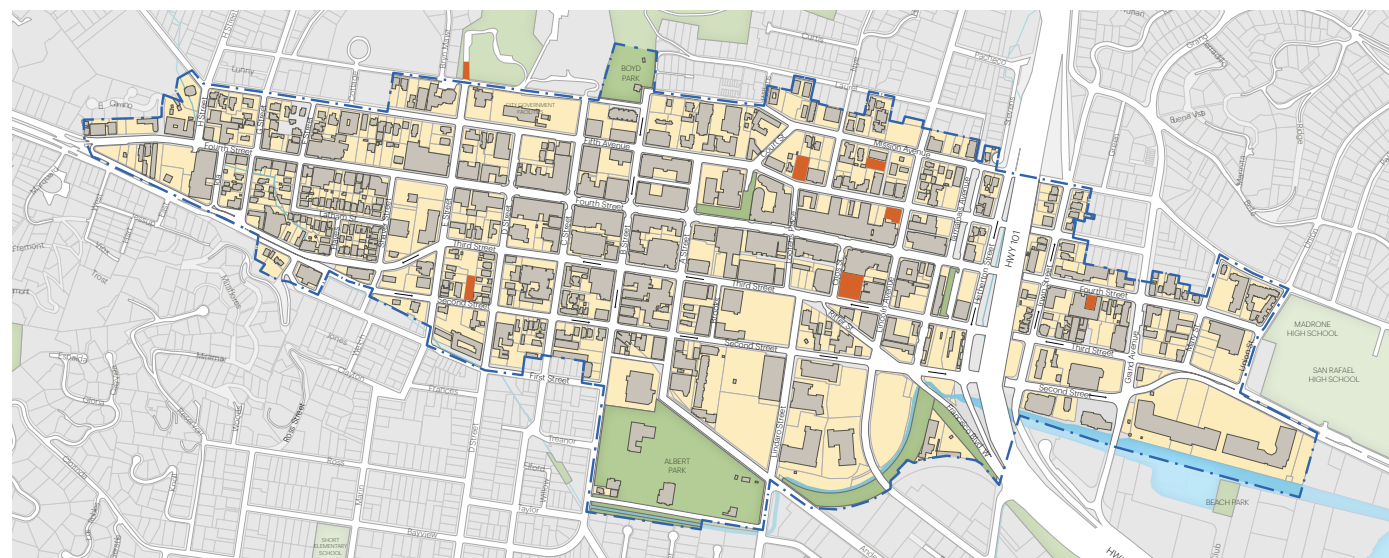


Figure 7.5 Downtown public parking lots being evaluated as potential sites for affordable and mixed-income housing sites.

■ Potential sites for affordable and mixed-income housing projects

housing for farmworkers, transit-oriented development, infrastructure for infill development, and homeownership. The bond also funds matching grants for Local Housing Trust Funds and homeownership programs. \$1 billion in bond proceeds will be allocated to CalVet for home and farm purchase assistance for veterans.

- **Multifamily acquisition/rehabilitation.** In addition to new construction, many communities also provide affordable housing through the acquisition and rehabilitation of aging and/or deteriorating multifamily housing. Under such a program, the City acquires or assists in the acquisition of a problem apartment complex and then works with a development partner to coordinate the rehabilitation, maintenance and management of the project as long-term affordable housing. In instances where units have been determined to be uninhabitable, housing element statutes establish specific criteria for acquisition/

rehabilitation in which regional housing needs (RHNA) credit may be obtained. As part of the land use analysis conducted for the Precise Plan, the City has the opportunity to begin developing an inventory of older, under-maintained apartment complexes for potential future acquisition and rehabilitation.

Innovative housing approaches: Community Land Trusts and Cooperatives

San Rafael's Housing Element includes the following policy to encourage innovative housing approaches to broaden the types of housing available:

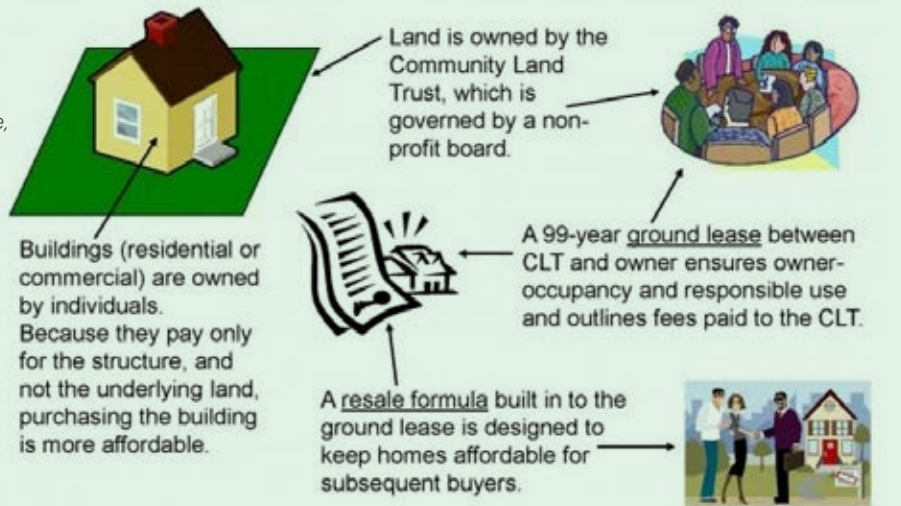
Provide opportunities and facilitate innovative housing approaches in financing, design and construction of units to increase the availability of low and moderate income housing and especially for housing that meets the City's housing needs.

Two types of non-traditional housing that may have particular relevance in Downtown as a means of increasing the supply of affordable housing and minimizing future displacement include Community Land Trusts and Cooperative Housing Developments.

- **Community Land Trusts (CLTs).** These are non-profit organizations that buy and hold land, permanently removing it from the speculative real estate market. CLTs may build new ownership or rental housing on land they purchase, or may purchase existing housing, provide rehabilitation improvements and offer it at affordable rents. The CLT makes the land available to residents through a 99-year ground lease. In some cases, residents purchase the home, which is well below market-rate, as land cost is not part of the purchase. In other cases, the lease goes to a cooperative which owns the building collectively, and provides affordable housing to its shareholders. Figure 7.6 illustrates how a CLT works.

Figure 7.6 A visual depicting how a Community Land Trust works

Source: Plan to Place, 2019



- **Cooperative housing development.** A limited equity cooperative is a model in which low and moderate income residents purchase ownership shares in a building at below market prices, subject to limitations on the amount of equity or profit they can receive on the resale of their units. Cooperatives are governed by an elected board of directors whose responsibilities include establishing resale controls. Co-op ownership helps to allow residents to remain in place in the face of rising market pressures that can lead to displacement.

Tenant protection strategies

The Precise Plan recommends a development program of 2,200 new housing units and 2,020 new jobs. This level of development demand will place significant pressure to redevelop existing uses in the Plan Area. The following

measures may serve both to minimize the loss of existing housing, and to assist tenants who are displaced to find suitable replacement housing.

■ Tenant Relocation and Protection Ordinance

With significant demand for multifamily development in the Plan Area and elsewhere in the City, some of which may be accommodated through redevelopment of existing residential uses, an effective anti-displacement program for rental property tenants is essential to stemming future gentrification. Several Bay Area communities have adopted Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinances (refer Table 7G below) in response to the number of low-rent apartments being lost to redevelopment and the associated displacement of lower income tenants. With rents continuing to rise, displaced

Ordinance provisions	Menlo Park (2019)	Mountain View (2010, 2018 amendments)	San Leandro (2017)
Ordinance applicability	Landlord actions (demolitions, condo conversions, renovations) resulting in the removal of rental units and requiring tenants to vacate their apartments.		
Additional applicability	NA	NA	Rent increase of >12% within 1 year, and tenant intends to vacate unit
Project size threshold	5 or more rental units	4 or more rental units	2 or more rental units
Tenants eligible for assistance	Up to 80% AMI	Up to 120% AMI	No income limit
Rent payment amount	3 x current HUD fair market rent (FMR)	3 months median market rent	3 months tenant's current rent, or 3 x current FMRs, whichever is greater
Additional assistance to Special Circumstance Households*	1 additional month rent	\$3,000	\$1,000

* Special circumstance households are defined as having at least one person that is either over 62 years of age, handicapped, disabled, or a legally dependent minor child (less than 18 years of age).
 Sources: www.menlopark.org/1399/Tenant-relocation-assistance-ordinance; www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/preservation/tenant_relocation_assistance.asp; www.sanleandro.org/depts/cd/housing/tra.asp

tenants are facing heightened challenges in locating replacement housing within their communities. Several Bay Area cities such as Mountain View, San Leandro, Menlo Park, Fremont, and Concord have adopted tenant relocation programs, and based on lessons learned from implementation, have continued to adjust eligibility criteria and other program components to be able to best meet the changing needs of the community's tenants.

San Rafael has an adopted Tenant Relocation and Protection Program. Tenants qualifying as low-income are eligible for relocation assistance (equivalent to two months of rent) if evicted or displaced as a result of property renovation, redevelopment or unit construction where they are required to vacate their rental unit. The Plan recommends that the City continue to monitor and update the Program with a focus on protecting current Downtown tenants at risk of getting priced out because of rent increases due to the anticipated redevelopment in Downtown. As noted earlier in this chapter, the City also has adopted a Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance and provisions for mandatory mediation.

■ No-net-loss/one-for-one replacement

The City could consider implementing a one-for-one replacement requirement in Downtown for projects involving the demolition or removal of deed-restricted residential units affordable to lower and/or moderate-income households. Projects could be required to include an equivalent number of affordable housing units (in addition to affordable units required under the City's inclusionary ordinance), or could potentially be permitted to pay a fee to offset replacement costs at a different location. Cities such as Portland and Los Angeles have no-net-loss policies for affordable housing in their downtowns. The City of Walnut Creek implements a one-for-one replacement requirement for projects involving demolition of residential units less than 30 years old. State

density bonus law now includes no-net-loss provisions, requiring replacement of units occupied by lower-income households or subject to a form of rent control within the preceding five year period. Given that most recent development applicants in San Rafael elect to take advantage of density bonus incentives, State replacement housing requirements will provide some protections to tenants in buildings seeking a density bonus.

■ Preservation of affordable rental housing

The preservation of existing affordable housing is a key strategy to minimizing displacement within the Plan Area. As shown in Table 7D, the study area currently contains 286 publicly assisted affordable rental units within 12 residential developments. While four of these properties (81 units) are potentially eligible to convert to market rents within the next 10 years, they are all owned by non-profit organizations and are thus considered at low-risk of conversion. At more imminent risk of conversion to market-rate are privately owned below-market rate (BMR) rent-restricted units produced under the City's inclusionary program. While the City currently requires BMR units to remain affordable for a minimum of 55 years (or in perpetuity in some cases), the term was 30 years when the City started its program in 1986. This means that affordability controls on many of these earlier projects may soon be expiring. The City should request an updated inventory from Marin Housing Authority with current dates of expiring use restrictions to identify such properties, and reach out to property owners to discuss options and incentives to extend affordability controls.

Depending on the extent of at-risk BMR units, the City may wish to consider developing a policy for pricing the purchase of affordability term extensions so this option could be offered to local BMR property owners, along with additional incentives such as rehabilitation assistance.

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Implementation

CHAPTER

8

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8.1 Roadmap to Implementation

The Downtown vision will be accomplished through a mix of public investment projects and private infill development. Public realm improvements promote placemaking and strengthen Downtown identity.

Implementing the 2040 vision

Implementation of the Precise Plan will occur over time and will require collaboration between the City of San Rafael, property owners, and the development community, as well as City funding and grants. It will be a combination of larger, catalyst projects at key locations, as well as ongoing smaller-scale infill development.

The Precise Plan does not recommend a rigid phasing strategy for implementation. This is intentional, in order to provide a degree of flexibility to City staff in exploring innovative solutions and strategies, and to be able to take advantage of development opportunities over the life of the Plan. Also, for many of the proposed improvements, it will be practical and cost-effective to initiate a pilot project with a defined timeline to test the design concepts for viability prior to incurring substantial capital costs.

The Precise Plan includes dozens of implementing actions, some of which are already underway and represent the core services provided by City departments and others that will require additional funding or revenue streams. The Precise Plan embraces the idea that new programs must be evaluated for their fiscal impact on the City as well as secondary impacts on residents and businesses.

The same is true for capital improvement projects, such as flood control improvements and bicycle lanes. Cost-benefit analysis must consider the City's ability to pay for the improvements or services to be provided. It must also consider the social, environmental, and health benefits that may result.

Implementation of the Precise Plan will require ongoing consideration of trade-offs between the costs and benefits of various programs and improvements. For example, reconfiguring streets to add bicycle lanes would benefit those that use the new bicycle infrastructure but could add to vehicle traffic delays for motorists. While social, health, and environmental benefits are hard to quantify, they are important considerations in such decisions. Some projects may have important long-term dividends (fewer injuries, reduced greenhouse gas emissions), while others may be difficult to justify given competing priorities and other tools available to achieve the same goals.

Ultimately, each program and each decision must be evaluated on its merits, recognizing that, in an environment of limited resources, cost-benefit analysis must be part of the process. Fiscal responsibility is part of the foundation of the City's General Plan as well as this



Figure 8.1 Priority projects recommended for Downtown

Note: The highest priority projects are indicated on this map. Refer to Table 8A for the complete list of priority projects.

Transportation projects

- 1 Downtown gateway improvements
- 2 Transit Center relocation
- 3 US-101/Downtown San Rafael Interchange
Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- 4 Canal pedestrian-bicycle connection
- 5 Downtown one-way street conversion

- 6 Second Street multimodal improvements
- 7 Fourth Street improvements
- 8 Fourth Street intersection realignment
- 9 Tamalpais Avenue West improvements
- 10 Lincoln Avenue peak period lanes/parking restrictions

□ Downtown Parking Assessment District

Civic space projects

- 1 Transit Plaza
- 2 Montecito Promenade
- 3 Urban Wetland for flood mitigation
- 4 San Rafael Canal adaptation

Precise Plan and is also integral to the implementation of both the General Plan and Precise Plan.

The Plan recommends the following implementation strategy:

■ Placemaking through priority projects

Placemaking is a central strategy in the Precise Plan to attract investment to Downtown and to achieve many of the Precise Plan goals. The City should seek to prioritize improvements at nodes where they can stimulate private investment and contribute to Downtown's continued role as a mixed-use and cultural destination for the region. City staff should collaborate with relevant agencies to prioritize key public realm improvements (high, medium, low) and establish a timeline (near-term and/or long-term) to pursue funding and implementation. Grant funding opportunities as well as partnerships with private entities should be explored.

The Precise Plan recommends a list of key priority projects for placemaking, shown in Figure 8.1 and listed in Table 8A. The priority projects have been selected on the basis of their importance in framing the Plan vision, due to their scale, location, and/or their potential impact on existing and subsequent development. These are recommended based on conditions at the time of the drafting of the Plan, and can be changed over the life of the Plan as conditions change, and to avail of new opportunities.

■ Facilitate incremental infill

The analysis of Downtown lots during the Design Charrette highlighted many small and medium-scale potential infill opportunity sites. A steady flow of such projects across Downtown will create sustained, balanced, and distributed growth, at a scale that will blend well with the existing fabric and fill in missing gaps. The Downtown Precise Plan and Downtown Form-Based Code provide

clear guidance about the City's expectations for new development in terms of built form and character, and establishes additional clarity with regards to historic resources in order to encourage streamlined review processes.

■ Short-term pilot projects and tactical urbanism

Define pilot projects for planned improvements, particularly those for streetscape and public realm improvements, and carry out short-term transformations to both test out design concepts and to build community support for longer-term implementation of the ideas. Investment projects can benefit from "quick-build" and "tactical urbanism" strategies that implement short-term, low-cost improvements to test design concepts and build community support for more permanent solutions. Public investments such as street improvements and civic spaces can be achieved through temporary street closures and movable furnishings. Private development can also install temporary uses and activities that generate foot traffic in anticipation of development.

■ Sustain local business and institutions

Downtown's local businesses and cultural establishments contribute to its uniqueness and give it an authentic character, essential for placemaking. New development in Downtown may have an impact on existing businesses and uses. Policies can help to protect local businesses and prevent displacement. Additional information can be found in Chapter Seven: Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement.

Potential Financing Strategies and Funding Sources

Potential sources of funding for the public realm improvements and programs identified in this chapter include allocation of new City revenues that new development will generate, development impact fees paid by project developers; and federal, state, and local grants.

Fiscal analysis

The Precise Plan preparation process included an analysis of the impact that the Plan will have on City of San Rafael General Fund revenues and expenditures. The analysis found that the annual revenue that the Plan will generate in the form of increased property taxes, sales taxes, and other City General fund revenues sources will exceed the increases in annual City expenditures that will be needed to pay for increased service demands generated by new development. The City could elect to use some or all of the resulting surplus in annual General Fund revenue to help pay for Plan Area public improvements and other Plan implementation activities. Because these surpluses will be derived from General Fund revenue sources, which can be spent at the City Council's discretion, the City will have significant flexibility in making expenditure decisions. However, this revenue surplus is likely to be somewhat limited in the early phases of implementation, during which financing public improvements and programs may be particularly crucial, because these revenues are dependent on new development projects in the Plan Area that will be constructed over time.

As opposed to spending available funds on a pay-as-you-go basis, using only the funds that accrue on an annual

basis, the City could consider establishing an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) in the Plan Area that would enable the City to bond against future revenues "up front" and then use the subsequent annual revenues to pay off the bond principal and interest. An EIFD would authorize the City to earmark its share of property tax increment in the Plan Area to generate funds that can be used to assist in Plan implementation actions. Using this type of financing tool would enable the City to accelerate investments in Plan Area public improvements, which in turn would help to accelerate private investments in the Plan Area. Additional analysis would be necessary to assess whether an EIFD would be a suitable tool for the types of implementation activities that are desired for the Plan Area and whether this tool would be desirable given other City policy objectives.

In addition, the City may be able to partially fund new improvements through impact fees charged to new development. San Rafael already assesses impact fees to mitigate some of the impacts from new development and could consider whether new types of impact fees or adjustments to current fee schedules would be appropriate within the Plan Area. Impact fees can only be used to mitigate the impacts associated with

the new development that generates the impact fee revenue, and therefore may not be suitable for financing all improvements and programs identified in this implementation plan. In addition, adopting high impact fees could affect the financial feasibility of new private development projects, thereby impeding the type of development that the Precise Plan envisions. Thus, any new impact fees should be carefully evaluated and supplemented with other financing sources to fully implement the Plan.

Finally, grants from regional, state, and federal funding programs will be crucial in helping to address shortfalls in local funding and accelerate the availability of funds to implement projects. Potential sources of regional, state, and federal grant funding include the California Strategic Growth Council Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program and federal transportation funds.

Impact of COVID-19 on implementation

In the time since the City initiated the Downtown Precise Plan process, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the global economy as well as many people's daily lives in ways that were entirely unanticipated during the initial phases of the planning process, though the most significant impacts of the pandemic are anticipated to be temporary. The Downtown Precise Plan is a long-term planning document that will outlast the current economic crisis and span economic cycles and will similarly outlast the need for social distancing guidelines. Many of the actions that the Plan calls for will aid the Downtown area and the City overall in withstanding the current crisis and recovering as conditions improve.

The impacts of the pandemic include considerable negative impacts on the retail and restaurant sectors as well as the lodging industry, creating significant challenges for many retailers, restaurants, and hotels, in San Rafael

and elsewhere. While some of these challenges are likely to be temporary and will lessen as the economy recovers, many of the businesses in Downtown San Rafael will need additional support to withstand the ongoing economic crisis and to recover as economic conditions improve. The Precise Plan includes a number of recommended actions to support existing businesses and attract new businesses to Downtown San Rafael, which can help to aid in weathering the current crisis and through the recovery phase. Some of these actions, such as facilitating outdoor dining options, may be particularly relevant given current conditions.

In addition, the pandemic will likely slow the pace of new development in the near term, including in San Rafael, with varying impacts across land use types. While the pandemic is likely to delay future retail and lodging development in the Precise Plan area over the near term, other development projects, such as those related to the life sciences sector, could be relatively insulated from the current economic climate. Overall, the new development in the Precise Plan Area is likely to be somewhat delayed until economic conditions improve.

The economic impacts from the pandemic have also negatively affected the City of San Rafael's budget, causing a decrease in revenue from sales tax revenue, transient occupancy tax revenue, and other key sources of municipal funding. These trends are anticipated to continue as the economic effects of the pandemic are ongoing. The City has begun to implement cost-cutting measures that will result in a decrease in City staff availability, which can be expected to impact the pace at which the City is able to implement the Precise Plan in the near term. As economic conditions improve and General Fund revenues increase, the City should have the ability to accelerate the implementation process, depending on staff capacity and city-wide priorities.

Finally, the pandemic has affected the economic stability of countless households and individuals who have lost their employment or seen a significant decrease in earnings due to the ongoing economic crisis. While the City cannot independently address these challenges, the Plan does include measures that can mitigate these impacts, which are increasingly important given current conditions. These include economic development strategies that can help to support local businesses, as noted above, as well as the affordable housing and anti-displacement strategies that are included in Section 8.3: Recommended Actions of this chapter.

Priority Projects for Transportation and Public Realm Improvements

Table 8A. Priority projects for transportation and public realm improvements

8A.1. Streets and transportation infrastructure improvements

	Priority projects	Timing ¹	Priority	Funding source
Near-term priority	8A.1.1. Downtown gateway improvements First/last mile improvements for SMART Station and Transit Center (pedestrian, bicycle, lighting, wayfinding). Downtown intersection improvements (traffic signals, roundabouts, and/or turn lane modifications).	Near-term ²	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/Federal/Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM); private development-related improvements.
Near-term priority	8A.1.2. Transit Center relocation Implement the San Rafael Transit Center relocation project on site selection by the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (GGBHT). Evaluate and implement necessary circulation and wayfinding improvements on surrounding streets to support the new function.	Near-term ²	High	Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD); grants.
	8A.1.3. US-101/Downtown San Rafael interchange Intersection and ramp improvements to Second Street, Third Street, Hetherton Street, Irwin Street, and/or ramps.	Near-term	High	State and Federal/ TAM funding.
	8A.1.4. San Rafael Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Improvement projects relevant to Downtown as described in the following diagrams in Chapter Six: Transportation and Parking: - Figure 6.14: Pedestrian Priority Network - Figure 6.18: Bicycle Priority Network	Near to long-term	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM funding.
	8A.1.5. Canal pedestrian-bicycle connection Pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Canal neighborhood and the Montecito Commercial Sub-Area through improvements to Grand Avenue.	Near-term	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM funding.

¹ Near term: 2021 to 2030
 Long term: 2031 to 2040

² Near-term priority project (2021 - 2025)

Table 8A. Priority projects for transportation and public realm improvements (continued)				
	Priority projects	Timing ¹	Priority	Funding source
Near-term priority	8A.1.6. Downtown one-way street conversion Convert B Street to two-way operation.	Near-term ²	High	Traffic Improvement Fee/ CIP project.
	8A.1.7. Second Street multimodal improvements Improve Second Street corridor operations while addressing pedestrian and bicycle safety at crossing locations, and widen sidewalks and remove parking where feasible.	Near-term	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM funding.
	8A.1.8. Fourth Street improvements Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation improvements on Fourth Street on the following segments, as described in Section 6.3: Street Transformations: - Fourth Street between H and E Streets - Fourth Street between E Street and Lincoln Avenue - Fourth Street between Tamalpais and Hetherton Streets - Fourth Street between Irwin and Grand Streets	Near to long-term	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM funding.
Near-term priority	8A.1.9. Fourth Street (West End) intersection realignment Re-align Fourth Street/Second Street/Marquard Avenue intersection.	Near-term ²	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM funding.
	8A.1.10. Tamalpais Avenue West improvements Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation improvements on Tamalpais Avenue on the following segments, as described in Section 6.3: Street Transformations: - Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Third Streets - Tamalpais Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets - Tamalpais Avenue between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue	Near to long-term	High	Traffic Improvement Fee; State/ Federal/ TAM; private development-related improvements.
Near-term priority	8A.1.11. Lincoln Avenue peak period lanes/parking restrictions Extend the existing PM peak period parking restrictions, to allow for two lanes in each direction during both AM and PM peak periods, from Hammondale Court/SB US-101 ramps to Mission Avenue. Provide additional parking in corridor.	Near-term*	High	General Fund; local capital improvement.
Near-term priority	8A.1.12. Precise Plan Downtown Parking Assessment District Expand the existing Downtown Parking Assessment District east to E Street and west to Hetherton Street.	Near to long-term*	High	Parking Assessment District.

¹ Near term: 2021 to 2030
Long term: 2031 to 2040

² Near-term priority project (2021 - 2025)

Table 8A. Priority projects for transportation and public realm improvements (continued)				
8A.2. Civic space improvements				
	Priority projects	Timing ¹	Priority	Funding source
Near-term priority	8A.2.1. Transit Plaza Reconfigure Tamalpais Avenue between Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue to create a plaza designed to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle movement, temporary activities, and allowing service and emergency vehicular access as needed. Improve Walter Lane to enable it to function as a pedestrian passage.	Near-term ²	High	Grants; private development-related improvements.
	8A.2.2. Montecito Promenade Pedestrian and bicycle improvements to the existing promenade to improve connectivity to Downtown, the Canal neighborhood and to the city-wide north-south pedestrian-bicycle connector.	Near to long-term	High	Private development-related improvements.
	8A.2.3. Urban Wetland for flood mitigation Consider acquiring the parcel(s) south of Second Street and east of Lincoln Avenue along the San Rafael Canal (as shown in Section 4.4: Public Realm and Connectivity) to create an urban wetland or a similar feature to control local flooding and potentially form part of an adaptation strategy for future sea-level rise.	Near to long-term	High	State and Federal grants; future climate adaptation financing measures (bonds, special assessments, etc.).
	8A.2.4. San Rafael Canal adaptation and creek enhancements Levee improvements, infrastructure hardening, and other mitigation and adaptation strategies consistent with General Plan recommendations; enhancement of Irwin and Mahon Creeks.	Near to long-term	High	State and Federal grants; future climate adaptation funding measures (bonds, special assessments, etc.)
Near-term priority	8A.2.5. Fourth Street as Shared Street Evaluate the feasibility of converting Fourth Street from B Street to Lincoln Avenue as a Shared Street coordinated with recommended transportation improvements.	Near-to-long-term ²	High (assess feasibility)	Grants; Traffic Improvement Fee; development-related improvements.
	8A.2.6. Pocket park in West End Village [subject to the redevelopment of privately-owned parcel] on north side of Fourth Street mid-block between Shaver and F Streets.	Long-term	Medium (assess feasibility)	Grants; private development-related improvements; future CIP item.
	8A.2.7. Green infrastructure for Downtown street upgrades Integrate permeable pavement, catchment basins, and other suitable green infrastructure as part of future street improvements and upgrades to increase the stormwater retention capacity of Downtown streets and reduce runoff.	Long-term	Medium (assess feasibility)	Grants; future climate adaptation funding measures (bonds, special assessments, etc.).

¹ Near term: 2021 to 2030
 Long term: 2031 to 2040

² Near-term priority project (2021 - 2025)

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8.2 Economic Development Strategy

The economic development strategy for Downtown is aimed at strengthening its role as a regional center and ensuring a high quality of life for the City’s residents and workers.

Vision for economic development

Downtown San Rafael will strengthen its role as a vibrant, attractive, and livable place with a diverse economy. Downtown will foster innovation and entrepreneurship, economic opportunity, quality jobs, arts and cultural events, and an appealing mix of shops, services, and entertainment venues. Downtown's role as a transportation hub will continue to attract new investment in mixed-use commercial and residential development that will, in turn, support the Downtown’s retail sector and provide new housing and employment opportunities.

Expected outcomes

The Precise Plan visualizes the future Downtown as one that serves San Rafael's local community, and is also a regional destination. To enhance its vitality and attractiveness, Downtown will feature new investments in streetscapes, mobility, and placemaking to support both reinvestment in existing properties and redevelopment of infill sites. The following are a few expected outcomes of the successful implementation of the Precise Plan, which relate to the design principles and the design concepts discussed in previous chapters.

- Development of opportunity sites into new mixed-use commercial and residential development;
- Small business growth that can be accommodated with new commercial space Downtown;
- New market-rate and affordable housing to address workforce housing needs and generate additional spending power to support Downtown businesses;
- Preservation and enhancement of the City’s fiscal sustainability through increased taxable sales and increased property values;
- Establishment of new maker and craft businesses as well as independent retailers;
- Strengthening of Downtown as a California Arts and Culture district;
- Regular communication and needs assessment of Downtown’s business community; and
- Increased promotion of Downtown with enhanced events programming and robust social media and cross-marketing campaigns.

Overarching Strategies

The following summarizes a variety of high-level strategies for the City of San Rafael to consider, recognizing the stated goals of the City, local conditions within the Plan Area, and the community vision proposed by this Precise Plan.

Strategy

1

Support existing businesses and attract new businesses to Downtown.

Strategy

2

Maintain and enhance Downtown's contribution to San Rafael's fiscal vitality.

Strategy

3

Support new infill and transit-oriented development.

Strategy

4

Strengthen Downtown as a community and regional destination.



Table 8B. Economic Development Strategy: implementation actions and recommendations		
Strategy 1		
Support existing businesses and attract new businesses to Downtown		
Action	Timeline	Responsible departments/ parties
8B.1.1. Continue to provide and promote a business-friendly environment with an efficient, equitable, and predictable permitting process.	Ongoing	Community Development and Economic Development departments
8B.1.2. Continue to prepare and update marketing materials to support firm attraction to Downtown and to support the Downtown San Rafael BID, Chamber of Commerce, and the San Rafael Downtown Arts and Cultural District.	Ongoing	Economic Development department, Downtown San Rafael Business Improvement District, and Chamber of Commerce
8B.1.3. Monitor and update development standards in the zoning code to allow progressive and efficient floor area ratios, parking standards, and other development regulations in accordance to the Precise Plan and General Plan 2040.	Ongoing	Community Development and Economic Development departments
8B.1.4. Continue to offer business technical assistance and information related to market research, financial resources for business expansion, and workforce training.	Ongoing	Economic Development department
8B.1.5. Coordinate with San Rafael Downtown, the Chamber of Commerce, and Downtown businesses to identify areas where the Downtown's social media presence, and marketing and branding efforts can be enhanced.	Complete by 2023	Economic Development and local business organizations
Strategy 2		
Maintain and enhance Downtown's contribution to the City's fiscal vitality		
Action	Timeline	Responsible departments/ parties
8B.2.1. Continue to partner with commercial real estate brokers and property owners to track available spaces, monitor leasing activity, and support tenant recruitment and permitting.	Ongoing	Economic Development department
8B.2.2. Strengthen joint efforts with the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce to identify joint business support and promotion such as small business training and area-wide joint advertising	Started in 2021, and ongoing	Economic Development department and Chamber of Commerce

Table 8B. Economic Development Strategy: implementation actions and recommendations (continued)		
8B.2.3. Support local maker and craft businesses as well as other independent retailers by promoting Downtown locations and providing guidance for permitting.	Ongoing	Economic Development department
8B.2.4. Support existing and new co-working spaces to bring additional workers to Downtown.	Ongoing	Economic Development department
8B.2.5. Retain existing retailers by surveying needs, identifying issues, and partnering with City departments and other business organizations to address issues raised.	Ongoing	Economic Development department, Downtown San Rafael Business Improvement District, and Chamber of Commerce
8B.2.6. Encourage property owners to utilize vacant retail space for micro-enterprises, pop-up retailers, pop-up/try-out restaurants, and special events; identify and address barriers to pop-ups and temporary uses of retail space.	Start by 2022 and ongoing	Community Development and Economic Development departments
8B.2.7. Research a revolving loan fund to provide financing to owners of older structures to provide venting, facade upgrades, and other improvements to expand the inventory of retail space that can accommodate restaurants and support existing retailers.	Complete by 2024	Community Development, Finance, and Economic Development departments
8B.2.8. Work with existing and new restaurants to offer outdoor dining options.	Ongoing	Economic Development, Community Development, and County Health departments
8B.2.9. Work with Downtown stakeholders and create regular opportunities for community events on Fourth Street including street closures to encourage outdoor dining, shopping and recreation.	Start in 2021	Economic Development, Community Development, and County Health departments
8B.2.10. Continue to report marketing activity, leasing volume, sales tax revenues, and business issues to the City Manager and City Council on a regular basis.	Ongoing	Economic Development department
Strategy 3		
Support new infill and transit-oriented development		
Action	Timeline	Responsible departments/ parties
8B.3.1. Encourage parcel assembly through a height bonus over the base level allowed height.	Complete by 2022	Community Development department

8B.3.2. Consider setting a minimum parcel or development size for key blocks suitable for TOD development Downtown.	Complete by 2022	Community Development department
8B.3.3. Offer a wide range of both affordable and market rate housing by supporting a variety of housing types, including live-work on the ground floor of selected blocks in Downtown.	Ongoing	Economic Development and Community Development departments
8B.3.4. Continue to preserve historic resources in Downtown to retain the area's authenticity and attract new investment.	Ongoing	Community Development department
8B.3.5. Pursue grant funding for enhanced mobility improvements to strengthen ties to the SMART station and between the west and east sides of Downtown across US-101.	Start by 2021	City of San Rafael
8B.3.6. Explore partnerships with local health care providers such as Kaiser Permanente and major employers such as Biomarin to add new outdoor wellness facilities Downtown such as a par course.	Complete by 2024	City and private health care providers
8B.3.7. Incorporate flexibility into development standards that allow new projects to incorporate a variety of unit sizes to meet a range of housing needs and respond to market conditions.	Complete by 2021	Community Development department
8B.3.8. Consider use of City-owned sites for infill development projects.	Ongoing	Community Development department
8B.3.9. Ensure that building and development standards enable lower-cost construction methods such as modular construction and construction that uses prefabricated components.	Complete by 2023	Community Development department
8B.3.10. Continue to provide height bonuses and other incentives for projects that provide affordable units and explore the potential for additional height bonuses. Develop incentives and concessions with the goal of minimizing discretionary review for projects that pursue the height bonus program.	Start in 2021 (through adoption of the Downtown Precise Plan	Community Development department

Table 8B. Economic Development Strategy: implementation actions and recommendations (continued)

8B.3.11. Implement streamlined review of new development to the extent possible and appropriate through the implementation of the Downtown Precise Plan, and explore additional opportunities to remove or reduce discretionary review processes for projects that provide affordable units or meet other Precise Plan goals, including reducing discretionary review of incentives for these projects.	Start in 2021 (through adoption of the Downtown Precise Plan)	Community Development department
Strategy 4 Strengthen Downtown as a community and regional destination		
Action	Timeline	Responsible departments/ parties
8B.4.1. Build on the California Arts and Cultural District designation with expanded programming in partnership with local and regional arts and cultural organizations.	Ongoing	Library and Recreation department
8B.4.2. Establish Downtown as San Rafael's lifestyle and entertainment center through promotions of events, enhance use of social media positioning, and encouraging new hotel development.	Start by 2022	Economic Development and local business organizations
8B.4.3. Continue to provide high quality public services and facilities Downtown, including recreational and cultural amenities.	Ongoing	Library and Recreation department
8B.4.4. Review and enhance how San Rafael and its Downtown are presented in travel, restaurant, and event guides both in print and online media.	Start by 2023	Economic Development department
8B.4.5. Encourage public art as a placemaking strategy, prioritizing local artists and themes. Create incentives for private developers to sponsor public art in Downtown.	Start by 2022	Community Development department

Additional Recommendations for Downtown Development

A feasibility analysis of hypothetical infill projects informed additional recommendations that address development issues relevant to Downtown San Rafael.

Feasibility analysis for infill projects

The team economist carried out a financial feasibility analysis for three different hypothetical prototype infill sites in Downtown, with the objective of evaluating what type of development was financially feasible under market conditions in 2020, as well as over the long-term implementation period for the Plan. The feasibility analysis is included in Appendix VIII: Financial Feasibility Analysis of Infill Sites, and key findings are summarized below:

- Three hypothetical development projects were analyzed, on typical small, medium and large infill sites in Downtown. All faced feasibility challenges in the development environment at the time (2020), similar to conditions in most Bay Area cities, and attributed partially due to high construction costs at the time;
- Small residential projects faced more significant financial feasibility challenges than larger projects;
- Larger residential projects were potentially financially feasible if the market conditions would change slightly, or through adjustments to development costs and rents;
- Relative to other factors that affected development feasibility, the City's inclusionary requirements had a relatively modest impact;
- Development incentives such as height bonuses were found to support the financial feasibility of providing affordable units in new residential development projects;
- While office development faced considerable financial feasibility challenges in the 2020 development environment, an office project well-positioned to achieve higher rents than typical was potentially financially feasible;
- Catalyst infill development in the Plan Area were potentially feasible if City-owned sites were made available at a discounted cost;
- Development feasibility would be positively affected by a development process that was both flexible and predictable;
- Parking ratios played a key role in determining financial feasibility; and
- The study determined that the Plan Area was well-positioned to attract new residential and office development as economic conditions improved, supported by Plan policies to facilitate new infill development.

Economic Feasibility Study

Three development prototypes were tested for financial feasibility in the Plan Area. All prototypes provide a mix of market-rate and affordable units, based on inclusionary requirements, and assume a 35 percent State Density Bonus.

All three prototypes face financial feasibility challenges in the current development environment, similar to challenges currently present in many other Bay Area communities. However, the Downtown Precise Plan area is well-positioned to attract new residential and office development as economic conditions improve, particularly with policies in the Plan that help to facilitate new infill development.

For full report, see Appendix VIII: Financial Feasibility Analysis of Infill Sites.

Prototype 1: Small infill site

Snapshot

- 0.1 acres
- Seven residential units, including six market-rate units and one Very Low Income unit (61 dwelling units/acre)
- Three tuck-under parking spaces (0.43 spaces/unit)

Analysis

This prototype is not feasible under current market conditions but could become feasible with decreased hard costs and increased market-rate rents, especially when coupled with a City-owned site made available at low or no cost.

Smaller residential projects face more significant financial feasibility challenges than larger projects. Parcel assembly may be critical for enabling new development in the Plan Area.

Prototype 2: Medium infill site

Snapshot

- 0.9 acres
- 27 units, including 24 market-rate units and three Very Low Income units (31 dwelling units/acre)
- 20 parking spaces, including 15 surface and five tuck-under spaces (0.74 spaces/unit)

Analysis

This prototype is not feasible under current market conditions. This prototype had the highest residual land value per site area of the three prototypes, but this was still not high enough to achieve financial feasibility in the current environment.

The current imbalance between construction costs and residential project revenues is expected to even out over time, at which point the feasibility of this prototype would improve.

Prototype 3: Large infill site

Snapshot

- 2.1 acres
- 200 residential units (170 market-rate units and 30 affordable units), 90,000 sq ft office space, and 10,000 sq ft retail space
- 285 parking spaces in above-ground podium with parking lifts

Analysis

This prototype is not feasible under current market conditions, but could become financially feasible in somewhat different market conditions, with lower development costs or higher rents than are typical in San Rafael in 2020.

While office development faces considerable financial feasibility challenges in the current development environment, an office project that is well-positioned to achieve higher rents than typical could potentially be feasible.

The findings from the study helped to inform the following development strategies recommended for specific conditions existing in the Plan Area.

Parcel aggregation

Downtown San Rafael has many small parcels (e.g., less than one acre) with one-story buildings and other parcels with private surface parking lots. These small parcels are often more challenging to redevelop due to less flexibility in building design, parking options, and poor economies of scale (e.g., projects are more expensive on a per unit or per square foot basis since fixed costs are allocated over a small square footage base of improvements). Prior studies completed for the prior Downtown Station Area Plan found that up to 75 percent of the parcels Downtown are less than 13,000 square feet in area, representing more than half of the Downtown area.

The financial feasibility analysis conducted for the Plan Area also found that larger parcels were economically more feasible compared to smaller parcels, indicating that parcel aggregation may need to be incentivized and regulated to ensure appropriate built outcomes. The City needs to adopt policies that provide economic incentives for parcel aggregation to achieve projects of scale and to improve development feasibility.

■ Parcel aggregation incentives

The most common incentives that cities adopt to encourage lot consolidation and parcel aggregation are policies that reduce costs or increase density through bonus FAR or increased height.

Policies that can reduce costs include:

- Reduce parking requirements for projects on aggregated parcels. For example, the City of Roseville

gives a parking credit of one space for two lots merged and three spaces for three lots merged;

- Waive or reduce selected development and/or impact fees for projects on merged lots; and
- Adopt a Mills Act historical property contract program to reduce ad valorem property taxes for projects involving a historic property on an aggregated parcel.

Policies that can increase density (hence, project revenue potential):

- Consider a graduated height bonus program that allows additional height proportional to the level of parcel aggregation to avoid encouraging holdouts. A height bonus program could offer additional height for projects on sites that are aggregated to form a site size of one-half acre or more, with more significant bonuses for projects on sites that are aggregated to form a site size of at least one acre. The one-half acre size threshold would be consistent with recent Housing Element guidance issued by the California State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) defining sites measuring less than one-half acre as small sites that typically present financial feasibility challenges. Since many of the sites in the Downtown area measure less than one-half acre, as discussed above, aggregating parcels to form sites measuring at least one half acre would improve feasibility relative to current parcel sizes.

The Downtown Precise Plan already includes tiered height bonuses of up to 33 feet for projects that provide 100 percent affordable housing consistent with AB 1763. With the exception of 100 percent affordable projects, the affordable housing height bonuses generally enable an additional 10 feet of building height for projects in which at least 10 percent of units are affordable. In

some areas within the Downtown area, an additional 10-foot bonus is available for projects that provide affordable housing exceeding the City's inclusionary requirement, up to a maximum bonus of 20 feet.

Height bonuses for projects that require parcel aggregation could allow an additional 10-foot height bonus in addition to any height bonus for affordable units. Creating such a bonus program would require weighing multiple factors that include the desired overall maximum height for buildings in the Plan Area after factoring in all bonuses, the need for height bonuses to incentivize affordable housing, and the need for height bonuses to incentivize parcel aggregation.

Repurposing existing historic buildings

Downtown San Rafael has many historic buildings some of which are already listed as a local historic resource and others that are eligible and not listed. Some others require evaluation. Often these buildings are hard to retrofit for contemporary uses, particularly for food and beverage uses that require code-compliant hooding and venting.

In October 2019, California enacted AB 451 which established a new State Historic Tax Credit Program that provides a new significant economic incentive for historic preservation and adaptive reuse. This new tax credit program provides 20 to 25 percent credit against state taxes and can be utilized in tandem with the Federal 50 percent Historic Tax Credit program. Application for credits is made through the State's Tax Credit Allocation Committee on a first-come, first serve basis with a total program limit of \$50 million.

At the local level, San Rafael could leverage these state and federal programs by adopting a Mills Act program to provide contract property tax abatements. Together

these three programs could provide a powerful incentive to property owners to reinvest in their properties, convert properties to new uses, or undertake major rehabilitation. To maximize the opportunity to utilize these programs, the City could encourage listings at the local and national level, to widen the pool of potential program participants.

Many other California cities have adopted Mills Act programs including Larkspur, Belvedere, Benicia, Berkeley, Oakland, Redwood City and San Mateo.

Supporting Downtown retail

Downtown San Rafael is an attractive destination with an authentic small-city setting but its many retailers face strong headwinds as the retail sector continues to evolve. Increasing internet sales have impacted brick-and-mortar stores worldwide, but "experiential retail" is an emerging trend, and retailers are adapting to providing a "unique" shopping experience that could not be had online. The COVID-19 pandemic has further challenged the retail sector and accelerated trends that were already underway.

As trends change, Downtown San Rafael has certain attributes that could position it better than many similar downtowns, for adapting to new retail formats:

- It has a well-preserved stock of historic buildings and provides an authentic main street experience in a scenic setting, with mild climate suited to outdoor dining;
- It also enjoys good access and visibility, located on both sides of US-101; and
- San Rafael's residents and large pool of daytime workers contribute to its high spending power.

Downtown continues to face challenges within the retail sector, which include lack of activity during evenings and weekends, a relatively small population and employment

base within Marin County, issues related to homelessness, and a lack of a coordinated marketing effort and strong identity for the Downtown. Existing retail spaces are fairly old and may be unsuitable for tenants that are currently seeking Downtown space, particularly restaurants.

To strengthen retail in the face of significant and ongoing disruption, the City can take several concrete steps:

- Promote additional housing and office development to add buying power to Downtown's consumer base;
- As a means of streamlining permit approvals, land use regulations for the Plan Area have been updated to reduce the number of uses, including adding "artisanal" manufacturing uses. The City can evaluate the list to reduce the uses that are subject to conditional use permits, and add the recommended new uses to encourage occupancy by small-batch producers with a public retail operation;
- Reduce water/sewer hook-up charges for eating and drinking establishments to lower the cost of establishing new businesses in these categories;
- Adopt a pop-up retail ordinance granting temporary certificates of occupancy with temporary retail use permits with minimal or no fees;
- Encourage existing and new restaurants to offer sidewalk dining, and continue the current practice of

periodic evening street closures for outdoor dining, even after the COVID-19 pandemic recedes; and

- Establish a revolving loan fund to provide financing to owners of older structures to provide venting, facade upgrades, and other improvements to expand the inventory of retail space that can accommodate restaurants.

Expanding partnerships to diversify Downtown workforce

- Maintain existing and build new partnerships with businesses, banks, and other institutions in adjacent neighborhoods such as the Canal neighborhood to augment and diversify the Downtown workforce; and
- Work with nearby schools such as the San Rafael High School to bring students into the Downtown workforce through mentorships, training programs, etc.

8.3 Recommended Actions

A. Historic Resources Management

The Precise Plan recommends the following actions for protecting historic resources in Downtown.

1. Refine "Chapter 2.18 - Historic Preservation" in the San Rafael Municipal Code. Refer to Section 5.5: Recommendations for Historic Preservation Ordinance for additional details.

1A. The Plan recommends that the City appoint one of the following, as feasible:

- A full Historic Preservation Commission as is recommended by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) - note that the OHP recognizes this option may not be feasible in all cases; or
- An advisory committee made up of a Design Review Board member, a Planning Commission member and an architectural historian who has up-to-date training on current preservation standards; or
- An on-call professional Architectural Historian familiar with CEQA compliance for additional historic analysis.

1B. Align with CA OHP procedures for evaluating and designating individual historic resources and Historic Districts, including industry accepted definitions.

1C. Create a full suite of historic preservation economic and feasibility incentives.

1D. Establish a clear process for local designation of historic resources that may not meet eligibility requirements under SISR or CA OHP guidelines.

1E. Add guidelines to relocate designated resources per Criteria Consideration B ("Moved Properties of the National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Designation") to avoid demolition when feasible.

2. Maintain inventory and map of historic resources

2A. Maintain the City's recently prepared historic context statement by updating it every five years.

2B. Maintain an inventory and map of the historic resources in Downtown, informed by a field survey and updated every five years.

2C. Maintain the inventory of historic resources in the City's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database.

3. Streamline permitting processes and procedures. Refer to Section 5.6: Procedures for Additions, Alterations and Demolition for additional details.

3A. Assess and streamline planning procedures and permitting processes for review of projects involving historic resources, and eliminate possible redundancies and extraneous processes. Adopt the guidance and procedures described in Section 5.6 and illustrated in Tables 5A and 5B. Establish clear procedures compliant with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for individual properties, and in identified eligible historic districts.

4. Develop educational materials and programs for encouraging historic preservation and restoration

4A. Develop programs to celebrate and educate San Rafael citizens about their City's history and built environment.

4B. Provide information about the sustainability of preservation and rehabilitation of older structures, as compared to new construction.

4C. Communicate to Downtown residents and property owners the importance of retaining, restoring, and maintaining historic resources as part of Downtown's evolution and for placemaking.

5. Offer design guidance

5A. To create efficiencies early on in the development of a project, design guidance should be provided to current and potential owners of historic resources in Downtown. This should be done in advance of design guidelines.

5B. Develop educational materials for building owners (and potential owners) of historic resources, including information on grants and other sources of funding for maintaining the properties. Provide factual, well-balanced information about the opportunities, benefits, and responsibilities for historic building ownership to enable owners to make informed decisions.

B. Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement

The Plan recommends adoption of the Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy for the Plan Area, the key recommendations of which are summarized below. Please refer to Section 7.4: Implementation Strategies for additional information.

1. Housing production strategies

1A. Streamlined development review. Streamline the development review process for Downtown by adopting the Downtown Form-Based Code and city-wide Objective Design and Development Standards. Consider developing an Online Permit Guide, and a Permit Management system.

1B. Air rights development/land write-downs. Complete the ongoing feasibility study of six parking lots in Downtown (refer to Section 7.4: Implementation Strategies for details) for the potential development of affordable housing, retaining the ground floor parking for public use.

1C. Outside funding resources and applications. Complete the General Plan Amendment and Zone Changes on parcels currently designated Light Industrial to support two local non-profits in developing housing for formerly homeless individuals.

1D. Height bonuses in the Plan Area. Use the Plan's tiered height bonus system to incentivize production of affordable units in Downtown, particularly near transit. Refer to Section 4.3: Building Height and Transitions for additional information.

1E. Potential zoning strategies. Use the Downtown Form-Based Code's updated standards for parking and building height limits to encourage production of more housing developments. Consider providing deeper reductions in parking standards for eligible affordable housing projects.

1F. Multifamily acquisition/rehabilitation. Develop an inventory of older, under-maintained apartment projects for potential future acquisition and rehabilitation.

1G. Innovative housing approaches. Pursue Community Land Trusts and Limited Equity Cooperative strategies to encourage innovative housing approaches to broaden the types of housing available.

2. Tenant protection strategies

2A. Tenant Relocation and Protection Ordinance. Maintain and regularly update the City's Tenant Relocation and Protection Program, with a focus on protecting current Downtown tenants that may be at risk of getting priced out because of rent increases due to anticipated redevelopment in Downtown.

2B. No net loss/one-for-one replacement. Implement a one-for-one replacement requirement in the Plan Area for projects involving the demolition or removal of

deed-restricted residential units affordable to lower and/or moderate-income households.

2C. Preservation of affordable rental housing.

Inventory privately-held below-market rate properties and discuss options and incentives with the owners to extend affordability controls.

3. Strategies to address homelessness

3A. Ending homelessness.

Work with the County of Marin Health and Human Services, local service providers, housing advocates, businesses, and other stakeholder groups to develop mutually beneficial solutions that increase shelter, transitional and permanent housing, and supportive services for unsheltered residents. Develop specific programmatic measures through the 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element. The City of San Rafael is committed to the goal of ending homelessness and promoting access to programs and housing resources for those in need.

C. Utility Infrastructure

Downtown has sufficient capacity in its utility infrastructure systems to support the additional uses proposed by the Precise Plan. The Plan recommends the implementation of planned infrastructure upgrades, and to consider strategies to adapt to climate change and its related impacts.

The analysis of existing conditions did not reveal any deficiencies in Downtown's utility infrastructure, and there is enough capacity in the system to support the Precise Plan's recommended development program.

The following infrastructure improvements are planned or under consideration, and the Plan recommends their implementation. Infrastructure upgrades in the future should consider adaptation to climate change, to make Downtown systems more resilient to future impacts from sea-level rise, increased risk from wildfire, power disruptions, etc.

Water supply

A major improvement project by Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) in the Plan Area is the Pipeline Replacement Program. This is an ongoing program to replace approximately eight miles of pipelines that have reached the end of their useful life. By 2025, 4,000 feet of pipeline, located in Third Street between Irwin Street and Fourth Street, are planned for replacement. Other improvement initiatives are:

- Transmission and Distribution Pumps Replacement Program;
- Slide Repair; and

- Fire Flow Improvement Program (FFIP).

Sanitary sewer

Major capital improvement initiatives have been recently completed, are underway, or are planned by San Rafael Sanitation District (SRSD) in the Plan Area. The 10-Year Capital Improvement Program of the Central Marin Sanitation Agency (CMSA CIP) includes the replacement and rehabilitation of existing capital assets, as well as the acquisition or construction of new capital assets. Two major projects in the 2019 CIP include:

- Primary Clarifier Gates Actuator System; and
- Secondary Clarifiers Rehabilitation.

Stormwater system

Construction of new stormwater facilities and the maintenance of existing facilities are managed through the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP lists expected new facilities as well as facility improvements and repairs. The list includes fully funded projects as well as projects where funding is not yet available.

The City is actively seeking better long-term funding strategies for these projects, including:

- More aggressive pursuance of grant funding for non-Right of Way capital projects;
- Pursuance of ballot measure to raise current per-parcel stormwater assessment in FY 2018-19; and
- Exploring alternative funding mechanism such as assessment districts or public private partnerships.

Electricity and natural gas

PG&E has implemented a Gas Pipeline Replacement Program (GPRP) to improve gas service to customers. The goal is a more reliable system with less maintenance and lower energy costs. As part of the GPRP, PG&E has completed work on a natural gas main that travels through the Bret Harte neighborhood in San Rafael and feeds most of southern Marin County. PG&E's construction involved excavating, removing and replacing

the existing gas main down Second Street, Irwin Street, Lindaro Street, Andersen Drive, Woodland Avenue, and Du Bois Street.

Energy resiliency

Economic vitality rests on the ability to continue operations during disruptions to the electrical grid. On-site solar and battery storage and the ability to disconnect from the grid during power loss due to natural events and intentional shut-offs provides energy resiliency as well as cost-savings. State and regional efforts and incentives to increase the number of renewable energy microgrids such as SB 1339 offer Downtown property owners and businesses the opportunity to pursue energy resilience as a means of preparing for the increased effects of climate change.

D. Adaptation to Climate Change

The Precise Plan recommends the following actions for climate change adaptation for Downtown.

Adaptation to climate change and future sea-level rise will be important considerations that will guide new development as well as infrastructure upgrades over the life of the Precise Plan.

The Precise Plan recommends:

- Evaluate the strategies and recommendations of the Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Report being prepared as part of the General Plan;
- Study the Precise Plan's proposed natural systems approach outlined in Section 4.4: Public Realm and

Connectivity, and the projects listed in Table 8A, for feasibility in Downtown;

- Initiate pilot projects to test design concepts and to identify best strategies for future implementation; and
- Pursue opportunities to enable renewable energy microgrids such as those with solar photovoltaic and backup battery storage for business and property owners for energy resiliency during power disruptions.

8.4 Plan Monitoring and Enforcement

The Precise Plan recommends the following recommendations for Plan implementation.

- Develop metrics to evaluate the Plan's performance, based on the guidance and "expected outcomes" provided in Chapter Three: Design Principles and Guiding Policies. The Plan recommends creating an Implementation Matrix similar to the General Plan Annual Report, that provides annual reports on progress made towards key milestones and actions. While the General Plan Annual Report includes the Downtown Precise Plan Area, it would be beneficial to create a similar reporting mechanism for Downtown that would be easily accessible by residents and decision makers.
- Set up a schedule for periodic review including annual reporting to monitor the Plan's performance;
- Set a period of approximately one year to test the Downtown Form-Based Code for new project proposals. Make adjustments as needed to refine the Downtown Form-Based Code;
- Develop a list of community benefits that could allow an additional height bonus for eligible projects in the future. Potential community benefits include community amenities, publicly accessible open space, public use of private parking facilities, historic preservation, spaces for child care, cultural arts, etc. Add appropriate references to the list of community benefits in Figure 4.8, Table 4D, and other relevant sections of Chapter Four: Design Vision;
- Update relevant sections of the San Rafael Municipal Code and other regulatory documents to be consistent with the Downtown Form-Based Code. Appendix I provides a list of sections of the San Rafael Municipal Code that were referenced in the drafting of the Downtown Precise Plan and Code. These sections, among others, may need to be updated to be consistent with the Downtown Code; and
- Update the City's application submittal requirements to reflect the new information required by the Downtown Form-Based Code, including but not limited to Frontage Type standards, Facade Zone compliance, and Massing and Facade Articulation standards.

