

Public Comment on B st Agenda item

Philip Mooney <[REDACTED]>

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To: **Distrib City Clerk** <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City Council

I am writing to support the conversion of B Street into a two-way street. I'm also writing to encourage city council and DPW to add to this project to make it better for pedestrians and better for our community.

B st should be converted into a two-way street as this plan states. It's been planned for and in the works for years. This is a good thing. We need fewer high-speed, one-way streets downtown. This plan also includes welcome upgrades at the intersections to make them safer for all users. Again, this is seen by me and very much appreciated.

While the conversion to a two-way street is a step in the right direction, I believe it would be a missed opportunity if we do not also incorporate enhancements for pedestrians.

B Street is designated as the "Pedestrian Priority Route" in the Downtown Precise Plan, and for good reason. Along this route is St Vincent de Paul, an area that sees very crowded sidewalks multiple times throughout the day as they open their free dining hall for meals and companionship. B st also connects a vibrant network of bars and restaurants with parklets, small businesses dependent on foot traffic, and residential developments. This makes it one of the busiest areas for pedestrians in downtown San Rafael.

The entrance to two of the largest city-owned parking lots, the A st and C st garages, have entries on B st between 3rd and 4th. These lots have 388 and 390 parking stalls, respectively. The 2017 parking study showed the parking lots are nowhere near full capacity.

We know the street is busy with pedestrians, and we know it is surrounded by abundant parking that is currently underutilized. I'd like to see a visionary B st project that converts it to 2-way traffic as a multi-use street, with amenities for pedestrians on a street that is truly a Pedestrian Priority Route. Let's rethink this project and sacrifice a small amount of street parking to make it safe and inviting for pedestrians with wide sidewalks, improved lighting, seating areas, fencing, loading zones, and both ADA and bicycle parking.

I believe B st is a key to downtown San Rafael. From the business on the street, to the cross-town access, to the linkage to our community center, to the unsung work it does for our most vulnerable residents through St Vincents, B street should become more than another route for cars. It should be developed as a true multi-use street. Action right now, as part of this project when the road is already changing, is the time to include these improvements for all users.

Sincerely,
Philip Mooney