



Request for Proposals for Development of Affordable Housing at 519 4th St

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Thank you for your interest in the City of San Rafael's RFP for 519 4th St. Below are responses to questions asked during the virtual developer workshop on December 20, 2023. The full RFP is available at <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/2023-rfp-development-new-affordable-housing/>.

1. Is there gap funding available?

Through this RFP, the City is offering City-owned land for development of affordable housing. The City has a modest Affordable Housing Trust Fund and periodically issues Notices of Funding Availability, available on the City's [Funding Opportunities](#) webpage. The selected project for 519 4th St may be eligible to apply for City funding in future NOFA cycles. The County of Marin issues Notices of Funding Applications for multiple funding sources, including Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) and the Marin County Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Applications are available on the County's [Affordable Housing Funding Opportunities](#) webpage.

2. Are there Section 8 vouchers available in San Rafael?

Information on Marin Housing Authority's project-based voucher program can be found on MHA's website: [Project Based Vouchers for Newly Constructed Housing](#).

3. Are the adjacent property owners aware of this RFP? Has the City explored whether the site could be expanded by additional property purchase?

The City has not conducted active outreach regarding this site with adjacent property owners.

4. How many units is the City expecting on the site?

The City is looking for projects that maximize unit count and affordability level, while still maintaining high quality design in alignment with the [Downtown Precise Plan](#) T4 Neighborhood zoning designation.

5. State law limits parking requirements for sites near transit, such as this one, and provides the opportunity to increase height through density bonus. Should the developer anticipate pushback from the City and/or neighbors if the building height is increased and/or no parking is provided?

Leading up to the adoption in 2021 of the General Plan 2040 and Downtown Precise Plan, the San Rafael City Council, staff and community were part of discussions on these housing development allowances. A few projects utilizing these tools to increase allowable height and/or limit parking have moved forward recently in San Rafael.



6. Is the City more interested in the program capacity and number of units, or in what the project is going to look like?

Both aspects are important and successful projects will strike a balance between the two. The City is looking for high-quality projects that meet the vision of the Downtown Precise Plan.

7. Is there any context or City preference that might inform which priority populations would be a good fit for the development and community?

Addressing homelessness, including through the provision of extremely and very low-income housing, is a City Council priority, as stated in the City Council's [FY 2023-2025 Goals and Objectives](#). Projects with supportive services are compelling if they demonstrate engagement of a high-quality service provider and the ability to complete project construction and support ongoing operations. As stated above, the City is looking for projects that maximize unit count and affordability level, while maintaining high quality design in alignment with the Downtown Precise Plan.

8. Could the applicant use SB 35 or another expediting mechanism under state law, or is the City expecting to control the process as the landowner and require this project to go through the typical City review process?

This is an opportunity to develop on a city-owned property via an exemption under section 54221(f)(1)(A) of the California Surplus Land Act (Government Code sections 54220-54234). The selected development partner will work in good faith with the City to enter into an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the City that is expected to result in a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA). There is an opportunity to establish the review process through these agreements.

9. Does the City have a site survey?

The City does not have a survey available.

A [Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment](#), commissioned by the City, was completed on August 23, 2023 by The ECA Group Environmental Consultants and is available for review.

A condition of title report is available to applicants upon request.

10. Can applicants email staff with further questions?

Yes, applicants are welcome to submit questions to housing@cityofsanrafael.org through January 8th. Staff will update this FAQ document with additional questions and responses and post the revised document by January 12th on the RFP webpage:

<https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/2023-rfp-development-new-affordable-housing/>.