



San Rafael

Downtown Station Area Plan



Approved Final Draft

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I. Introduction

1. Purpose of the Station Area Plan

California State Senate Bill 375 became law effective January 1, 2009. Under SB375, regions are tasked with creating Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) that combine transportation and land-use elements to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As part of this effort, the Bay Area's regional transportation organization, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has provided a grant to fund in part this Station Area Plan, which is focused around MTC's Priority Development Area (PDA) for San Rafael's City Center, the area within a 1/2-mile radius of the planned Downtown San Rafael Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) station.

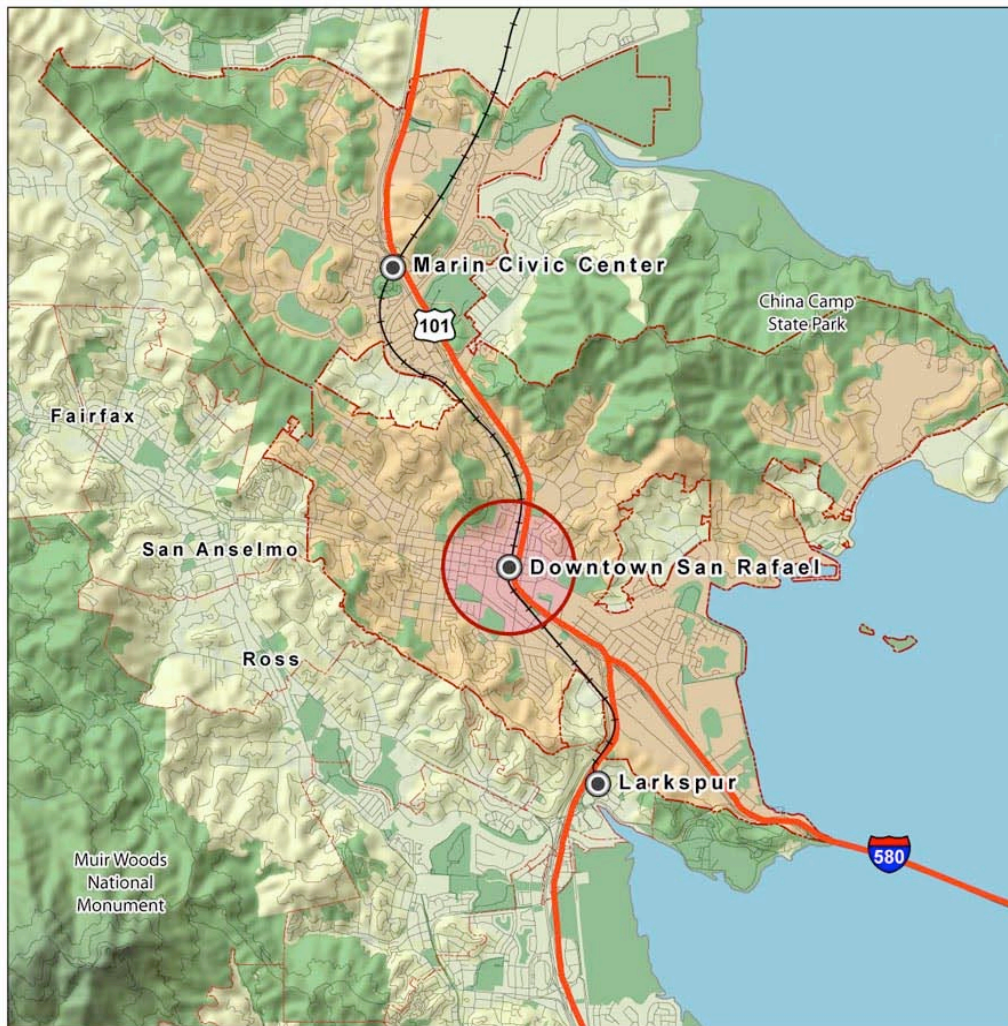
The coming of SMART rail service to Downtown San Rafael in 2014 is an opportunity to build on the work that's been done to create a variety of transportation and housing options, economic stability, and vibrant community gathering places in the heart of San Rafael. This Downtown Station Area Plan sets the stage to create a more vibrant, mixed-use, livable area supported by a mix of transit opportunities, including passenger rail service.

Developed through collaboration among multiple agencies and stakeholders, this Plan sets out a community-supported long-term strategy for the Downtown San Rafael station area, including the possible reconfiguration and operation of a new Downtown San Rafael transit complex. The transit complex consists of the planned SMART station and the C. Paul Bettini Transit Center. Operations and ease of use of the complex will be improved through better connections for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people arriving by bus, shuttle, taxi or personal vehicle, including improvements to streets and sidewalks in the station area, opportunities for public space and placemaking, development opportunities for new buildings and concepts to leverage transit ridership, and parking strategies. The multi-agency implementation strategy identifies short-term and long-term action items, responsible parties, and potential funding sources.

Through the station area planning process, the San Rafael community has considered and provided input on the safest way for buses, pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobile drivers to travel to and from residential and commercial areas, the best ways to access the SMART station and nearby services, the most appropriate crossing improvements, design guidelines to maximize amenities and passenger rail ridership potential, and strategies to sustain and improve economic vitality. Elements that compose the community's vision for the station area may require further or more detailed study as they are implemented going forward. Chapter VII of this Plan provides guidance on a strategy of multi-agency implementation to achieve this vision.

2. The Downtown San Rafael Station Area Plan Study Area and Plan Area

San Rafael is the seat of Marin County and the largest city in Marin, and Downtown is the heart of commerce, professional services and the arts for the county. The Downtown San Rafael SMART station is the second southern-most station along the planned 70-mile SMART rail corridor from Cloverdale to Larkspur and is currently the major transfer point for connecting bus service. It is located at the eastern end of and gateway to Downtown San Rafael, along the US 101 corridor, and near the residential neighborhoods and business centers of east and central San Rafael. Communities to the west such as San Anselmo, Fairfax and Ross, and Larkspur to the south, are the next largest nearby cities.

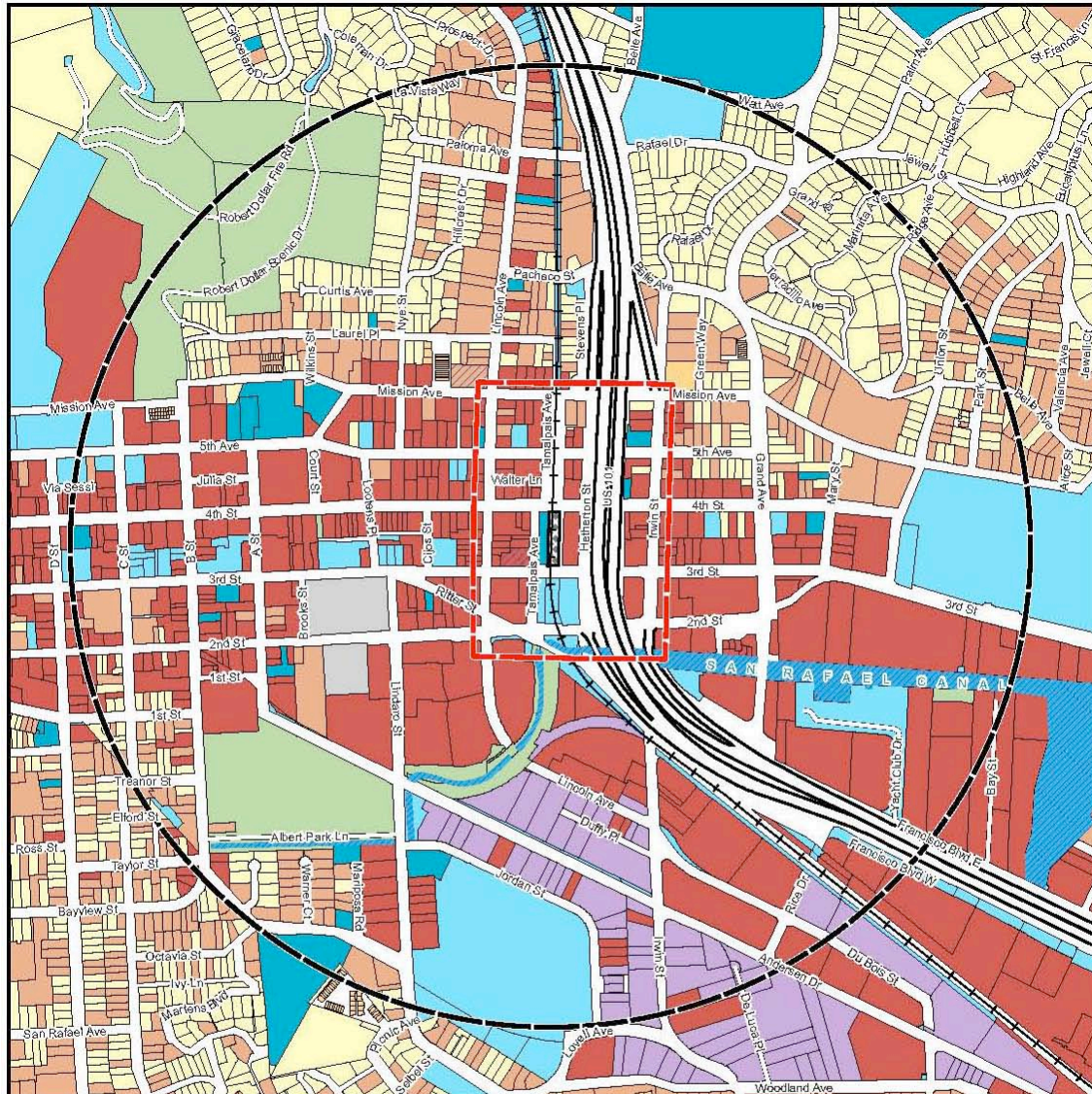


Regional Context

-  SMART Stations
-  Study Area
-  San Rafael City Limits
-  Other Marin Cities
-  State and National Open Space/Park

The Study Area and Plan Area

The Station Area Plan’s **Study Area** consists of a 1/2-mile radius around the SMART station (see Figure I-1). The Plan considers conditions in this larger study area, including traffic, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and land use patterns, such as the location of residential neighborhoods and areas of commercial concentration.



Existing Land Use

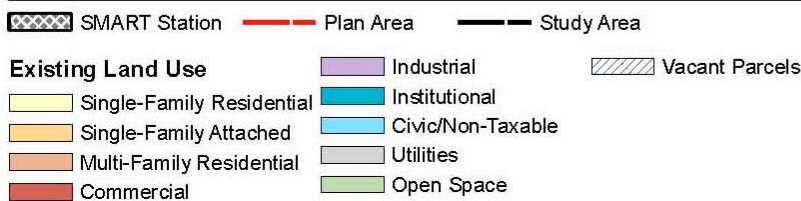
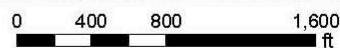


Figure I-1: Downtown San Rafael Station Area Plan – Study Area (1/2-mile radius from the station)

As detailed in the Downtown San Rafael Station Area Plan Existing Conditions Report (2010), the half-mile radius Study Area is synonymous with the Priority Development Area (PDA) boundary. It is within the PDA that residential units are counted toward the MTC TOD Policy housing threshold. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Resolution 3434 TOD Policy sets corridor-wide housing thresholds for prioritizing funding for regional transit expansion projects. For commuter rail systems, Resolution 3434 sets a threshold of an average of 2,200 dwelling units per station across the system. In 2005, City of San Rafael staff estimated that the Study Area contained 2,444 dwelling units.¹ It is important to note that certain station areas along the SMART corridor are expected to exceed the average dwelling unit threshold, while others may not reach it. This is because certain station areas are more appropriate locations for additional residential uses, while land use patterns and/or natural features limit others.

While this Plan considers issues and provides recommendations that relate to the entire 500-acre Study Area, the primary focus of this Plan is the **Plan Area, a 12-block area** bounded by Mission Avenue, Irwin Street, the San Rafael Canal and Lincoln Avenue (see Figure I-2).

In developing the scope of work for the MTC grant proposal and consultant solicitation, City staff emphasized the need for more detailed planning in this area in order to resolve issues related to the introduction of passenger rail service and to further the City's policy goals for the revitalization of this area. The Plan Area hosts a confluence of transit services; auto, pedestrian and bicycle access routes. As such, it presents an opportunity to serve as a vibrant, efficient, and safe transportation hub while also providing a challenge of coordination between travel modes and land uses. In addition, the circulation and transit complex concept must consider the significance and importance of this station area to the City of San Rafael and to the larger region, as the Plan Area: (i) serves as the primary transit hub of Marin County and for Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit; (ii) represents an important gateway to the City of San Rafael and its Downtown; and (iii) acts as the primary traffic and freeway access point in the area.

Station Area Demographics and Employment

The Downtown is San Rafael's economic center. It serves to connect the neighborhoods that lie to the north, south, east and west: Montecito/Happy Valley, Dominican/Black Canyon, Lincoln/San Rafael Hill, Fairhills, Sun Valley, West End, Gerstle Park, Picnic Valley, Francisco Boulevard West, and Canal Waterfront. The Downtown includes a mix of uses that provide shopping, services, civic uses, and connections to regional transit and transportation networks.

The 2000 Census reveals that San Rafael's population includes a wide range of ages and incomes. It can be informative to compare these City-wide Census data with the same data for the Study Area to compare the distributions of age, race and income between the City and Study Area. The exact boundary of the Study Area cannot be matched with the available Census data, so the four primary Census Block Groups are used as a proxy for the Study Area. Figure I-3 shows the relationship between these two boundaries, and the following table lists the various data for each area: City and Study Area (Block Groups).

¹ Downtown San Rafael FOCUS Application for Priority Development Area, October 31, 2008.

According to data from the 2000 US Census, residents of the 1/2-mile radius Study Area held almost 1,800 jobs, located throughout Marin and the Bay Area. The majority of these jobs were held by employees between the ages of 30 and 54, and a majority of these jobs paid more than \$3,333 per month. Within the Study Area there were an estimated 7,000 jobs in 2008. Of these jobs, the majority was also held by employees between 30 and 54 years of age, and over 40 percent of the jobs paid more than \$3,333 per month.

According to the 2000 Census, over 82% of the housing is renter occupied and almost 29% of the population is foreign born. The majority of people drove or carpooled to get to work, but almost 16% used public transportation and another 7% walked or bicycled to work.



Figure I-2: Downtown San Rafael Station Area Plan - Plan Area

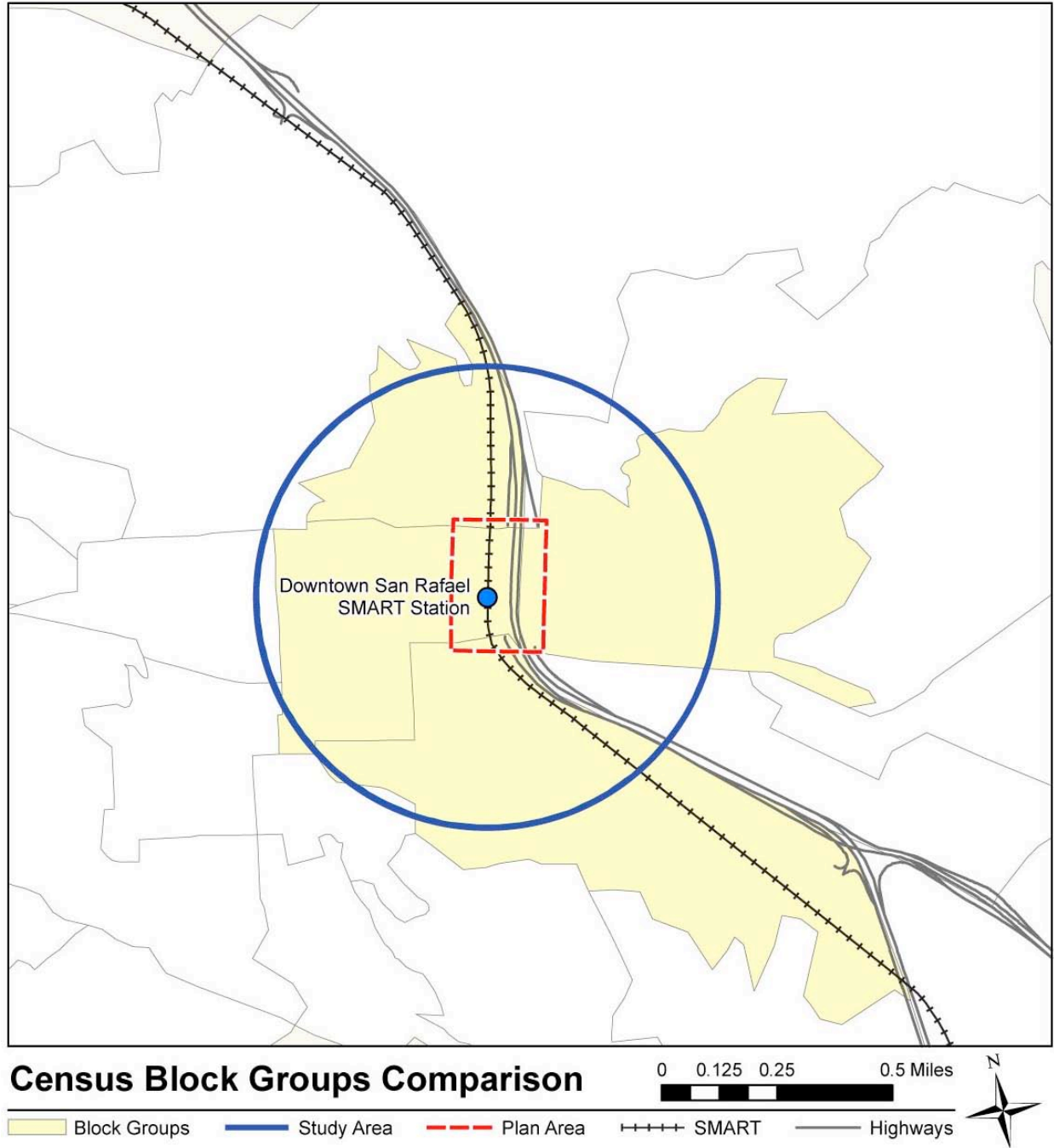


Figure I-3: Census Block Groups and 1/2-mile Study Area Comparison

Table I-1: Station Area Demographics

Household Income (2010)	Percent Population (City-wide)	of	Percent of Population Study Area (Block Group Area)
Below \$25,000	8%		29%
\$25,000 - 59,999	11%		35%
\$60,000 - \$99,999	23%		22%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	24%		10%
Over \$200,000	10%		4%

Age (2010)	Percent Population (City-wide)	of	Percent of Population Study Area (Block Group Area)
0 - 17	19%		15%
18 - 64	65%		75%
65+	16%		10%

Race (2010)	Percent Population (City-wide)	of	Percent of Population Study Area (Block Group Area)
Hispanic or Latino	27%		33%
White*	59%		53%
Black or African Am.*	2%		3%
Asian*	6%		5%
Other*	1%		1%
Two or more races	5%		5%

Source: 2010 Census *Not of Hispanic or Latino Decent

Table I-1 above shows statistics from the 2010 US Census, which do not vary significantly from the 2000 Census. The Block Group Area has lower incomes, slightly higher working-age population, and similar racial demographics to the City as a whole. Within the Study Area, there is a higher percentage of working age adults and fewer children and elderly residents than in the City as a whole. The Study Area also has about the same proportion of Hispanic or Latino residents as the City. The Census reveals additional interesting facts about the population within the Block Group area. Of a total population of 6,265 people, 35% reported some type of disability and nearly 48% of the population lives alone, while another 27% live in a 2-person household.

The Vision for the Station Area (see Chapter II) recognizes this diversity of income levels, and encourages maintaining a broad variety of earners, as well as improving the diversity of ages and races within the Station Area, while also increasing the percentage of people that use public transportation, walk and bicycle to work and other destinations.

3. Planning Horizon

This plan is a long-range document with a planning horizon of 2035. The plan assumes that in 2035, SMART service will be running along the full length of the planned rail corridor, from Cloverdale to Larkspur. The location and configuration of the Downtown San Rafael SMART station, the SMART track and multi-use path, and the timing and frequency of SMART service have all been consistent with SMART's facility and service plans as of October 2011.

SMART's Initial Operating Segment (IOS), anticipated to begin operation in 2016, is currently planned to have its southern terminus north of Third Street at the Downtown San Rafael station. However, this plan assumes that SMART trains will be traveling south across Third Street through the Bettini Transit Center in order to reach the Larkspur station. This is a conservative assumption, in that the impacts of the complete SMART line will be considerably greater than those of the IOS alone.

Long-range service plans for 2035 were not available for other transit operators, including Golden Gate and Marin Transit, so the Plan takes into consideration current operations while remaining flexible to allow opportunities for future expansion of bus service.

4. Plan Development Process

The City of San Rafael received grant funding from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to prepare this Station Area Plan for the area around the future Downtown rail station.

The Station Area Plan is a multi-agency collaborative planning effort between the City of San Rafael, SMART, Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD), Marin Transit, the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency, and the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM). A multi-agency Joint Project Team (JPT) composed of staff from each participating agency and from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) provided oversight and assistance throughout the plan development process.

The Redevelopment Agency Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) has provided oversight for the development of the Downtown Station Area Plan. The CAC is composed of representatives of the citizens of San Rafael, including residents, businesspersons and property owners. The recommendations in this plan are from the CAC.

Community Engagement

This plan is guided by members of the public through their engagement in two community workshops, and through monthly CAC meetings, and focus group loop-outs. Prior to the first workshop, extensive outreach efforts included:

1. Email notification to various stakeholder groups and their constituents
2. A mailing to key stakeholders and nonprofit organizations in the area
3. A mailing to all businesses in the plan area and commercial property owners within ½-mile of the station

4. A press release to local newspapers
5. A write-up in Snapshot, the newsletter of the San Rafael City Manager
6. A posting on the City of San Rafael's homepage



The first Community “Visioning” workshop was held on Tuesday, November 9, 2010 at the San Rafael Corporate Center. Attended by approximately 50 people, the event began with an optional tour of the station planning area, and included a 30-minute open house before formal introductions and a brief presentation on the progress of the planning effort. The core of the workshop was a series of small group

discussions to develop a vision for the station area in 2035. These occurred in a round robin format at six themed stations facilitated by members of the consultant team and City staff.

Some common themes emerged from the workshop. These include a vision of Downtown that makes walking enjoyable and safe, through improved sidewalk and crosswalk conditions, new public plazas, and buildings with diverse architectural character in which businesses—rather than parking lots—face the street; improved on-street bicycle access through new bike lanes or separated pathways, as well as better bus circulation and an integrated bus and SMART station complex that marks the gateway into Downtown, providing a “wow” factor for people arriving from the east. Key insights from each workshop station are summarized below.

Station 1: SMART Station Block

- Create a strong sense of arrival and a civic and commercial anchor adjacent to the SMART platform, inspired by San Francisco’s Ferry Building,
- Renovate the Whistlestop building in a way that supports creating a strong sense of arrival.
- Create a plaza or other public space in the area along Tamalpais Avenue or Fourth Street, connecting to an entry to the station from Tamalpais Avenue.
- Integrate the bus and train stations into a cohesive complex with easy access from adjacent blocks for pedestrians and bicyclists with improved, safer drop-off areas.

Station 2: Bicycling in the Area

Key ideas in this station centered around improving bicycle connectivity in the station area along two axes: north-south as a link in the planned continuous multi-use pathway connecting the Puerto Suello path through Downtown to the Mahon Creek path; east-west as a connection between this desired north-south bicycle route and the planned Downtown station, and beyond to the San Rafael neighborhoods that border Downtown such as Montecito/Happy Valley and West End, as well as the communities of San Anselmo and Fairfax to the west.

Station 3: Driving and Parking in the Area

Three key ideas related to driving and parking conditions arose over the course of the participants' discussion:

- Have a district parking area that includes more of the Downtown surrounding the station block and build more structures for cars within these areas and so that drivers are able to park once and access station area destinations on foot;
- Improve dramatically the natural areas beneath US 101. Beautify the park and ride and merchant parking area to improve appearance and safety;
- Give pedestrian, bicycle and transit access preference over motor vehicles on the streets surrounding the transit complex.

Station 4: Riding a Bus in the Area

Three priorities regarding buses came out of discuss at this station:

- Expand the bus terminal to accommodate more people and buses;
- Make transfers between buses and the planned SMART train safer and more fluid by better integrating the station with the bus terminal;
- Provide additional trees and vegetation around the transit center.

Station 5: Working and Owning a Business in the Area

Four primary themes emerged to encourage economic vitality in the station study area:

- Development should contribute to a cohesive neighborhood that allows for architectural diversity and a mix of businesses;
- Destinations like shopping, restaurants and businesses with outdoor spaces such as café seating should be located and designed to encourage people to stay, rather than simply pass through the area;
- The quality of the open space under US 101 and south towards the canal should be improved to maximize business opportunities on both sides of the freeway
- Fourth Street's vibrant commercial activity should be expanded through the addition of new businesses to the east, on the east side of US 101;
- Development should be spurred through tax incentives or other financial incentives to attract new businesses to the area.

Station 6: Living in the Area

Three central themes emerged from the discussions about making this a great area to live:

- Ensure that walking and bicycling is safe and convenient throughout the area;
- Provide high-quality outdoor public spaces for community gathering;
- Support diversity and vitality in the character of buildings and public spaces and the mix of amenities nearby.

- Encourage mixed-use buildings with retail uses on the ground floor and residential uses above, and with particular emphasis for housing along Lincoln and Tamalpais Avenues.

The second Visioning Workshop, an open house about Implementation, was held on Wednesday, June 15, 2011 at Whistlestop. This workshop was attended by approximately 50 people. The open house included six facilitated, themed stations. A summary of key input from each station follows. For a more detailed summary of the workshop, please see the City's website.



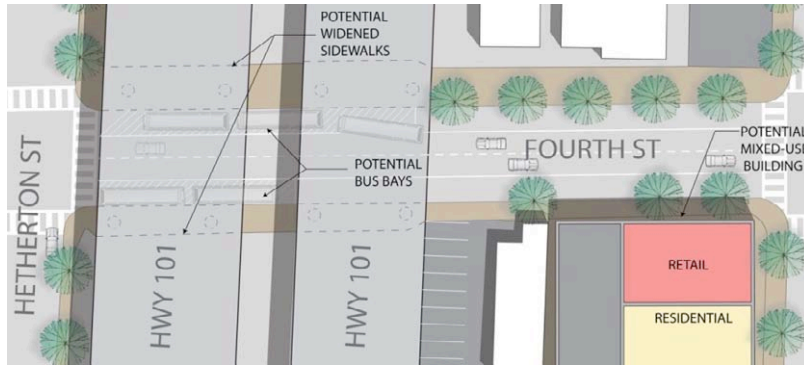
Participants at Workshop 2

- **West Tamalpais Avenue.** Concepts for a “green and complete street” were explored. Participants were generally excited about the possible greening improvements to Tamalpais between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street: stormwater planters, rain gardens in the landscaped median, more trees and native vegetation were all well received. South of Fourth Street, participants thought a plaza at the north end of Whistlestop should have more public amenities, including perhaps a coffee kiosk, fountain, landscaping and possible gateway features.



Potential Improvements to Tamalpais Avenue

- **Fourth Street.** This station focused on possible improvements to enhance the east-west connection underneath the freeway. Participants were asked to respond to a variety of public plaza concepts as well as potential improvements for Fourth Street, including the segment underneath the freeway. Most supported the concept of a plaza north of the existing Whistlestop facility, but wanted this plaza to be planned wisely for best use next to the SMART station. Bicycle parking was not viewed to be the best use for the plaza, but could be provided in a repurposed Whistlestop Building. There were positive comments and reaction to the various concepts for improvements under the freeway. Many commented that improvements under the freeway need to: a) draw one toward Downtown; b) include public art such as murals and lighting; c) be open and well lit so that it is safe; and d) consider some limited use for public transit.



Potential Improvements to Fourth Street



Photos of potential underpass improvements including murals, painting, lighting and pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure enhancements

- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access.** This station focused on pedestrian and bicycle accessibility between the station and the various surrounding neighborhoods and destinations. Participants were asked to rate the current conditions as well as to describe how important various routes and amenities were to them. This station also showed a long-range concept from the Canalfront Conceptual Plan to improve the connectivity of the Canal neighborhood, which has a high proportion of transit riders. Participants ranked pedestrian access to the Transit Center as their highest priority, followed by improving the Fourth Street freeway underpass and the Tamalpais Avenue pedestrian experience.
- **Transit Center.** This station explored potential improvements for various components of the transit center, including the location of kiss 'n ride and taxi activities, bicycle parking, and

bus circulation. The most significant potential change was the relocation of bus operations to the Citibank site, creating a unified transit block with the train station. There was general consensus that moving buses to the Citibank site helps to reduce the walking distance between buses and trains. Many participants were curious about what would happen to the Whistlestop building. Some said the top floor should be kept for office uses, but the bottom floor could be integrated into the train station and have a similar feel to the San Francisco Ferry Building.

- Parking.** At this station, participants were asked to provide feedback on various parking management strategies, including short-term parking zones, appropriate pricing and easy payment programs, signage, and a new parking district. This station also showed two locations for a potential new municipal parking structure: one on Third Street between Lincoln and Cijos with 413 spaces, and another on the block bound by Second and Third Streets and Lincoln and Tamalpais Avenues, providing 500 spaces. Many participants stressed the importance of encouraging people to drive less and rely on transit and walking, in some cases by suggesting more high density housing with reduced parking requirements. Some participants supported a new or enlarged parking district and many supported building a new, aesthetically pleasing parking structure.



Workshop 2 Participants' Comments on Parking

- Building Design.** At this station, participants were asked to fill out a survey regarding a variety of building designs. They were asked to comment on height, massing, and architectural style. They were also asked to comment on what buildings would be appropriate for different sites in the Plan Area. Generally speaking, people felt comfortable with taller heights in the areas adjacent to the station. They thought mixed-use buildings were appropriate for the area and that encouraging housing would bolster transit use. Some expressed a desire for more affordable housing in the area.

Height (number of stories)



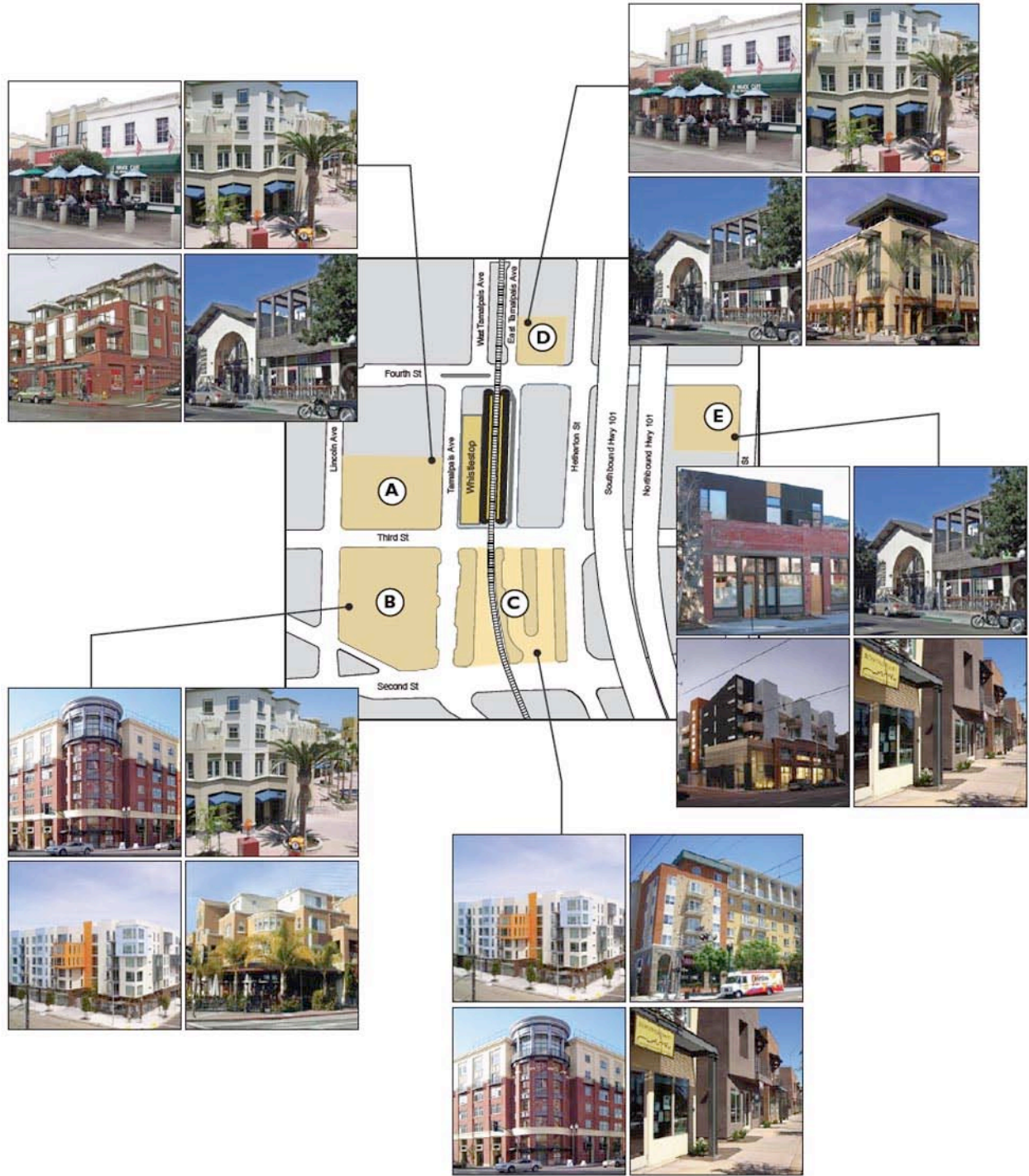
Massing (building shape)



Style (materials & architecture)



Workshop 2 Participants' Preferred Building Heights, Massing, and Styles.



Workshop 2 Participants' Selections of Preferred Building Types for Various Sites within the Plan Area



II. Vision for the Station Area

The following draft Vision for the Downtown San Rafael Station Area was developed in the course of the planning process, with input from the community and the Redevelopment Agency's Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC):

Vision Statement:

The Downtown San Rafael Station Area is at the crossroads of Marin, where people travel north/south through the County, and east/west to shop, to neighborhoods, and to treasured open spaces. Some of San Rafael's most vibrant neighborhoods are just a short walk from the Downtown San Rafael transit complex: Downtown, Montecito/Happy Valley, Francisco Boulevard West and the Canal neighborhoods. At the heart of this area is a regional transit complex that fits seamlessly into the context of the surrounding neighborhoods and connects people to destinations throughout San Rafael, Marin and the greater Bay Area.

In 2035, the Downtown San Rafael Station Area is a place people can easily reach by walking, biking, or using transit. On arriving at the transit center, people feel a strong sense of welcome to Downtown San Rafael. The area is an attractive gateway to downtown and the vibrancy of Fourth Street.

The transit complex is a busy, regional hub for train, bus, shuttle, taxi, and other transit services. People are safe and comfortable walking as they transfer easily from one mode to another, and there are clear, safe and pleasant connections between the transit center and the surrounding neighborhoods. It is safe for pedestrians and bicyclists to get to, around and through this area.

The area immediately around the transit center reflects and enhances the surrounding neighborhoods. New buildings form a strong sense of place, reflecting the community's focus on creating an exciting and friendly edge to downtown. Although development has changed and the appearance of the area has improved, the charming character of nearby neighborhoods remains the same. Every day a comfortable and reliable commuter rail service brings hundreds of people to San Rafael to work, and shops in the area that is thriving.

People who live in the area enjoy safe, pedestrian-friendly streets and access to reliable transit service. The buildings around the transit center have a mix of uses and give the place an urban feel. Residents like being able to walk to the movies, restaurants, shops and nightlife. Close-by neighborhoods have a variety of housing types where families with children, students, young professionals, and seniors live, and all enjoy the benefits of living close to the Downtown San Rafael transit center.

The station provides a sense of arrival into Downtown. The Station Area is intuitive; signage and other physical design help people navigate to their destination, with particular emphasis on connections to Fourth Street.

Parking is available for new housing and businesses. In keeping with the vision of a transit-oriented, walkable, and active environment, the amount of parking provided is limited to

encourage transit use, as well as walking and bicycling. Parking facilities are out of view but are clearly found through signage. On-street, off-street and shared parking facilities are carefully managed, efficiently used, and meeting demand.

III. Land Use and Building Design

This chapter discusses the building blocks that will help shape a vibrant, attractive, and easy to navigate Downtown, anchored by the new transit complex. Trends, issues and recommendations regarding land use and building design, including a discussion of the potential location, building form and estimated square footage of prototypical new buildings are key parameters that will guide the transition to achieving the vision that has been established for Downtown. Additionally, the following section explores example development concepts for individual sites in the Plan Area to inform the Plan's recommendations for changes to City land use policies that will help make it more economically feasible to achieve the type of development envisioned by the City's General Plan.

A busy, regional transit hub and bustling transit-oriented station area both require an environment that is walkable, safe, and easy to navigate. This will allow transit riders and nearby residents alike to get to and from their homes and destinations like shops and places of business, on foot. There will also need to be more of these destinations within walking distance, and they will need to be designed to create a pleasant experience for people on the street. The following key ingredients, which Downtown San Rafael currently enjoys to varying degrees, help create this kind of environment:

- **Density** – a dense concentration of jobs and a considerable and growing residential population, which contribute to more activity and improved vitality and safety for people Downtown.
- **Diversity** – a good mix of different types of businesses and residences, numerous cultural facilities, schools and other civic uses, and public open spaces, and many diverse and distinct neighborhoods.
- **Design** – pedestrian-friendly building designs and character throughout much of Downtown; architecturally attractive streetscapes, especially Fourth Street, and historic buildings; a traditional street grid with small, walkable blocks with some larger and more auto-oriented blocks in outlying portions of Downtown.
- **Destinations** – the County seat and local government; commerce, including many long-standing and new businesses; cultural destinations like the Film Center and Mission, and new housing and jobs throughout Downtown.

In addition, Downtown San Rafael benefits from recent investments in public infrastructure, including sidewalk widening, sidewalk/curb cut improvements for wheelchair accessibility, and improved bicycle routes and multi-use path connections, including the new Puerto Suello connector along Hetherton Avenue, and the Mahon Creek path from Francisco Boulevard to Anderson Drive. Private investments have also contributed to a successful and energized Downtown, including Rafael Town Center, the San Rafael Corporate Center, housing developments and businesses.

Combined, these strengths and opportunities for improvement create an environment that is well suited to benefit from additional transit investments. Leveraging the introduction of SMART train services and building on the many successes to date will allow the City to create an

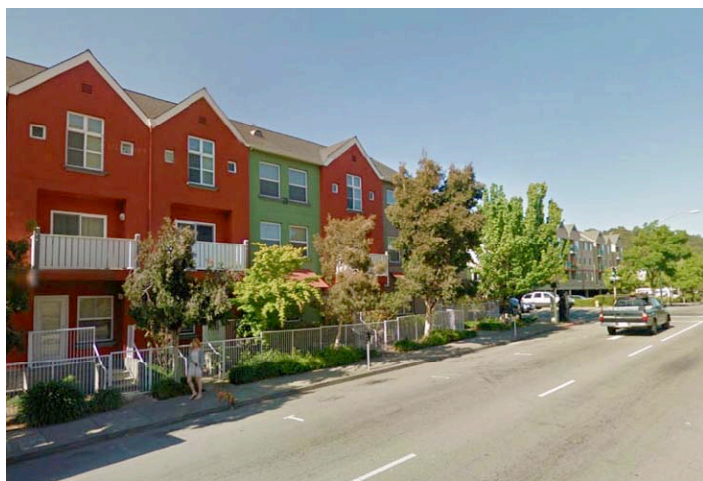
even more vibrant, successful and enjoyable place for people to live, work, and enjoy opportunities for recreation in Downtown San Rafael.

1. Development Trends and Issues

The *San Rafael General Plan 2020* (2004) outlines a vision for the city. It acknowledges the distinctive Downtown, which has been successfully revitalized over two decades and provides many advantages of urban living, such as the proximity of residential neighborhoods to shops, services, and other amenities. It also acknowledges the desirable “hometown” feel of those residential neighborhoods, each of which has a unique character.

The General Plan established a goal of maintaining and building on the Downtown as a vibrant, active and attractive center for the City. The General Plan anticipates that the location of residential neighborhoods and commercial, civic, and other uses will not change significantly by 2020, and that growth will occur primarily through infill construction on vacant and underutilized lots (such as surface parking lots) and through redevelopment of existing buildings. It is anticipated that new multi-family housing, including affordable and senior housing, will be constructed in commercial areas and along transit corridors so that residents may walk to work and shopping. This includes the Downtown, which benefits from a large variety of employment and service uses and proximity to transit, including the San Rafael transit complex.

Affordable Housing



The General Plan’s goal for housing in San Rafael is to provide a variety of residential options, “for people at all stages of life, at all income levels.” Nearly half of the City’s existing housing stock is renter-occupied, and great strides have been made to increase the supply of affordable housing over the past three decades. Higher density residential and mixed-use buildings with smaller-sized units can be a potential source of additional affordable housing and support the

vision of a Downtown where students, young professionals and seniors, among others, can live.

The General Plan 2020 encourages mixed-use development, includes reduced parking requirements, allows live/work units and encourages affordable housing by allowing density and height bonuses. The City’s Housing Element, contained in General Plan 2020, describes numerous sites and areas where additional residential development can occur. It also includes policies that encourage provision of affordable housing. One means of obtaining additional affordable housing is by requiring new residential development to include affordable housing units, and for new job-producing commercial development to contribute financially to

affordable housing programs. The City of San Rafael utilizes both techniques, which have resulted in creation of over 1000 deed-restricted affordable housing units.

Most of these requirements, which are summarized in Table III-1 below, are contained in Section 14.16.030 of the Zoning Ordinance of the San Rafael Municipal Code.

Table III-1: City of San Rafael Affordable Housing Requirements

Building Size/Type	Affordable Housing Requirement
2-10 units	10% of units must be affordable
11-20 units	15% of units must be affordable
20+ units	20% of units must be affordable
Rental developments	50% affordable to very low and 50% low income
Ownership developments	50% affordable to low income and 50% to moderate income

To encourage housing in the Downtown, General Plan incentives were adopted in 1988 and 1996 that: (1) allow height and density bonuses for affordable housing; (2) encourage mixed-use development by modifying development potential calculations; (3) reduce the parking requirement for downtown units; (4) provide live/work opportunities; and (5) provide for single-room occupancy units. Some of the units developed as a result of the Downtown zoning changes in 1996 include Centertown and Lone Palm apartments, which are 3 and 4-story infill projects located in Downtown within easy walking distance of transit, shopping and services.

The City of San Rafael allows a density bonus pursuant to State Law for provision of affordable units, as shown in Table III-2 below. Density bonus units are market rate units. In addition to the bonus units, projects meeting the density bonus thresholds are entitled to additional incentives to assure the density bonus units can be developed.

Table III-2: City of San Rafael Density Bonus Calculation

Percentage of Total units	Income Category	Density Bonus
5%	Very Low	20%
6% and above	Very Low	2.5% additional bonus for each 1% increase in affordable units up to 35% max. density bonus
10%	Low	20%
11% and above	Low	1.5% additional bonus for each 1% increase in affordable units up to 35% max. density bonus
10%	Moderate (ownership only)	5%
11% and above	Moderate (ownership only)	1.0% additional bonus for each 1% increase in affordable units up to 35% max. density bonus

For new housing, the General Plan 2020 states that care must be taken to respect the character and privacy of adjacent development. Utilizing setbacks, transitions in height, and other strategies is encouraged to maintain compatibility with the surrounding context. This is especially important for infill development, including transit-oriented development in Downtown, where mixed uses and greater densities, height limits, and floor-area ratios are permitted. The General Plan 2020 encourages preserving and upgrading existing housing units, as well as implementing zoning standards for new units that reflect and reinforce Downtown's urban character.

San Rafael's citywide affordable housing need for 2009 to 2014, as identified by ABAG for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), is 1,403 units. In addition, ABAG has determined the following affordable housing needs for the period from 2007 to 2014:

- Low and very low-income housing: 470 units (about 34 percent of the total housing need)
- Moderate-income housing need: 288 units (about 28 percent of the total housing need)

Other Relevant Planning Documents

San Rafael's Climate Change Action Plan (2009) recommends a number of strategies to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. Many of these strategies overlap with the concepts put forth by this Station Area Plan: Compact, transit-oriented development, including greater residential and commercial densities within walking distance of high frequency transit centers and corridors; and non-auto mobility, including better pedestrian access through improved sidewalk and crossing conditions, better bicycle access through provision of bike lanes and route markings, and improved transit connectivity, convenience and efficiency.

The Montecito/Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan (1996) makes recommendations that also echo strategies suggested within this Plan. Among these are adding and improving public spaces for meeting and gathering, and improving basic infrastructure to support walkability such as sidewalks and street crossings, and other strategies to make streets safer and less auto-dominated.

Development Issues

San Rafael's Downtown has been enlivened by development since the mid-1990s that has brought an influx of several hundred new dwelling units, including those in the mixed-use Rafael Town Center, new businesses and restaurants, and cultural attractions including the Rafael Film Center. However, challenges for development in the Plan Area, as discussed with the CAC, include the facts that the Plan Area is slightly removed from the heart of Downtown and that the transit complex and immediately surrounding area experience visual, noise and air quality impacts that may pose a challenge to some types of development.



Rafael Town Center

Visual Issues

Existing bus traffic and the future SMART train will have certain physical requirements within and around the San Rafael transit complex, including platforms, ticketing machines, and passenger loading/unloading areas. These elements and the wide bus aisles and train tracks they accompany take up space on the ground but, similar to wide streets or parking lots, they do not contribute to a visually pleasant walking environment because they cannot support elements like buildings and trees to provide visual interest. Figure III-1 illustrates this with a “figure-ground” map showing the large amount of empty white space in between the small black building footprints around the transit complex, especially along the important pedestrian corridors of Fourth Street east of Tamalpais Avenue and Tamalpais Avenue from Second Street to Mission Avenue.

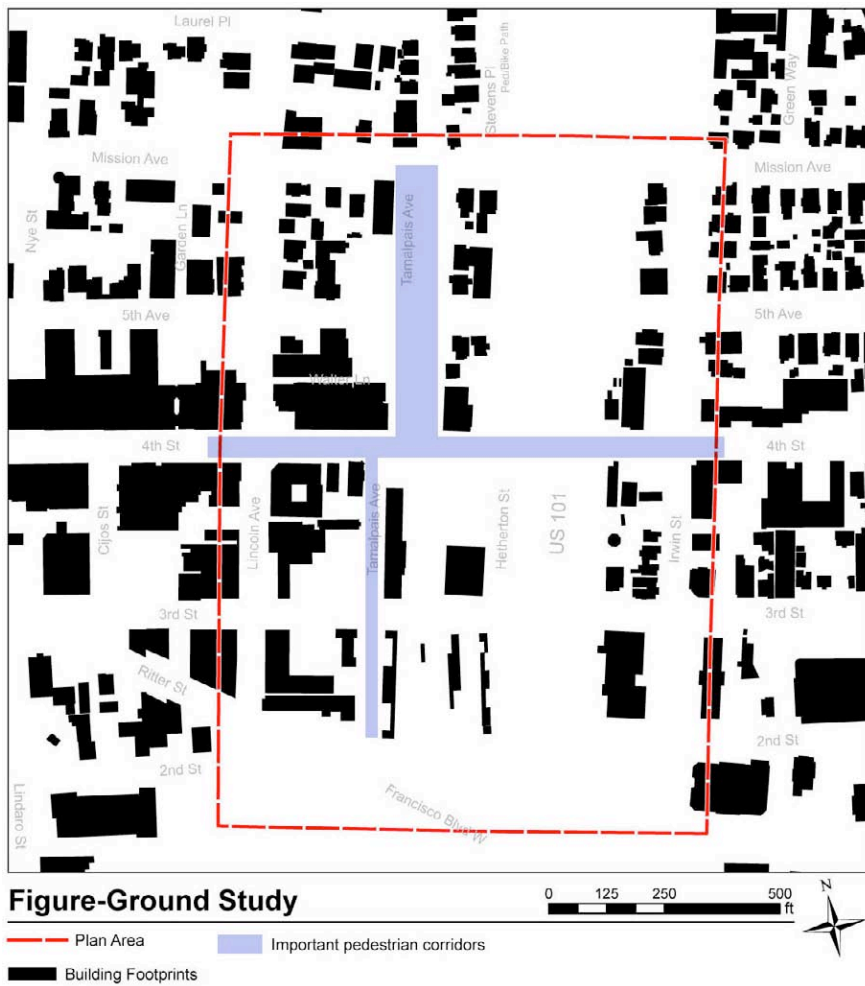


Figure III-1: Building footprints in the Plan Area and surrounding blocks

The gridded street network of the Downtown core, particularly along much of Fourth Street, is clearly evident in Figure III-1. The consistent architectural building wall along Fourth Street, and to some extent along parts of Third Street, Fifth Avenue, A Street, B Street, and Lincoln Avenue, physically frames the pedestrian experience on these blocks, which is reinforced in areas with street trees placed at regular intervals and building facades that include transparency and are

visually engaging to the passing viewer. Good pedestrian spaces are framed by strong edges, such as these. To the east along Fourth Street and along Tamalpais Avenue itself, the edges are less strong, especially as Fourth Street passes under the highway, and the urban character of the public space along these streets is diminished. These are important pedestrian routes and would benefit from an extension of strong edges to help define a more urban character and draw pedestrians from the surrounding neighborhoods into Downtown.

The wide and busy streets surrounding the transit complex, primarily the county arterials Second and Third Streets as well as Hetherton and Irwin Streets, also suffer from poorly defined edges. These conditions are evident in Figure III-2, which shows the figure-ground for the half-mile radius from the station, and demonstrates the less pedestrian-oriented urban form created along these and other streets by auto-related uses, including US 101 and businesses' surface parking lots, which face streets rather than sitting behind the buildings they serve.

Wide streets with few trees and prominent parking lots are good for businesses that require high visibility from moving vehicles, such as gas stations and other auto-oriented uses. However, these types of streets present challenges for some types of development, including pedestrian oriented commercial uses and housing, which require greater detail and visual interest to attract the eye of slower-moving pedestrians. These features help create a more inviting walking environment as is typical of Fourth Street, where buildings line the street continuously, as shown in Figure III-1, and have lots of visual details and form a strong sense of place, as is described in the Vision for Downtown.



Figure-Ground Study

- Study Area
- Building Footprints

Figure III-2: Building footprints within and surrounding the 1/2-mile Study Area

To better link San Rafael's many residential neighborhoods with Downtown, new development should be designed with minimal setbacks along street frontages and employ landscaping and streetscape furnishings to create a more appealing pedestrian environment, as well as buffer the sidewalk from traffic. More details about such improvements are described in Chapter III and Chapter VI.



Fourth Street – Continuous building frontages, architectural details and trees provide ample visual interest to pedestrians



Auto-oriented Street Frontage – Parking lot and set back building provide little visual interest to pedestrians

Pedestrian Crossings

Due to the heavy traffic flows, pedestrian crossing is prohibited on some legs of the busiest Downtown intersections, which increases walking distances and times and may discourage people from walking to nearby destinations. For example, a pedestrian at the southwest corner of Third and Irwin Streets must cross three times to reach a business across the street at the northwest corner of the same intersection (see Figure III-3). Similar conditions exist at roughly six other locations throughout the Plan Area. Certain intersections cannot be modified without creating untenable impacts to traffic flows, but in some locations improvements to pedestrian crossing conditions are appropriate. These include protective medians, improved curb ramps and high visibility crossing striping patterns, and countdown signal timers, which are described in Chapter IV of this Plan.

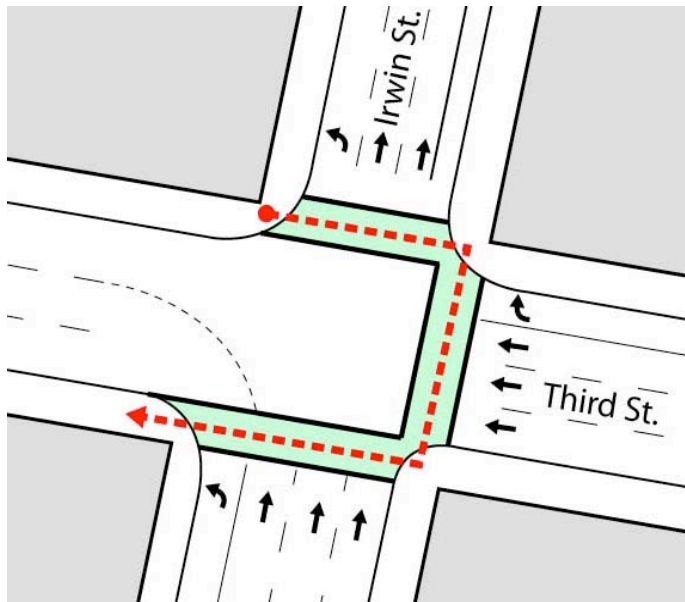


Figure III-3: Pedestrian crosswalk conditions at Third and Irwin Streets

Noise and Air Issues

US 101, Hetherton, Irwin, Second and Third Streets, experience large traffic volumes and contribute a great deal of noise and air pollution throughout the station area. Combined, the Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) on these and other roadways within or adjacent to the Plan Area boundary number between 320,000 and 410,000, according to data collected by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Of these, 130,000 to 160,000 trips are

attributed to US 101, while Second, Third and Fourth Streets, and Grand Avenue, account for between 70,000 and 130,000 trips. Additionally, bus traffic contributes to noise pollution, especially in the immediate vicinity of the transit station, and the SMART train will also contribute to noise pollution once in operation.

BAAQMD has identified 30 stationary sources of air pollution within the Study Area, and 14 additional sources within 1000 feet of the Study Area boundary (see Figure III-4). The Station Area Planning team found no businesses within or near the Plan Area that contribute an exceptional amount of noise pollution.

Noise and air pollution contribute to an uninviting pedestrian environment, but this can be mitigated to some extent through the addition of trees and by more people choosing to walk or bicycle instead of driving through the Plan Area. A variety of construction methods are commonly used to address noise and air quality issues for housing and to mitigate air quality and noise impacts as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Commonly used techniques include double- or triple-glazed windows, use of mechanical ventilation, orientation of living spaces away from noise and air pollution sources, and screening of outdoor spaces.

Sea Level Rise

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that mean sea level will rise between one and three feet by the end of this century. A three-foot rise would inundate much of eastern and central San Rafael, potentially affecting the Study Area. In accordance with the San Rafael Climate Change Action Plan, the City will monitor sea level rise and plan for shoreline defense; develop a program of levee analysis; participate in Marin County's regional vulnerability assessment and prepare a local vulnerability assessment for San Rafael; and continue to provide emergency planning and encourage community awareness.

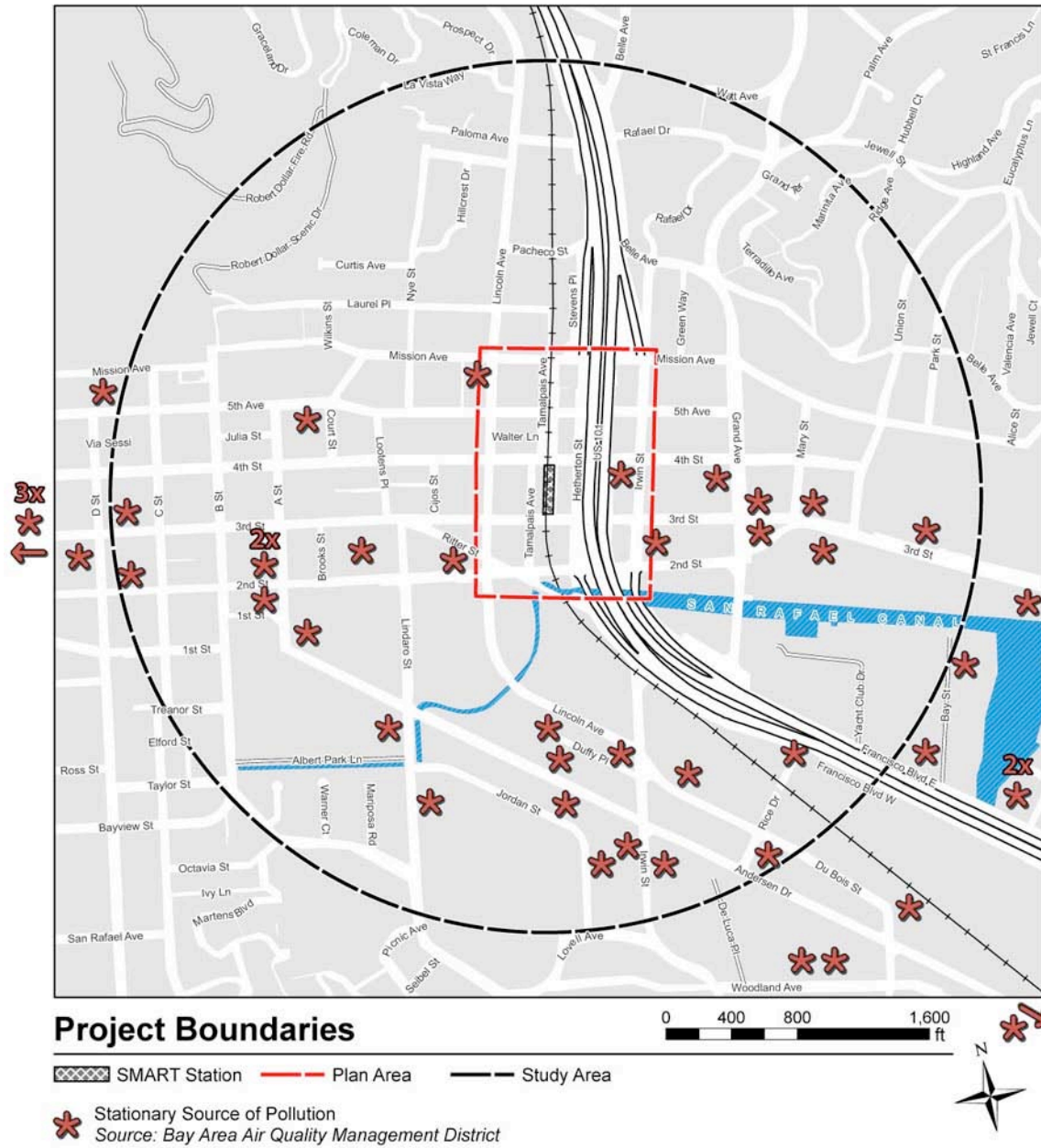


Figure III-4: Stationary Sources of Pollution

Parking

The lack of on-street parking on heavily trafficked streets such as portions of Hetherton, Second, and Third Streets and the evening peak-hour parking prohibitions on Irwin Street between Third Street and Fifth Avenue create challenges for adjacent businesses and contribute to public perceptions that parking is difficult to find in the Plan Area. Some residents of neighborhoods near the Downtown raised concerns about commuter parking spilling over into residential neighborhoods, citing that it is already an issue due to the limited capacity of the Caltrans park and ride lots under US 101. Additionally, the City's on-site parking requirements can be a limiting factor in determining the parameters of development, because

it is often too expensive to build the parking capacity required by the density of taller buildings, particularly on smaller parcels. These issues have informed the evaluation and recommendation of various parking strategies included in subsequent sections of this chapter of the Station Area Plan, which include accommodating parking off-site, possible sites for a new municipal garage, and reducing parking requirements for buildings with proximity to transit service and good bicycle and pedestrian access.

Parcel Size

The Plan Area contains many small parcels, which are inherently more difficult to develop than larger parcels (see Figure III-5). Strategic Economics presented materials to the CAC on December 2, 2010 showing that parcels under three acres are more expensive to build on, provide less flexibility in building design, and spread the same “soft” costs for design and approvals over a smaller amount of development, driving up the cost per unit or per square foot. Of these small parcels, those over 13,000 square feet (about one-third of an acre) are the most feasible to develop. Assembling small parcels into a larger development site can resolve some of these issues, but assembly itself involves time, money and risk for a developer. In the Plan Area, 75% of parcels are less than 13,000 square feet. These smaller parcels represent 57% of the net parcel acreage in the Plan Area. Of the parcels that are smaller than 13,000 square feet, the average parcel size is just over 5,000 square feet.



Small Parcels

▨ SMART Station - - - Plan Area

Parcel Size

- Less than or equal to 13,000 square feet
- Greater than 13,000 square feet

Figure III-5: Opportunity sites consist of many small parcels

2. Development within the Plan Area

This section discusses the potential location, building form and estimated build-out square footage of potential redevelopment sites within the Plan Area.

Opportunity Sites

Potential development opportunity sites within the Plan Area were identified based on input from the Citizens Advisory Committee on Redevelopment (CAC) and City of San Rafael staff (see Figure III-6).



Figure III-6: Possible Opportunity Sites

Development Examples

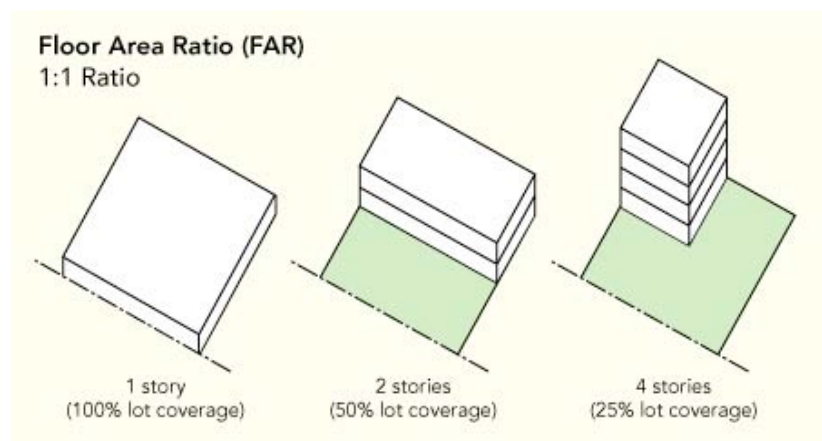
The build-out potential of each opportunity site was evaluated using current zoning and General Plan policies for allowable uses, maximum height and Floor Area Ratio, and amount of parking required. Redevelopment and Planning staff subsequently provided direction regarding the example developments, including the mix of uses, building height, and assumptions for height and density bonuses, including allowable density and height bonuses for affordable housing under state law, and reductions in the amount of required off-street parking, resulting in the development examples described below.

While specific sites have been selected for the following examples, the intention is to show a variety of development prototypes and contexts that can be adapted and modified to work on other sites throughout the half-mile Study Area. Indeed, many opportunity sites exist within and beyond the boundaries of the Plan Area. While the exact building forms shown below may not be appropriate on all sites, the concepts—greater densities and building heights, mixed uses, varied residential formats including condominiums and apartments, upper story setbacks and public ground floor uses such as retail or office space—all can help contribute to a more walkable and pedestrian friendly environment throughout the Study Area, to best leverage the benefits of expanded transit service. These prototypes may also serve to inform potential area-specific guidelines or a potential form-based code as part of a transit overlay district, which are described in further detail in the section *Recommended Land Use Policy Changes* below.

A description of the examples assumed for the opportunity sites follows illustrations of each, shown in Figure III-7 through Figure III-11. Current land use regulations, as well as a side-by-side comparison of existing and potential uses, the number of dwelling units, densities, and other data are provided in Table III-3 through Table III-7 for each of the five development opportunity sites.

Parking counts labeled “private” are intended for residential, office and business uses. “Public” parking denotes spaces that are available to anyone. Note that housing is not subject to Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits, so mixed-use buildings can include the maximum non-residential FAR plus any additional housing as allowed by the zoning.

FAR is the total gross building square footage divided by the land area, exclusive of public streets. Parking areas, covered or uncovered, and non-leasable covered atriums are not included in calculating FARs.



Floor Area Ratio Diagram.

Source: Los Angeles Housing Department

Site A

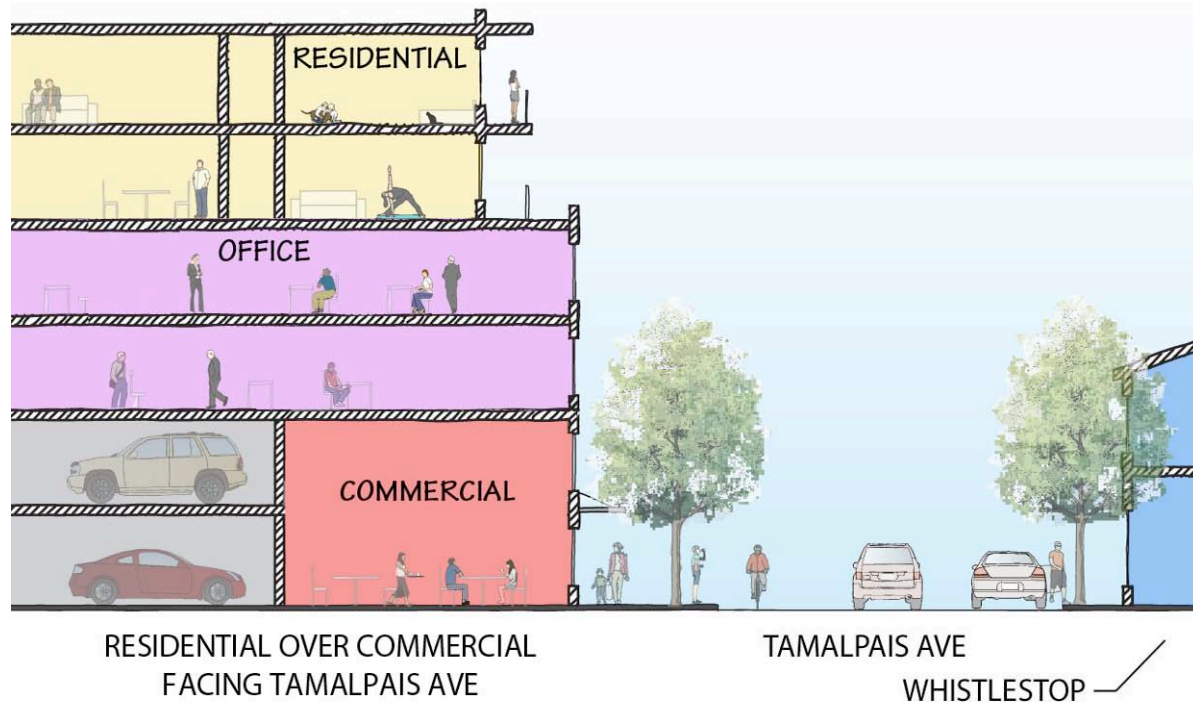


Figure III-7: Site A Alternative Concept – section looking north

Site A is composed of seven parcels. The example assumed, which requires assembly of these parcels, is a six-story mixed-use building occupying 0.8 acres. Commercial uses occupy a high-ceilinged space on the ground floor facing Tamalpais Avenue, comprising 8,600 square feet. Offices uses occupy floors three and four, comprising 60,000 square feet. Residential uses occupy floors five and six. The building contains a combination of studio and one-bedroom flats totaling 67 dwelling units and includes 133 parking spaces accommodated within the building in a two-story podium. Auto access and egress occurs on Lincoln Avenue. (See Table III-3).


This building configuration would encourage more continuous commercial activity fronting the SMART station block along Tamalpais Avenue, creating a more inviting pedestrian environment. However, certain retail uses are not currently permitted along Tamalpais Avenue and would require a variance.

Retail Uses within the Hetherton Office District

San Rafael municipal zoning code states that, within the Hetherton Office District “[o]n the ground floor, office, business-support retail, general retail for parcels that front on Fourth Street, personal service uses and restaurants are encouraged. Parking structures are allowed, and should have commercial uses on the ground floor. Limits on shops protect Fourth Street retail businesses.” (Emphasis added). Retail uses not currently permitted along Tamalpais Avenue without a variance include shops selling antiques and collectibles, apparel, appliances, bicycles, furniture, upholstery, furniture repair services, shoes, sporting goods, toys, and selling or renting videos.

By setting the upper stories back, the perceived height of the six story building would be reduced, more in line with the Whistlestop building, helping to frame the street (see Figure III-7). Providing office space within the Plan Area would encourage potential employees to utilize the buses or SMART train arriving at the adjacent transit complex and reduce the demand for parking. The residential uses on the uppermost floors would provide residents to frequent the movie theaters, restaurants and other nightlife venues Downtown once workers have left their offices and businesses, keeping the area active, vibrant and safe for a greater portion of the day. Additionally, the increase in both business and residential uses would allow employees and residents to take advantage of the nearby bus and rail transit services, reducing vehicle use.

Table III-3: Site A

Site A			
	Zoning:	Hetherton Office (HO)	
	Building Height:	66 feet	
	Maximum Housing Density:	72 dwelling units/acre	
	Maximum FAR:	2.00 (residential space does not count toward maximum FAR)	
	Parking:	up to 2 spaces/multi-family dwelling unit	
	Site Acres:	0.8	
		EXISTING SITE	POSSIBLE PROTOTYPE
	Uses:	7 parcels: vacant parcel, pub, restaurant, home furnishing store, and thrift store	Mixed-Use
	Number of Stories:	1	6
	Dwelling Units:	0	67
	Residential Density	N/A	83 du/acre
	Retail/Commercial	4,793 sq. ft.	8,600 sq. ft.
	Office	0	60,000 sq. ft.
	Non-residential Density	0.14 FAR	1.97 FAR
Parking Spaces:	46 private	133 private	

Site B

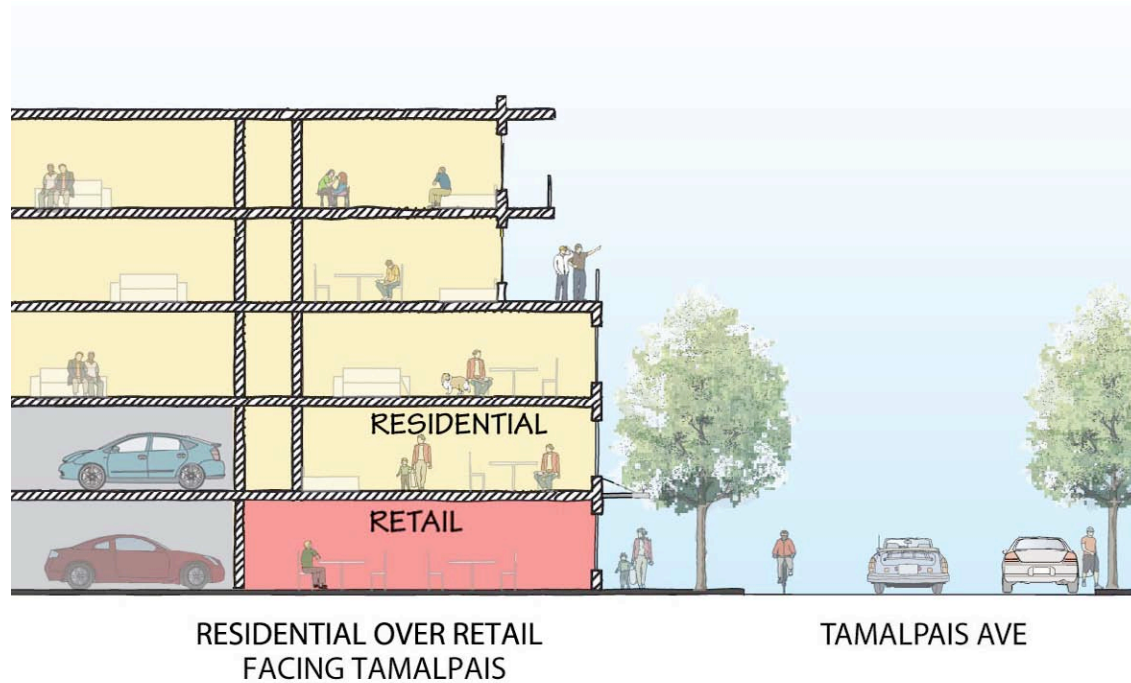



Figure III-8: Site B Possible Redevelopment Concept – section looking north

Site B is composed of three parcels. The example assumed for Site B, which requires assembly of these parcels, is a five-story mixed-use building occupying 1.0 acre. Retail uses on the ground floor facing Tamalpais Avenue comprise 10,240 square feet. Residential uses occupy the second through fifth floors. The building contains 86 dwelling units and includes 86 parking spaces for the residential units, accommodated within the building in a two-level podium. Per staff direction, no on-site parking is assumed for the ground floor retail uses; patrons of these businesses would use existing public on-street spaces or off-street parking lots. Auto access and egress occurs on Lincoln and/or Tamalpais Avenues (see Table III-4).

Similar to the possible development envisioned for Site A, this example includes public ground floor uses to help engage the street, providing an active frontage to attract the eye of pedestrians. The residential component on upper floors would have a similar effect of providing more people on the street after standard business hours, contributing to a welcoming, social, and active public realm in the Downtown, and increased ridership for the nearby bus and rail transit (see Figure III-8).

Table III-4: Site B

Site B			
	Zoning:	2nd/3rd Mixed Use East (2/3 MUE)	
	Building Height:	54 feet; up to 12 feet height bonus available for affordable housing, public parking, or skywalks over Second or Third Street, subject to certain conditions described in Section 14.16.190 of the zoning code	
	Maximum Housing Density:	72 dwelling units/acre	
	Maximum FAR:	1.50 (residential space does not count toward maximum FAR)	
	Parking:	up to 2 spaces/multi-family dwelling unit	
	Site Acres:	1.0	
		EXISTING SITE	POSSIBLE PROTOTYPE
	Uses:	3 parcels: paint, framing and photo shops.	Mixed-Use
	Number of Stories:	1-2	5
	Dwelling Units:	0	86
	Residential Density	N/A	86 du/acre
	Retail/Commercial	14,129 sq. ft.*	10,240 sq. ft.
	Office	4,300 sq. ft.*	0
	Non-residential Density	0.42 FAR	0.24 FAR
	Parking Spaces:	47 private	86 private
* Note: The breakdown between office and retail uses on Site B is estimated			

Site C

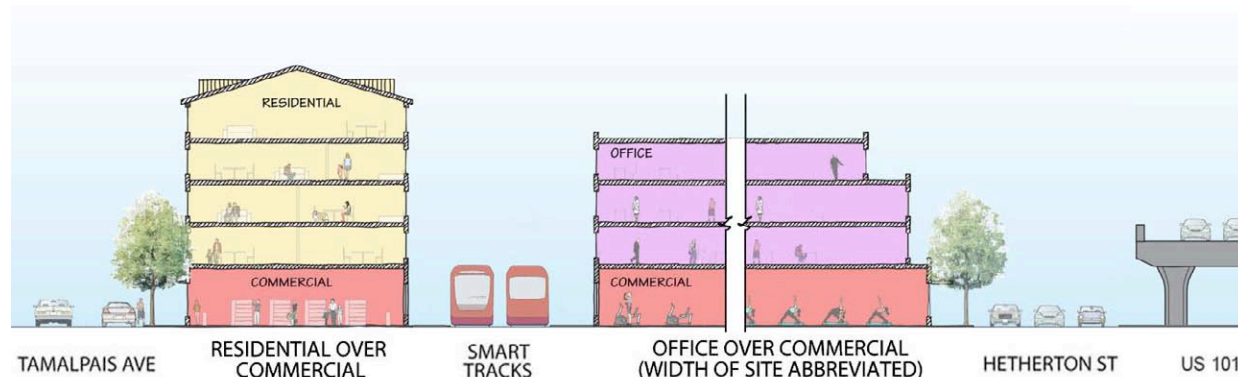



Figure III-9: Site C Alternative Concept – section looking north

Site C is composed of the current Bettini transit center. The potential long-term relocation of the transit center adjacent to the SMART station would allow the current Bettini site to be redeveloped. The example assumed breaks the site into two parcels on either side of the SMART right of way. On the east portion, the example assumes a four-story mixed-use building. A commercial use is anticipated on the ground floor, comprising 29,835 square feet. Office uses occupy floors two through four, comprising 55,000 square feet. The project assumed for the west portion includes a five-story mixed-use building. Commercial uses occupy the ground floor, comprising 14,960 square feet. Residential uses occupy floors two through five. The building contains 82 dwelling units (see Table III-5). No parking is provided on either portion of the site; the parking demand of 385 spaces would be satisfied by a new off-site parking structure within a block or two of the site, as described in the subsequent parking section of this chapter.

The example development on Site C includes two buildings that frame the streets on all sides of the block and provide considerably improved walking conditions within this part of the Plan Area, where fast-moving traffic on Hetherton Avenue, Second and Third Streets and the adjacent highway on-ramp now create an uninviting place for pedestrians. The assumed uses within the project include a broad mix of commercial, office and residential, though certain retail uses are currently not permitted along Tamalpais Avenue and would require a variance. See the excerpted zoning language under the description for Site A.

The mix of uses shown in the example on Site C would have the aforementioned effect of generating more people on the street for a longer part of the day and evening, improving the vibrancy and safety of the area, and would encourage transit use over personal vehicles (see Figure III-9).

Table III-5: Site C

Site C			
	Zoning:	Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)	
	Building Height:	36 feet	
	Maximum Housing Density:	24 dwelling units/acre	
	Maximum FAR:	1.00 (residential space does not count toward maximum FAR)	
	Parking:	up to 2 spaces/multi-family dwelling unit	
	Site Acres:	1.1	
		EXISTING SITE	POSSIBLE PROTOTYPE
	Uses:	Bettini transit center	Mixed-Use
	Number of Stories:	1	4-5
	Dwelling Units:	0	82
	Residential Density	N/A	74 du/acre
	Retail/Commercial	600 sq. ft.	44,795 sq. ft.
	Office	0	55,000 sq. ft.
	Non-residential Density	0.01 FAR	2.00 FAR
	Parking Spaces:	4 public	4 public*
*Parking demand of 385 spaces would be accommodated in a new off-site structure			

Site D

Figure III-10: Site D Alternative Concept – section looking west

Site D is composed of one parcel. The example assumed for Site D is a three-story mixed-use building occupying 0.23 acres. Retail uses on the ground floor face Fourth Street, comprising 3,000 square feet. Residential uses occupy floors two and three. The building contains 20 dwelling units and includes 20 parking spaces, accommodated within the building behind the retail component on the ground floor. Auto access and egress occurs on East Tamalpais Avenue (see Table III-6).

The example would retain a retail component at street level facing Fourth Street, similar to the existing shop, to keep the street frontage engaging to pedestrians, but would add residences on upper floors to encourage more people on the street and to offer a housing choice that provides the opportunity to take advantage of the nearby transit services, or walking and bicycling to nearby destinations (see Figure III-10).

Table III-6: Site D

Site D			
	Zoning:	Hetherton Office (HO)	
	Building Height:	42 feet	
	Maximum Housing Density:	72 dwelling units/acre	
	Maximum FAR:	1.50 (residential space does not count toward maximum FAR)	
	Parking:	up to 2 spaces/multi-family dwelling unit	
	Site Acres:	0.2	
		EXISTING SITE	POSSIBLE PROTOTYPE
	Uses:	1 parcel: bagel shop	Mixed-Use
	Number of Stories:	1	3
	Dwelling Units:	0	20
	Residential Density	N/A	100 du/acre
	Retail/Commercial	3,976 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.
	Office	0	0
	Non-residential Density	0.46 FAR	0.34 FAR
	Parking Spaces:	9 private	20 private

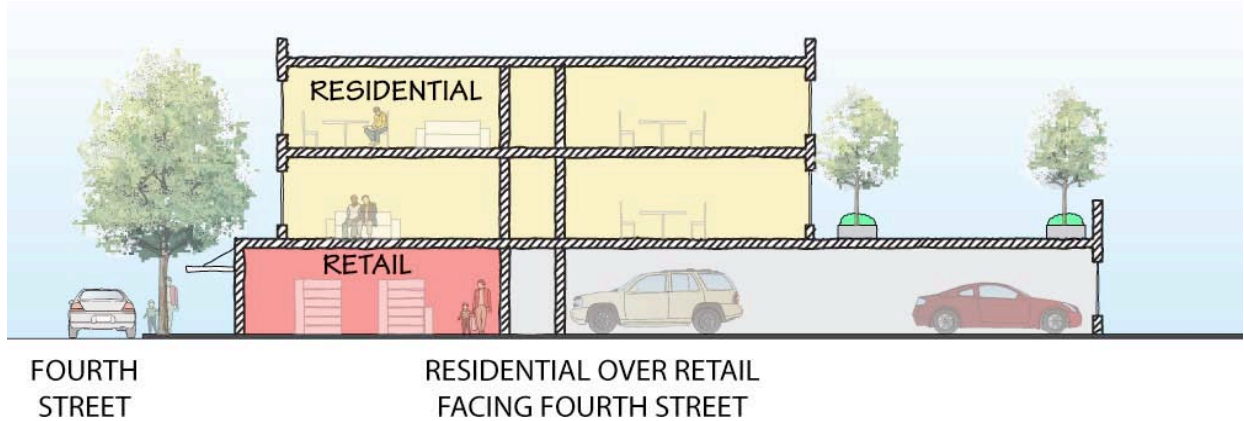

Site E

Figure III-11: Site E Possible Redevelopment Concept - section looking east

Site E is composed of three parcels. The example assumed for Site E, which requires assembly of these parcels, is a three-story mixed-use building occupying 0.33 acres. Retail uses on the ground floor face Fourth Street, comprising 4,750 square feet. Residential uses occupy the second and third floors. The building contains 17 dwelling units, the maximum residential density permitted under the zoning, and includes 17 parking spaces, accommodated within the building behind the retail component on the ground floor. Per staff direction, no on-site parking is assumed for the ground floor retail uses; patrons of these businesses would use existing public on-street spaces or off-street parking lots. Auto access occurs from Fourth Street and egress occurs onto Irwin Street (see Table III-7).

The project would help carry the density and vitality of Fourth Street to the east side of US 101. By retaining a ground floor retail component, but locating it along the sidewalk instead of setback beyond a drive aisle and parking lot as the site is currently configured, this project would create an engaging frontage along Fourth Street for pedestrians (see Figure III-11). The addition of residences on the upper floors would provide the benefits noted in the examples above, including encouraging more people to be active within the Plan Area after standard business hours, and also allowing residents to take transit or walk and bicycle to destinations instead of using a personal vehicle.

Table III-7: Site E

Site E			
	Zoning:	Commercial/Office (C/O)*	
	Building Height:	36 feet	
	Maximum Housing Density:	43 dwelling units/acre	
	Maximum FAR:	0.70 (residential space does not count toward maximum FAR)	
	Parking:	up to 2 spaces/multi-family dwelling unit, +1 space/5 units for guest parking	
	Site Acres:	0.3	
		EXISTING SITE	POSSIBLE PROTOTYPE
	Uses:	3 parcels: Dry cleaner and coffee drive-through.	Mixed-Use
	Number of Stories:	1	3
	Dwelling Units:	0	17
	Residential Density	N/A	56 du/acre
	Retail/Commercial	1,660 sq. ft.	4,750 sq. ft.
	Office	0	0
	Non-residential Density	0.13 FAR	0.36 FAR
Parking Spaces:	14 private	17 private	
*General Plan classification: "Retail Office(R/O)"			

Whistlestop

With the planned SMART service and proximity to the station platforms, it may be difficult to maintain the existing use of the Whistlestop building without modification. Some programs and services may be impacted due to the proximity of the station and station improvements to the building. Finding a new use for this site will be important to defining the heart of the transit complex.

The Whistlestop property at 930 Tamalpais Avenue is owned by Marin Senior Coordinating Council (“Whistlestop”). Whistlestop provides education, meals, and paratransit services for seniors and people with disabilities. In addition to providing an important social service for downtown San Rafael and the wider community, the operator of the senior services center also owns the property. A proactive public-private partnership could facilitate an effort to secure funding for improvements to the site, recognizing its central importance to the area as a part of the gateway to Downtown and to the functioning of the station itself. The design of both the station and the site need to be strongly integrated and closely coordinated, together with the public improvements proposed for the limited street and train rights-of-way adjacent to the site.

The parcel is currently within the Hetherton Office (HO) zoning district which permits a maximum building height of 66 feet and a variety of commercial uses including restaurants, office uses, limited retail, as well as housing.

The 48-inch high SMART loading platform will be located in close proximity to the east edge of the current Whistlestop building, potentially creating a 4-8 foot gap or “gully.” Without careful design, this area may attract unwanted activity such as graffiti, be uninviting to pedestrians, and negatively impact the first floor windows of the current building. SMART and the property owner should work together to integrate the station platforms with the building to minimize negative impacts such as this gap.

The Plan envisions an engaging ground-floor commercial component and possible food-related or restaurant uses that will help create a strong sense of arrival into Downtown. Second floor office uses could provide transit-oriented employment opportunities within the Station Area. It will be important to ensure any development on this site relates to the adjacent SMART loading platform in a way that enhances the experience of arriving into Downtown San Rafael.



Whistlestop Building - Former Train Depot

Station-related retail

Many workshop participants were excited about a scaled-down version of San Francisco's Ferry Building, envisioning a place that offers fresh produce, specialty items, flowers, coffee and commuter-related services and other fare. Other models for a smaller-scale, privately owned specialty food market include Oxbow Market in Napa, Alameda Marketplace, Epicurious Garden in Berkeley, and Rockridge Market Hall in Oakland.



Rockridge Market Hall, Oakland

Such an establishment would encourage activity throughout the day in the heart of the Plan Area and provide a convenient opportunity for transit patrons to shop for daily necessities on their way to and from the transit complex, as well as linking the Station Area to Fourth Street and the rest of Downtown.

Station Plaza

Improved public space or a new public plaza could be created in the area of the station to provide a community gathering place and enhance the pedestrian experience. One possible location is at the northern end of the Whistlestop site at the southeast corner of Fourth and West Tamalpais, serving to connect the SMART station platforms and Whistlestop site with Fourth Street (see Figure III-12) and acting as a visual focus and point of arrival. Plazas can make a major improvement in the pedestrian environment and help encourage transit use, by providing attractive and comfortable seating areas, along with important amenities such as wayfinding signage and bicycle parking. While benches and fixed seating can work well, movable tables and chairs increase the flexibility of use by allowing users to gather in groups and find shade or sun as they desire. It is important that any wayfinding signage or bicycle parking provided in the area be carefully designed and placed to add visual interest and complement the character of this gateway into Downtown. Trees and other means of providing shade, as well as other landscape treatments, can also help reduce runoff and improve water quality.

A plaza could also be an excellent location for public art, such as a sculpture to serve as a focal point and anchor the space, providing a landmark for people passing through and meeting one another near the station. Art Works Downtown is an organization that works with property owners and the City to place artworks in San Rafael, and may be of assistance in selecting and placing a piece of public art in this prominent location.

The area along Fourth Street between the rail station and Tamalpais will serve to link the SMART platforms directly with Fourth Street, providing an opportunity to continue the vitality and visual interest of this primary pedestrian corridor of San Rafael into the Station Area. The area identified for the plaza at Fourth Street and Tamalpais Avenue is privately owned. The City

could work with the property owner on a variety of improvement options, ranging from a plaza to enhanced streetscape improvements and the provision of pedestrian amenities. High quality design and lighting will be critical, as will ensuring adequate security for the area. Photos of various plaza designs are shown in Figure III-13.



Plaza in Santa Barbara



Figure III-12 Possible Plaza at Fourth Street and Tamalpais Avenue

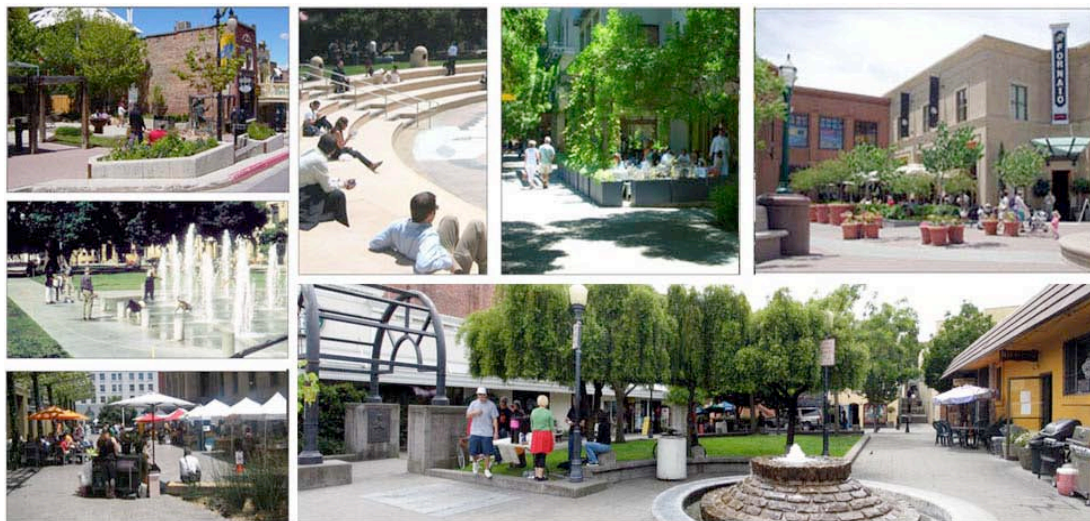


Figure III-13: Photos of various plaza designs



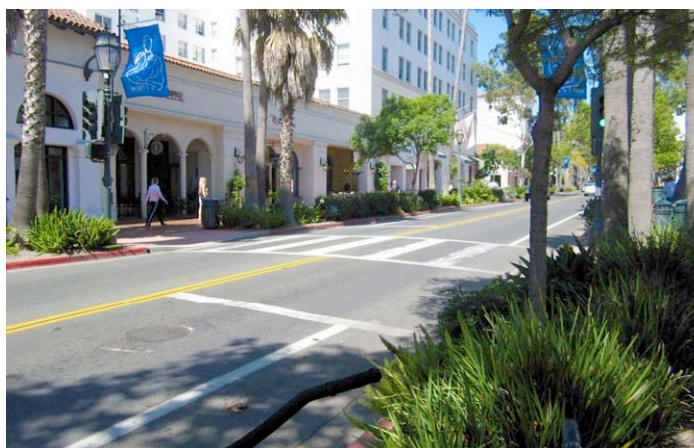
3. Recommended Land Use Policy Changes



The Vision established for the Station Area describes an environment where people are able to enjoy and comfortably navigate the public spaces in the Station Area and among the surrounding blocks of Downtown San Rafael. Public spaces—streets, sidewalks, plazas—and the atmosphere within them, are correspondingly defined by the buildings around them. Taller buildings mean more people to populate the streets and use transit, walk, or bicycle to reach their destinations.

Commercial and retail uses on the ground floor and office uses above encourage activity throughout the day, while residential uses encourage activity in the evening, keeping streets and other public spaces animated and vibrant. The development concepts studied above provide a valuable test of the capacity to achieve this vision through the creation of new buildings, within the limits of existing land use policy. This section examines and makes recommendations to change existing land use policy to facilitate achievement of the vision for the Station Area.

The opportunity site assessment found that under current regulations, *maximum density* was the most restrictive regulation limiting the types of buildings that can help achieve the vision. This is because the maximum density could typically be reached with a lower number of stories than what would be allowed under the maximum building height. In addition, the



studies found that providing more than one space per unit of off-street parking for new residential uses would typically require two levels of structured parking, which is expensive and often infeasible on small sites due to the space needed for vertical circulation. As discussed in the Development Issues section of this chapter, the prevalence within the Plan Area of many small parcels (less than 13,000 square feet) inhibits development because it requires parcels to be assembled, resulting in increased cost and time for the developer.

Based on guidance from the Citizens Advisory Committee and the results of the land use opportunities, this plan recommends the following land use policy changes to make the development envisioned in the General Plan and the vision for the station area more economically feasible and therefore more likely to be achieved.

Vision 1: A Gateway into Downtown

To create an improved gateway into Downtown San Rafael, the portions of the Plan Area and immediate environs that allow a 66-foot height limit could be expanded to include the blocks between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton from Mission Avenue to Second Street, including the Bettini site. The site immediately west of the SMART station, known as the Whistlestop site, is an important site as it is part of the gateway to Downtown San Rafael. As discussed in a previous section, this site is located in a zoning district (HO) that offers a 66-foot building height limit. This site could serve as an iconic, active, welcoming point of arrival to downtown San Rafael.

The development prototype shown for Site B assumed a 66-foot height limit or variance in order to allow a 5-story structure (see Figure III-8). East of US 101, the area allowing 54-foot heights could be expanded to include the parcels along the west side of Irwin Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street, both sides of Irwin Street between Fourth and Second Streets, and along the south side of Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue. Figure III-14 indicates these areas with colored hatching and shows the previous height limits underneath. These increased building height limits would make a larger variety of building projects feasible on the parcels in these areas, which will help achieve the goals established in the vision to encourage more people to use transit and promote a greater diversity of land uses, including more residential uses in the Station Area.

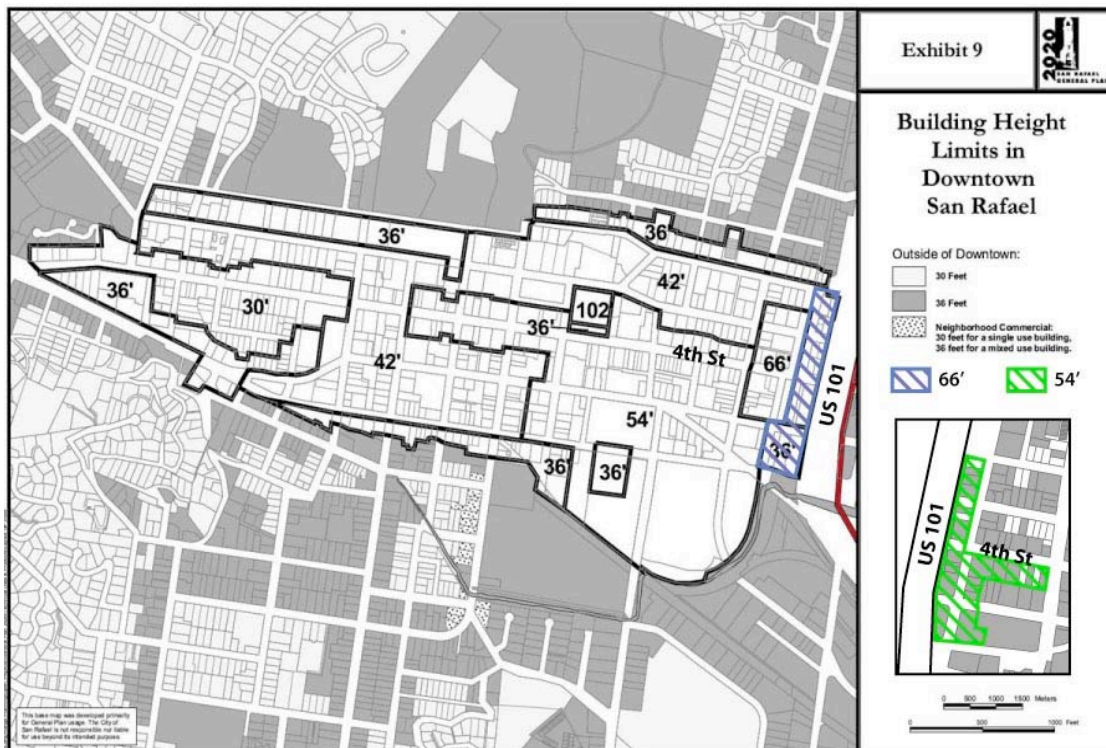


Figure III-14: Recommended Building Height Limits in Downtown

Vision 2: Increased Activity, Commercial and Housing Uses for Transit

To encourage redevelopment within and around the Plan Area that supports increase activity and a mix of uses, the area that allows a 2.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) could be expanded to include the blocks between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton from Mission Avenue to Second Street, including the Bettini Transit Center site. East of US 101, the area that allows an FAR of 1.5 could be expanded to include the parcels along the west side of Irwin Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street, both sides of Irwin Street between Fourth and Second Streets, and along the south side of Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue. Figure III-15 indicates these areas with colored hatching and shows the previous FAR limits underneath. Similarly to increased building height limits, increasing the FAR in these areas would make a greater variety of building projects feasible, which will help achieve the goals established in the vision to encourage more people to use transit and encourage a greater diversity of land uses including more residential uses in the Station Area.

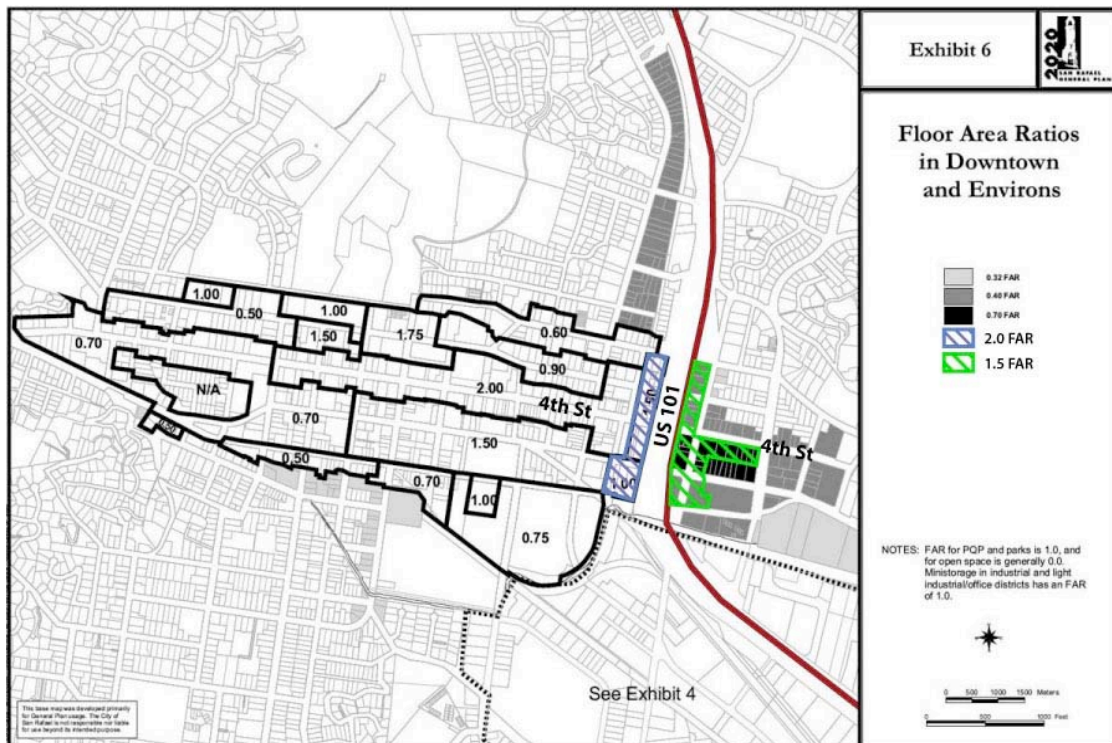


Figure III-15: FAR limits in Downtown

Vision 3: Parking for New Housing and Business

The vision of creating a transit-oriented, walkable, and active environment in the Station Area is benefitted by limiting the amount of parking provided in order to encourage transit use, walking, and bicycling instead of personal vehicle use. Changes to existing parking requirements can help achieve adequate parking ratios without providing an oversupply for new housing and businesses, and can also help prevent parking encroachment on residential neighborhoods near the Station Area.

In the short term, the City could consider:

- Reducing minimum parking requirements to one space for two-bedroom residential units and 1.5 spaces for three-bedroom units.
- Requiring any new off-street parking to be screened from public view
- Allowing tandem parking in private developments

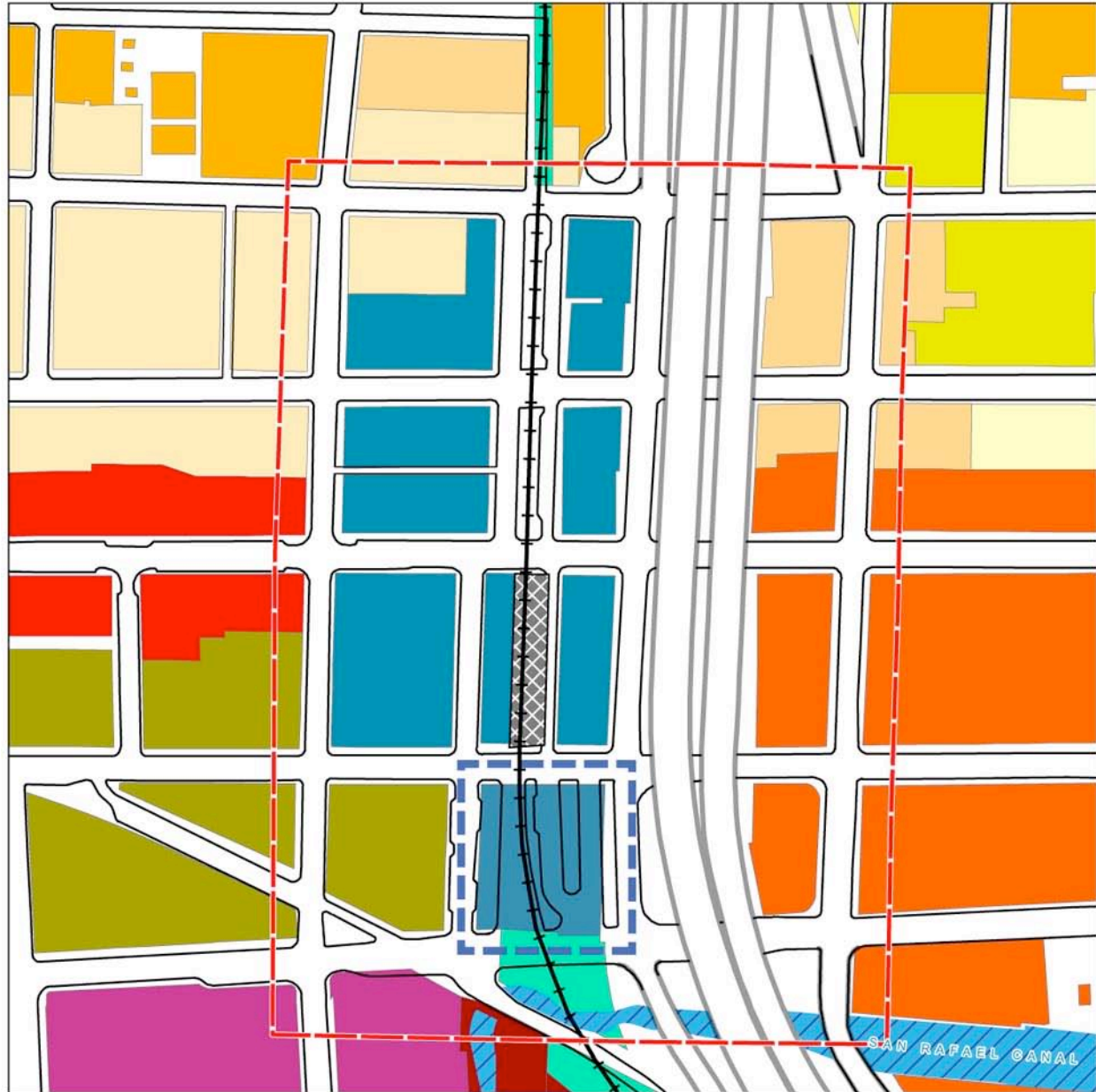
Other policy changes are more likely to be implemented in the long-term, either because they rely on the availability of municipal parking, or because they require a highly developed network of transportation alternatives that would allow residents in the Plan Area to live with fewer privately owned automobiles:

- Allowing one-half space per residential unit to be located off-site in a municipal parking garage
- Allowing off-site parking for ground floor retail uses
- Allowing unbundled parking, where parking spaces are leased separately from residential units
- Allowing bicycle parking in lieu of some portion of required automobile parking

These and other parking management strategies for public and private parking facilities are discussed in Chapter IV: Parking Trends and Issues.

Vision 4: Facilitate Eventual Reuse Should Bettini Transit Center be Relocated

To facilitate its eventual reuse as an active mixed use development, should the Bettini Transit Center be relocated, this Plan recommends rezoning Site C (see Table III-5 and Figure III-16) from *Public/Quasi-Public* to *Hetherton Office*. The *Hetherton Office* zone permits a variety of commercial and office uses and multifamily residential, which will generate more people on the street for a longer part of the day and evening, improving the vibrancy and safety of the area, as well as encouraging transit use over personal vehicles. As described in the opportunity site assessment, new buildings in this location would also help to create a gateway into Downtown from the Plan Area. These buildings would help frame the streets on all sides of the block and provide considerably improved walking conditions at the southern boundary of the Plan Area, where fast-moving traffic on Hetherton Avenue and Second Street and the adjacent highway on-ramp now create an uninviting place for pedestrians (see Figure III-9).



Recommended Zoning



Source: City of San Rafael

- SMART Station
- Plan Area
- Area of Recommended Zoning Change

Plan Area Zoning

- Commercial/Office
- Hetherton Office
- 2nd/3rd Mixed Use East
- Residential/Office Districts
- 5th/Mission Residential/Office
- Public/Quasi Public

Other Zoning

- General Commercial
- 4th Street Retail Core
- Single-Family Residential
- Duplex Residential District
- Medium-Density Multifamily Res
- High-Density Multifamily Res
- Planned Development

September, 2011
San Rafael Downtown Station Area Plan

Figure III-16: Recommended Zoning – The indicated block would be rezoned from Public/Quasi Public to Hetherton Office

Vision 5: Create an Active Street Frontage in the Station Area

As described in the discussion about opportunity sites above, except along Fourth Street, the zoning designations *Hetherton Office* does not allow general retail sales, including shops selling antiques and collectibles, apparel, appliances, bicycles, furniture, upholstery, furniture repair services, shoes, sporting goods, toys, and selling or renting videos. These types of uses promote pedestrian foot traffic on streets and help to create an active and engaging public realm.

To better link the Plan Area and transit complex with Downtown, the City could consider broadening the range of retail uses allowed along Tamalpais Avenue in the *Hetherton Office* district. This would create a more continuous, active streetscape and public realm, and allow redevelopment projects on such sites as the Bettini Center and within the Whistlestop building to provide customer-serving retail for transit patrons and Downtown shoppers alike.

Vision 6: Modify Zoning to Facilitate Transit-supportive Redevelopment in the Station Area

As described above, the opportunity site assessment found that the interaction of certain regulations prevent buildings from reaching their development potential, which is important to achieving the Station Area vision of an active, transit-oriented environment. While individual regulations, such as parking or density, can be altered to help prevent some of these limitations, it is recommended to take a different approach to regulating building development within the Station Area.

Implementation through Form-Based Code and Eliminating Maximum Density and FAR

One option to consider is establishing a Form-Based Code and eliminating the maximum density and FAR requirements. This approach would allow the underlying zoning to determine what uses are appropriate on a given site and the General Plan height limits (along with any applicable affordable housing height bonus) to determine the maximum building height, but lets the Form-Based Code determine what kind of façade treatments are necessary at the ground level, at what height the building's upper stories must be set back, and if there are any sky exposure planes established to ensure the building does not cast excessive shadow on adjacent properties or the street (see Figure III-17 and Figure III-18).

Under a Form-Based Code approach, the underlying zoning's FAR and residential density regulations would be superseded, avoiding the potential conflicts referred to above. As an example, if the current zoning's maximum density requirements were waived as part of a modified zoning ordinance and residential uses were required to provide no more than one parking space per unit, as many as 200 additional residential units could be accommodated as part of development on the six example sites described above. This is because the amount of building space that could be created within the recommended building heights and upper story setbacks is greater than the amount that would reach the maximum residential density and FAR allowed by the current zoning.

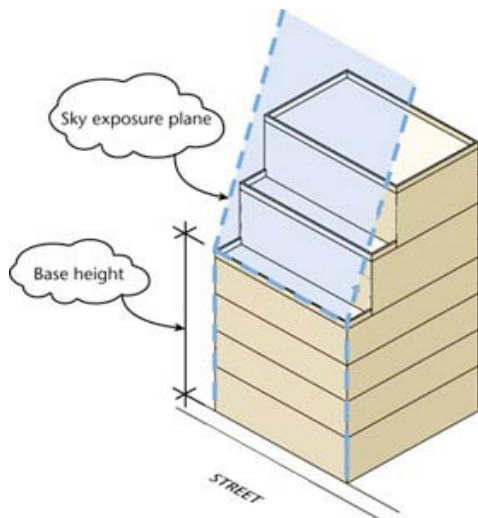


Figure III-17: Building Sky Exposure Plane
Source: nyc.gov

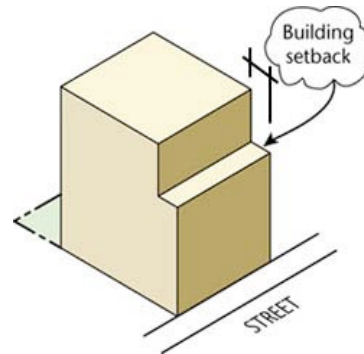


Figure III-18: Building Upper Story Setbacks
Source: nyc.gov

A Form-Based Code would permit development to achieve the maximum potential allowed under the building height and setback regulations. This would incentivize new construction within the district because developers would be able to spread the soft costs of development (design and permitting fees and land assembly and purchase) over a greater number of units and amount of office and commercial space.

Implementation through Development Bonuses

In addition to allowing greater heights and FARs directly, these changes could be made available to developers as bonuses in exchange for community benefits. Reduced parking requirements could also be made available as a bonus. In contrast to the affordable housing density bonuses that are provided under state law, as discussed in Chapter III, these development bonuses for community benefits or transit-supportive development would be at the City's discretion. Community benefits could include amenities to the surrounding area that support a more transit-oriented, walkable environment, such as wider sidewalks and landscaping, open space or plazas, and provision of car-sharing spaces, and for providing additional affordable units beyond those required by the City's inclusionary housing policy.

Implementation through Area Design Guidelines

The Community Design Element of San Rafael General Plan 2020 includes the *San Rafael Design Guidelines*, which were developed to provide guidance for the design of buildings that integrate well with their surroundings and promote a pedestrian friendly, people-oriented environment. Both citywide and Downtown design guidelines are included in this document. These guidelines are discretionary and are intended to assist projects in achieving high quality design. They are used by staff and the Design Review Board to evaluate the quality of project design and to make recommendations regarding design review approval or denial.

The General Plan's design guidance emphasizes preservation of Downtown's reputation as a special place characterized by diverse architectural design, historic, buildings, and the unique character created by a higher density of buildings and an urban street frontage. Downtown's

appeal is due in part to the many businesses, shops and restaurants that front directly onto the sidewalks and address the street. These features contribute to a comfortable and engaging pedestrian environment and are promoted by the design guidelines, which direct that windows, landscape and architectural elements relate to the height of pedestrians and create visual interest.

While Form-Based Codes are intended to contain design guidance specific enough that additional design guidelines are not necessary, an implementation approach based on development bonuses could benefit from the creation of area-specific design guidelines that could supplement or supersede the existing design guideline. Area design guidelines could help integrate new development with the existing character, especially of Fourth Street and adjacent neighborhoods, and achieve the strong sense of place that the plan envisions.

Land Use Recommendation Summary

To summarize, this Plan recommends the following:

- Extend the area permitting a 66-foot height limit to include the blocks between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton from Mission Avenue to Second Street, including the Bettini site. Increase the height limit to 54 feet for the parcels along the west side of Irwin Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street, along both sides of Irwin Street between Fourth and Second Streets, and along the south side of Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue.
- Extend the 2.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to include the blocks between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton from Mission Avenue to Second Street, including the Bettini site. East of US 101, increase the FAR limit to 1.5 for the parcels along the west side of Irwin Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street, along both sides of Irwin Street between Fourth and Second Streets, and along the south side of Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue.
- Support the vision of creating a transit-oriented, walkable, and active environment in the Station Area by limiting the amount of parking provided to encourage transit use, walking, and bicycling instead of personal vehicle use. Consider implementation through developer bonuses on individual sites, rather than direct implementation.
- Rezone the Bettini Transit Center site from *Public/Quasi-Public* to *Hetherton Office*.
- Allow a broader range of ground floor general retail sales uses by right along Tamalpais Avenue in the *Hetherton Office* district, as is allowed on Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue.
- Develop zoning modifications to encourage redevelopment in proximity to the transit center such as implementing a Form-Based Code. Consider implementing additional height and FAR increases in return for amenities through developer bonuses.
- If a Form-Based Code approach is not used, consider creating an updated set of design guidelines specific to the area.

IV. Parking Trends and Issues

This chapter discusses parking issues and opportunities in the Plan Area. Existing off-street parking facilities are heavily occupied, and the construction of the SMART station will remove some existing off-street parking. To accommodate the SMART station, 26 parking spaces will be removed from the Whistlestop site and 30 spaces from the SMART right-of-way on East Tamalpais Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets, currently being used by Whistlestop. To accommodate the SMART rail lines through Bettini, 5 spaces will be removed at the south end of the Bettini Center's Platform C. This results in a net reduction of 61 public spaces. Beyond these, in keeping with community desires to create a pleasant pedestrian experience, removal of some additional on-street parking would allow improvements to multi-modal conditions, including pedestrian, bicycle and transit operations. Thus, a strategy is needed to manage the supply of on-street parking, balance parking and pedestrian priorities, and provide sufficient parking for visitors, residents and businesses in the area.

New parking facilities envisioned in this Plan are intended primarily to support new mixed-use, commercial and residential development. In addition, SMART has had discussions with nearby property owners regarding the possible provision of commuter parking facilities near the transit center within planned privately owned garages. To support and encourage transit use, as well as walking and bicycling within the Station Area, commuters' use of parking intended for general use can be limited through a combination of general parking time limits of four hours and through the use of permits for residents and employees.

The following is a summary of current on- and off-street parking conditions; see Figure IV-1 for a map. Parking counts described as "private" are intended for residential, office and business uses. "Public" parking denotes spaces that are available to anyone, including commuters, though time limits apply to most on-street public parking spaces.

On-Street Parking

- There are approximately 200 existing on-street spaces currently within the Plan Area; 56 spaces will be removed for SMART's Initial Operation Segment (IOS) to Downtown San Rafael, leaving 144 public on-street spaces in the Plan Area. Most of the spaces are metered or have time restrictions (mostly two-hour time limits). Time-of-day "tow-away" restrictions during the PM peak period (4:00 to 6:00 PM) are in effect along Irwin Street, Third Street, and Fifth Avenue.
- On-street parking occupancy peaks at just over 50 percent between the hours of 12:00 PM and 2:00 PM on weekdays.

Off-Street Parking

- Approximately 197 long-term public parking spaces are provided in four park-and-ride lots maintained by Caltrans under or adjacent to US 101. These lots are free, do not have time limits and are available to commuters as well as Downtown visitors and employees. As such, these lots will be available to SMART patrons.

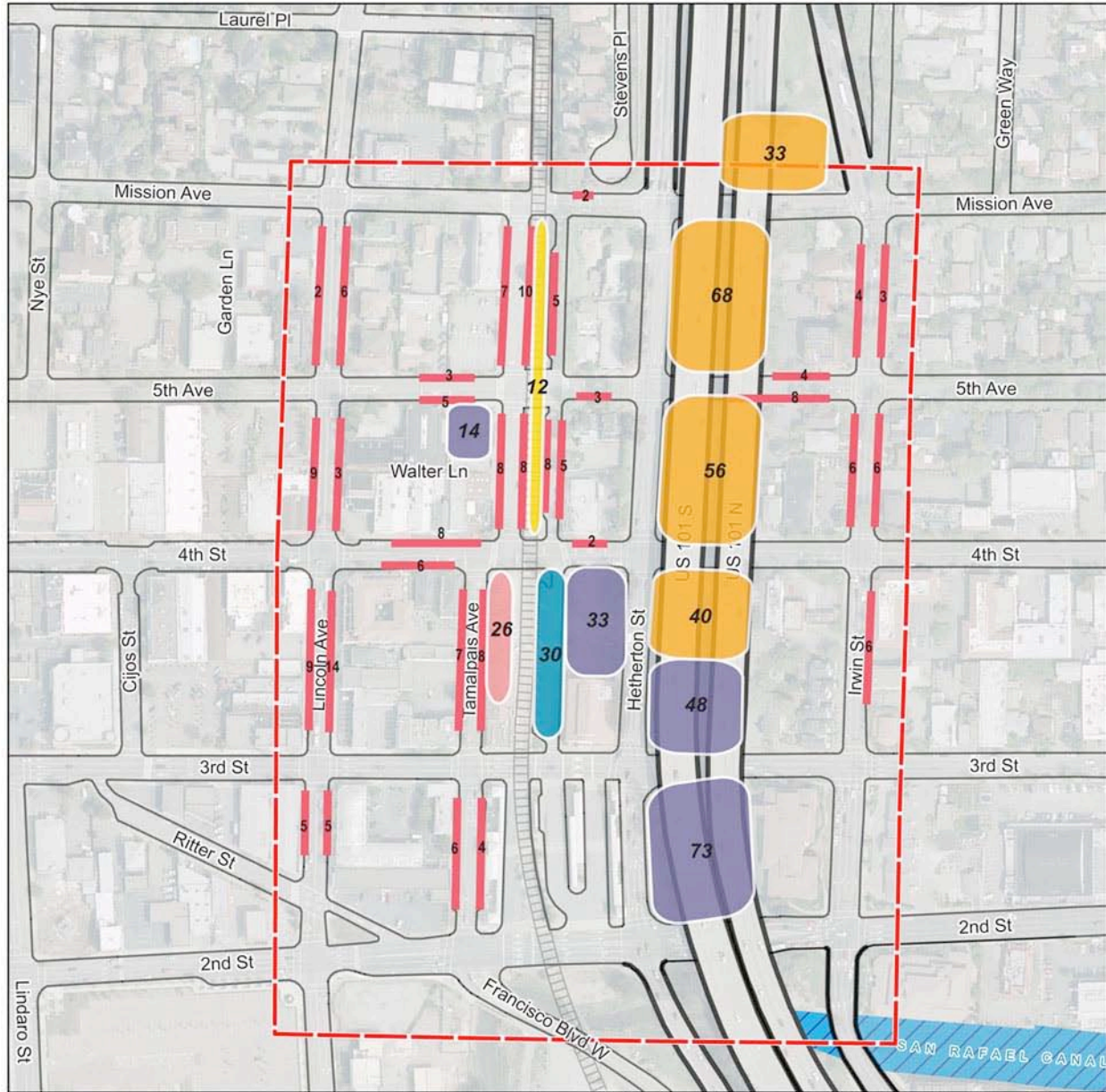
- The Caltrans park-and-ride lots are over 90 percent occupied from 9:00 AM to after 4:00 PM on weekdays.
- Miscellaneous off-street private parking areas are currently located at: East Tamalpais between Third and Fourth Streets (30 spaces), SMART right-of-way between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue (12 “informal” spaces), Whistlestop parcel (26 spaces), Caltrans park-and-ride lots leased to private parties under US 101 between Second and Fourth Streets (121 spaces), and other off-street private lots at the Citibank site (33 spaces) and at the southwest corner of Tamalpais Avenue / Fifth Avenue (14 spaces). These miscellaneous parking areas provide 236 private spaces.
- The miscellaneous off-street parking areas approach 90 percent occupancy between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

Accessible Parking

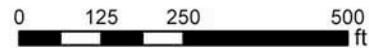
Current laws permit free parking in municipal metered parking spaces for any person displaying a disabled placard on their vehicle. Spaces specifically designated and thus reserved for people with disabilities are available within the Plan Area as follows:

- 1 space in the park and ride lot north of Mission Street
- 2 spaces and 1 van accessible space in the park and ride lot between Mission Street and Fifth Avenue
- 3 spaces in the park and ride lot between Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street
- 1 space at the Whistlestop building (typically for Whistlestop clientele)
- 7 spaces in the municipal lot on Third Street between A Street and Lootens Place
- 1 on-street space at Fourth and A Streets
- 1 space and 1 van accessible space in the lot at Lootens Place and Fifth Avenue

These miscellaneous accessible parking spaces provide 18 spaces. A number of accessible parking spaces are also designated within a number of private lots associated with businesses in and around the Plan Area.



Parking Inventory



- On-Street Parking - - - Plan Area
- Park and Ride Lot
- Cars Along Tracks East of Tamalpais Avenue
- Whistlestop Parking between 3rd Street and 4th Street
- Diagonal Parking Near Citibank West of Hetherton Street
- Private Parking Included in the Survey (Citibank Lot, and Two Lots Under US-101 Adjacent to 3rd Street)

Figure IV-1: Existing Parking Inventory

As discussed previously, the difficulty and expense of providing required off-street parking on individual small sites is likely to have constrained the development potential of much of the Plan Area in the decades since the allowable heights and densities were increased. Also of some perceived concern is the potential for spillover commuter parking in the neighborhoods surrounding the Plan Area. Providing additional municipal parking spaces may help to alleviate both of these issues.

The Plan Area lies just outside of the Downtown Parking Assessment District (“District”), which covers the area bounded by E Street, Fifth Avenue, Second Street and Lincoln Avenue (see Figure IV-2). The Downtown Parking Assessment District was created in 1958 to provide public spaces for new development. Inside the District, a portion of required parking may be provided by District lot spaces (not on-street spaces) if there is capacity in the nearest District lot. Development outside the District boundaries, which includes areas within the Plan Area, must provide all of their required parking as private off-street spaces, although parking requirements for portions of Downtown outside of the District are lower than in the rest of the City.

The City of San Rafael's Downtown Parking Lots

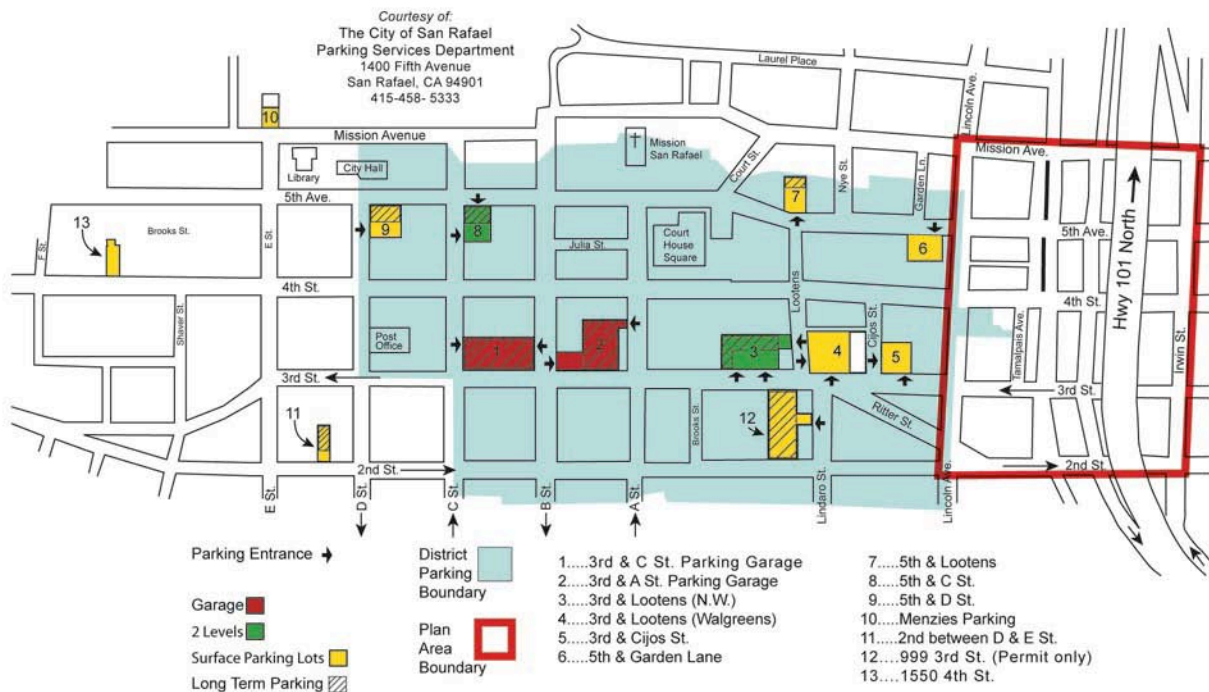


Figure IV-2: Downtown Parking District

1. Recommended Public Parking Supply and Management Strategies

Potential sites for a new municipal garage, which could be funded by in-lieu fees, were identified by the CAC and reviewed by the City’s parking manager. Potential sites were evaluated for their proximity to development opportunity sites, block size, the existing uses in place, and the suitability of entrance and exit points. While initial analysis indicated that creating a parking structure under the freeway is not feasible due to limited headroom, structural column spacing and insufficient room for the necessary ramping, more detailed further study may be warranted.

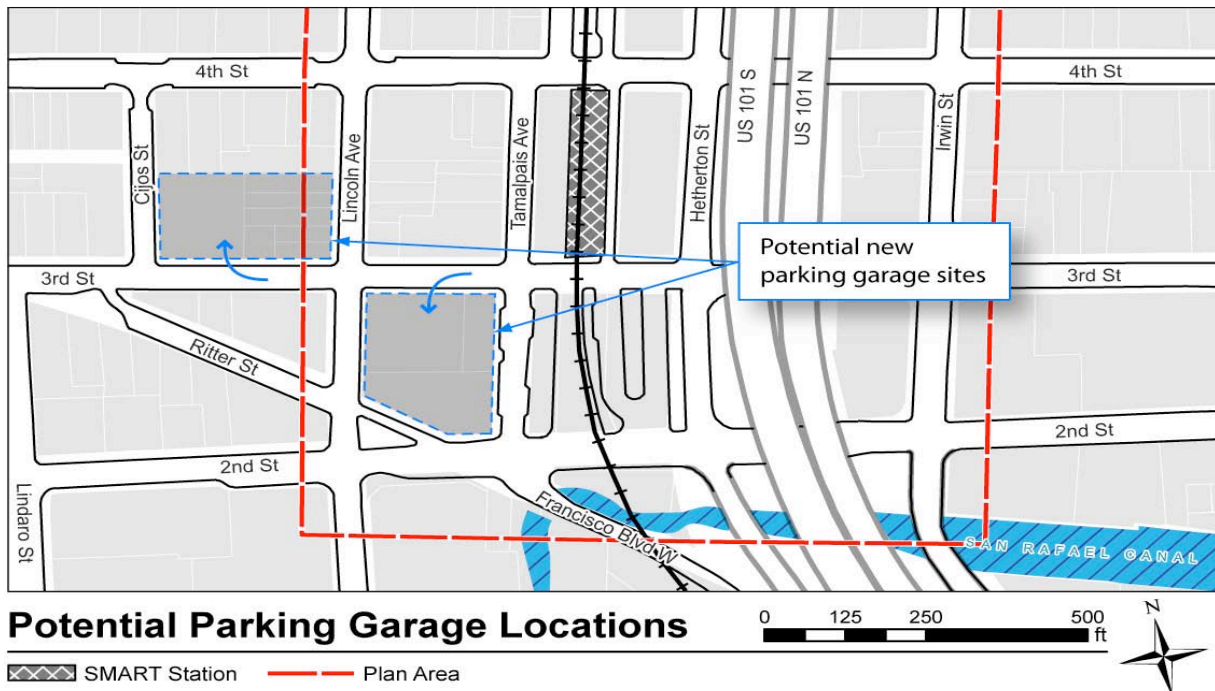


Figure IV-3: Potential parking garage locations

Based on the evaluation, a new municipal parking garage could be accommodated in two potential locations as shown in Figure IV-3. One location, on Third Street between Cijos Street and Lincoln Avenue, would provide 413 public spaces on five levels of parking within the 0.90-acre site. Retail uses on the ground floor facing Lincoln Avenue would comprise 7,600 square feet (see Figure IV-4). As described above in the land use section, new buildings must contribute to a more inviting public realm, to help achieve the vision laid out of the Station Area. Including commercial uses on the ground floor will add an attractive and visually interesting frontage to the possible parking structure along the street, helping to create a more pleasant and inviting pedestrian environment that encourages walking.

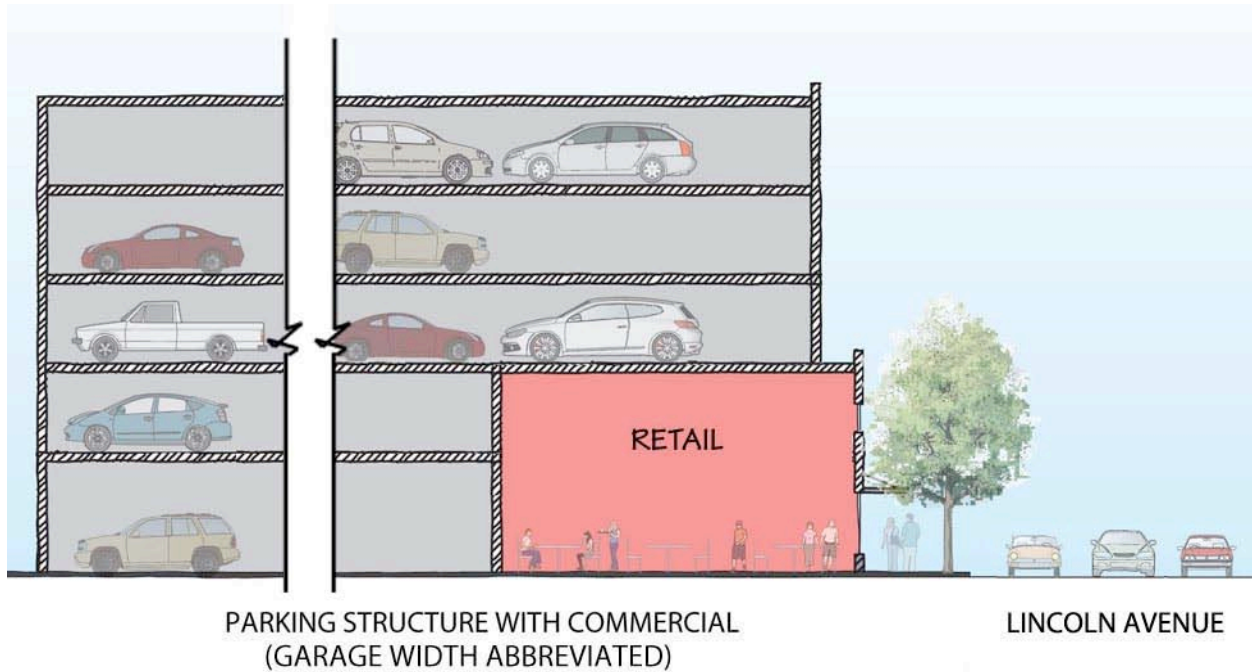


Figure IV-4: Third and Cijos Street Parking Structure Concept – section looking east

Another possible site for a new municipal parking garage is the block bounded by Second and Third Streets and Lincoln and Tamalpais Avenues (see Figure IV-3). If the transit center is relocated, parking demand from redevelopment on the Bettini site could be accommodated in a new garage on this adjacent site. The structure assumed provides 500 spaces on five levels of parking within the 0.9-acre site. Commercial uses on the ground floor could face Tamalpais Avenue, comprising 10,240 square feet. Residential uses could be located on the second and third floors above the commercial liner. The building would contain 71 dwelling units (see Figure IV-5). As described above, commercial uses on the ground floor will help to promote a more interesting and walkable public realm, though certain retail uses are not currently permitted along Tamalpais Avenue. See the excerpted zoning language under the description for Site A in Chapter III. Residential uses on the upper floors will result in more activity on the street as residents leave and return to their units throughout the day. While commercial uses promote more activity during normal business hours, residences will promote activity into the evening as well, leading to a more active and vibrant environment throughout more of the day.

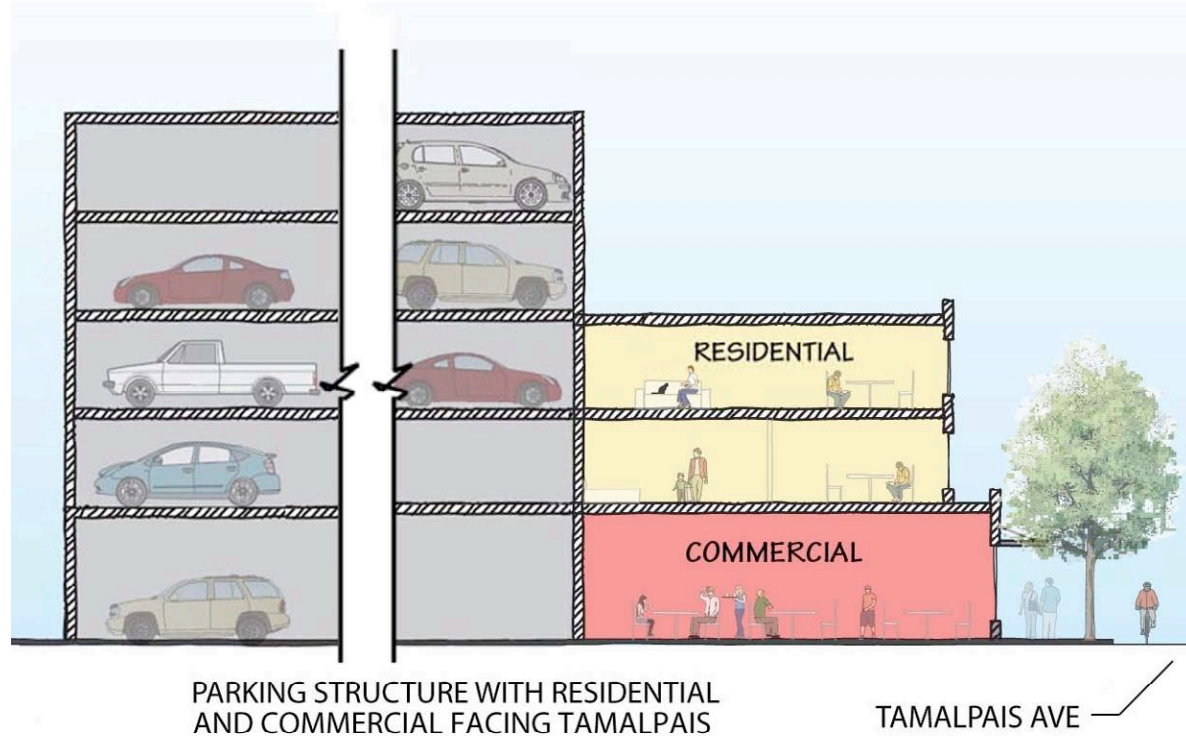


Figure IV-5: Development Example for Third Street and Tamalpais Avenue – section looking north

In addition to providing additional parking in garages for spaces that are lost due to the SMART improvements and for new developments, parking management strategies can be employed to help accommodate public parking demand. Potential strategies include the following, which continue the land use vision items enumerated and discussed in Chapter III:

Vision 7: Encourage Public Parking Use

- Installing additional electronic meters with easy-to-use payment methods such as credit card and pay-by-cell phone;
- Using signage to show municipal parking lot and garage locations and time limits (particularly for facilities in close proximity to the Plan Area and Fourth Street, such as the facility on Third and Cijos Streets);

Protecting Residential Neighborhoods

- Establishing residential parking permit programs to prevent transit riders and other non-residents from parking on residential streets. Although previous studies have found the cost of enforcement of residential permit districts would make the permits prohibitively expensive, enforcement could be limited and rely primarily on violations that are reported by residents, as is done in the city of Piedmont in Alameda County.

Vision 8: Manage Parking Demand Through Pricing

- Installing meters with variable pricing based on availability to encourage turnover;
- Establishing short-term parking zones (15 – 30 minute zones) to complement existing 2 hour zones and encourage turnover;
- Reducing required parking ratio minimums as described above, and also exploring potential parking ratio maximums for new development;
- Exploring future coordination of on-street and off-street pricing so that Fourth Street meter pricing and municipal garage pricing are adjusted relative to demand to encourage greater turnover on Fourth Street.

Vision 9: Efficiency through Shared Parking

- Allowing shared parking; most land uses have different times of peak demand, allowing them to share the same physical parking spaces at different times of the day and evening; this is especially true for mixed use buildings, where parking capacity can be shared between daytime office or retail/commercial uses and nighttime residential uses;

2. Recommended Private Parking Strategies

In general, new development in the Plan Area should be encouraged to provide no more parking than the minimum requirement. If a new parking district is established, as assumed in the development prototypes, then parking could be provided on-site for residential uses only; commercial and office uses could be parked off-site in municipal lots or structures, and a

portion of the residential parking could also be provided off-site if sufficient capacity were available in a nearby facility.

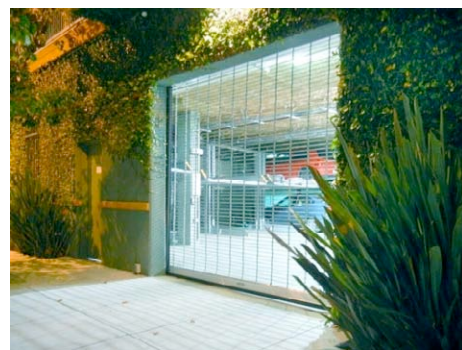
Vision 10: High Quality Off-Street Parking Facilities

Any new off-street parking facilities should be screened from public view but with adequate signage. New surface lots are unlikely given the area's small lot and block sizes and the desire for more intensive development. The mixed-use development examples described above typically assume a one-story parking podium with ground-floor retail uses lining active pedestrian streets such as Fourth Street and Tamalpais Avenue. If needed, additional parking levels could be provided above or below grade, although the area's high water table makes below-grade parking expensive to construct and thus feasible only on larger sites.

Vision 11: Efficient Use of Private Parking Facilities

Parking Lifts

By stacking cars, parking lifts provide more efficient use of space within the parking structure at a lower capital cost than building additional garage spaces. The additional time and effort required to store and retrieve cars from lifts make this solution most appropriate for residential development, where residents may wish to store their cars on-site but will use their cars relatively infrequently and can be trained by building management in how to operate the lifts. They can also be used in unprotected environments, such as on the Caltrans lots located under US 101. However, they can be unattractive and raise vehicles up above standard height fencing, creating additional negative visual impacts. Green screens that allow vegetation to grow on vertical screening to shield unwanted views with a natural element and/or ornamented metal screens could help to minimize the visual impact.



Unbundled Parking

Alternative approaches to pricing private parking for residential uses could include “unbundling” parking, meaning that a developer would still build the minimum required amount of parking for a new residential or mixed-use development, but the spaces would be leased independently of the residential units. Since each additional structured parking space can add \$40,000 to \$50,000 to the cost of a residential unit, allowing residents to opt out of paying for a parking space if they do not require one can make housing more affordable and increase the utilization of the parking spaces provided as other residents or employers make use of them. By promoting a market-based approach to parking pricing, unbundling can provide additional revenue to property owners. In these ways, unbundling incentivizes lower rates of car ownership and increased transit ridership.

Reducing Parking Requirements

Reducing the parking ratio requirement for smaller residential units is another way to help mitigate the expense of redevelopment and make higher density buildings more feasible. For example, the City could consider reducing minimum parking requirements to from 1.5 to 1 space for two-bedroom residential units and from 2 to 1.5 spaces for three-bedroom units. Reduced parking ratios are also an option that works well for buildings that provide residential units to seniors, who may be more likely to rely on paratransit and therefore less likely to require the same amount of parking capacity of a typical building.

Setting Parking Maximums

Some jurisdictions, including Portland, Oregon, have set parking maximums rather than or in addition to minimum parking requirements in certain areas, in order to assure that excessive amounts of parking are not created voluntarily by property owners or developers. The purpose of establishing parking maximums is to foster a build environment that encourage walking and transit use. Parking maximums could have an adverse effect on development marketability if the maximum was set below the amount of parking typically considered marketable by developers, which varies according to the income level being targeted and the availability of alternative transportation. A general rule of thumb is that one space per residential unit is the minimum amount of parking considered marketable for market-rate housing, particularly for ownership products. Developers of office uses, particularly outside of center-city locations like downtown San Francisco or Oakland, often desire two or three parking spaces per 1,000 square feet. In downtowns with high levels of pedestrian activity and public parking facilities, such as downtown San Rafael, a lack of on-site parking for retail uses, particularly small retail shops, is not generally a barrier to marketability. In addition to market feasibility, concerns about spill-over parking into adjacent residential neighborhoods may also be a concern.

Car-Sharing Programs

Car-sharing is short-term casual vehicle rental that provides households with access to a fleet of shared vehicles, allowing them to avoid the expense of owning a car, or a second or third car. Maintenance, insurance and fuel costs are typically included in the rental fees, essentially converting automobiles from a product to a service. Dedicated spaces for car-sharing vehicles are provided, typically in off-street lots but sometimes on-street as well.

Car-sharing supports pedestrian-oriented places by reducing parking demand and vehicle ownership rates. According to the Transportation Research Board, each car-sharing vehicle takes nearly 15 private cars off the road, as members of car-sharing programs sell or give up their vehicles. This can allow parking requirements to be reduced accordingly in developments that incorporate car-sharing. Such reductions are common in locations served by car-sharing programs, such as San Francisco and the inner East Bay.

Factors important to the success of car sharing programs include geographic and transportation conditions such as proximity to transit and transportation alternatives, a mix of land uses, and difficulty of parking conditions, as well as demographic factors such as relatively high population density, low automobile ownership, and an affluent population. Successful car-sharing programs typically have one or more strong local partners or champions, such as a government or transit agency, property owners or developers. There is also typically a “critical

mass” of car-sharing users and locations needed to make the administration of the service and vehicle maintenance economically feasible.

While some of these factors are already present in San Rafael, after the arrival of SMART service and with implementation of the recommended land use scenarios with their accompanying limits on private parking availability, there may be more interest in establishing car-sharing. Car-sharing pods could be located at or near the rail station, providing additional mobility for visitors who arrive by train. The City could provide spaces in municipal garages. Developers could also be allowed to provide car-sharing facilities for residents within new buildings in lieu of some personal parking spaces.

Vision 12: Supporting Alternative Modes of Transportation through Parking Facilities

Bicycle Parking

Ensuring that there is safe and accessible bicycle parking is a critical component in creating an environment that encourages residents to utilize bicycling as a form of transportation. San Rafael’s zoning code already requires bicycle parking for all new nonresidential buildings and in major renovations of nonresidential buildings with 30 or more parking spaces, and for all public/quasi-public uses. A further step could be to require bicycle parking for new residential development and building renovations. Additionally, the City could allow bicycle parking to substitute for a portion of required automobile parking, as is currently done in Palo Alto. See Figure IV-6 for image of bicycle parking solutions.



Figure IV-6: Images of innovative bicycle parking strategies

Motorcycle and Scooter Parking

Motorcycle and scooter parking require significantly less room than vehicle parking facilities. Scooters, and to some degree motorcycles, provide a fuel-efficient method of local travel that can satisfy the needs of many daily trips without relying on a personal vehicle. As such, these travel modes should be encouraged as part of reducing the prevalence of vehicles on the roads to help create a less congested and more enjoyable environment within the Station Area. Providing designated motorcycle and scooter parking within the Plan Area, including on the opportunity sites discussed above within parking structures, will help promote their use to

achieve this vision. As suggested with bicycle parking above, motorcycle and scooter parking could be allowed in lieu of a portion of the required automobile parking.

Electric Vehicle Parking

Priority parking for electric vehicles is also an emerging strategy to encourage sustainable practices when using personal vehicle, and is recommended within new developments. This could be encouraged through reduced parking requirements, for example allowing two EV spaces to count for three required standard vehicle spaces.

V. Integrated Transit Center

This section details the long-term vision for integrating rail and bus transit within the Plan Area in Downtown San Rafael. The strategy presented in the plan includes a consolidated San Rafael Transit Center that will serve SMART passenger rail service and bus service provided by the GGBHTD's transit system ("Golden Gate Transit") and the Marin County Transit District ("Marin Transit"). The goals for the integrated transit facility are:

- Locate bus transit operations in close proximity to the Downtown San Rafael SMART station and provide improved access to the station
- Provide a safe and convenient transfer experience for passengers connecting between rail and bus transit
- Provide a location that has adequate space to serve the existing and projected bus service, while also providing operating flexibility and travel time benefits to bus routes
- Provide a comfortable experience for waiting passengers that includes enhanced amenities and integrates the Whistlestop site if possible
- Ensure that the facility location and configuration fits within the larger context of Downtown

The vision does not include any detail on station design, platform configuration, or track alignment located within SMART's property or right-of-way.

1. Transit Center Context

The existing transit center complex consists of the Downtown San Rafael SMART station and the C. Paul Bettini Transit Center. Figure V-1 shows the location of the SMART station and the Bettini bus transit center. The SMART station is located between Third and Fourth Streets adjacent to the Whistlestop building. The Bettini transit center is located on the block bounded by Hetherton, Tamalpais, Second and Third Streets. The two stations are separated by Third Street, which is one of the City's most heavily traveled and most congested roadway corridors. The remainder of this section provides additional background information on SMART's planned service in Downtown San Rafael and the Bettini transit center.



Figure V-1 Transit Center Context

SMART Station Design and Passenger Rail Service

SMART's project description calls for two tracks through Downtown. SMART's "preferred concept" for its Downtown San Rafael station consists of two platforms located to the outside of the tracks. Figure V-2 shows a conceptual plan from SMART's "20 Percent" design package issued in September/October 2010. Figure V-3 shows an updated station cross-section from SMART's "20 Percent Plus" design issued in January 2011. These represent the latest designs available at the time of the plan and are included for informational purposes only. The latest

SMART operating plan calls for 32 weekday (16 southbound and 16 northbound) and 8 weekend trips (4 northbound and 4 southbound) with 30-minute peak period service frequency at the Downtown San Rafael station.

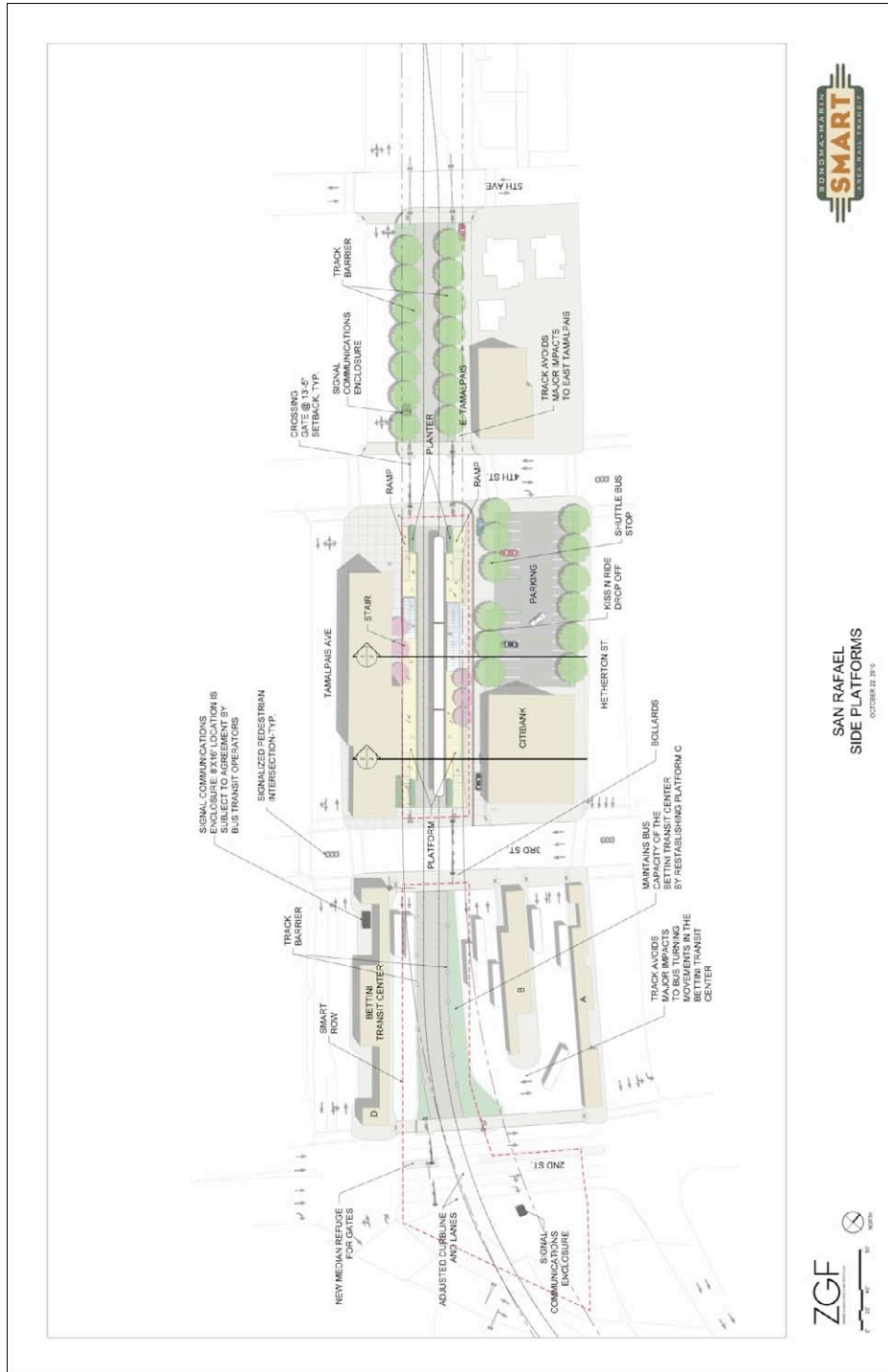


Figure V-2 Downtown San Rafael Station 20 Percent Design

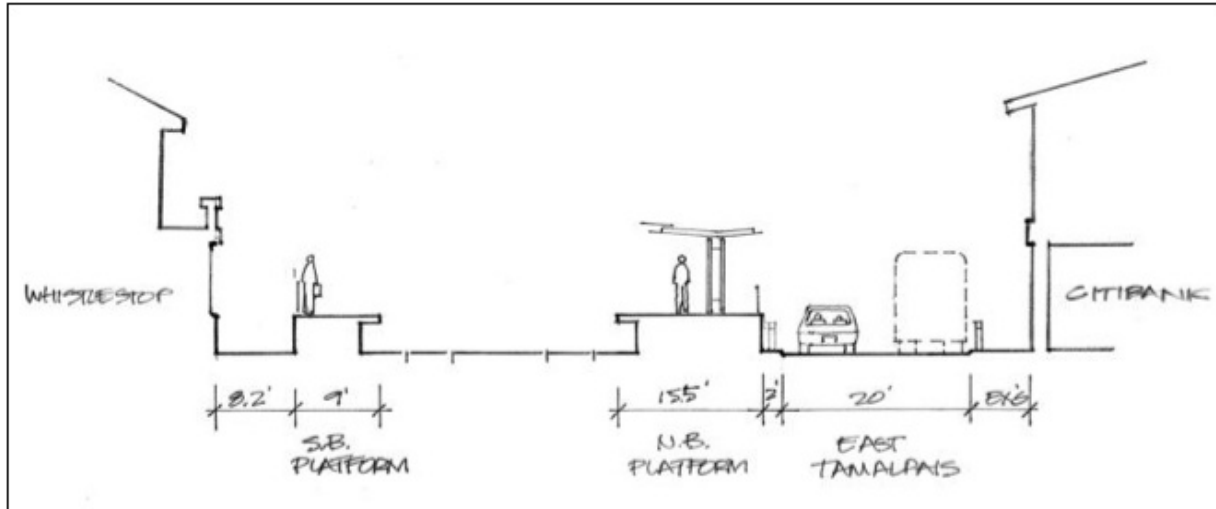


Figure V-3 Downtown San Rafael Station 20 Percent Plus Cross-Section

The IOS, which is scheduled to begin operations in 2016, will terminate at Downtown San Rafael. When the segment to Larkspur is completed, SMART trains will travel south of Third Street. At all at-grade crossings where SMART tracks intersect local streets, a series of advanced warning devices and other safety measures (gate arms, warning lights, etc.) will be implemented. These warning devices will stop all traffic until a train has safely cleared the at-grade crossing. These warning devices will cause some increase in delay to autos and buses each time a SMART train travels through the Plan Area. The time that the warning devices are activated will depend on the speed of the train, but a typical time for a train to clear an intersection will be approximately 30 to 45 seconds.

SMART is planning to deploy Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) rail car technology along the corridor. DMUs rail cars have on-board diesel engines that propel the train. The DMUs that SMART is considering have a maximum speed of between 75 and 80 miles per hour (mph). Through Downtown San Rafael, trains will average around 15 mph.

Bettini Transit Center Bus Operations

The Bettini transit center provides the primary transit access to Downtown San Rafael and is a critical hub in Marin County for bus service operated by Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit. Bettini's central location, convenient freeway access, and proximity to park-and-ride lots make it an important origin for long distance commute service to San Francisco and Sonoma County. The Bettini transit center is also a primary regional transfer point for transit service to other destinations in the Bay Area. Bus schedules are coordinated around several "pulse" times, which allow for timed transfers between routes. The Bettini transit center also serves several private operators, including the Marin Airporter (scheduled service to/from San Francisco International), the Sonoma County Airport Express (scheduled service to/from Oakland Airport) and Greyhound.



Platform B at the SRTC



Platform D and taxi stand on existing railroad tracks at the SRTC

The Bettini transit center consists of four platforms (Platforms A through D) with 14 designated berths and a maximum capacity (or occupancy) of 18 buses at any one time. Figure V-4 shows the layout of the existing Bettini transit center. As of September 2011, the Bettini transit center serves 35 to 37 buses during the peak hour. Within the peak hour, the maximum occupancy at the transit center is typically 10 buses. This occurs during one of the coordinated “pulses”. The major pulses occur on the hour and 15 and 30 minutes after the hour, with a minor pulse scheduled at 45 minutes after the hour. These scheduled pulses maximize transfer activity between bus routes. Bicycle parking and most passenger amenities (food service, security, and restrooms) are provided on Platforms C and D. A taxi stand is located on the tracks between Platforms C and D.



Figure V-4 Existing Bettini Transit Center

Interaction between SMART Rail and Bus Operations within the Plan Area

SMART's rail service through Downtown San Rafael will affect conditions for buses and automobiles traveling on the surrounding street system. SMART trains through the Plan Area will operate on rail tracks that cross five streets at-grade: Second Street, Third Street, Fourth Street, Fifth Avenue, and Mission Avenue. At each of these at-grade crossings, a series of safety measures are mandated that include warning devices (e.g., gate arms and flashers), roadway signing and striping, and interconnection with adjacent traffic signals. Safety measures at at-grade crossings are mandated and regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), with guidance and recommended practices published by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

A goal of this Plan is to provide seamless operation of the existing transit center, avoiding any disruption or diminishment of the transit experience for current riders. The magnitude of the impacts of SMART service on bus transit will depend on the increase in future traffic volumes and SMART's operating segment. The effect of SMART's operating segment on bus operations is summarized below:

- **SMART to Downtown San Rafael**

With the IOS, SMART passenger rail service will terminate at the Downtown San Rafael station and will not travel south of Third Street. Therefore, SMART will have no effect on the physical space or configuration of the existing Bettini transit center. The taxi stand will remain and maintain its existing functionality. The effects on bus operations will be limited and isolated to routes using Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue. Buses on these routes will likely experience minor delays at the at-grade rail crossing on Fourth Street when SMART trains arrive or depart the Downtown station. The majority of buses using other streets in the area, including Second, Third, Hetherton and Irwin, should experience minimal to no delay because these routes will not cross active at-grade crossings. Pedestrians connecting between rail and bus will have to cross Third Street, one of the most congested corridors in San Rafael. (Recommendations for pedestrian improvements are discussed in Chapter VI.)

- **SMART to Larkspur**

When SMART service extends to Larkspur, the SMART tracks will travel north-south through the middle of the Bettini transit center and divide it into two sides. The track alignment will result in a slight narrowing of Platform C and will reduce the width of the drive aisle used by Platform D buses. The tracks will also require fencing or barriers that will prohibit bus passengers from using the internal crosswalk between Platforms C and D. This will increase the time required for passengers to transfer between bus routes. Overall, the impacts are relatively minor and do not affect the bus operational capacity of the Bettini transit center. All bus routes will experience some travel time effects caused by the activation of the warning devices at the at-grade crossings. The majority of buses will have to cross the tracks at least one time entering or exiting the Bettini

transit center. Some routes stay on Hetherton Street and do not cross the tracks. These buses will still experience some travel time impacts associated with vehicle queues spilling back to Hetherton and partially blocking the flow of traffic. The extent of the travel impacts are detailed in the Alternatives Analysis report.

2. Transit Center Vision

The vision for the integrated San Rafael Transit Center includes three phases:

1. **Bettini with the Initial Operating Segment** – Changes or modifications to SMART’s 20 Percent Plus design required on opening day
2. **Bettini Vision** – Near-term changes to the existing Bettini transit center
3. **Integrated Station Vision** – Long-term plan to relocate bus operations from the existing site to the Citibank site

Each phase of the San Rafael Transit Center vision can be implemented independent of SMART’s system terminating at Downtown San Rafael or Larkspur. Elements of the near and long-term transit phases provide additional redevelopment and transportation opportunities within the Plan Area. The two transit visions are described below.

Bettini with the Initial Operating Segment

SMART’s IOS will terminate at the Downtown station when scheduled service begins in 2016. The impacts to traffic and bus circulation, described above, are expected to be minimal. The most significant challenge involves integrating the rail and bus operations between the SMART station and the Bettini transit center and ensuring adequate station access and pedestrian safety.

The 20 Percent and 20 Percent Plus designs represent the most up-to-date station designs for the station platforms, pedestrian access, and the passenger loading zones (Kiss-and-Ride and SMART shuttles). While the station design is not within the scope of the Station Area Plan, the station access and circulation is. Figure V-5 presents the potential issues using the 20 Percent Plus design drawing for the station.

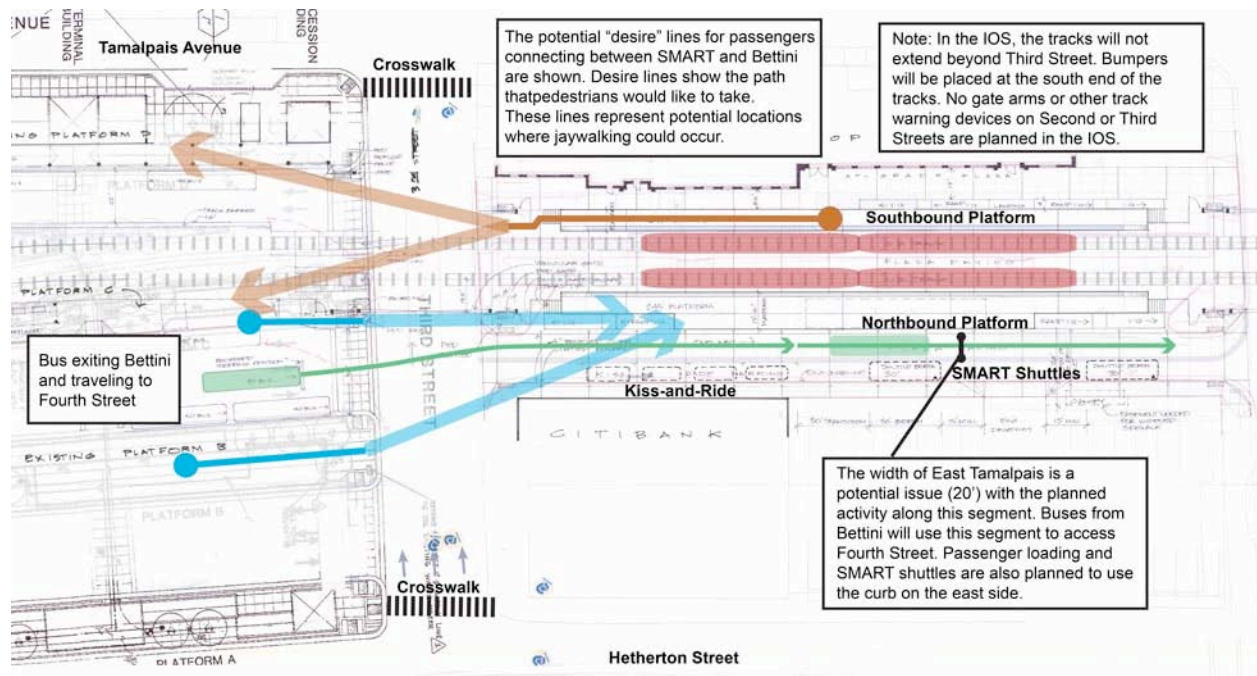


Figure V-5 IOS Station Design Issues

The two major issues are summarized below:

1. The potential for passengers connecting between rail and bus transit to jaywalk across Third Street instead of using the designated crosswalks at Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton Street. Figure V-5 shows the likely “desire” lines that connecting passengers would prefer, particularly if they were running late. A comfortable connection with plenty of extra time, combined with physical barriers at the ends of the platforms, would reduce the likelihood of jaywalking across busy Third Street. Schedule coordination between the transit operators will help ensure adequate transfer times. Relocating the transit center north of Third Street, discussed in detail in the following section, will eliminate the pedestrian crossing issue altogether.
2. East Tamalpais adjacent to the station (between Third and Fourth Streets) is currently planned to have a significant level of activity with Kiss-and-Ride drop-off and SMART shuttles along the east curb. In addition, buses exiting the Bettini transit center and traveling to Fourth Street are still expected to use East Tamalpais as they currently do today. The street right-of-way along this segment is only 20 ft: 8-10 ft for the parking lane and 10-12 ft for the travel lane. The level of activity, combined with the narrow street width, could create potential safety issues. Relocating the passenger loading zone and shuttles to Tamalpais Avenue will allow buses to operate along East Tamalpais relatively unimpeded. This would reduce the potential vehicle conflicts along East Tamalpais.

Potential mitigations to minimize the likelihood of jaywalking might include:

- **Physical design:** physical barriers at the ends of the platforms to direct pedestrians to the crosswalks

- **Pedestrian countdown signals:** pedestrian countdown timers should be placed at the pedestrian walk signals located at the designated Third Street crosswalks on Hetherton Street and Tamalpais Avenue. A pedestrian countdown timer is a flashing timer which signals the number of seconds remaining during the pedestrian crossing phase at a signalized intersection. Countdown timers provide better information and reduce crossings on red.
- **Schedule coordination:** rail and bus schedules should be coordinated and provide for ample transfer time, particularly in the peak direction of travel
- **Coordinated holding policy:** a coordinated holding policy between certain rail and bus routes would reduce the desire to jaywalk
- **Enforcement:** periodic policing

Before the implementation of the near and long-term vision detailed below, these issues will need to be addressed as the station design process evolves.

Bettini Vision

The near-term vision provides a series of recommendations for changes to the current Bettini transit center, with bus operations remaining within the existing site. Figure V-6 presents the major elements of the near-term transit vision. These transit-related modifications are integrated with other elements of the plan that affect traffic circulation, pedestrian, and bicycles. These other transportation modes are addressed in detail in other sections.

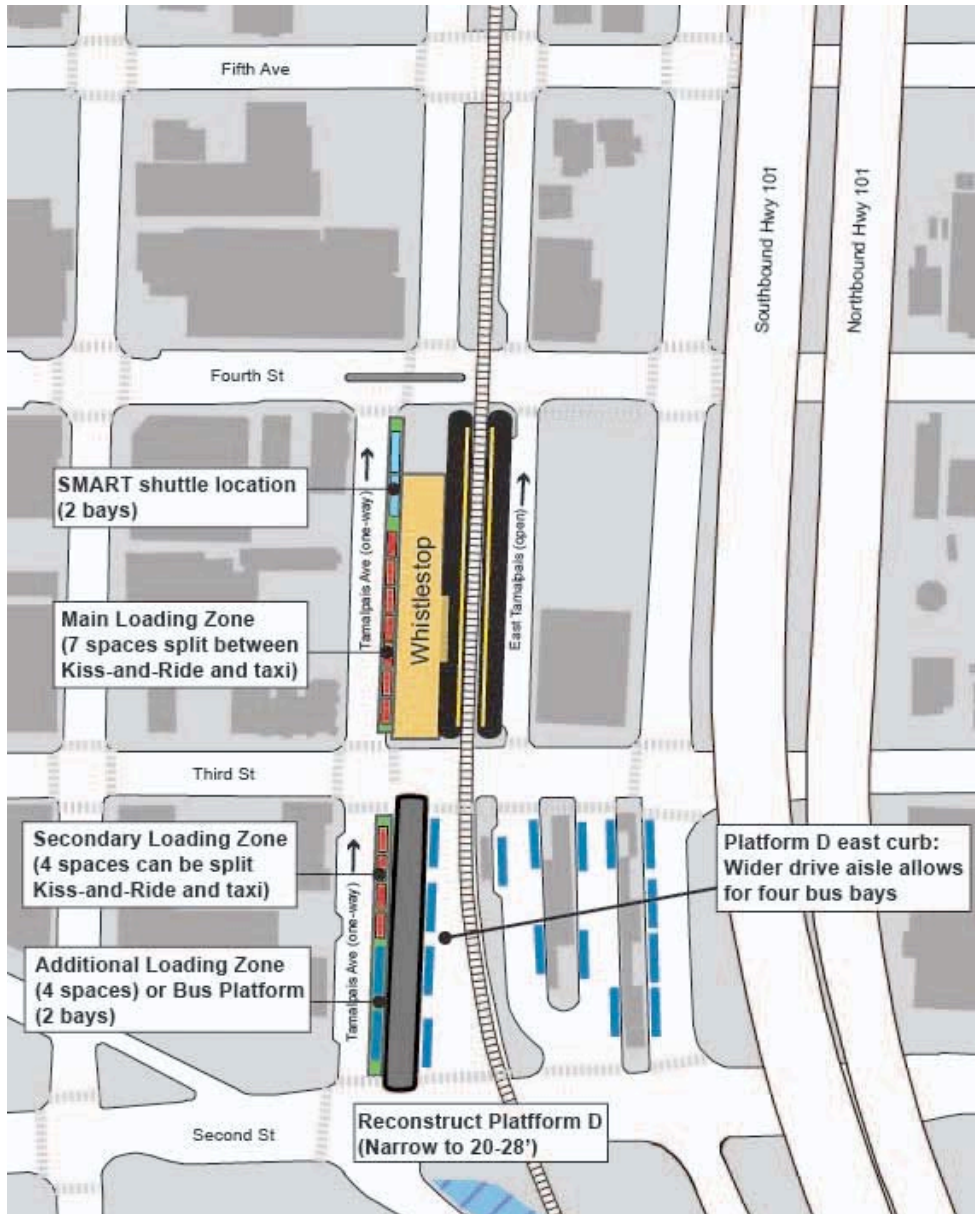


Figure V-6 Bettini Transit Vision

The following elements are included in this near-term phase:

- Reconstruction of Platform D: this includes narrowing the platform from 40 feet (ft) to approximately 20 to 28 ft. This will provide additional right-of-way on both the east and west curbs.
- Utilize the entire east curb of the two blocks along Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets for Kiss-and-Ride, SMART shuttles, and taxis. This would involve relocating the Kiss-and-Ride and shuttles from East Tamalpais (the assumed location for these activities in the 20 Percent Plus station design plan). The SMART shuttles will likely include small buses less than 35 ft in length.
- Consolidating these passenger loading activities along Tamalpais Avenue provides for a centralized location that would serve both rail and bus passengers. Relocating Kiss-and-Ride and the SMART shuttles away from East Tamalpais also improves bus circulation for the routes that use this street to access Fourth Street.
- All of the on-street parking spaces along the east curb of Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets would be converted to Kiss-and-Ride, shuttles, and taxis. However, additional parking is planned as part of the parking strategies. [Note: See the discussion of the Tamalpais “Complete Street” concept in the next section for additional detail on the possible conversion of Tamalpais Avenue to one-way northbound travel between Second and Fourth Streets].
- Utilizing the east curb for the two blocks on Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Street provides flexibility in how the curb space is allocated between Kiss-and-Ride, shuttles, taxis, and the potential for additional bus bays.
- On the Whistlestop block, there is sufficient space for two SMART shuttles at the north end of the block and a main passenger loading zone with a capacity of up to seven vehicles. The passenger loading zone would be split between Kiss-and-Ride and taxis.
- On the Platform D block, the reconstruction would allow for a secondary loading zone with capacity for up to eight cars. Similar to the primary loading zone, this space would be split between Kiss-and-Ride and taxis.
- Other options for the Platform D block include: providing one space for a SMART shuttle at the north end of the block with a five space loading zone (this would allow SMART shuttles easier access to westbound Third Street and areas to the west of the station), or configuring the block to include two additional bus bays at the south end for Golden Gate or Marin Transit buses with a four space loading zone.
- Narrowing Platform D will provide additional drive aisle width on the east curb within the Bettini transit center to accommodate four bus bays with independent movement for buses entering and exiting the transit center.
- This reconstruction could occur independently of any change to Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Third Streets.

- Capacity at Bettini transit center is dictated by the schedule and assignment of bays during each 15-minute pulse. Bettini is near its capacity during these pulse periods as most bays are occupied. However, additional capacity is available in the off-pulse times. If demand patterns and route structures change, additional capacity could be gained by: a) increasing service in the off-pulse periods, or b) adjusting schedules on existing routes to slide their arrival/departure times outside of the pulse.

Integrated Transit Center Vision

The long-term vision recommends creating an integrated San Rafael Transit Center surrounding the SMART station. This consolidated transit center would require relocating the bus operations at the Bettini transit center from the existing location to north of Third Street located just to the east of the SMART station. This transit complex would provide several important benefits:

- The more convenient connection between rail and bus would promote ridership growth on both modes of travel by increasing transit's access to more destinations.
- Locating bus operations adjacent to the SMART station platforms would allow for safe and convenient passenger transfers between the two transit modes. Connecting passengers would not have to cross any public streets to transfer. The relocation of bus operations would reduce the expected flow of pedestrians crossing Third Street between Hetherton Street and Tamalpais Avenue. Eliminating the need for transfers to cross Third Street (as would occur between the SMART station and the existing Bettini transit center) is an important safety element of the vision.
- Relocating bus operations adjacent to the SMART station platforms affords an opportunity to redevelop the existing Bettini site.

The evaluation of the integrated San Rafael Transit Center complex indicated that the site bounded by Fourth, Hetherton and Third Streets and the SMART right-of-way has sufficient capacity to serve existing bus service levels with a small amount of additional capacity to support additional service during peak periods. However, the relocation was shown to negatively impact travel times on some bus routes. Several locations adjacent the integrated transit center were evaluated in an effort to allow for system expansion and to provide better transit operations on critical routes.

Figure V-7 presents the major elements of the long-term transit vision.

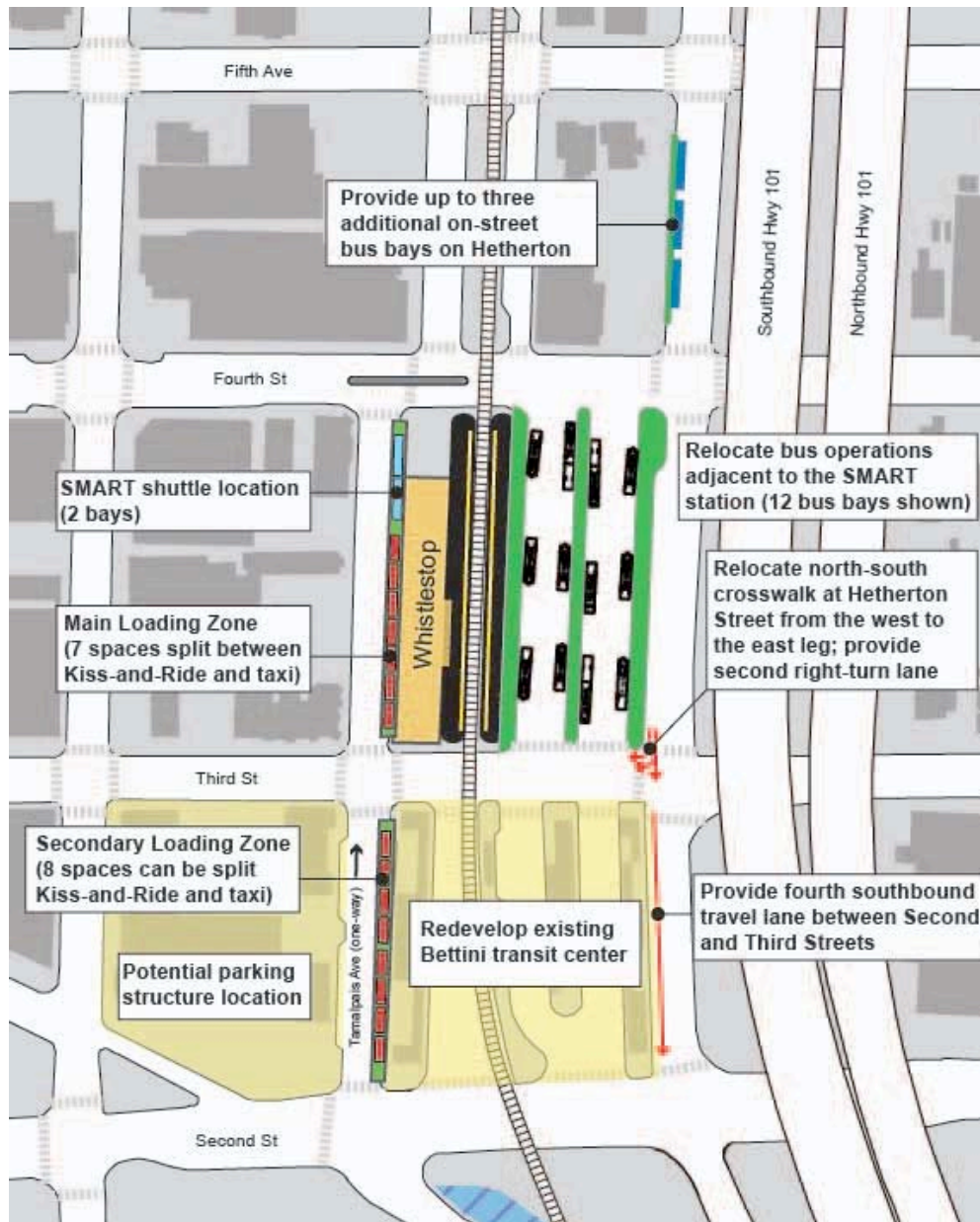


Figure V-7 Long-Term Transit Vision

The following elements are included in the long-term phase:

- Relocate bus operations from the existing Bettini site to the parcel on the east side of the SMART station.
- Close East Tamalpais between Third and Fourth Streets and incorporate the public street right-of-way into the San Rafael Transit Center complex.
- Integrate the design of the bus platforms and pedestrian circulation areas within the bus center in a way that creates a seamless connection with the SMART station.

- Configure the bus transit center to have three platforms with 12 bays. This would provide adequate capacity to serve the existing level of bus service plus provide a small amount of peak period expansion.
- Provide additional bus bays along Hetherton Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. These bays are required to allow for expansion of the system and provide the transit operators with a location that allows for easy access. Because this concept conflicts with the planned Class I bikeway on the west side of Hetherton in San Rafael's 2011 Bicycle Plan, this idea would need further study should the need for additional bus capacity be required. An alternative primary bicycle route along Fifth Avenue and Tamalpais/East Tamalpais Avenue is one possibility.
- The long-term vision also utilizes the entire east curb of Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets for SMART shuttles and passenger loading zones. The SMART shuttles will likely include small buses less than 35 ft in length and would be located at the north end of this segment near Fourth Street. The passenger loading zones include Kiss-and-Ride (passenger drop-off/pick-up) and taxis. A total of 15 spaces for Kiss-and-Ride and taxis are available. All of the on-street parking spaces along the east curb of Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets would be converted to Kiss-and-Ride, shuttles, and taxis. However, additional parking is planned as part of the parking strategies. [Note: See the discussion of the Tamalpais "Complete Street" concept in the next section for additional detail on the possible conversion of Tamalpais Avenue to one-way northbound travel between Second and Fourth Streets].
- Relocating the bus operations to the parcel east of the SMART station provides opportunities for redevelopment on the existing Bettini site.
- The consolidation of transit operations on a single block would remove the transfer activity between the SMART station and existing Bettini transit center. This provides an opportunity to remove the north-south crosswalk at the west side of the Hetherton Street / Third Street intersection and construct a second southbound right-turn lane from Hetherton Street to Third Street. This will reduce vehicle queuing and congestion on this critical segment of Hetherton Street.
- The removal of the on-street bus lane along Hetherton Street between Second and Third Streets will provide one additional southbound travel lane approaching the US-101 on-ramp. This will also help decrease congestion.

This long-term vision will require a series of coordinated actions that will involve a number of stakeholders and jurisdictions.

VI. Station Access and Connectivity

The objective of the station access strategy is to ensure safe and convenient connections to both the SMART station and the Bettini transit center for all users, including: those walking, arriving by bicycle, arriving by train or bus, carpooling, or driving alone and parking. The access strategy incorporates connections to Downtown San Rafael and neighborhoods east of US-101, the regional roadway network, the San Francisco Bay Trail, and other pedestrian/bicycle facilities in the area. Figure VI-1 presents the various planned, proposed, and potential projects that are currently under review that will improve local station access and connectivity.



Figure VI-1: Planned and Proposed/Potential Projects Affecting Station Access; does not include proposed SMART multi-use pathway connection from Second Street to Andersen Drive

The major existing and planned pedestrian/bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the transit center include:

- **Puerto Suello Hill Multi-Use Path:** an existing 1.2-mile Class I multi-use path (a Class I pathway provides for pedestrian and bicycle travel on a paved right-of-way separated from the street) that runs north-south on the west side of US 101. The Puerto Suello Hill path connects North with Central San Rafael. Within the Plan Area, the Puerto Suello path currently terminates at the northwest corner of the Hetherton Street / Mission Avenue intersection.
- **Mahon Creek Path:** is an existing 0.22-mile Class I path that connects the Class II on-street bike lanes (a Class II bike lane provides a striped and stenciled lane for one-way travel on a street) along Andersen Drive to Francisco Boulevard West at the southern edge of the Plan Area boundary. The Mahon Creek Path and the Class II bike lanes along Andersen Drive provide the primary north-south bike access to areas south of Downtown San Rafael.
- **Puerto Suello Path – Transit Center Connector:** is a Class I multi-use path planned along the west side of Hetherton Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street and will provide an important north-south connection between the Puerto Suello Path and the SMART Station and bicycle/pedestrian facilities to the south. This project also includes median improvements to Fourth Street at Tamalpais Avenue that will prevent vehicles from making left turns at this intersection, helping to reduce traffic congestion and delays. Median cuts will allow bicyclists to make left turns and to proceed across the median where vehicles cannot, and an accessible crosswalk with a pedestrian refuge in the new median will make it easier for pedestrians to cross both streets at this intersection. This project is funded through the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP) and is slated for construction in 2012.

The recommended access routes and curb locations for transit center drop-off from both the east and the west, as discussed in Chapter VI, will not be affected by the new median. Pedestrians will travel between the Puerto Suello Path and Tamalpais Avenue along the existing sidewalks on the north and south sides of Fourth Street. To improve pedestrian conditions, these sidewalks should be widened in conjunction with the creation of a public plaza at Fourth and Tamalpais as discussed in Section 2 of this chapter, future transit center improvements as discussed in Chapter V, and improvements to Tamalpais Avenue as discussed in Chapter VI. Bicyclists will travel between the Puerto Suello Path and Tamalpais Avenue along a planned Class III bikeway on Fourth Street.

- **Second Street to Andersen Drive Multiuse Pathway:** SMART has developed a number of concept alignments for a multi-use pathway between Second Street and Andersen Drive on or along the SMART right-of-way. While this segment is not currently being designed as part of SMART's Initial Operating Segments (IOS-1 and IOS-2), it will become relevant when SMART extends service from downtown San Rafael to Larkspur.
- **East Francisco Boulevard Improvements:** this NTPP project plans to widen the existing sidewalk to a width of nine to twelve feet along the north side of East Francisco Boulevard from Bellam Boulevard to the southern end of the Grand Avenue Bridge. The sidewalk will

serve multiple users and improve pedestrian and bicycle access between Grand Avenue and Bellam Boulevard. Final design is complete and construction is expected to begin in 2013.

- **Grand Avenue Pathway Connector:** this project will construct a nine to twelve foot multi-use pathway across the east side of the Grand Avenue Bridge from the terminus of the East Francisco Boulevard path (see above) to Second Avenue. This project is still in design.
- **Canalfront Paseo Pathway Concept:** the Canalfront Paseo Pathway was recommended in the *Canal Neighborhood Community-Based Transportation Plan* (Transportation Authority of Marin, 2006), with design guidance provided in the *San Rafael Canalfront Design Guidelines* (City of San Rafael, 2009). The Paseo is still very conceptual, but it would focus on providing pedestrian and bicycle access along the Canal waterway from US 101 to areas beyond the Montecito Shopping Center. The most feasible components of the Paseo concept include sections behind the Shopping Center with a connection to the Grand Avenue Pathway Connector. Extending the Paseo west of Grand Avenue is challenging from an engineering perspective and will require further study. A short section along Second Street under US 101 from Tamalpais to Irwin Avenue is discussed as part of this Plan. A further extension along Second Street is shown only for illustrative purposes.

The access plan incorporates these existing and planned facilities into the overall access strategy for the station, which is illustrated in Figure VI-2 and elaborated upon in the sections that follow.

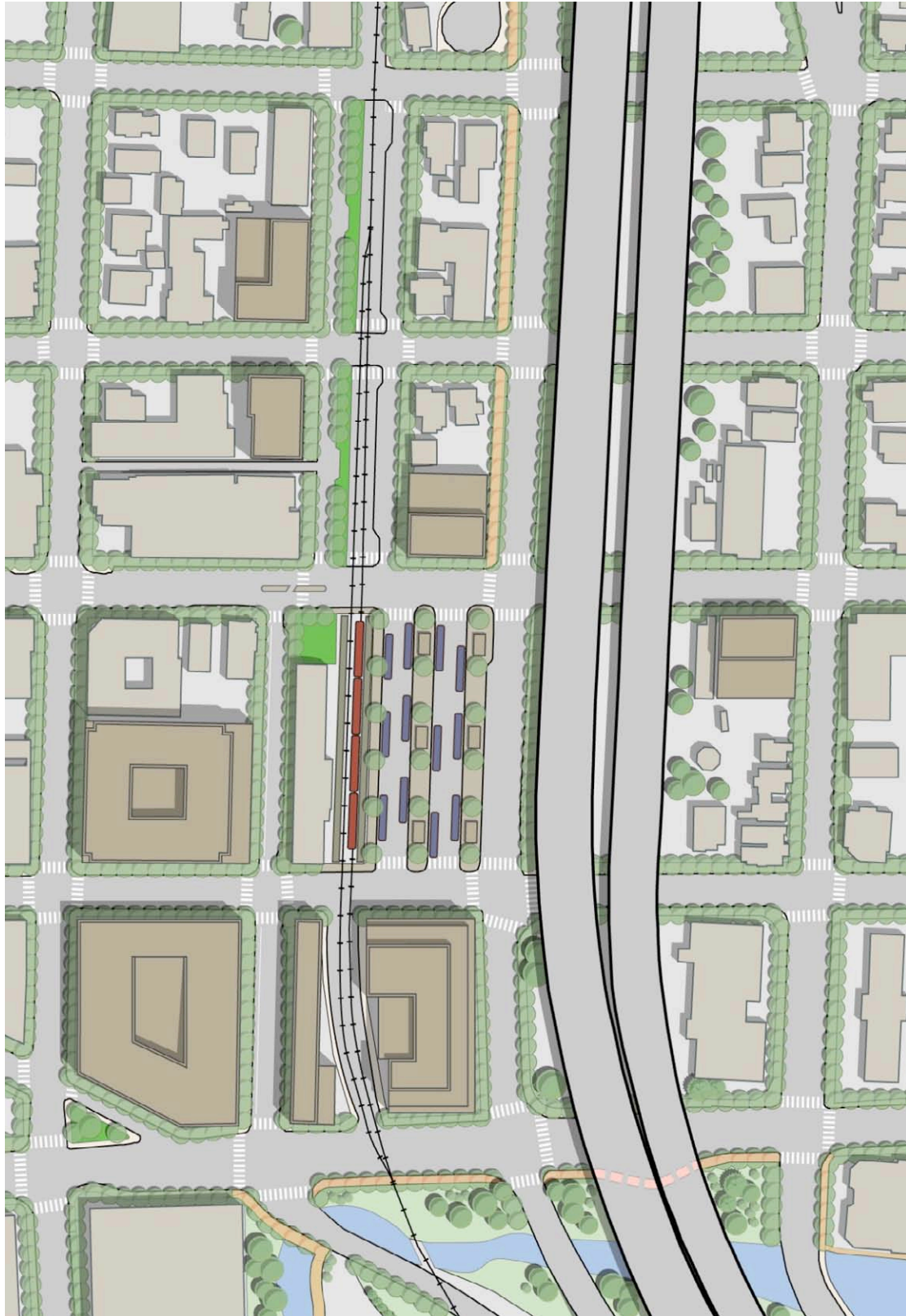


Figure VI-2: Illustrative View of Planned and Proposed Public Improvements in the Plan Area

1. Pedestrian, Multi-modal and Accessible Design

Attractive pedestrian spaces are essential ingredients of healthy communities, both for support of multimodal travel and for providing great public spaces. While the present built environment in Downtown San Rafael has a highly successful pedestrian “spine” along Fourth Street, there are opportunities to expand this success to other parts of the Plan Area and Downtown. To provide an appropriate balance between traffic and pedestrian needs, considerations for pedestrians are needed in planning and designing community infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, buildings, and public spaces. A few guiding concepts highlight the key principles of planning for pedestrian-supportive environments. From these broad concepts spring specific guidelines for the various pieces of the built environment.

Give pedestrians more, safe, comfortable, and interesting walking space. Pedestrians need wide pathways, not simply for room to maneuver, but also to feel comfortable. Beyond width, pedestrians desire shelter from sun and rain, as well as a sense of being enclosed by nearby buildings, rather than exposed in a barren asphalt expanse. Trees, both along streets and in public spaces, are particularly important in enhancing the pedestrian experience. Street trees should be spaced closely enough to create a continuous canopy when mature – in general, no more than 30 feet on center – and should be selected from the City’s approved street tree list. Lastly, visually interesting, highly detailed surroundings, and amenities such as seating and sidewalk cafes, render a walk more enjoyable, and may even entice people to linger and relax.

Protect pedestrians and cyclists from traffic. Fast-moving traffic is risky to pedestrians and cyclists crossing streets, as well as uncomfortable for those walking and biking along them. Speed management techniques in the design of streets can make pedestrians and cyclists safer by prompting drivers to slow down and exercise caution, while design treatments at street crossings can reduce crossing distances and make pedestrians and cyclists more visible. Objects that serve as buffers between sidewalks and passing traffic, such as parked cars and trees and other landscaping, also increase pedestrian and cyclist comfort.

Create great outdoor spaces. For some, such as pedestrians and riders waiting for transit, being outside is a necessity; for others, it is a welcome opportunity for relaxation and spontaneous encounters. Well-designed urban public spaces near transit stops and areas with high volumes of pedestrian traffic can cater to both groups by making outdoor spaces enjoyable destinations.

Shorten walking distances. Pedestrians are particularly sensitive to circuitous routes because, at low speeds, longer distances translate into much longer travel times. Shortcuts for pedestrians such as mid-block crossings or accessways through large blocks can make walking faster and more convenient.

Accessible design. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was passed in 1990, and the subsequent development of the ADA Accessibility Guidelines focuses on compliance with laws related to providing equal access to people living with disabilities. As such, ADA Standards for such elements of pedestrian design as curb ramps and sidewalks are minimum requirements that comply with the law, but are not necessarily “best practices.”

Universal design. Universal design goes beyond minimum requirements for people with disabilities to provide guidance that creates environments that are usable by people of all ages

and abilities, including children, the elderly, parents with pushing strollers. Universal design comprises a broader array of pedestrian design elements to help create a more complete street.

The following strategies for pedestrian and multi-modal supportive elements should be incorporated into future planning and design efforts throughout the station area.

Roadway Elements

- Landscaping
- Planted medians and trees
- Stormwater quality designs

Intersection Elements

- High-visibility striping and/or alternative paving treatments for pedestrian crossings, such as stamped patterns or colored concrete
- Minimum curb return radii and sidewalk bulbouts to minimize crossing distances
- Appropriate curb ramp designs, including meeting ADA requirements
- Pedestrian and bicycle-friendly signal timing

Sidewalk Elements

- Sidewalks with appropriate widths, cross-slopes, grades, and surfaces
- Street trees and planting strips or tree wells to buffer pedestrians from traffic
- Pedestrian-scale lighting in addition to roadway lighting
- Amenities such as seating, news racks, outdoor cafes, and retail displays, especially near transit stops
- Pedestrian and bicycle-oriented signage, including wayfinding and landmarks signage
- Secure bicycle parking, especially near public facilities and transit

Urban Public Space Elements

- Small urban public spaces provided
- Spaces visible, accessible from surrounding neighborhood
- Located near land uses that ‘activate’ spaces with people and activity throughout the day and evening
- Seating provided, with flexible configurations

2. Tamalpais Avenue “Complete Street” Concepts

The major station access improvement explored in this plan is to reconstruct Tamalpais Avenue to serve as a “Complete Street” that would serve all travel modes. In this concept, Tamalpais Avenue could be converted to one-way northbound travel between Second and Fourth Streets and one-way southbound travel between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue.

The conversion of Tamalpais Avenue to one-way travel, which would require more detailed analysis, would support several elements of the station access, pedestrian/bicycle, and open space elements of the plan:

- **Station Access:** Currently, the segment of Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets has relatively low traffic volumes. These volumes are anticipated to decrease further with the construction of the median on Fourth Street that will prevent left-turns to and from Tamalpais Avenue. The elimination of left-turns at Fourth Street, combined with the one-way northbound traffic flow, will make Tamalpais Avenue less attractive as a cut-through route. This will allow this section of Tamalpais Avenue to serve as the “front door” to the San Rafael Transit Center and support passenger loading activities.
- **Convenient Passenger Loading:** The one-way traffic flow between Second and Fourth Streets will allow for convenient Kiss-and-Ride and passenger loading along the east curb in front of Whistlestop and the Bettini transit center (see the Intermodal Transit Center section for additional detail on passenger loading, taxi, and shuttle bus parking along Tamalpais Avenue). In addition to public transit-related passenger loading, Whistlestop provides specialized transportation services to seniors and persons with disabilities at their site immediately adjacent to the station.
- **Local Connectivity:** Tamalpais Avenue would serve as the primary north-south pedestrian and bicycle connection between the SMART station and the Puerto Suello Path and Transit Center Connector, Fourth Street, and the Mahon Creek Path.
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian:** From Second to Fourth Street, the removal of the southbound travel lane and the parking spaces along the west curb will provide additional right-of-way. This extra right-of-way could be utilized to make multi-modal improvements along these two blocks of Tamalpais.
- **East Tamalpais closure:** East Tamalpais between Third and Fourth Streets, located on the east side of the SMART station, is recommended to be abandoned and incorporated into the integrated San Rafael transit complex.
- **Open Space:** Currently, the segment of Tamalpais Avenue from Fourth Street to Mission Avenue is very lightly traveled. The proposed median at Fourth Street will also prevent left turns to and from Tamalpais Avenue, which will further decrease traffic volumes along this segment of Tamalpais Avenue. Converting this segment to one-way southbound should have little effect on traffic flow within the Plan Area. One option could be the conversion to one-way travel to free up the right-of-way from the former northbound lane. This stretch of Tamalpais could become a landscaped multi-use pathway. Tamalpais Avenue southbound

and East Tamalpais northbound between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue will work as a one-way couplet in this area.

Figure VI-3 shows one potential concept to Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Fourth Streets.

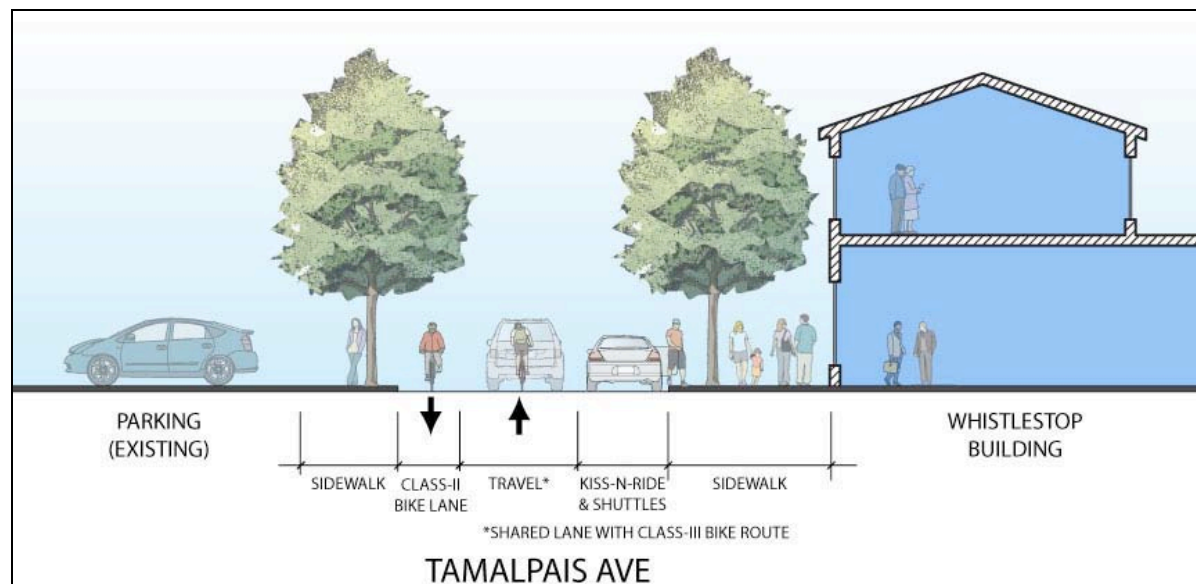


Figure VI-3 Potential concept for Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Fourth Streets

Figure VI-4 shows one alternative landscape treatment for this section of West Tamalpais and Tamalpais Avenues between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue, which would require further study and coordination with SMART's ongoing track design work. In conjunction with the proposed conversion of West Tamalpais Avenue to one-way southbound travel, narrowing the pavement of West Tamalpais and eliminating on-street parking on the eastern curb, leaving a pull-out fire staging area near the center of the block, would free up space for landscaping and other uses. Widening the sidewalk on the western curb would improve the pedestrian environment. Other features such as distinctive sidewalk paving, a separated multi-use pathway, stormwater management features such as planters, bulb-outs at crosswalks, and permeable paving in parking areas, as illustrated in Figure VI-5, could also be considered during the design phase. Other possible configurations include a separated multi-use pathway, or northbound and southbound Class II bicycle lanes.

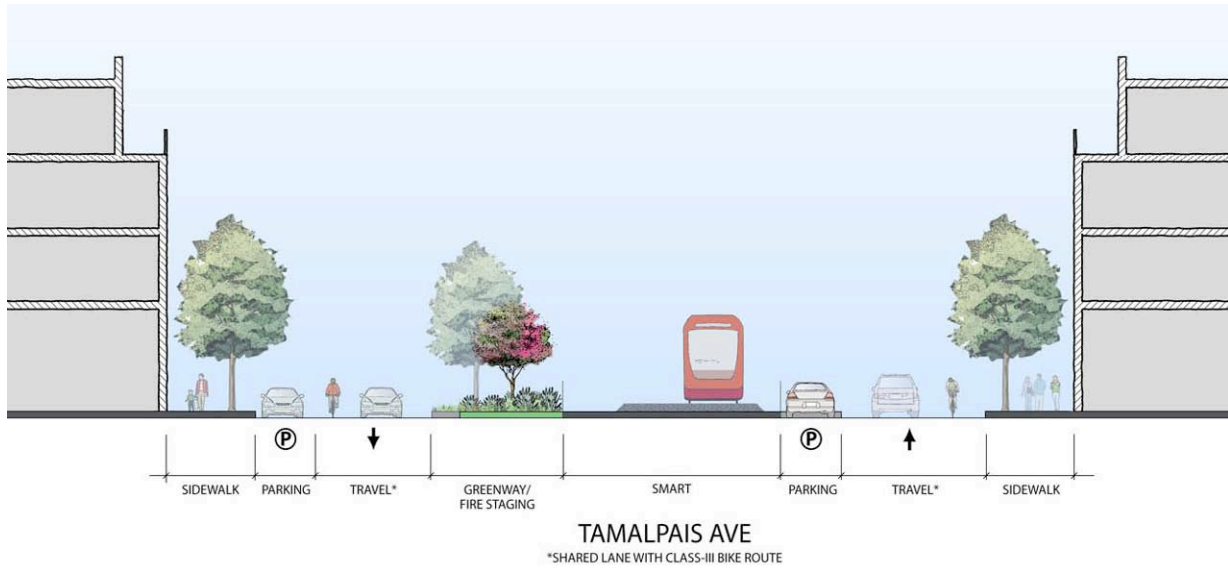


Figure VI-4 Potential concept for Tamalpais Avenue between Fourth Street and Mission Avenue



Figure VI-5 Potential concept for Tamalpais Avenue Improvements

3. Pedestrian Access and Improvements

Figure VI-6 shows the major routes pedestrians would likely use to access the transit complex from different areas of San Rafael, and also shows the major destinations within the Study Area, including Downtown, the Montecito and Canal neighborhoods, and local schools. The pedestrian routes reflect information provided by residents during the public workshops.

The Plan Area's street network, which is characterized by short block lengths, provides a generally well-connected and walkable environment. However, the Plan Area does have some pedestrian deficiencies:

- Some intersections have crosswalks that are not established. This can create indirect walk routes and can result in jaywalking. Crosswalks are not established in locations where sidewalks do not exist or at locations with specific traffic operations and safety considerations.
- Crosswalks that conflict with double left-turn movements
- Crosswalks without pedestrian signal heads
- Narrow sidewalks on portions of Hetherton Street and Tamalpais Avenue
- Heavy traffic volumes and loud traffic noise from US 101

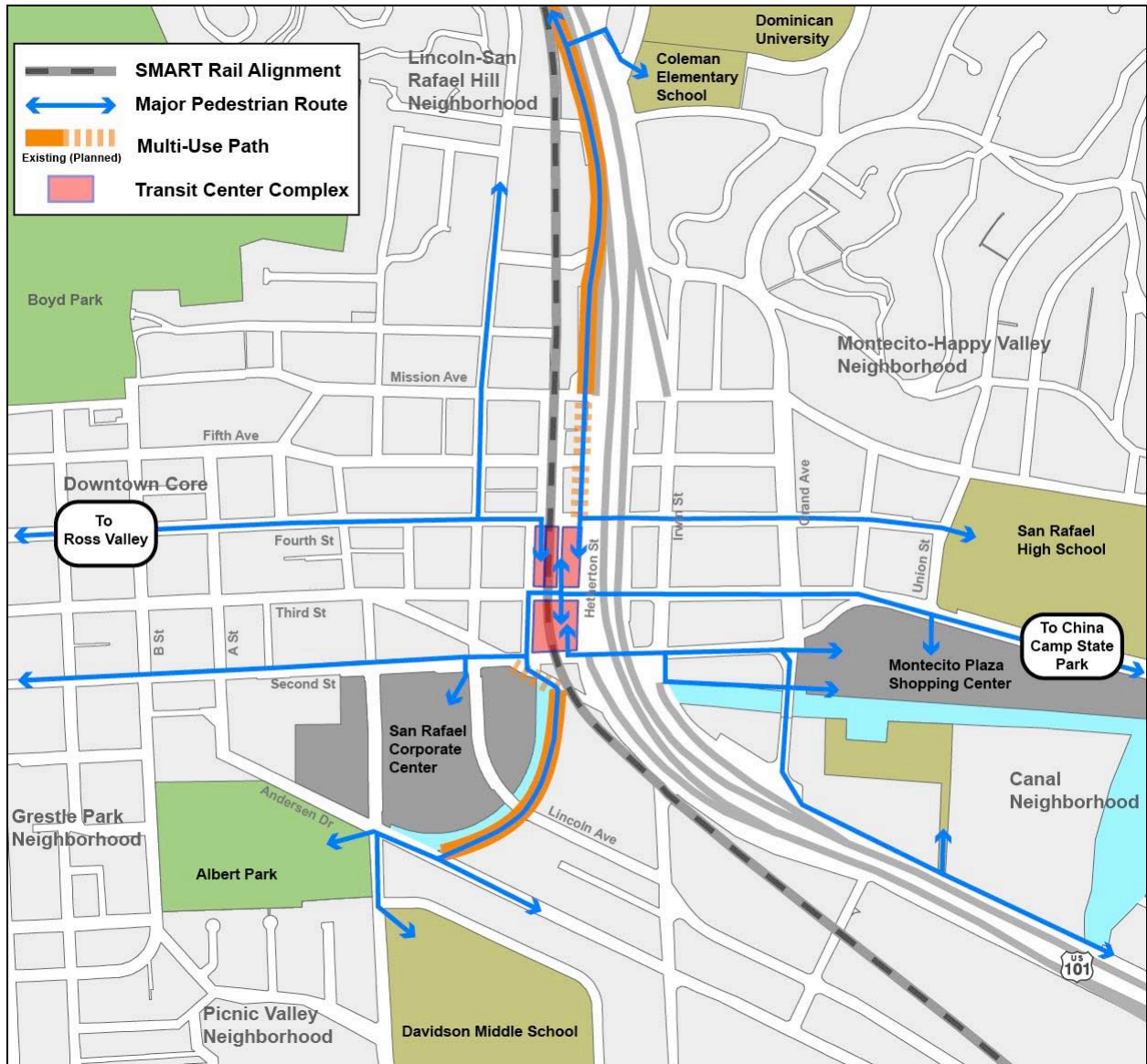
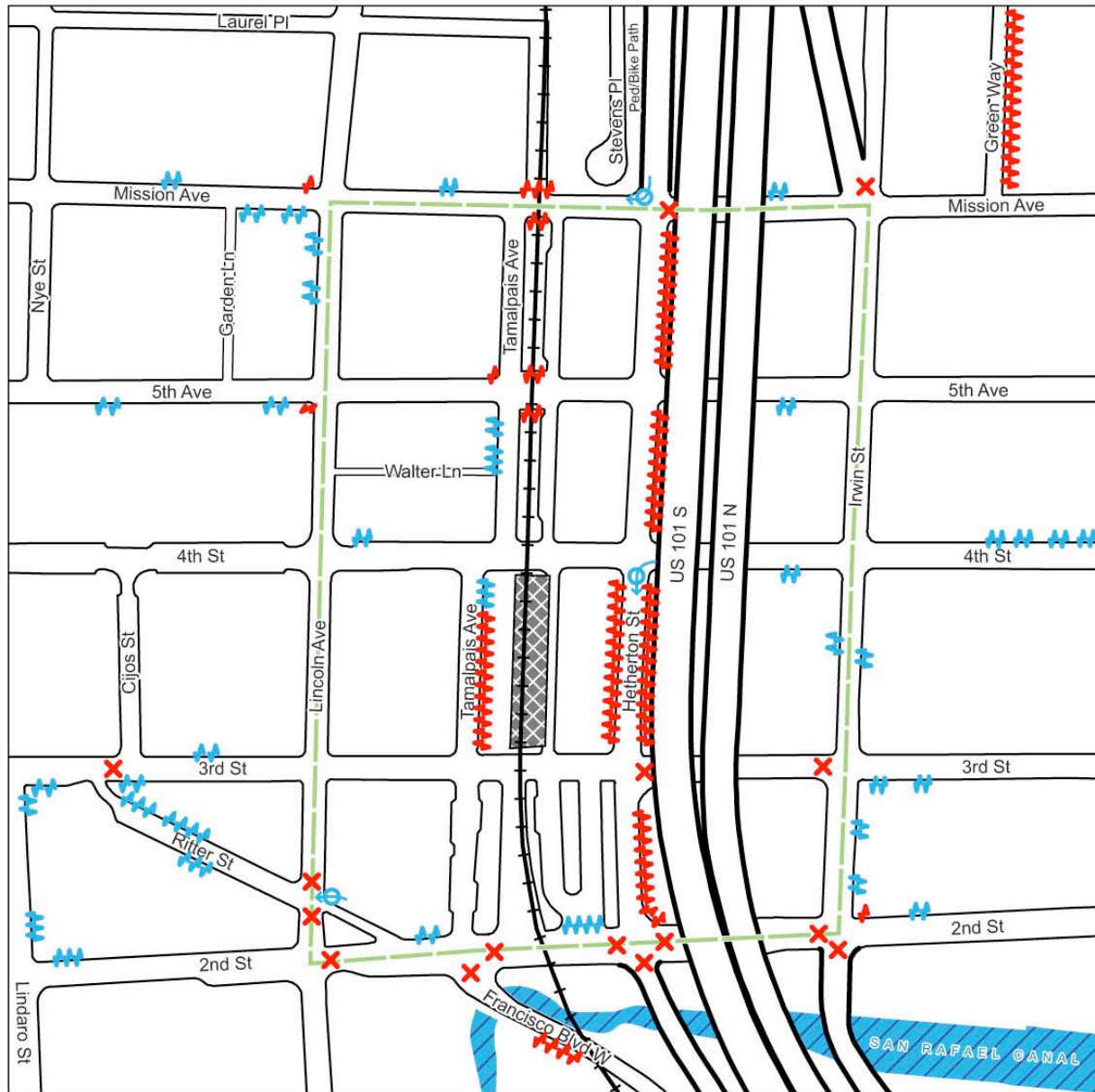
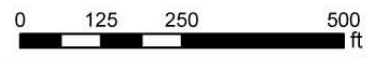


Figure VI-6: Major Pedestrian Routes

Figure VI-7 shows the pedestrian barriers in the immediate vicinity of the transit complex.



Pedestrian Barriers









-  SMART Station
-  Plan Area
-  No Crosswalk
-  Potential Pedestrian-Vehicle Conflict
-  Inadequate or Nonexistent Sidewalks and Curb Ramps
-  Long Curb Cut (increased motorist speed, increased pedestrian exposure)

Figure VI-7: Pedestrian Barriers

Barriers to Pedestrian Routes beyond the Plan Area

Enhanced pedestrian/bicycle connectivity between Downtown and areas to the east of US-101 is important for improving access to the Canal and Montecito neighborhoods, Coleman Elementary School, San Rafael High School, and the Montecito Shopping Center. Currently, the freeway, canal, and Mahon Creek all provide significant barriers to local pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Traffic and pedestrian needs should be balanced in the implementation of this Plan and in future planning efforts. The improvements discussed in this section (e.g., additional sidewalks along Hetherton Street and wider sidewalks and more attractive amenities on streets under US-101) all will enhance the east-west pedestrian routes. However, an additional pathway along the canal to improve access from the Canal Neighborhood to Downtown has been highlighted in various studies.

Canal Paseo

As stated previously, one vision for achieving this connection is the “Canal Paseo” concept: a near-term option would include constructing a new at-grade sidewalk or multi-use path along the south side of Second Street from Irwin Street to Hetherton Street. The path would include a bridge over the Mahon Creek (under US-101), a new east-west crosswalk on Second Street at the US-101 off-ramp, and a new north-south crosswalk on Hetherton Street at Second Street. The new north-south crosswalk at Hetherton Street would tie into the sidewalk proposed along the east side of Hetherton Street between Second and Third Streets. This would provide additional connectivity to Third Street and the integrated transit complex. These two crosswalks would not affect traffic flow or capacity at either the on or off-ramps to/from US-101. However, key safety aspects would need to be examined with this concept prior to considering this as a viable option.

A long-term option would include extending the Canal Paseo along Second Street to Francisco Boulevard and the Mahon Creek path. This extended option would require the construction of a grade-separated undercrossing (i.e., tunnel) underneath the southbound US-101 on-ramp, a new at-grade crossing with the SMART tracks with enhanced safety measures, and a new east-west crosswalk at Francisco Boulevard. The grade separation is an expensive feature but necessary to protect pedestrians/bicyclists by removing the conflict with the heavy right-turn volume from Second Street to southbound US-101. A grade separated undercrossing at the SMART tracks is not feasible because the short distances between the tracks and Francisco Boulevard would require very steep grades that would not meet standard design guidelines.

The ultimate feasibility of both the near and long-term options will require additional engineering studies and coordination and approvals from a multitude of government agencies.



"No Ped Crossing" signage on Second Street near Francisco Boulevard



Narrow sidewalks, high traffic, and US 101 create an uncomfortable pedestrian environment



Crosswalk at the south leg of the Third Street / Hetherton Street intersection; note the double-left turn movements that must yield to pedestrians

Figure VI-8 presents the recommended pedestrian network improvements within the Plan Area. These improvements will create a more walkable environment in the station area and allow for convenient and safe access to SMART rail and bus transit.

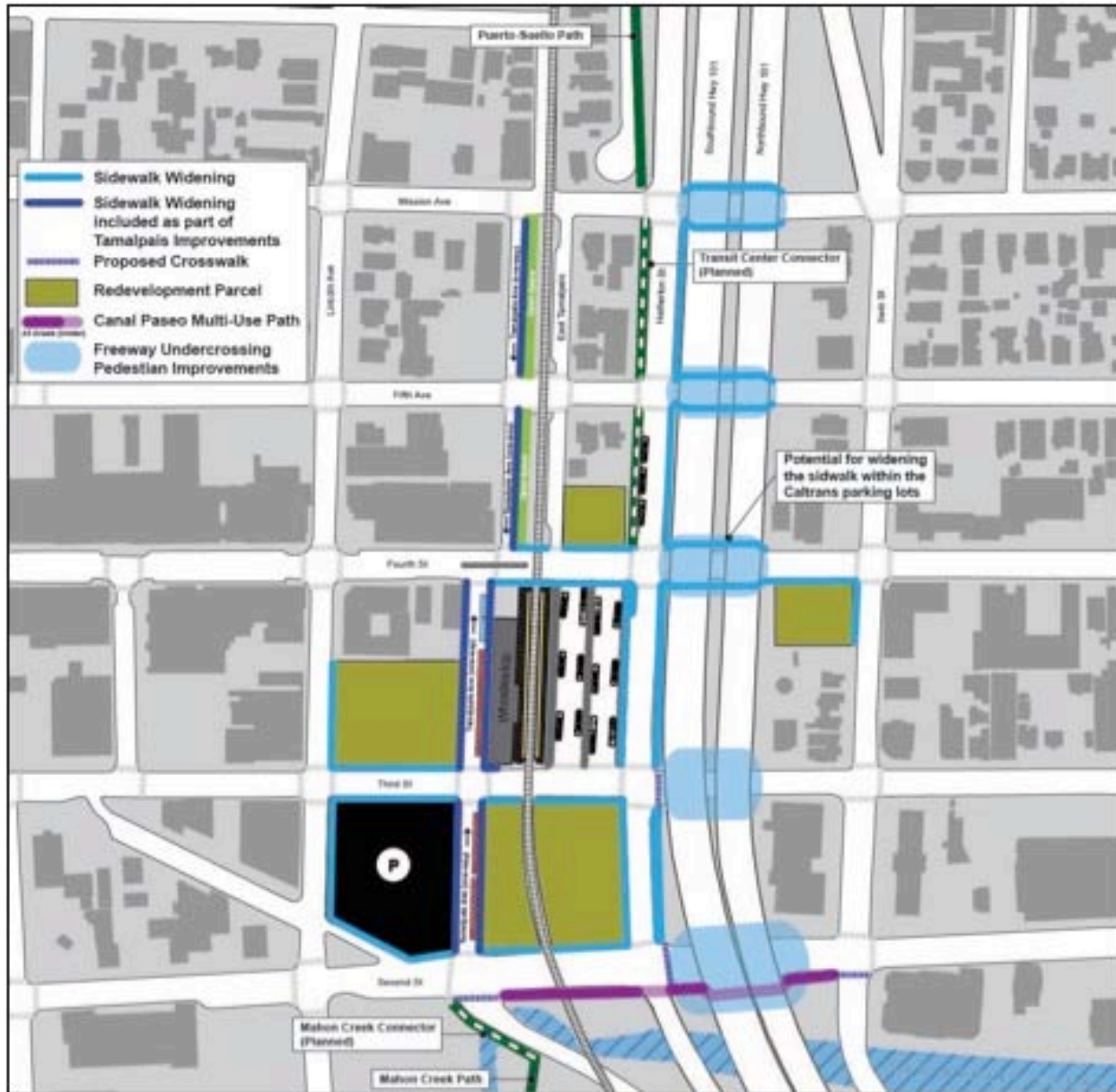


Figure VI-8: Recommended Pedestrian Improvements

The recommended pedestrian projects include the following:

- Explore ways to enhance the prominence, visibility and safety of the Third Street crosswalks at Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton Street, such as studying the feasibility of widening the crosswalks, to mitigate the strong desire for people to cross between the bus and rail stations.

- Sidewalk widening on Tamalpais and at the intersection of Fourth Street and Tamalpais associated with the Tamalpais Avenue Complete Street concept.
- Widen sidewalks along the frontages of parcels that redevelop (the redevelopment parcels included as examples in the Plan are shown).
- Install additional barriers and fencing along Third Street between Tamalpais Avenue and Hetherton Street to prohibit jaywalking and direct pedestrians to use proper crosswalks.
- Explore additional options for making West Tamalpais Avenue and Tamalpais Avenue between Mission Avenue and Second Street more inviting for pedestrians and transit riders. One possibility could be to explore the feasibility of creating a multi-use path along the street. The landscape treatment of such a path, if feasible, should be integrated with the proposed landscape treatment of the SMART right-of-way and East Tamalpais. Feasibility of this concept would require resolution of safety concerns for bicyclists due to the closely spaced intersections and frequent curb cuts, as well as right-of-way and property access considerations.
- Along the east curb of Hetherton Street, explore the potential for constructing a new sidewalk between Second and Third and widening the existing sidewalks from Third Street to Mission Avenue. This will require coordination with Caltrans and the Marin Municipal Water District because the right-of-way is located within their jurisdiction. Also, a small parking lot is located between Second and Third Streets that would need to be reconfigured to accommodate the new sidewalk segment.
- If the Bettini Transit Center is relocated to the site east of the SMART station, ensure that improvements include safe and direct connections along sidewalks between the SMART station platforms and the relocated bus platforms (on the Third Street and Fourth Street frontages).
- Install pedestrian wayfinding signage to highlight recommended pedestrian routes from the transit center to other destinations in the Plan Area and Study Area, including landmarks such as the Mission San Rafael Arcángel, City Hall, the Fourth Street commercial corridor, the San Rafael Corporate Center, the San Rafael Canal, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Wayfinding signage should be in accordance with the City's Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Explore the potential for improving the pedestrian experience at the five east-west crossings under US 101. This could include lighting, public art, wayfinding signage and improved landscaping, as illustrated in Figure VI-9. There is also the potential for widening the sidewalks into the existing Caltrans Park-and-Ride lots along a portion of these streets. However, this would require coordination with Caltrans as these parking lots are under their jurisdiction.



Figure VI-9: Fourth Street and US 101 Undercrossing Improvements

Pedestrian impacts from the potential relocation of the Bettini transit center to the site east of the SMART station:

- The relocation would reduce some of the north-south pedestrian flows across Third Street because rail-bus facilities would be consolidated on a single block. This could allow for the relocation of the north-south crosswalk from the west leg of the Hetherton/Third Street intersection to the east leg. This could be done in conjunction with other possible sidewalk improvements along the east curb of Hetherton Street. The removal of the north-south crosswalk at the west leg of the intersection would allow for a second right-turn movement from southbound Hetherton to westbound Third Street. The analysis used to support the Plan indicated that this would help both auto and bus circulation.
- While reducing pedestrian connectivity is never preferred, the severity of future traffic congestion and its impact on auto and bus travel indicates that some capacity improvement is needed. The traffic capacity improvements become needed when SMART extends service to Larkspur, which would stop cars and buses on Second and Third Street during rail crossings. Some capacity improvement is also needed to serve population and employment growth associated with the City's General Plan and the land use changes proposed in this Plan.

4. Recommended Bicycle Improvements

The following bicycle improvements are recommended for the Study Area in order to enable convenient and safe bicycle access to the SMART rail transit (see Figure VI-10).

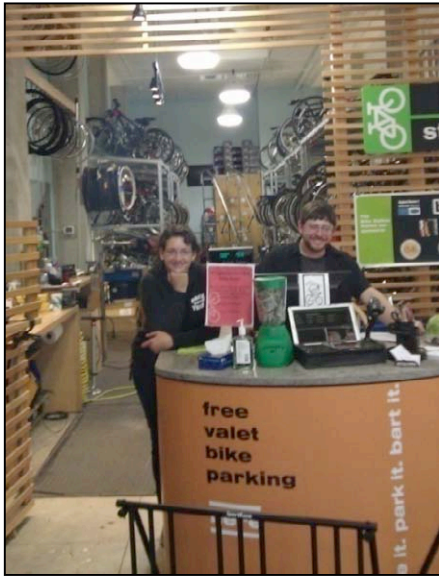
A Class I pathway refers to a bike path or multi-use path. Class I pathways provide for bicycle travel on a paved right-of-way separated from the street.

A Class II bikeway is referred to as a bike lane. A Class II bike lane provides a striped and stenciled lane for one-way travel on a street.

A Class III bikeway is referred to as a bike route. A Class III bike route provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic and is identified only by signage and/or stenciling.

The recommended bicycle improvements include the following:

- Create a Class II southbound bike lane along the west side of Tamalpais from Second to Fourth Streets. This is feasible with Tamalpais Avenue converted to one-way northbound travel.
- On Tamalpais Avenue from Second Street to Mission Avenue, options include the designation of Class III routes, a bi-directional separated multi-use pathway, or a Class II northbound and a Class II southbound bike lane.
- Designate a northbound Class III bike route on East Tamalpais from Fourth Street to Mission Avenue (see Figure VI-4).
- If the Bettini Transit Center is relocated to the site east of the SMART station, consider building a bicycle parking facility shared with the SMART station.
- Explore additional options for making West Tamalpais Avenue and Tamalpais Avenue between Mission Avenue and Second Street more inviting for bicyclists. The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and City staff could investigate the feasibility of various design solutions, such as creating a streetside multi-use path or barrier-separated cycle track. The landscape treatment of this bikeway should be integrated with the proposed landscape treatment of the SMART right-of-way and East and West Tamalpais Avenues.
- Consider locating a "bike station" – an indoor facility for longer-term bike storage– in a ground floor space near the transit complex.
- Work with SMART to determine alignment of SMART multi-use pathway between Second Street and Andersen Drive.



Downtown Berkeley Bike Station

A bike station in Downtown Berkeley opened in 2010 under a partnership between BART and the City of Berkeley and the bicycle community of the East Bay. The 268 bike spaces provided include 155 spaces in triple-decker racks in the valet-assisted parking area and 113 spaces in a smart-card self-park area with double-tier (lift-assist) racks and vertical racks. It is operated under contract by Alameda Bicycle, which successfully operates BART's bike stations at Embarcadero and Fruitvale stations. The \$735,000 facility was funded by MTC's "Safe Routes to Transit" program, the Federal Transportation Administration and the State of California Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement and Service Enhancement account.

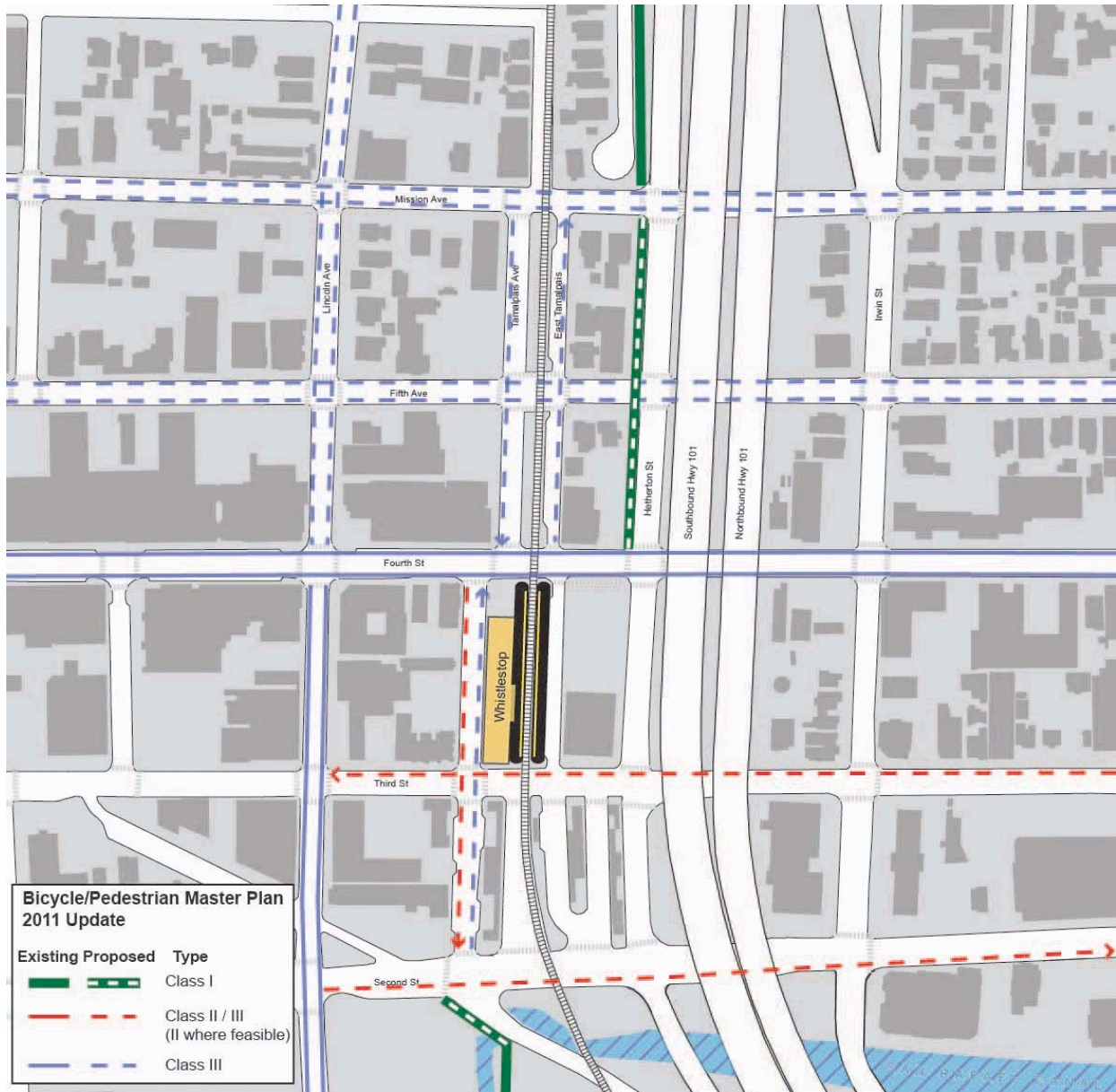


Figure VI-10: Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan 2011 Update

5. San Francisco Bay Trail

The San Francisco Bay Trail is a planned recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays. The Bay Trail is administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and is an important element of the Bay Area’s overall pedestrian and bicycle network. The ultimate goal of the Bay Trail is to provide a continuous 500-mile multi-use corridor around the entire San Francisco Bay that connects communities and provides recreation and transportation opportunities. This planning effort is separate from the City’s local Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan.

The Bay Trail alignment currently runs east-west through the Plan Area along Second and Third Streets east of Tamalpais Avenue and along Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Third Streets. No on-street bike lanes are currently provided along Second and Third Streets or Tamalpais Avenue. In its 2011 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan update, the City re-aligned the Bay Trail onto the Mahon Creek Pathway from Andersen Drive to Second and Third Streets. Two improvements are needed to achieve the full potential of this connection: a curb cut to access the pathway from Andersen Drive, and replacement of the existing 5 foot wide bicycle/pedestrian bridge across Mahon Creek at the intersection of East Francisco Street near Second Street with a 12 foot wide bridge.

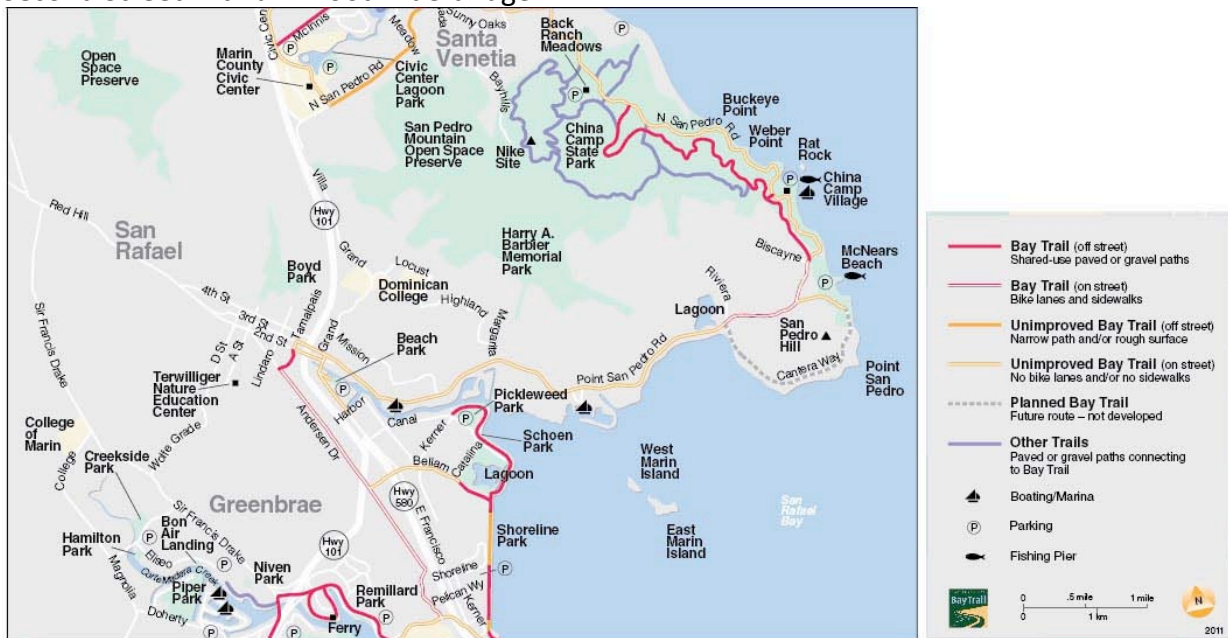


Figure VI-11 : Bay Trail in San Rafael (Source: ABAG)

Figure VI-11 presents the current ABAG Bay Trail alignment within Downtown San Rafael, which is different from the City’s locally adopted Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan. Second and Third Streets have been identified in the ABAG Bay Trail alignment as the preferred route to link Andersen Drive south of the Plan Area with Point San Pedro Road to the east. Third Street is identified as “Unimproved Bay Trail (on-street)” in the Bay Trail plan, while both Second and Third Streets have been identified in the Bicycle Master Plan as Class II/III facilities. Right-of-way

constraints and heavy traffic and transit volumes will likely limit the bicycle improvements to Class III facilities along Second and Third Streets; however, the proposed Canal Paseo discussed above, if feasible, would provide a Class I path along the south side of Second Street between Tamalpais Avenue and Irwin Street. A multi-use path along the west side of Tamalpais Avenue, if feasible, could form another Bay Trail segment connecting Second and Third Streets.

6. Recommended Taxi, Pick-up and Drop-off, and Shuttle Access Improvements

Passenger loading zones require adequate curb space for Kiss-and-Ride (pick-up/drop-off), a taxi stand, and space for SMART shuttles. The existing Bettini transit center uses Tamalpais Avenue between Second and Third Streets for Kiss-and-Ride, with taxis located inside the transit center along the SMART rail right-of-way between Platforms C and D. SMART’s IOS will not affect these activities at Bettini. SMART’s IOS plan allocates its Kiss-and-Ride and shuttle activities adjacent to its station along East Tamalpais Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets. Figure VI-12 presents the existing and the proposed SMART IOS passenger loading areas.

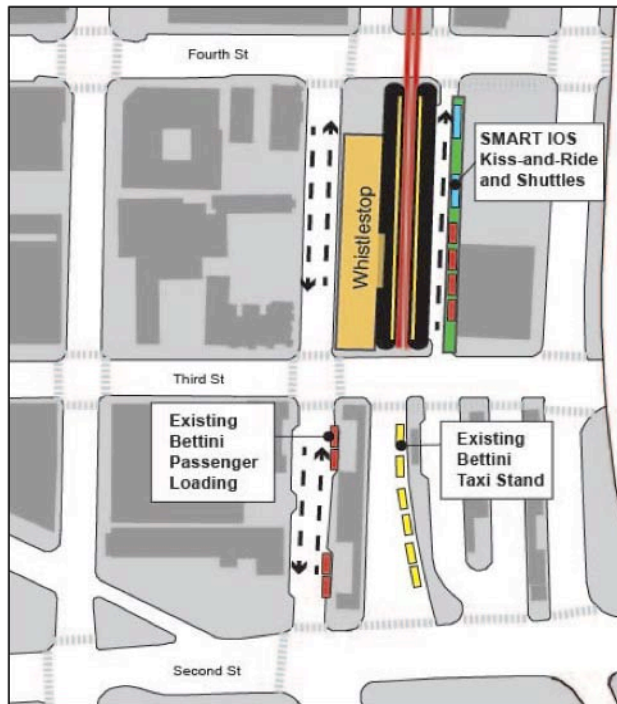
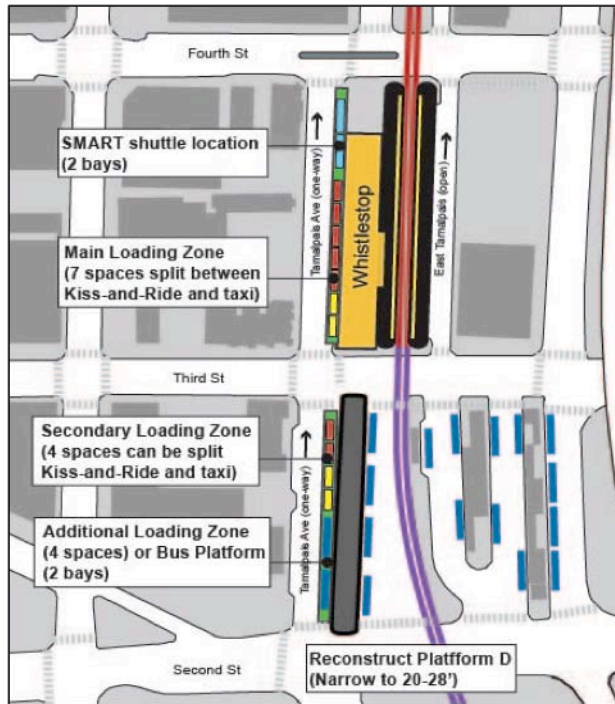
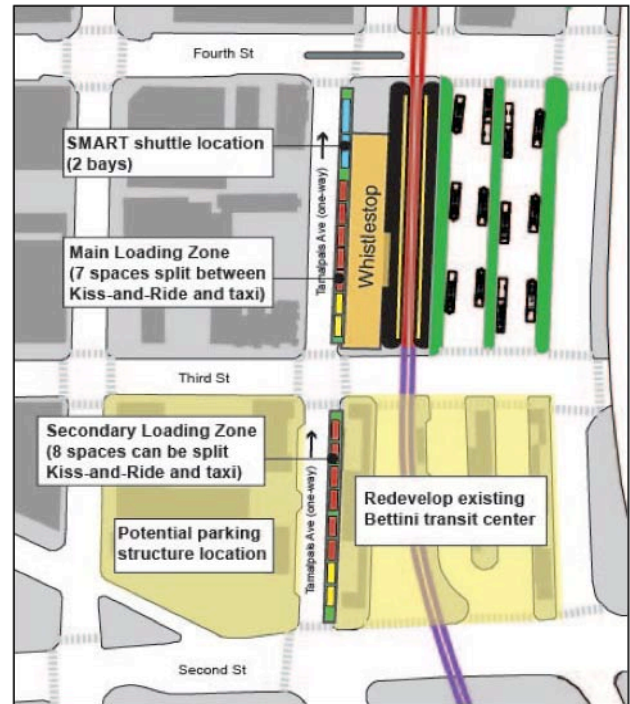


Figure VI-12 Existing and SMART IOS Passenger Loading

In both the Bettini (near-term) and Integrated Transit Center (long-term) visions, as shown in Figure VI-13, the east curb of Tamalpais Avenue from Second to Fourth Streets is recommended as the location to serve as the loading zone for Kiss-and-Ride, taxis, and SMART shuttles. In both of transit visions, the two blocks from Second to Fourth Street are required to provide enough capacity for these activities. Locating all loading activities along Tamalpais Avenue creates a clearer and simpler experience for passengers and drivers.



Bettini Vision

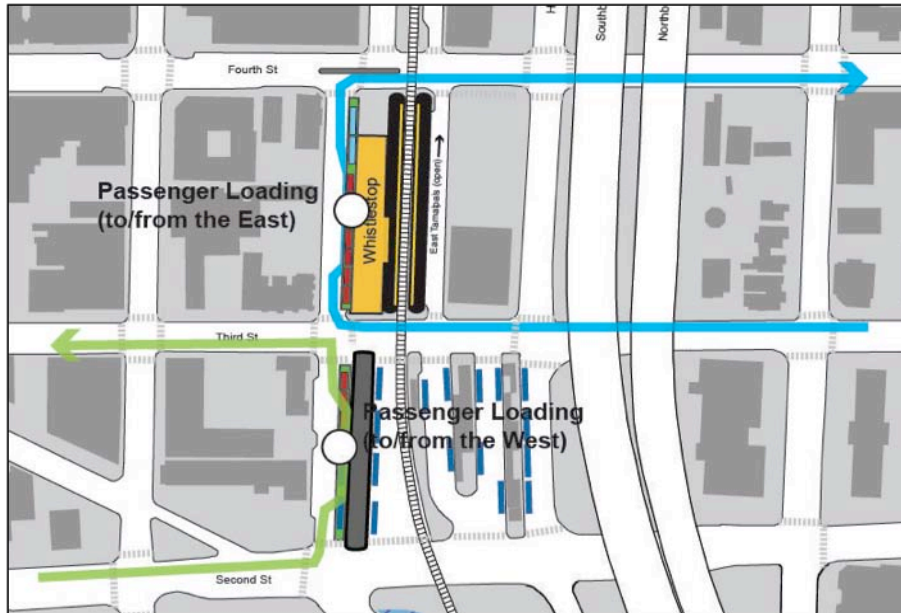


Integrated Transit Center Vision

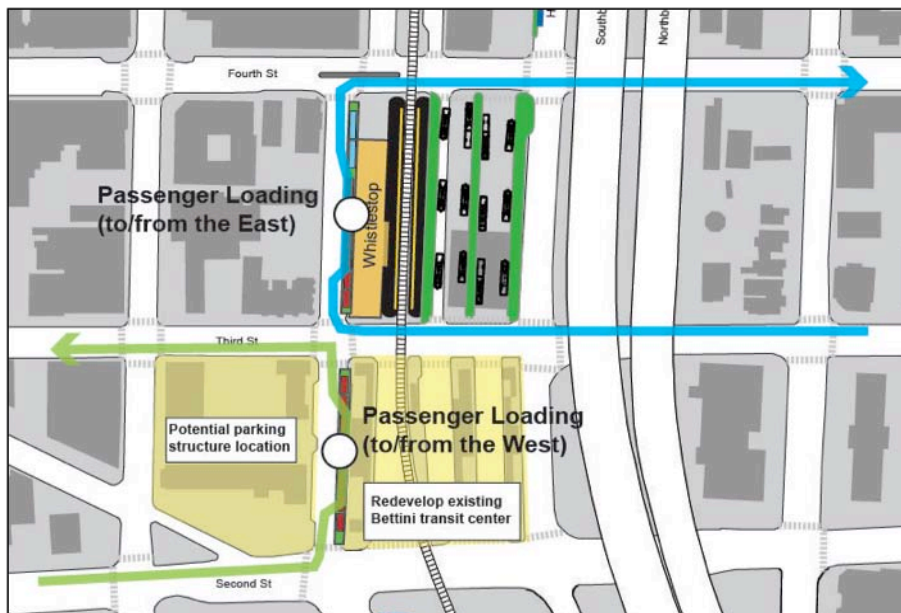
Figure VI-13: Bettini and Integrated Transit Center Passenger Loading

Integrated Transit Center Vision

Figure VI-14 shows the planned routes for drivers accessing the passenger loading areas from areas to the east and west under both transit center visions. Providing the two blocks for passenger loading provides convenient access.



Bettini Vision



Integrated Transit Center Vision

Figure VI-14 Routes for Passenger Loading

VII. Street Circulation

This section details the recommended changes to the street network that are required to achieve the plan's vision and support the other land use and transportation elements.

1. Street Network Context

Downtown San Rafael is located at a critical nexus of the region's roadway network. The US 101 / Central San Rafael interchange is the major regional access point for residents and workers in San Rafael, San Anselmo, and Fairfax. Second and Third Streets serve as the major east-west routes connecting these communities. The Downtown San Rafael SMART station and the Bettini transit center are located along these major corridors. Cars and buses traveling on the local street system often experience significant delays during peak travel periods and throughout the day. Figure VII-1 presents the major elements of the study area street network.

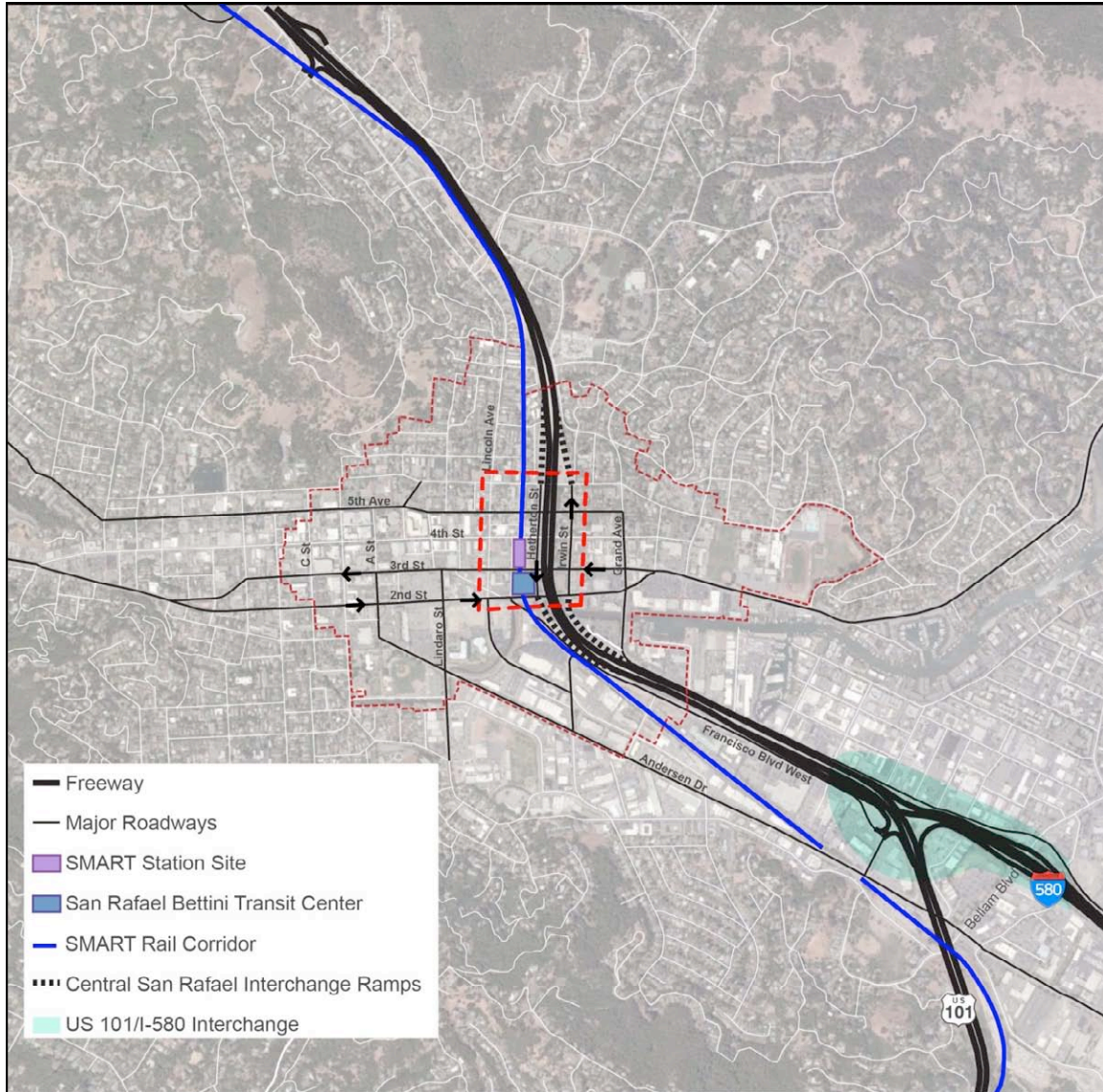


Figure VII-1: Study Area Roadway Network

The major roadways in the street network are described below.

- **US 101:** US 101 is a major north-south freeway that connects San Rafael and other Marin County communities with San Francisco to the south and Sonoma County to the north. In the vicinity of the Plan Area, US 101 is an eight-lane freeway with four lanes in each direction: three mixed-flow travel lanes and one high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) travel lane. The segment of US 101 in Central San Rafael carries approximately 100,000 vehicles per day.
- **US 101 Central San Rafael Interchange:** The Central San Rafael Interchange provides the primary access to US 101. The interchange consists of a set of freeway ramps at Second Street and Mission Avenue that are connected by Hetherton and Irwin Streets. Second Street provides access to US 101 to/from the south, and Mission Avenue provides access

to US 101 to/from the north. Hetherton and Irwin Streets, which are local streets maintained by the City of San Rafael, serve as frontage roads for US 101.

- **Hetherton and Irwin Streets:** Irwin and Hetherton Streets are one-way streets that function together to connect the freeway ramps at Second Street and Mission Avenue. Hetherton Street is a three to four-lane one-way street traveling southbound between Mission and Second, while Irwin Street is a three to four-lane one-way street traveling northbound from Second to Mission. These one-way streets form a single high-capacity connector that functions similar to freeway frontage roads.
- **Second Street and Third Street:** Second and Third Streets form a one-way couplet that carries traffic east-west through Downtown San Rafael. Second Street and Third Street are both three to four-lane one-way arterial streets that extend from West End Avenue west of downtown to Point San Pedro Road east of US 101. These streets serve as the primary route for traffic from San Rafael and communities to the west, such as San Anselmo and Fairfax, to access US 101 at the Central San Rafael Interchange. Concentrating traffic on Second and Third Street does reduce traffic congestion on other street within downtown San Rafael, such as Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue.
- **Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue:** Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue are minor two-lane east-west roadways that primarily function as local traffic collectors. These streets also form the backbone of the City's downtown commercial district west of Lincoln Avenue.
- **Tamalpais Avenue and Tamalpais Avenue East:** Tamalpais Avenue is a north-south two-lane street that runs between Second Street and Laurel Place (north of Mission Avenue) west of the railroad tracks. Tamalpais Avenue has offset intersections at Fourth Street and Mission Avenue. Tamalpais Avenue East is a northbound one-way street east of the railroad tracks that runs parallel to Tamalpais Avenue. Tamalpais Avenue East begins at Third Street and terminates at Mission Avenue.
- **US 101/I-580 Interchange:** The US 101/I-580 Interchange is just south of the Plan Area and provides a second point of access to the regional freeway network via ramps at Bellam and Francisco Boulevards. The interchange provides a limited freeway-to-freeway connection serving westbound I-580 to northbound US 101 and southbound US 101 to eastbound I-580.

Major elements and critical issues within the Plan Area are summarized below:

- **Traffic signal coordination within the Plan Area:** The City of San Rafael Public Works Department maintains a coordinated traffic control system along major streets within the Plan Area and Downtown San Rafael. This system ties together traffic signals along critical corridors to help maintain traffic flow and manage queues between intersections.
- **Traffic congestion on Second Street approaching the Central San Rafael Interchange:** Traffic originating from Downtown San Rafael and areas west of the City, such as San Anselmo and Fairfax, use Second Street as the primary route to access US 101. Heavy traffic demand and close intersection spacing contribute to recurring congestion on the

segment of Second Street approaching US 101. Despite the congestion on Second Street, this route remains a more attractive option than Sir Francis Drake Boulevard for drivers traveling to and from areas west of San Rafael. Sir Francis Drake Boulevard necks down from four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) to two travel lanes (one lane in each direction) just south of San Anselmo. This reduction in capacity on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard renders Second Street the more attractive option to access US 101.

- **Traffic congestion on Second/Third and Hetherton/Irwin:**The majority of traffic headed to/from US 101 must use these one-way couplets. Very close spacing results in queues spilling back between intersections.
- **Traffic queues on the southbound US 101 on-ramp extend from the freeway mainline back to Second Street:** The on-ramp from Second Street to southbound US 101 experiences congestion due to the merge from two lanes to one lane on the ramp. Also, the ramp forms an auxiliary lane on southbound US 101. Congestion in the auxiliary lane, combined with the effect of cars merging from the auxiliary lane into the mainline mixed-flow travel lanes on southbound US 101, can result in queuing on the on-ramp from Second Street.
- **Lack of dedicated striped bike lanes within the Plan Area:** The Plan Area roadway network has limited right-of-way available to dedicate to bike lanes, particularly along the major corridors of Second, Third, Hetherton, and Irwin Streets. There is currently no north-south bike route that connects the Puerto Suello and Mahon Creek Class I bikeways (Note: a Class I bikeway is an “off-street” facility on paved right-of-way completely separated from any street or highway).

Managing the existing levels of congestion within Downtown San Rafael is already a considerable challenge. The growth in population and jobs over the last twenty years has led to higher traffic levels and increased delays to cars and transit. Accommodating the growth identified in the City’s General Plan and the Station Area Plan will require improvements to support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes.

Significant increases in roadway capacity are probably not feasible or appealing from a planning and environmental perspective. Capacity projects typically involve widening the roadway to add travel lanes or exclusive left or right-turn lanes. But modest and targeted capacity increases that do not require the acquisition of additional right-of-way should be considered. The City currently does not have any adopted plans for increasing the capacity of the roadway network within the Plan Area. The City does actively monitor traffic conditions and adjusts signal timing parameters along its coordinated traffic signal corridors to help manage queues and maintain traffic flow.

2. Recommended Changes to Street Network

The vision for the plan is to create a street network that supports the various land use and transportation elements of the plan, while balancing the needs of all users: cars, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The street network vision includes the two elements described below:

1. The relocation of the Bettini transit center allows for modest roadway capacity increases along Hetherton Street without widening streets or acquiring additional right-of-way.

Providing a modest increase in roadway capacity will improve traffic operations for cars and buses. Two traffic capacity improvements become possible with the relocation of the Bettini transit center:

- Provide a second right-turn lane from Hetherton to Third Street: The relocation of bus operations to the site east of the SMART station will eliminate the need for passengers transferring between rail and bus to cross Third Street at Hetherton. This will result in fewer pedestrians crossing at this leg of the intersection, which makes this crosswalk less necessary. The removal of a crosswalk is not a preferred strategy in most circumstances because it reduces pedestrian connectivity. However, several factors support providing additional capacity at this location: i) the relocation of the bus operations, ii) the existing congestion along Hetherton Street, and iii) the significant increase in traffic forecasts. The removal of the crosswalk will allow right-turn movements (from southbound Hetherton Street to westbound Third Street) from a dedicated right-turn lane (as exists today) and providing a shared right-turn/through lane. No widening is required.
- Provide a fourth travel lane on Hetherton Street from Third to Second Streets: the removal of the curbside bus bays on Platform A (A1 and A2) at the existing Bettini transit center frees up this right-of-way for an additional southbound travel lane on Hetherton Street between Second and Third Streets. The ultimate street cross-section would include four travel lanes, with two dedicated southbound left-turn lanes to eastbound Second Street and two dedicated through lanes to the US 101 southbound on-ramp.

2. Install new traffic signal controllers and interconnection systems to incorporate advanced rail preemption at all traffic signals adjacent to the at-grade crossings.

Advanced rail preemption allows rail detection devices along the tracks to communicate directly with traffic signals and coordinated signal systems on streets that intersect the tracks at-grade. These rail detection systems are integrated with the traffic signals and provide information to the signals far in advance of a train approaching the at-grade crossing. The advanced rail detection triggers a “track clearance” phase, which once initiated provides adequate green time to clear vehicle queues from the tracks. The clearance phase occurs before the gate arms are activated. This clearance ranges from 12 to 15 seconds depending on the distance from the crossing to the intersection. Once the track clearance phase ends, the gate arms are activated and stay down until the train has safely

cleared the intersection. The length of time that the gate arms are down is also based on the train speed and the length of the train. The following signal upgrades are recommended:

- Install new signal controllers and upgraded signal interconnect to allow for advanced rail preemption: The City's existing signal controllers within the Plan Area and interconnect system used to coordinate the traffic signals are not capable of integrating with an advanced rail preemption system. The close spacing of the traffic signals requires a high level of coordination to ensure that vehicles progress smoothly from one intersection to the other. To maintain a high degree of coordination capabilities along the major corridors (Second and Third Street), signal upgrades are warranted at several locations that are not immediately adjacent to the SMART tracks. The following list provides the fourteen intersections that will eventually require signal and interconnection upgrades:
 1. Second Street / Lincoln Avenue
 2. Second Street / Tamalpais Avenue
 3. Second Street / Hetherton Street
 4. Second Street / Irwin Street
 5. Third Street / Lincoln Avenue
 6. Third Street / Tamalpais Avenue
 7. Third Street / Hetherton Street
 8. Third Street / Third Street Irwin Street
 9. Fourth Street / Lincoln Avenue
 10. Fourth Street / Hetherton Street
 11. Fifth Avenue / Lincoln Avenue
 12. Fifth Avenue / Hetherton Street
 13. Mission Avenue / Lincoln Avenue
 14. Mission Avenue / Hetheron Street

Figure VII-2 presents additional detail on the street network changes. The conversion of Tamalpais Avenue to one-way travel can occur independent of SMART and the relocation of the Bettini bus operations to the site east of the SMART station. The one-way concept works if SMART terminates at Downtown San Rafael or Larkspur.

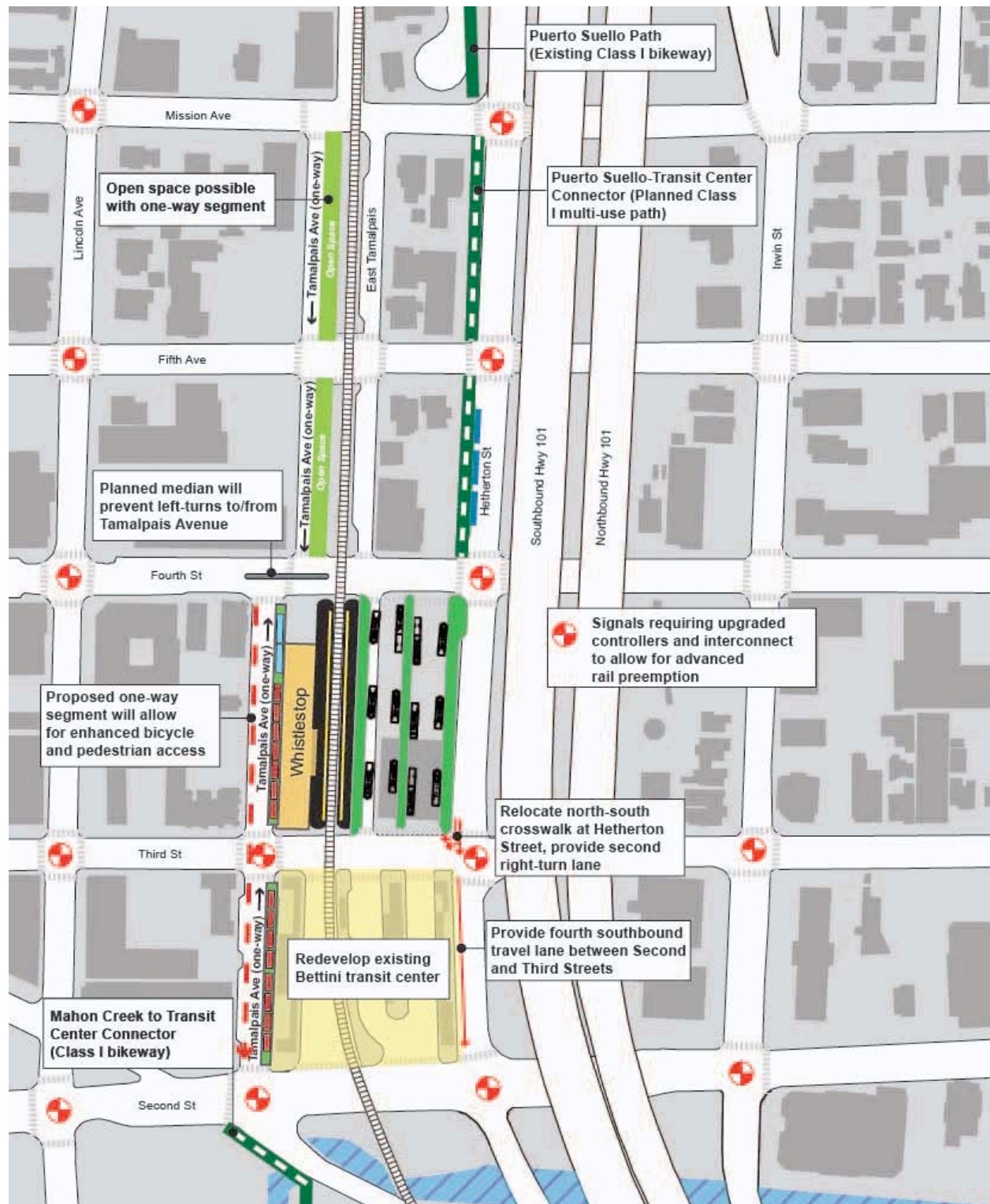


Figure VII-2: Street Network Changes

VIII. Multi-Agency Implementation Strategy

This chapter provides a framework for implementing the recommendations discussed in previous sections of the Plan. The framework is organized around five goals for the Plan Area:

1. Integrate rail and bus transit within the Plan Area.
2. Provide a street network that supports the Plan's land use vision while balancing the needs of motorists, bus and rail customers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
3. Enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely and comfortably get to, around, and through the Plan Area.
4. Supply adequate parking for new housing and businesses while encouraging transit use, walking, and bicycling.
5. Explore making zoning changes to provide a consistent urban fabric on both sides of the freeway.
6. Enable new transit-oriented development characterized by increased activity, a mix of uses, and a strong sense of place.

The Plan is largely conceptual, laying out broad goals for the Plan Area and options for achieving these goals. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the steps required to implement the Plan's goals, including areas where further study will be required; identify potential funding sources; and document lessons learned from the planning process that should be considered during implementation.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the overarching lessons learned and considerations for implementation. The second section briefly discusses the concepts explored in the planning process for implementing each goal, including timing and prioritization of potential implementation actions, which agencies would lead implementation, benefits and key considerations, and areas for further study. These factors are itemized in Implementation Matrix 1. The final section of the implementation strategy describes typical funding and financing sources for the types of capital improvements recommended in the Plan. Potential funding/financing sources for each concept are identified in Implementation Matrix 2.

Major Lessons Learned & Considerations for Implementation

The planning process involved multiple community meetings, extensive discussion among the agencies that compose the Joint Project Team and the members of the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency Citizen's Advisory Committee, and intensive study of transit operations, opportunity sites, and traffic, parking, and bicycle/pedestrian conditions. Several lessons emerged from this process that should guide implementation of the Plan:

- *Fostering a strong sense of place will be critical to meeting the community's vision for the Plan Area as the gateway to Downtown San Rafael.* The implementing agencies

should work together to integrate the Plan's elements into a cohesive whole and create a unique sense of place. Streetscape treatments, pedestrian amenities, artwork, public gathering spaces, restored natural features, and high-quality architecture and design will all contribute to achieving this vision.

- *A range of improvements to the street network and bicycle/pedestrian conditions will be required to set the stage for future redevelopment and to promote transit ridership.* The Plan Area is characterized by significant traffic congestion and gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network. Addressing these challenges and providing improved bicycle and pedestrian conditions will help encourage transit ridership and make the area more attractive for new development.
- *Modifying parking and land use regulations, and potentially providing a new municipal parking facility, may open up opportunities for redevelopment.* The opportunity sites analysis conducted as part of the planning process showed that modifications to parking, height, density, and floor area ratio regulations can assist in enabling the kind of development envisioned for the Plan Area. Even after regulatory changes are made, however, the opportunity sites are small enough that accommodating sufficient parking as part of individual development projects is likely to remain a challenge. Improved parking demand management, combined with strategies to enable some off-site parking such as the development of a new municipal parking structure, may play an important part in facilitating new development.
- *While some projects are critical to accommodating the SMART station and train service, most of the projects identified in the Plan would provide significant benefits independent of SMART's presence in the Plan Area.* Some improvements are needed to accommodate SMART's initial operations, and will need to be completed within a relatively short time frame. However, the Plan also includes improvements to the Bettini Center, street network, and bicycle and pedestrian conditions that address challenges that existed prior to SMART. While these latter improvements could be implemented independently of SMART's development, the introduction of SMART service may create a perfect opportunity to make these long-needed improvements that will also help optimize the benefit of SMART to San Rafael.
- *Multiple agencies must work together in order to successfully implement the Plan.* The members of the Joint Project Team will need to continue coordinating their efforts in order to achieve the vision laid out for the Plan Area. In particular, integrating rail and bus transit and improving bicycle and pedestrian conditions will require long-term cooperation among the City and various transit agencies that operate within the Plan Area.

Discussion of Implementation Actions

This section reviews the individual implementation actions that fall under each goal, including timing and prioritization, which agencies would lead implementation, benefits and key considerations, and areas for further study. The discussion is summarized in Implementation Matrix 1.

In general, discussion of potential funding and financing sources is reserved for the following section. However, for a few implementation actions, funding is expected to pose a particular challenge. In these cases, potential sources are discussed below as a key consideration. The reader should consult the “Potential Funding Sources” section for additional information.

Goal 1. Integrate rail and bus transit within the Plan Area.

The Plan examined strategies for integrating SMART service with existing Golden Gate Transit, Marin Transit, and other transportation providers in the Plan Area. Some improvements in the Plan Area will be required in the short-term to accommodate SMART’s Initial Operating Segment (IOS). Others will be required when SMART is extended to Larkspur, but could be implemented earlier to improve operations at the existing Bettini Center. Finally, the Plan created a long-term vision for relocating bus operations to a consolidated transit complex on the SMART station block. Like the mid-term vision, this long-term vision could be implemented independently of SMART’s extension to Larkspur. Implementing the short-, mid-, and long-term visions will require coordination among the City and the multiple transit providers that serve the Plan Area.

Concept A. "Day 1" Opening Day: SMART IOS to Downtown

In order for SMART’s IOS to operate safely and in accordance with California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulations, a series of improvements will be required prior to implementation of the IOS, including:

- i. Install new traffic signal controllers and upgrade signal interconnection systems.
- ii. Mitigate the likelihood of jaywalking between the Bettini Center and SMART station through physical design, coordination among transit agencies, and enforcement of jaywalking regulations.
- iii. Coordinate bus and rail schedules to minimize disruption of bus service.

SMART will need to work with the City – which owns and operates the street right-of-way and traffic signals – to install new traffic signal controllers and signal interconnection systems.

Potential mitigations to minimize the likelihood of jaywalking might include physical barriers at the ends of the platforms to direct pedestrians to the crosswalks; schedule coordination and a coordinated holding policy among certain bus and rail routes to reduce passengers’ desire to jaywalk; and periodic policing of jaywalkers. Coordinating bus and rail schedules will also help minimize disruption of bus routes when SMART service begins. In particular, bus routes that

operate on Fourth Street should be scheduled to avoid periods when rail will pre-empt traffic signals. The potential impacts of the IOS and these recommended mitigation measures are discussed in further detail in Chapter V, Section 2 of the Plan. SMART, Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District (GGBHTD), and other transit operators will need to work together to implement these recommendations.

Concept B. Mid-Term: Improve Operations of the Current Bettini Center.

The Plan recommends the following medium-term actions to improve operations at the existing Bettini Center:

- i. Modify Platform C and Platform D when rail service is extended to the south, as described in Chapter V, Section 2 of the Plan
- ii. Consider options for providing additional space for shuttles, buses, taxis, kiss-and-ride, and other passenger loading activities, as discussed in Chapter VI, Section 6 of the Plan.

Modifications to Platforms C and D are necessary in order for transit providers to continue full use of the Bettini Center when SMART extends service to the south. These improvements will have the added benefit of allowing transit providers to operate four bus bays on the east curb of Platform D, which could otherwise be limited to three bus bays because of the wide turning angles required to access the platform. SMART and the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District (GGBHTD), which owns the Bettini Center, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will govern the division of responsibility for making these improvements.

The Plan considers options for dedicating additional curb space for passenger loading activities (see Chapter VI, Section 6). Providing adequate loading space may require the removal of some existing on-street parking. Additional improvements are envisioned to improve pedestrian access to the Bettini Center and between the Bettini Center and SMART station; these are discussed under Goal 3.

Concept C. Long-Term: Consolidate bus and rail service in a San Rafael Transit Complex surrounding the SMART station.

The Plan's long-term vision recommends creating an integrated San Rafael Transit Complex surrounding the SMART station. Implementing this vision would require the following steps:

- i. Investigate the availability of parcels on the SMART station block for the relocation of the Bettini Center.
- ii. Investigate the financial feasibility of relocating bus operations from the existing Bettini Transit Center to a new location.
- iii. Determine whether a relocated transit center could adequately accommodate transit services.
- iv. If relocation is determined to be feasible, pursue relocating bus services to the SMART station block.

- v. If relocation is pursued, create safe connections between the SMART station and bus platforms and consider building a shared bicycle parking facility.
- vi. If and when there is additional transit demand and funds are available, consider how expansion of the transit complex can occur (see discussion in Chapter V, Section 2 and the Plan “Alternatives Report”).

Creating a consolidated Transit Complex in the block bounded by Third, Fourth, Tamalpais, and Hetherton Streets would have the benefit of improving convenience and safety for passengers transferring between bus and rail, eliminating the likelihood that passengers will jaywalk across Third Street. Relocating bus operations would also create a potential opportunity to redevelop the existing Bettini site, and allow for street capacity improvements (see Goal 2, Concept B). However, the planning process identified a number of challenges that the City and transit agencies will need to consider in deciding how to move forward with implementation:

- *Site control.* While consolidating the transit stations is a long-term goal, achieving this vision may require the City/transit agencies to acquire control over an appropriate site before the rest of the project is ready to move forward.
- *Coordination among multiple agencies.* The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District (GGBHTD) owns the current Bettini Center. However, the property was acquired and developed in part with state and federal funds. The state and/or federal funding agencies would need to be consulted on any plans to repurpose the property. The San Rafael Redevelopment Agency was also involved in the development of the existing Bettini Center. Although the Redevelopment Agency is not expected to be in a position to participate in creating a new consolidated complex,² other City departments would likely work in conjunction with GGBHTD to prepare and implement a more detailed plan for relocating the Center. The GGBHTD Board would need to approve the plan; the City would need to approve any changes to the public right-of-way. SMART, Marin Transit, and the other transit providers that would operate in the transit complex would also need to be involved in planning and implementing the project.
- *Challenging redevelopment site.* The SMART right-of-way – where the train will run when SMART service extends to Larkspur – bisects the Bettini Center site. If the Bettini Center were relocated, the train right-of-way would present a challenge for redeveloping the site. Because of the awkward configuration of the Bettini Center parcels, parking for any development project would most likely have to be provided off-site.
- *Securing funding.* The Plan envisions funding the consolidated transit complex in part by selling or leasing the existing Bettini Center site. Because state and federal funding was used to purchase the original site, state and/or federal approval may be required to implement this plan. The challenges associated with redeveloping the Bettini Center site would also affect the potential for raising funds by selling or leasing the site. In addition,

² San Rafael’s Redevelopment Agency was dissolved on February 1, 2012 in accordance with state law.

projects of this size and scope in California have historically relied in part on redevelopment agency funds; however, the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency, like all other redevelopment agencies in the state, were dissolved on February 1, 2012.³

- *Impact on bus capacity and travel times.* The analysis performed as part of the planning process showed that a consolidated transit complex on the SMART station block may provide enough capacity to serve the existing Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit service levels (as of late 2011), with a small amount of additional capacity to support expanded service during peak periods. However, the relocation was shown to negatively impact travel times on some bus routes. The planning process considered several locations for additional bus bays (discussed in Chapter V, Section 2, above, and the Plan “Alternatives Report”) adjacent to the integrated transit complex that could allow for system expansion and reduce travel times on critical bus routes.

Goal 2. Provide a street network that supports the Plan's land use vision while balancing the needs of motorists, bus and rail customers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The Plan identified several potential improvements to the street network that would improve multi-modal access to the transit center and help address congestion in the Plan Area. The City would take the lead on these implementation actions, which involve changes to the City-owned right-of-way.

Concept A. Consider modifications to Tamalpais Avenue to create a “front door” to the transit stations and facilitate passenger loading and bicycle/pedestrian activities.

The planning process evaluated alternatives for modifying Tamalpais Avenue between Second Street and Mission Avenue to allow this section of Tamalpais to serve as a “front door” to the transit stations, facilitate passenger loading activities, and create space for wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and green space. The City, in working with all interested parties including but not limited to the City’s Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, owners of properties fronting Tamalpais, will explore various solutions to improve bicycle and pedestrian access within the planned area without compromising safety considerations for the public. This includes but is not limited to examining access along Tamalpais and to other key transit facilities in the area.

³ Potential funding sources are discussed in further detail below.

Concept B. If and when the Bettini Center is relocated, explore implementing traffic capacity improvements on Hetherton Street while balancing the needs of other modes.

Moving the Bettini Center to the SMART station block could potentially allow the City to increase capacity on Hetherton Street, as discussed in Chapter VII, Section 2 and the “Alternatives Report.” However, this proposal would require further study. Any improvements to traffic capacity should be considered in light of potential impacts on bus and rail, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Goal 3. Enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely and comfortably get to, around, and through the Plan Area.

The Plan identified a number of improvements that would improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and encourage more people to walk or bike to, around, and through the station area. The City would largely take the lead on these projects, except for projects that involve right-of-way owned by other agencies.

Concept A. Consider options for improving bicycle and pedestrian access on Tamalpais Avenue.

As shown in Figure VIII-1, the Plan considered several bicycle and pedestrian improvements to Tamalpais Avenue, including widening sidewalks, constructing bicycle facilities, and providing green space in the City-owned right-of-way adjacent to the SMART tracks. These improvements would require modifications to Tamalpais Avenue (see Goal 2, Concept A, above) in order to free up the required right-of-way.

Concept B. Explore other options for improving pedestrian and bicycle conditions in the Plan Area.

The Plan identified a number of other potential improvements that would significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle conditions in the Plan Area, as shown in Figure VIII-1 and discussed in Chapter VI, Sections 3-5. These improvements could include:

- i. Wider sidewalks, improved pedestrian crossings, and extended curbs adjacent to the transit stations, including on Second Street, Third Street, and/or Hetherton Street.
- ii. Wider sidewalks and improved pedestrian connections under US 101 at Third, Fourth, Fifth, and/or Mission Streets.
- iii. Bicycle signage on Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Lincoln Avenue, and Mission Avenue.
- iv. A multi-use path along the southern side of Second Street between Hetherton and Irwin Streets. The path could be further extended to Francisco Boulevard, with an undercrossing of the southbound US-101 on-ramp, an at-grade crossing of the SMART tracks, and a new east-west crosswalk at Francisco Blvd.

- v. Improved public space along Fourth Street or a Station Plaza at the north end of the Whistlestop site.

Providing wider sidewalks and improved pedestrian connections around the transit stations would facilitate passenger access and transfers between the Bettini Center and SMART station. The proposal to install bicycle signage on Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Lincoln Avenue, and Mission Avenue is included in the 2011 San Rafael Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. Creating a multi-use path would contribute to completing the City's Canalfront pathway, described in the San Rafael Canalfront Conceptual Design Plan. Improved public space or a new public plaza could provide a visual link between the SMART station and Fourth Street, improve the pedestrian environment, and help encourage transit use. The southeast corner of Fourth Street and West Tamalpais is currently privately owned by Whistlestop. The City should work with the property owner and SMART on a variety of ways to improve the pedestrian experience and link to Fourth Street and Downtown.

While the City would lead most of these projects, some would require coordination with other agencies, including Caltrans (which owns and operates park-and-ride lots under US-101), the transit agencies (since service could potentially be impacted by curb extensions or other street changes), and private property owners. Cost will be a key consideration in deciding how to prioritize improvements.

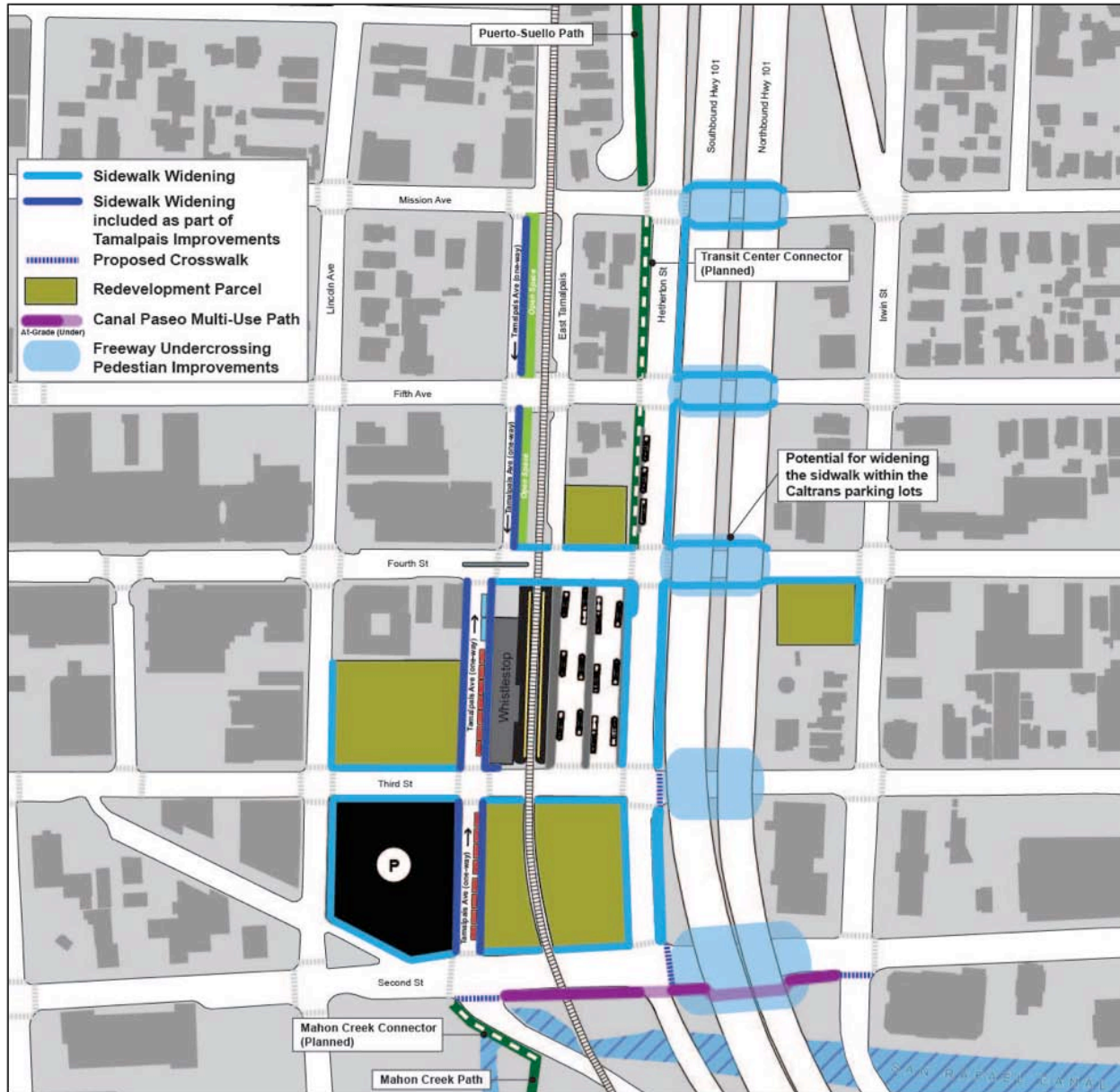


Figure VIII-1. Recommended Pedestrian Improvements

Concept C. Consider adding wayfinding signs and features in and around the Plan Area.

New wayfinding features in and around the Plan Area would help orient visitors to San Rafael and facilitate access to the transit stations, downtown, and shopping and other amenities. The City could coordinate efforts with GGBHTD, which is implementing MTC’s Hub Signage Program – a regional effort to install standardized wayfinding signs, transit information displays, and real-time transit departure indicators – at the Bettini Center. SMART and GGBHTD could also consider asking MTC to modify the scope of the Hub Signage Program to include integrated wayfinding for the SMART station and bus transit center.

Concept D. Work with developers and property owners to provide wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities along the frontages of the transit center and parcels as they redevelop.

Portions of Hetherton Street and Tamalpais Avenue have narrow sidewalks and other pedestrian deficiencies. As redevelopment occurs, the City could work with developers to widen the sidewalks and provide pedestrian amenities adjacent to development sites.

Goal 4. Supply adequate parking for new housing and businesses while encouraging transit use, walking, and bicycling.

The Plan recommends a series of changes that the City could make to parking policies and identifies opportunities for expanding parking capacity in the Plan Area. These recommended actions are intended to address concerns about the parking spaces that will be removed to accommodate SMART service; ensure efficient use of new and existing parking spaces, whether publicly or privately owned; limit the impact of parking from commuters, visitors, and new residents on existing residential neighborhoods surrounding the Plan Area; facilitate the development of small parcels; and encourage the use of alternatives to the private automobile.

Concept A. Review parking regulations for the Plan Area and consider making changes to encourage more efficient use of privately owned parking spaces.

The Plan explored a range of short- and long-term options for adjusting City regulations to ensure that privately-held parking is managed efficiently and to facilitate the development of small lots that can dedicate limited space to parking. Options include reducing minimum parking requirements, allowing off-site parking for new development, allowing tandem parking and/or unbundled parking, and/or allowing bicycle parking in lieu of some portion of required automobile parking (see Chapter IV, Section 2). Implementing these changes would require making amendments to the City's zoning code.

Concept B. Consider implementing public parking management strategies in the Plan Area.

The Plan also evaluated parking management strategies that the City could implement to help accommodate public parking demand, while protecting existing residential parking and encouraging walking, bicycling, and taking transit over driving. As discussed in Chapter IV, Section 1, potential strategies include installing new signage to show parking locations and time limits; establishing short-term parking zones; installing electronic meters; and/or exploring strategies to manage parking on residential streets.

As discussed below, funding for parking management strategies may be available from TAM and MTC.

Concept C. Explore the feasibility of establishing car-share near the transit stations.

A car-share program could help reduce reliance on the private automobile, in turn reducing parking demand and vehicle travel. A private car-share organization would most likely provide and maintain the cars; the City could dedicate municipally-owned parking spaces for car-share and work with TAM to provide additional incentives as required.

Typically, car-share organizations require proximity to transit, a mix of land uses, difficult parking conditions in the surrounding neighborhood, and a significant pool of existing or potential car-share members before they will locate car-share vehicles in a new area. These factors are likely to become more prevalent with the arrival of SMART service and continued redevelopment in the Plan Area.

Concept D. Explore opportunities to provide additional parking for bicycles.

Various agencies play a role in providing bicycle parking in the Plan Area. The City sets bicycle parking requirement for new development. Golden Gate Transit provides bicycle parking to serve bus riders. SMART will provide bicycle parking to serve train riders when SMART service begins. Caltrans provides additional public bicycle parking under Highway 101.

As demand for bicycle parking increases, there may be opportunities for these agencies to create efficiencies by coordinating the provision of new bicycle parking. For example, additional bicycle parking could potentially be provided in the Whistlestop area or at the current Bettini Center site if bus operations were relocated.

Concept E. Consider options for providing additional municipal parking.

The strategies described above will help manage parking demand and supply in the Study Area. Even with these strategies in place, however, new parking spaces may still be required to replace the parking that will be removed with the construction of the SMART station and to absorb future increases in parking demand from new residents, businesses, visitors, and SMART and other transit customers.

The planning process identified and evaluated several potential sites for a new municipal parking garage (discussed in Chapter IV, Section 1). Creating such a garage would require the City to take additional steps, including:

- i. Investigating the availability of parcels in the Study Area that could be acquired for the development of a parking garage.
- ii. Developing a financing strategy.
- iii. Acquiring site; planning and developing parking garage.

Financing and timing would be the primary challenges involved in creating a new parking garage. San Rafael's existing parking districts do not currently have a mechanism for generating revenue to develop new parking facilities. In order to finance a new facility, therefore, the City

would need to explore options such as establishing parking impact or in-lieu fees for new development, and/or creating a new special assessment district.⁴

The former option – an impact or in-lieu fee – is a pay-as-you-go strategy that poses a potential timing challenge: in order to generate sufficient funding from impact or in-lieu fees to develop a garage, significant new development would be required; on the other hand, the development opportunity sites in the Plan Area are mostly small parcels that will be challenging to redevelop unless sufficient off-site parking is available. Because parking impact/in-lieu fees are tied to new development, the resulting revenue stream fluctuates over time according to changes in the real estate market and the availability of development opportunities. These kinds of revenues are not typically viewed as reliable or predictable enough to serve as security for the repayment of bonds.

A new special assessment district could create a revenue stream against which the City could issue bonds, providing up-front funding for a parking garage. However, forming such a district requires a majority vote of the property owners.

Concept F. Consider ways to meet parking demand for transit users as needed.

As transit use expands, reserving additional parking spaces for transit riders may be required. However, the City and transit agencies should prioritize other modes of accessing the transit stations, such as walking, bicycling, buses, etc.

Goal 5. Explore making zoning changes to provide a consistent urban fabric on both sides of the freeway.

The Plan provides several recommendations intended to provide a consistent urban fabric on both sides of US 101, and to ensure that – if bus operations are relocated – the Bettini Transit Center site is redeveloped in a way that benefits the community and contributes to a vibrant, mixed-use environment.

Concept A. Consider allowing increased height limits and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) on certain blocks adjacent to US 101 to match existing requirements in nearby areas.

Extending the character of the “Hetherton Gateway” area (the portion of the Plan Area located west of US 101) under the freeway to Irwin Street would help make the Plan Area a welcoming gateway to San Rafael. In order to accomplish this goal, the Plan recommends making the following changes to building height and FAR requirements:

⁴ Revenues from parking fees in San Rafael have not historically generated sufficient revenue to pay for new parking facilities. Potential financing mechanisms and the difference between pay-as-you-go and debt financing are discussed in further detail below, in the section on potential funding sources.

- In the blocks bounded by Tamalpais Avenue, Hetherton, Mission Avenue, and Second Street, allow building heights up to 66 feet and FAR up to 2.0 to match the current height limits and FAR allowed on Tamalpais between 3rd Street and 5th Ave.
- In the blocks along the west side of Irwin Street between Mission Avenue and Fourth Street, both sides of Irwin Street between Fourth and Second Streets, and along the south side of Fourth Street between Irwin Street and Grand Avenue, allow building heights up to 54 feet and FAR up to 1.5 to match the heights and FAR allowed west of US 101.

The recommended height and FAR, as well as existing height and FAR requirements in surrounding areas, are shown in Figure VIII-2 and Figure VIII-3. These regulatory changes would require amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, as well as environmental review.

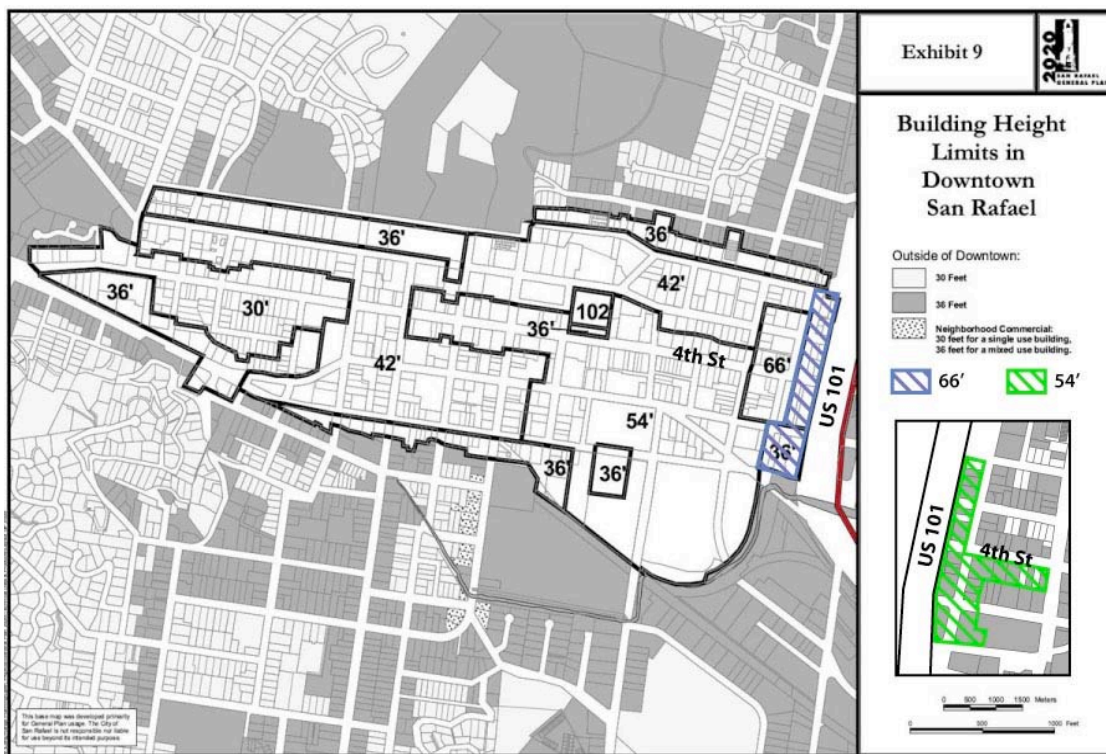


Figure VIII-2. Recommended Building Height Limits

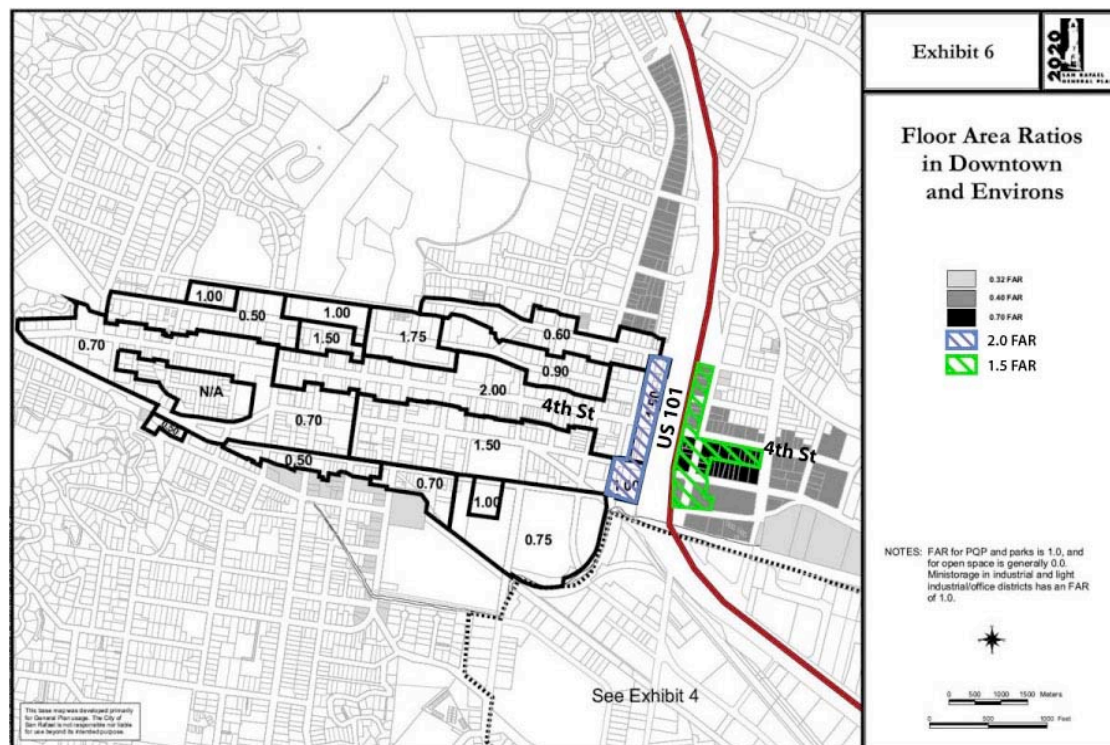


Figure VIII-3. Recommended FAR

Goal 6. Enable new transit-oriented development characterized by increased activity, a mix of uses, and a strong sense of place.

In order to enable a greater variety of building types and achieve the Plan's vision of a vibrant, mixed-use district, the Plan recommends that the City consider allowing additional height and FAR increases in exchange for community amenities, and removing maximum density requirements on residential units.

Concept A. Explore allowing a height and/or FAR bonus for developments that provide community benefits in the Plan Area.

In exchange for community benefits such as public open space, public art, providing carshare or bicycle parking, etc., the City could consider allowing discretionary height or FAR bonuses in addition to those required by state law. These discretionary height and/or FAR bonuses would be implemented separately from the proposed increases in allowable height and FAR discussed in Goal 5, Concept A. Allowing increased building height limits could allow a greater diversity of building types, contributing to a more vibrant urban fabric that serves as a gateway to downtown San Rafael. The actual building heights/FARs and level of community benefits that could be achieved would depend on market conditions when development proposals come forward. Establishing a new height and/or FAR bonus would require amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, as well as environmental review.

Concept B. Explore removing maximum density requirements for residential uses in the Plan Area.

The opportunity site assessment performed as part of the planning process found that under current regulations, maximum density was the most restrictive regulation limiting the types of residential buildings that can be built in the Plan Area. In other words, the maximum density is typically reached before either the maximum building height or maximum FAR. By removing or relaxing this density requirement, the City would effectively allow height and FAR limits to determine the density and number of residential units that can be built on a given site. Changing the density requirement require amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, as well as environmental review.

Concept C. Facilitate reuse of the Whistlestop site

The Plan recognizes the Whistlestop site as critical to creating a strong sense of place and providing character for the area, and recommends reusing the site in a manner that integrates well with the station design and related activities, creates an active ground floor use, and provides a gathering place for the area. Recommended options to be explored include:

- Address the lack of parking at the building. This could be addressed through site design, zoning considerations, including permitting off-site parking.
- Integrate the SMART station platforms with the Whistlestop site to create compatibility and improve a functional integration of uses and pedestrian connections.
- Create an attractive link to the Fourth Street retail core and Downtown.
- Provide an active, welcoming point of arrival to Downtown San Rafael.
- Integrate the site with transit passenger drop-off and loading activities on Tamalpais Avenue.

Concept D. Facilitate eventual reuse should the Bettini Transit Center be relocated.

To facilitate the site's eventual reuse as an active mixed-use development should bus operations be relocated, the Plan recommends rezoning the Bettini Center site to conform to the surrounding Hetherton Office zoning, a designation that permits a variety of retail, office, and multi-family residential uses.

Implementation Matrix 1. Implementation Concepts: Lead Agencies, Prioritization, Timing, Benefits and Key Considerations

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	LEAD AGENCIES	PRIORITY*	TIMING**	BENEFITS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/NOTES
Goal 1. Integrate rail and bus transit within the Plan Area.					
A. "Day 1" Opening Day: SMART IOS to Downtown					
i. Install new traffic signal controllers and upgrade signal interconnection systems.	City/SMART	High	Short	Allows for advanced coordination between traffic signals and approaching trains.	Required to address impacts of IOS.
ii. Mitigate the likelihood of jaywalking between the Bettini Center and SMART station through physical design, coordination among transit agencies, and enforcement of jaywalking regulations.	Transit agencies	High	Short	Improve pedestrian safety.	Requires coordination among SMART, GGBHTD, and other transit operators.
iii. Coordinate bus and rail schedules to minimize disruption of bus service.	Transit agencies	High	Short	Minimize disruption of bus service.	Requires coordination among SMART, GGBHTD, and other transit operators.
B. Mid-Term: Improve Operations of the Current Bettini Center.					
i. Modify Platform C and Platform D to accommodate SMART when rail service is extended to the south.	GGBHTD (Key partner: SMART)	High	Medium to Long	Required to accommodate SMART's extension to the south, while continuing full use of the existing Bettini Center platforms. Provides additional right-of-way to accommodate bus bays and passenger loading zones.	Memorandum of Understanding between SMART and GGBHTD will govern division of responsibility.
ii. Consider options for providing additional space for shuttles, buses, taxis, kiss-and-ride, and other passenger loading activities	City	High	Medium to Long	Provide passenger loading zones.	May require removal of existing on-street parking. Will require further study of traffic impacts.
C. Long-Term: Consolidate bus and rail service in a San Rafael Transit Complex surrounding the SMART station.					
i. Investigate the availability of parcels on the SMART station block for the relocation of the Bettini Center.					
ii. Investigate the financial feasibility of relocating bus operations from the existing Bettini Transit Center to a new location.					
iii. Determine whether a relocated transit center could adequately accommodate transit services.	City/GGBHTD/SMART/Other transit agencies	Medium	Long	Improve convenience and safety for passengers transferring from bus to rail; provide opportunity for redevelopment of existing Bettini Center site; enables traffic capacity improvements to Hetherton and Third Streets.	Will require coordination among multiple agencies, including approval of the GGBHTD and consultation of state and federal funders. Will require further study of financial feasibility, site design, impact on bus service, and options for providing additional bus bays if demand for transit increases. May require the City/transit agencies to acquire control over an appropriate site before the rest of the project is ready to move forward.
iv. If relocation is determined to be feasible, pursue relocating bus services to the SMART station block.					
v. If relocation is pursued, create safe connections between the SMART station and bus platforms and consider building a shared bicycle parking facility.					
v. When there is additional transit demand and funds are available, consider how expansion of the transit complex can occur.					
Goal 2. Provide a street network that supports the Plan's land use vision while balancing the needs of motorists, bus and rail customers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.					

Implementation Matrix 1. Implementation Concepts: Lead Agencies, Prioritization, Timing, Benefits and Key Considerations

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	LEAD AGENCIES	PRIORITY*	TIMING**	BENEFITS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/NOTES
A. Consider modifications to Tamalpais Avenue to create a "front door" to the transit stations and facilitate passenger loading and bicycle/pedestrian activities.	City	Low	Medium	Create a "front door" to the Transit Center; facilitate passenger loading; create space for wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and green space	Some modification to the Tamalpais cross-section may be required to create sufficient space for bicycle/pedestrian improvements. Requires further study.
B. If and when the Bettini Center is relocated, explore providing traffic capacity improvements on Hetherton Street while balancing the needs of other modes.	City	Low	Long	Improve traffic circulation.	Requires further study. Potential improvements to traffic capacity should be considered in light of impact on other modes.
Goal 3. Enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely and comfortably get to, around, and through the Plan Area.					
A. Consider options for improving bicycle and pedestrian access on Tamalpais Avenue.	City	High	Medium	Encourage bicycling and walking; improve safety.	Some modification to Tamalpais cross-section may be required to create sufficient space for bicycle/pedestrian improvements. Requires further study.
B. Explore other options for improving pedestrian and bicycle conditions in the Plan Area, such as:					
i. Wider sidewalks, improved pedestrian crossings, and extended curbs adjacent to the transit stations, including on Second Street, Third Street, and/or Hetherton Street.	City/Transit Agencies	High	Short	Improve bicycle and pedestrian access to transit stations.	Curb extensions or other changes to the street network may require coordination with transit agencies.
ii. Wider sidewalks and improved pedestrian connections under US 101 at Third, Fourth, Fifth, and/or Mission Streets.	City/Caltrans	Medium	Medium	Encourage bicycling and walking; improve safety.	Requires coordination with Caltrans and the tenants who lease the Caltrans-owned parking lots under US 101. Includes the potential for widening sidewalks within the Caltrans park-and-ride lots, installing public art, improving street lighting, and providing other pedestrian amenities.
iii. Bicycle signage on Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Lincoln Avenue, and Mission Avenue.	City	High	Short	Encourage bicycling and walking; improve safety; contribute to the implementation of the 2011 San Rafael Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.	Implements 2011 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.
iv. A multi-use path along the southern side of Second Street between Hetherton and Irwin Streets. The path could be further extended to Francisco Boulevard, with an undercrossing of the southbound US-101 on-ramp, an at-grade crossing of the SMART tracks, and a new east-west crosswalk at Francisco Blvd.	City	Low	Long	Encourage bicycling and walking; contribute the completion of the Canalfront pathway.	Described in the San Rafael Canalfront Conceptual Design Plans. Potentially expensive and challenging due to environmental considerations involving the creek and water table.
v. A Station Plaza at the north end of the Whistlestop site at the southeast corner of Fourth Street and West Tamalpais Avenue.	City	High	Medium	Link the SMART station with Fourth Street; improve the pedestrian environment and encourage transit use.	The southeast corner of Fourth Street and West Tamalpais is currently occupied by parking for the Whistlestop building; these parking spaces will be removed to accommodate the construction of the SMART station. In order to create the Station Plaza, the City would need to acquire control of the land.
C. Consider adding wayfinding signs and features in and around the Plan Area.	City/Transit Agencies	Medium	Short	Encourage bicycling, walking, and taking transit.	Coordinate with MTC's Hub Signage Program.

Implementation Matrix 1. Implementation Concepts: Lead Agencies, Prioritization, Timing, Benefits and Key Considerations

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	LEAD AGENCIES	PRIORITY*	TIMING**	BENEFITS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/NOTES
D. Work with developers and property owners to provide wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities along the frontages of the transit center and parcels as they redevelop.	City/Developers	High	Medium	Encourage bicycling and walking; improve safety.	As redevelopment occurs.
Goal 4. Supply adequate parking for new housing and businesses while encouraging transit use, walking, and bicycling.					
A. Review parking regulations for the Plan Area and consider making changes to encourage more efficient use of privately owned parking spaces.	City	Medium	Short to Long	Facilitate development on small lots; provide an adequate supply of parking for new housing and businesses, while limiting parking to encourage transit use, walking, and bicycling, and protecting existing residential parking.	Options include reducing minimum parking requirements, allowing off-site parking for new development, allowing tandem parking and/or unbundled parking, and/or allowing bicycle parking in lieu of some portion of required automobile parking. Would require changes to the City zoning code.
B. Consider implementing public parking management strategies in the Plan Area.	City	High	Short to Long	Manage public parking demand while encouraging transit use, walking, and bicycling and protecting existing residential parking.	Potential strategies include installing new signage to show parking locations and time limits; establishing short-term parking zones; installing electronic meters; and/or exploring strategies to manage parking on residential streets.
C. Explore the feasibility of establishing car-share near the transit stations.	City (Key partner: TAM)	Medium	Short	Encourage alternatives to the private automobile.	Car-share organizations typically require proximity to transit, a mix of land uses, difficult parking conditions, and significant existing/potential car-share members. Car-share pods could be parked in existing City parking lots.
D. Explore opportunities to provide additional parking for bicycles.	City/Transit agencies	High	Short to Long	Encourage alternatives to the private automobile.	The City, GGBHTD, SMART, and Caltrans all play a role in providing bicycle parking in the Plan Area. As demand for bicycle parking increases, there may be opportunities for these agencies to create efficiencies by coordinating the provision of new bicycle parking.
E. Consider options for providing additional municipal parking. i. Investigate the availability of parcels in the Study Area that could be acquired for the development of a parking garage. ii. Develop a financing strategy. iii. Acquire site; plan and develop parking garage.	City	High	Long	Facilitate development on small lots; replace the off-street parking that will be eliminated with the construction of the SMART station; absorb future increases in parking demand.	Cost and timing of development, operations, and maintenance.
F. Consider ways to meet parking demand for transit users as needed.	City/Transit agencies	Low	Medium to Long	Encourage transit ridership.	As transit use expands, reserving additional parking for transit riders may be required.
Goal 5. Explore making zoning changes to provide a consistent urban fabric on both sides of the freeway.					
A. Consider allowing increased height limits and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) on certain blocks adjacent to US 101 to match existing requirements in nearby areas.	City	Medium	Short	Provide consistent urban fabric on both sides of the freeway.	Requires amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, environmental review.
Goal 6. Enable new transit-oriented development characterized by increased activity, a mix of uses, and a strong sense of place.					

Implementation Matrix 1. Implementation Concepts: Lead Agencies, Prioritization, Timing, Benefits and Key Considerations

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	LEAD AGENCIES	PRIORITY*	TIMING**	BENEFITS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/NOTES
A. Explore allowing a height and/or FAR bonus for developments that provide community benefits in the Plan Area.	City	Medium	Short	Allow a greater diversity of building types; contribute to a more vibrant urban fabric; obtain community benefits.	The actual building heights/FARs and level of community benefits that could be achieved would depend on market conditions when development proposals come forward. Requires amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, as well as environmental review.
B. Explore removing maximum density requirements for residential uses in the Plan Area.	City	Medium	Short	Allow a greater diversity of building types; contribute to a more vibrant urban fabric.	By removing or relaxing this density requirement, the City would effectively allow height and FAR limits to determine the density and number of residential units that can be built on a given site. Requires amendments to the General Plan and zoning code, as well as environmental review.
C. Facilitate reuse of the Whistlestop building or site.	City	Medium	Short	Ensure that the Whistlestop site is reused in a way that integrates well with the station design and related activities, creates an active ground floor use, and provides public gathering space.	Potential actions include assisting the current tenant with relocation and addressing the lack of parking at the building.
D. Facilitate eventual reuse should the Bettini Transit Center be relocated.	City	High	Long	Ensure that the Bettini Center site is redeveloped in a way that benefits the community and contributes to a vibrant, mixed-use environment	Plan recommends rezoning the Bettini Center site to conform to the surrounding Hetherton Office zoning.

*Definition of prioritization categories:

- High: Essential to accommodate SMART service or address critical traffic or bike/ped safety needs.
- Medium: Necessary to encourage transit use, bicycling, and walking, improve traffic conditions, or facilitate development.
- Low: Potentially helpful for meeting other Plan goals.

**Definition of timing categories:

- Short: Envisioned for the next 0-5 years
- Medium: Envisioned for the next 5-15 years
- Long: Envisioned in 15 or more years

Potential Funding Sources

This section provides an overview of funding and financing alternatives for the types of improvements considered in the Plan. Implementation Matrix 2 matches each concept described above with the range of potential funding and financial sources that are available.⁵ These sources should be approached as a menu of options rather than as a recommendation for any particular financing strategy. It is likely that some projects will be funded through a number of different local, state, federal, and even private sources, and the potential for utilizing a given source will vary depending on market conditions, funding availability, consent from property owners, and other factors. To arrive at the appropriate strategy, the City will have to make a series of decisions about the implementation process for each of the potential improvement projects.

“Funding” Versus “Financing”

The term “funding” refers to a revenue stream – whether from a tax, fee, grant, or other revenue source that generates money to pay for an improvement. “Financing” or “debt financing” refers to the mechanisms used to manipulate available revenue streams, so that agencies are able to provide infrastructure immediately, before revenue equal to the full cost of that infrastructure is available. Typically, financing involves borrowing from future revenues by issuing bonds that are paid back over time through taxes or fee payments. Although the terms “funding” and “financing” are often used interchangeably, the distinction is important because financing mechanisms almost always require that a funding source be identified to pay off the debt. For example, the land-based financing tools discussed below typically establish a new district-wide tax or fee that is used to pay back bondholders (or, in the case of tax-increment financing, dedicate a portion of future revenue generated by the existing property tax rate to pay back bondholders).

Debt financing is one way to approach paying for infrastructure for a plan area. Pay-as-you-go is another. In the pay-as-you-go approach, an improvement can only be made once a sufficient amount of tax or fee revenue is gathered to fund the improvement.

⁵ Implementation concepts falling under Goals 5 and 6 are excluded from Implementation Matrix 2 because they consist of regulatory changes that would not require project funding.

Table VIII-1 compares the advantages and disadvantages of pay-as-you-go and debt financing.

Table VIII-1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Pay-As-You-Go and Debt Financing Tools

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pay-As-You-Go	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little financial risk to City or district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements take longer to finance. Difficult to apply to larger-scale, more costly improvements.
Debt Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements can be made immediately. • Allows for financing of larger-scale, more costly improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some risk that future revenues will be insufficient to pay off debt within time frame. • Many cities and redevelopment agencies have reached their bonding capacity.

Potential Sources

A variety of funding sources are available for the types of infrastructure improvements envisioned in the study area. Sources include land-based district financing and other value capture tools, which leverage the value of the real estate development that occurs within a geographic area; user fees for revenue-generating infrastructure such as parking; local and regional transportation funding sources; and other state and federal grants.

District Financing

In California, the most commonly used land-based financing tools have historically included the formation of special assessment districts, community facilities districts (CFDs), and redevelopment agency tax increment financing (TIF) districts. However, as discussed below, the future of redevelopment TIF in California is highly uncertain, and infrastructure financing districts (IFDs) are increasingly under discussion as a potential alternative. All of these land-based financing tools depend on new real estate development to generate parcel-based taxes or property tax revenues to finance improvements.

- **Special Assessment Districts:** In a special assessment district, property owners within the district agree to pay an additional fee or tax in order to fund an improvement within a specific geographic area. The amount that each property owner pays must be proportional to the benefit the property will receive from the proposed improvement. Assessment districts are established by a majority vote of the property owners, and include everything from business improvement districts to sewer, utility, and parking districts.
- **Community Facilities Districts (CFDs):** Like special assessment districts, Mello-Roos Community Facilities Districts are formed when the property owners in a geographical area agree to impose a tax or fee on the land in order to fund infrastructure improvements. Unlike benefit assessment districts, however, CFDs are most commonly formed in cases where the geographic area encompasses a small number of property owners who intend to subdivide the land for sale. To be enacted, CFDs require a two-

thirds vote of property owners, but this threshold rarely poses a significant barrier because most proposed CFDs include few property owners. One provision of the Mello-Roos Community Facilities District Act is that these fees can also be proportionally subdivided and passed on to the future landowners. These fees can then be used either for pay-as-you-go financing or to pay off bonds issued against the anticipated revenue from the CFD.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** In California, redevelopment agencies have historically used tax-increment financing to raise funding for infrastructure improvements, land assembly, housing, and other redevelopment projects. TIF worked by freezing the property tax revenue in a redevelopment project area at its “base level” in the current year, and diverting additional tax revenue in future years into a separate pool of money. The redevelopment agency could then issue bonds to be paid back over time with TIF revenues.

The Plan Area and most of the Study Area fell within the City of San Rafael’s Redevelopment Project Area. However, in June 2011, the governor signed two bills that were slated to eliminate redevelopment agencies that did not agree to make annual payments for distribution to schools, fire protection agencies, and transit agencies. On December 29, 2011, the California Supreme Court ruled that the bill eliminating redevelopment agencies was constitutional, but that the second bill, which allowed the agencies to continue to exist if they paid the state for schools, fire protection agencies, and transit agencies, was invalid. After this ruling redevelopment agencies were required to dissolve as of February 1, 2012. Although the City of San Rafael assumed the role of “successor agency” to the redevelopment agency and will continue to implement existing enforceable obligations, TIF will not be available to fund new projects in San Rafael or elsewhere in California unless the state legislature takes further action.

- **Infrastructure Financing Districts (IFDs):** IFDs are increasingly under discussion as a potential alternative to redevelopment TIF. Like TIF, infrastructure financing districts (IFDs) divert new property tax revenues (the increment) to finance improvements. However, IFDs cannot divert property tax increment revenues from schools. Under existing California law, a city or county may create infrastructure financing districts by ordinance if a two-thirds majority of the voters in the proposed district approve the IFD. There are several proposed changes to the existing law that are currently being considered by the legislature as an alternative to TIF, including eliminating the requirement for voter approval to form and bond an IFD. Under current law, IFDs may be formed only in areas that have never been redevelopment project areas.

Table VIII-2 summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of these land-based financing tools. An important consideration in the case of both CFDs and assessment districts is that there is a limit to the amount that property owners are typically willing to contribute in annual property tax assessments. A commonly used rule of thumb for calculating the feasibility of implementing new assessments is that total property taxes, assessments, and obligations should not exceed two percent of a given property’s assessed value.

Table VIII-2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Land-Based Financing Tools

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Benefit Assessment District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less financial risk to City or public agency; risk transferred to individual property owners. • Requires basic majority vote of property owners. • Could lead to increased tax revenue based on private reinvestment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual property owners may be unwilling to absorb financing risk, especially for debt financing. • Assessment can be politically infeasible if existing property tax assessments total 2 percent of assessed value.
Community Facilities District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less financial risk to City or public agency; individual property owners take on more risk. • Because fees are passed on to end-users, developers are generally more receptive to their use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically only used in areas with a small number property owners who plan to subdivide their land for sale. • Property owners may fear that imposing fees will dissuade buyers or reduce achievable sales prices. • Assessment can be politically infeasible if existing property tax assessments total 2 percent of assessed value.
Tax Increment Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement does not cost individual property owners additional fees or taxes. • Improvements may lead to increases in sales and property tax revenue adjacent to redevelopment area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently unavailable in California. • Some risk to City if future property tax revenue falls short of projections. • Diverts future tax revenue from general fund. •
Infrastructure Financing District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement does not cost individual property owners additional fees or taxes. • Improvements may lead to increases in sales and property tax revenue adjacent to redevelopment area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require amendment to state law to utilize in a former redevelopment project area. • Requires a vote of two-thirds of property owners and approval from all affected taxing entities; cannot divert tax revenues from schools. • Diverts future tax revenue from general fund.

Other Value Capture Mechanisms

In addition to land-based districts, cities can – subject to various state and federal law – capture value generated by new development through direct negotiations and fees.

- **Development Agreements:** California law authorizes cities to conduct structured, bilateral negotiations with developers in order to obtain desired improvements in exchange for development rights. The extent to which a new development project can contribute to the provision of infrastructure or other public improvements depends on construction costs, lot size and configuration, parking ratios, market prices, and other factors related to the anticipated costs and revenues of the development project. All of these factors vary depending on the particular project and timing of development, so the amount of public benefits that can be provided is unpredictable and must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.
- **Impact Fees:** Development impact fees are a one-time charge to new development imposed under the Mitigation Fee Act. These fees are charged to new development to mitigate impacts resulting from the development activity, and cannot be used to fund existing deficiencies. This means that for improvements that benefit existing as well as new development, impact fees can only pay for the portion of the improvement that benefits the new uses. Cities must find other funding sources to cover the costs that benefit existing uses. Impact fees must be adopted based on findings of a reasonable relationship between the development paying the fee, the need for the fee, and the use of fee revenues.
- **In-lieu fees:** Similar to impact fees, an in-lieu fee allows a developer to pay a fee to satisfy a requirement that would otherwise entail providing infrastructure, an amenity, or mitigation measure on-site, such as parking or affordable housing.

User Fees/Rates

User fees and rates include the fees charged for the use of public infrastructure or good (e.g., toll road or bridge, water or wastewater system). Such fees and rates are typically set to cover a system's operating and capital expenses each year, which can include debt service for improvements to the system. The revenues generated from user fees help offset operations and maintenance costs. It may be possible to use some portion of user fee or rate revenue toward financing the costs of new infrastructure, though doing so may require raising rates.

Other Funds

- **City:** The City of San Rafael has limited funding available each year from the General Fund and various other sources for capital improvement projects.
- **Transit agencies:** While the public transit agencies that operate in the Plan Area have limited access to dedicated funding sources, they are eligible to apply for many regional, state, and federal grants. SMART and GGBHTD – which own the future train station site

and the Bettini Center, respectively -- signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2005 for the transfer of railroad assets from GGBHTD, the prior caretaker of much of the railroad right-of-way, to SMART. The MOU specifically addressed the future restoration of train service through the existing Bettini Center, with both parties agreeing to work cooperatively to design improvements to facilitate local bus, regional bus, and regional railroad transportation operations at the San Rafael Transportation Center, and to maximize federal, state and local funding opportunities to pay for the construction of such improvements. The MOU will govern this relationship; the matrix is intended to provide only a general sense of the types of projects for which the transit agencies may potentially be involved in securing funding.

- **Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM):** TAM is the congestion management authority (CMA) and transportation sales tax authority for Marin County. In this capacity, TAM administers funding for local transportation improvements and bus service using revenues from a 20-year increase in sales tax (Measure A, passed by County voters in 2004) and an annual vehicle registration fee (Measure B, passed in 2010). TAM also distributes some of the county's share of state and federal funding sources through programs like the local Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) and Safe Routes to School grant programs. Finally, TAM works with cities to nominate projects for the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) assembles every five years to plan how state and federal transportation funds will be allocated across the region over a 25-year period.

TAM funding is often awarded through a competitive process. In order to receive funding, a project must typically appear as a priority in a land use or transportation plan adopted by the local jurisdiction. TAM funding may be available for projects like maintaining local streets and pathways, improving bicycle and pedestrian conditions, or providing safe routes to school; the authority does not directly fund transit service or facilities. The authority has already programmed significant funding for improvements related to SMART; TAM's existing policy is not to program additional county discretionary funds for SMART-related improvements until the Initial Operating Segment is in service.

- **Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC):** MTC is the transportation planning and financing agency for the nine-county Bay Area region. As required by state and federal law, the agency assembles the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) every five years. This document outlines how MTC intends to distribute the funding it receives from the state and federal governments over a 25-year period. Typically, large transportation projects must be included in a region's RTP to receive state and federal transportation dollars. To be considered, a project's sponsors must work with their county's congestion management agency (in the case of San Rafael, the Transportation Authority of Marin) and undergo a competitive evaluation process.

In the past, MTC has also offered regional, competitive grants for which local jurisdictions (with the support of their county's CMA) could apply directly, such as the

Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program.⁶ However, a proposal currently under consideration would create a “OneBayArea Grant Program” to link transportation funding with the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Under this proposal, regional funding for the TLC program, Local Streets and Roads Rehabilitation, Regional Bicycle Program, and Safe Routes to Schools would be shifted to county CMAs. MTC is scheduled to make a decision about this proposal in the spring of 2012.

In addition, MTC promotes effective regional transit through regional programs such as Clipper and Regional Transit Connectivity (RTC). The Santa Rosa Transit Center is explicitly named a regional transit hub in the latter program and is required to conform to RTC signage standards. MTC funds portions of the RTC program.

- **Other State and Federal Grants:** The City, transit agencies, TAM, and MTC may pursue other state and federal funding opportunities as they become available. Recent examples include Proposition 1B, the 2006 California bond act that provided \$19.9 million for transportation projects, and the federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Discretionary Grants, appropriated as part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

⁶ TLC grants have provided funding for streetscape improvements that enhance multi-modal access to transit, transportation/parking demand management projects, and non-transportation infrastructure improvements. Grants have typically ranged from a few hundred thousand dollars to \$4 million or more. To be eligible for a TLC grant, projects must be located in designated Priority Development Areas.



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Implementation Matrix 2. Potential Funding/Financing Sources

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	DISTRICT FINANCING		VALUE CAPTURE FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT		USER FEES	OTHER FUNDS					
	Assessment District	TIF/CFD/IFD/Etc.	Development Agreements	Impact/In-Lieu Fees	Parking	City	SMART	GGBHTD	TAM	MTC	State/Federal Grants
Goal 1. Integrate rail and bus transit within the Plan Area.											
A. "Day 1" Opening Day: SMART IOS to Downtown											
i. Install new traffic signal controllers and upgrade signal interconnection systems.						X	X			X	X
ii. Mitigate the likelihood of jaywalking between the Bettini Center and SMART station through physical design, coordination among transit agencies, and enforcement of jaywalking regulations.							X	X			
iii. Coordinate bus and rail schedules to minimize disruption of bus service.							X	X			
B. Mid-Term: Improve Operations of the Current Bettini Center.											
i. Modify Platform C and Platform D to accommodate SMART when rail service is extended to the south.							X	X		X	X
ii. Consider options for providing additional space for shuttles, buses, taxis, kiss-and-ride, and other passenger loading activities						X	X	X			
C. Long-Term: Consolidate bus and rail service in a San Rafael Transit Complex surrounding the SMART station.											
i. Investigate the availability of parcels on the SMART station block for the relocation of the Bettini Center.											
ii. Investigate the financial feasibility of relocating bus operations from the existing Bettini Transit Center to a new location.											
iii. Determine whether a relocated transit center could adequately accommodate transit services.		X				X	X	X	X	X	X
iv. If relocation is determined to be feasible, pursue relocating bus services to the SMART station block.											
v. If relocation is pursued, create safe connections between the SMART station and bus platforms and consider building a shared bicycle parking facility.											
v. When there is additional transit demand and funds are available, consider how expansion of the transit complex can occur.											
Goal 2. Provide a street network that supports the Plan's land use vision while balancing the needs of motorists, bus and rail customers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.											
A. Consider modifications to Tamalpais Avenue to create a "front door" to the transit stations and facilitate passenger loading and bicycle/pedestrian activities.		X				X	X		X	X	
B. If and when the Bettini Center is relocated, explore providing traffic capacity improvements on Hetherton Street while balancing the needs of other modes.		X				X	X		X	X	
Goal 3. Enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely and comfortably get to, around, and through the Plan Area.											
A. Consider options for improving bicycle and pedestrian access on Tamalpais Avenue.		X	X	X		X			X	X	X
B. Explore other options for improving pedestrian and bicycle conditions in the Plan Area, such as											
i. Wider sidewalks, improved pedestrian crossings, and extended curbs adjacent to the transit stations, including on Second Street, Third Street, and/or Hetherton Street.	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
ii. Wider sidewalks and improved pedestrian connections under US 101 at Third, Fourth, Fifth, and/or Mission Streets.	X	X				X			X	X	X

Implementation Matrix 2. Potential Funding/Financing Sources

IMPLEMENTATION CONCEPTS	DISTRICT FINANCING		VALUE CAPTURE FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT		USER FEES	OTHER FUNDS					
	Assessment District	TIF/CFD/IFD/Etc.	Development Agreements	Impact/In-Lieu Fees	Parking	City	SMART	GGBHTD	TAM	MTC	State/Federal Grants
iii. Bicycle signage on Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Lincoln Avenue, and Mission Avenue.	X	X				X			X	X	X
iv. A multi-use path along the southern side of Second Street between Hetherton and Irwin Streets. The path could be further extended to Francisco Boulevard, with an undercrossing of the southbound US-101 on-ramp, an at-grade crossing of the SMART tracks, and a new east-west crosswalk at Francisco Blvd.	X	X				X			X	X	X
v. A Station Plaza at the north end of the Whistlestop site at the southeast corner of Fourth Street and West Tamalpais Avenue.	X	X				X			X	X	X
C. Consider adding wayfinding signs and features in and around the Plan Area.	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	
D. Work with developers and property owners to provide wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities along the frontages of the transit center and parcels as they redevelop.	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	
Goal 4. Supply adequate parking for new housing and businesses while encouraging transit use, walking, and bicycling.											
A. Review parking regulations for the Plan Area and consider making changes to encourage more efficient use of privately owned parking spaces.											
B. Consider implementing public parking management strategies in the Plan Area.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	
C. Explore the feasibility of establishing car-share near the transit stations.						X			X	X	
D. Explore opportunities to provide additional parking for bicycles.						X	X	X	X	X	
E. Consider options for providing additional municipal parking.											
i. Investigate the availability of parcels in the Study Area that could be acquired for the development of a parking garage.	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
ii. Develop a financing strategy.											
iii. Acquire site; plan and develop parking garage.											
F. Consider ways to meet parking demand for transit users as needed.						X	X	X	X	X	

Note: Implementation concepts falling under Goals 5 and 6 are excluded from this matrix because they consist of regulatory changes that would not require project funding.

IX. Appendix: Additional Transit Expansion Concepts

This section provides additional detail on various concepts for accommodating expanded bus service in the future. It is important to note that these concepts are not recommended elements of the Station Area Plan. However, they are presented here to illustrate various possibilities should future increases in transit demand warrant the expansion and future transit funding become available. Several of these concepts would require the acquisition of additional property.

The concepts were developed in collaboration with Golden Gate Transit. Each concept is consistent and compatible with the overall long-term transit vision presented in this plan – the relocation of bus operations to the site east of the SMART station and the creation of an integrated San Rafael transit complex around the SMART station. Each concept has been evaluated at a high level to understand the various “pros” and “cons” of each proposal.

Figure IX-1 presents the various transit expansion concepts. Concepts A through C are considered “on-street” options that could be accommodated within the public street right-of-way. Concepts 1 through 5 are options that would require property acquisition or are more challenging to implement. Platforms, buses, and some bus turning paths are shown for illustrative purposes. Additional variations of these concepts, developed by Golden Gate Transit, are included in the discussion presented below.

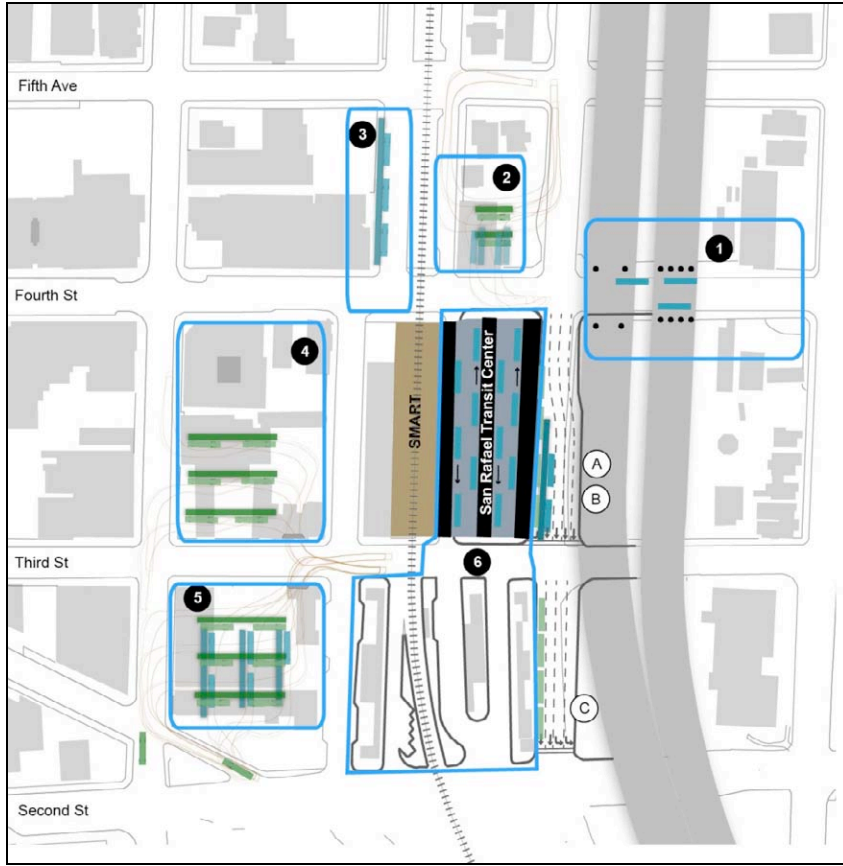


Figure IX-1 Bus Transit Expansion Concepts

On-Street Concepts

Concept A: Hetherton Island

This concept would include a median platform boarding island (approximately 150 ft in length) with a “transit only” bus lane located between the right-turn and through travel lanes on Hetherton Street at Third Street. This concept would require the widening and realignment of Hetherton Street between Second and Fourth Streets. The platform would have capacity for two buses. The island is intended to serve southbound commuter bus routes.

Pros:

- Greatly improves bus travel time on commuter bus routes that use US 101

Cons:

- Limited capacity and buses cannot layover for long periods of time as they do now
- Passengers must wait along a relatively narrow 6-8’ platform in the middle of a busy street
- Right turning traffic will be squeezed between the island platform and Platform A at the relocated transit center site

- No opportunity for providing a second right-turn lane
- Heavy pedestrian flows crossing in front of the right-turn lane will reduce the right-turn on red (RTOR) capacity and increase delay
- Hetherton from Fourth to Second Streets must be realigned to gain the additional space required for the platform and the transit-only lane
- The additional space and realignment of Hetherton Street would reduce Platform A's width and could conflict with the SB US 101 viaduct columns and creek on the east side of the street

Concept B: Hetherton On-Street Adjacent to the Relocated Transit Center Site

This concept would utilize a curbside lane along Hetherton Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Hetherton Street would have to be widened and realigned slightly to accommodate this additional bus lane. The platform would have sufficient capacity for four to five buses. A bus-only queue jump signal would be required for buses to exit onto southbound Hetherton Street.

Pros:

- More capacity than Option A with similar operational benefits
- Better experience for waiting passengers
- Less right-of-way impacts to Hetherton Street than Option A (likely requires widening only, not widening and realignment)
- Could still utilize a double right-turn lane (pro), but with no right turn on red (con)

Cons:

- Conflict of buses exiting the bays with heavy right-turn volume (this is why we did not include this option in the Alternatives Report)
- Would require a queue jump signal for exiting buses: this requires upgrades to the signal system at the intersection (e.g., special signal heads)
- Complex operation that would be unique to Marin County
- A queue jump would introduce another phase to the cycle at this intersection, making the signal less efficient and introducing additional delay

Concept C: Hetherton On-Street at the Existing Bettini Site

This concept would simply utilize the existing curbside bus platforms at the Bettini transit center on Hetherton Street between Second and Third Streets. This platform (Platforms A1 and A2) would operate the same as it does today, with capacity of four to five buses. This concept could be incorporated into the redevelopment of the Bettini site.

Pros:

- Likely to have the most transit capacity and the best operating performance
- No right-of-way impacts
- Relatively simple as no additional queue jumps are required
- Familiar location for passengers
- Potential for innovative transit-oriented development (TOD) design

Cons:

- Could limit the redevelopment potential of the Bettini site
- Would likely create a poor passenger and pedestrian experience along this block of Hetherton
- Disconnected from the rest of the transit center; connections will have a much more difficult time crossing Third Street because of the heavier traffic volumes
- Would have to keep the north-south crosswalk open, which would limit the options for providing the second right-turn lane from Hetherton to Third Street

Concepts Requiring Additional Property Or Challenging Implementation

Concept #1: Fourth Street

This concept would include three on-street bus bays on Fourth Street between Hetherton and Irwin Streets: two along the north curb and one along the south curb. The sidewalks on both sides of Fourth Street are constrained by the US 101 structural columns.

Pros:

- This is location of the previous bus transit center, before Bettini was constructed

Cons:

- Providing these bus bays would likely require the removal of the left-turn pockets on Fourth Street at both Hetherton and Irwin Streets. This would negatively impact traffic flow along Fourth Street.
- The narrow sidewalks would provide limited area for passenger waiting.

Concept #2: Site D

Acquire Opportunity Site D, located on the north side of Fourth Street between East Tamalpais and Hetherton Streets, and provide two east-west or north-south platforms.

Pros:

- North of Fourth Street, which could provide some operating benefits

Cons:

- Does not add many platforms
- Turn radius issues further constrain the ability to accommodate additional buses

Concept #3: Tamalpais Between Fourth and Fifth Streets

Provide one bus platform along the west curb of Tamalpais Avenue between Fourth and Fifth Streets with three to four bus bays.

Pros:

- Relatively easy to implement and would pick up three to four bays

Cons:

- Would require removing the median that will be constructed with the Puerto Suello Hill-Transit Center Connector project

Concept #4: Site A

Provide three east-west or north-south platforms with capacity of up to ten additional bays.

Pros:

- Provides a significant increase in capacity on a block closer to the Downtown Core

Cons:

- Issues related to bus turning radius within the block – this constrains the capacity
- The exit driveway on Lincoln Avenue would require buses to merge into congested conditions

Figure IX-2 presents one of Golden Gate Transit's variations on utilizing the Opportunity Site A, located north of Third Street between Lincoln and Tamalpais Avenues, as well as an alternative layout for the parcel east of the SMART station.

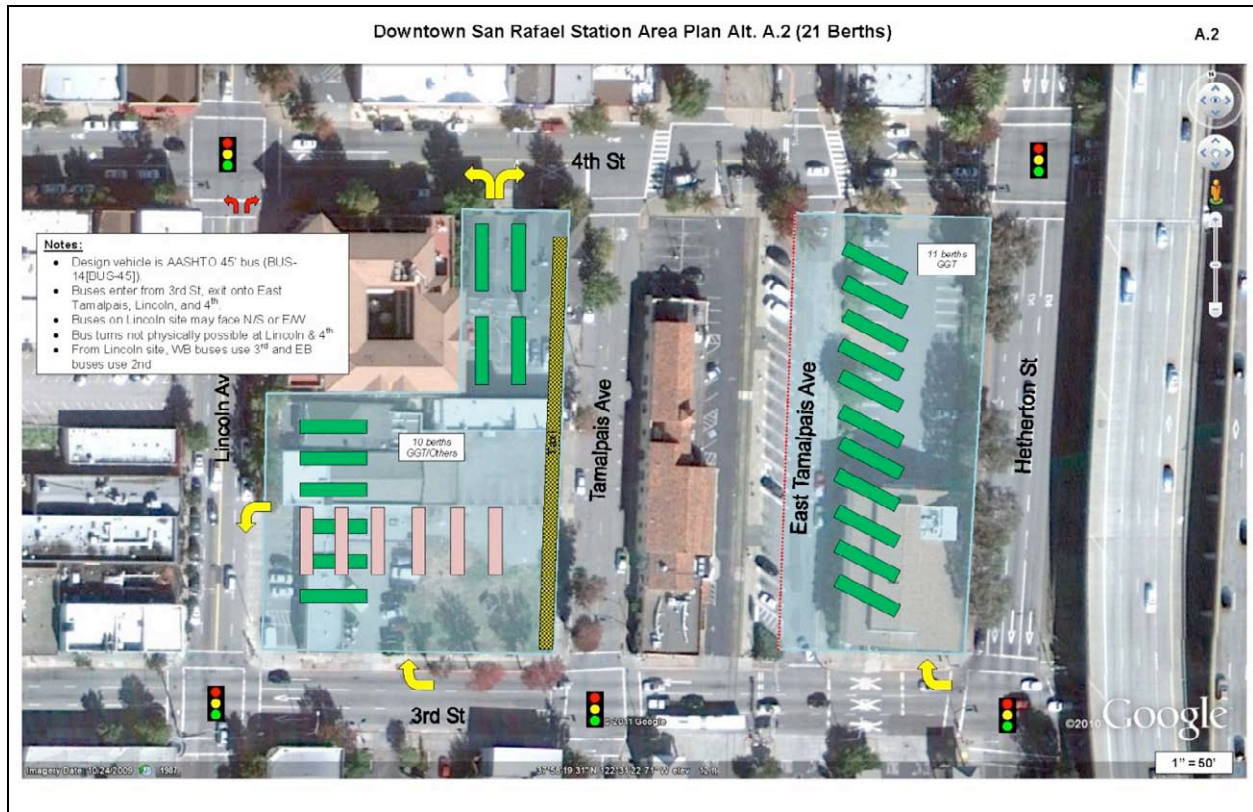


Figure IX-2: Golden Gate Transit Option 4a

Pros:

- Relatively simple access to and from the parcel east of the SMART station
- 10 total bays on the block west of the transit complex

Cons:

- Focusing all of the inbound bus traffic to the entry on Third will route all buses through the Hetherton Street / Third Street intersection; this intersection is projected to be congested in the future
- All of these bays are sized for 45 ft buses; the diagonal configuration will limit the ability to route longer 60 ft buses to the transit center
- Similar issues as described in Concept #5 above; a north south configuration is optimal as it will reduce bus and car conflicts, but buses exiting on to Lincoln will experience congestion and a tight right-turn maneuver from the transit center to northbound Lincoln
- Requires the taking of several parcels on the Salute block
- Swept path analysis of buses entering from Hetherton indicates that one or two southern bus bays would become unusable with the diagonal configuration

Figure IX-3 presents another variation.

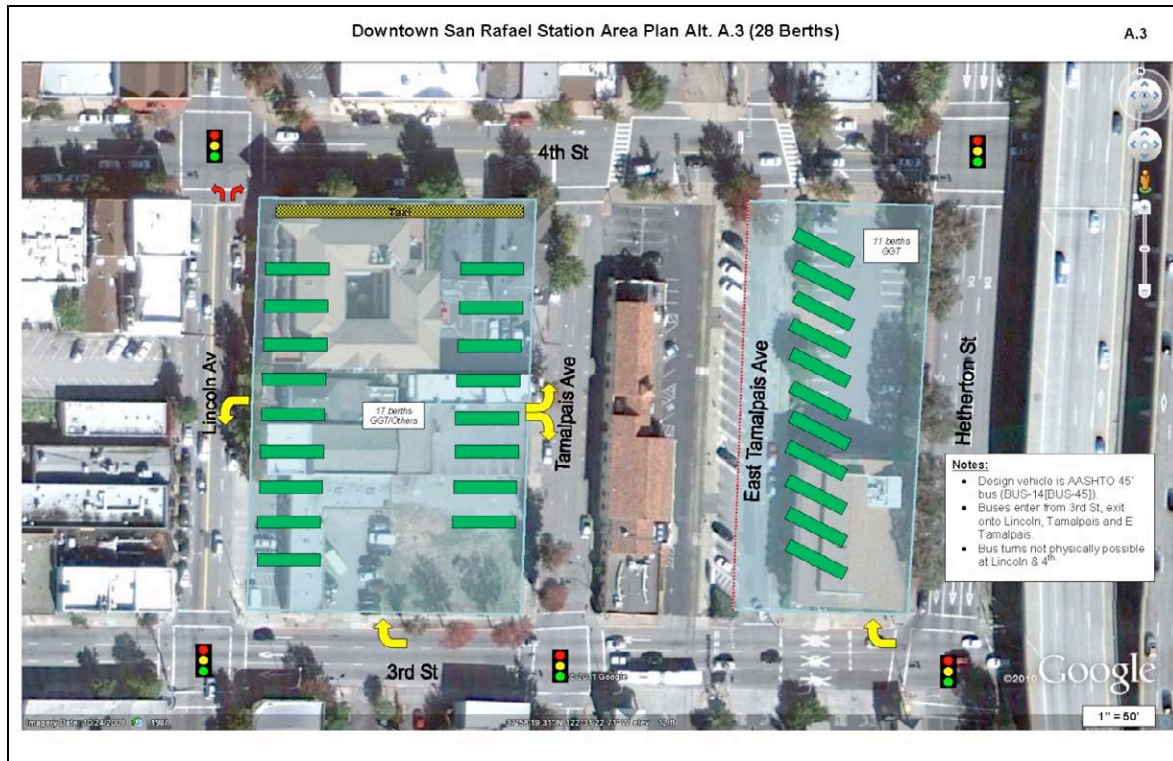


Figure IX-3 Golden Gate Transit Option 4b

Pros:

- This option has the most capacity adjacent to the SMART station (28 total bays)

Cons:

- Same constraints at the site east of the SMART station as Concept A.2
- The entire block along Lincoln from Third to Fourth Street has buses exiting; this increases conflicts between buses and cars and degrades the pedestrian environment
- Buses exiting to Tamalpais will create conflicts between buses and bicyclists, if the contraflow bike lane is constructed
- Potential turn radius issues at the Fourth Street/Lincoln Avenue intersection; this would require curb changes to permit these movements
- Residential, office and retail uses in the Clock Tower mixed-use project would be displaced

Concept #5: Site B

Provide three east-west or north-south platforms with capacity of up to six additional bays.

Pros:

- Provides a modest capacity increase
- Located adjacent to the existing Bettini transit center
- Located close Second Street and the US 101 on and off-ramps

Cons:

- Issues related to bus turning radius within the block – this constrains the capacity
- The exit driveway on Lincoln Avenue would require buses to merge into congested conditions
- Disconnected from the Integrated Transit Center block

Concept #6: Integrated Transit Center with the Existing Bettini Site

Maintains the existing Bettini transit center site and adds the proposed bus transit facility east of the SMART station (north of Third Street).

Pros:

- Provides the most bus capacity
- Provides bus bays adjacent to the existing Bettini transit center
- The existing location is familiar to riders and has on-street bays along Hetherton, which provides operating benefits to southbound buses

Cons:

- Implementation challenges –developing the Integrated Transit Center vision with bus platforms east of the SMART station is expensive and would likely require the sale and redevelopment of the existing Bettini transit center site to make this possible