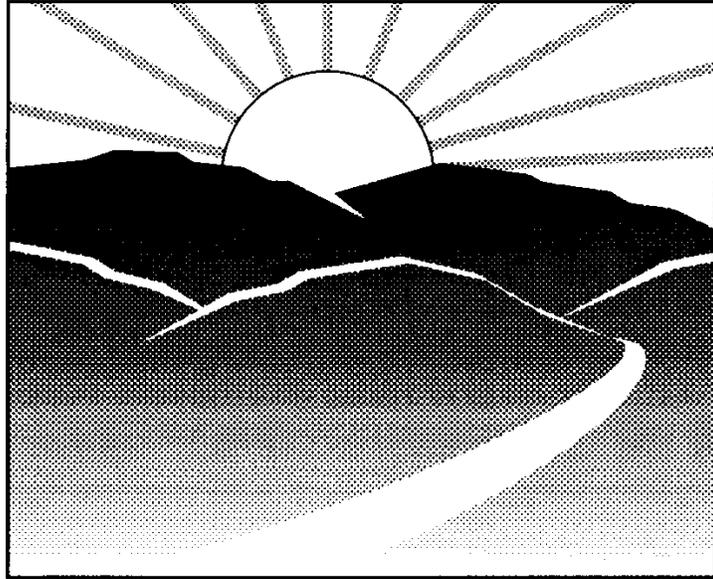


V I S I O N



North San Rafael

November 1997

San Rafael, California

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The Steering Committee is grateful to Ian MacLeod for his illustrations depicting our vision of North San Rafael - may they serve as inspiration to imagine the possibilities.

Vision North San Rafael

November 1997

San Rafael, California

Copies of this document and the Technical Appendix are available from the San Rafael Community Development Department. For a copy, or for information about how you can participate and help to bring this vision into reality, please call (415) 485-3085.

letter from the mayor

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SECTION I
INTRODUCTION

Background and History

In the spring of 1996, the City of San Rafael initiated a community visioning process to plan for the future of city areas north of Puerto Suello hill, an area known as North San Rafael. North San Rafael is home to over 15,000 people, renowned for its beautiful hills, sunny weather, thriving businesses and excellent schools. The last planning effort, fifteen years ago, resulted in the *Northgate Activity Center Plan*. With the success of *Our Vision of Downtown San Rafael* and the *Montecito/Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan*, the City Council and citizens started a similar effort to learn more about what the people who live, work, and play in North San Rafael would like for their community in the year 2010.

Beginning the Process

The community effort began with a Start-Up Committee. During four meetings, the Committee designed a process to provide opportunities for the North San Rafael community to help shape a vision for their future. Members set out to create a fun process with a broad and integrated approach that was realistic and feasible, and had extensive participation.

Guiding the Efforts

In July of 1996, the City Council used an application process to select 25 people to serve on the North San Rafael Vision Steering Committee. Collectively, the members reflect the many interests in our community: residents, business-owners, community and government. Council set the following charge for the Committee:

- Develop a broadly supported vision for the future of North San Rafael that addresses all of the essential elements of community such as: neighborhood identity, values and goals, housing, business and retail development, traffic, pedestrian and bicycle access, schools, recreation, open space, and aesthetics.
- The process will address incorporated city neighborhoods, and involve residents, business interests and property owners.
- The Vision will be the primary basis for updating city policies and programs affecting this area.
- The Vision will establish an environment for collaborative activities by the neighborhood and City government.
- The Vision will be completed within one year.

Profile of North San Rafael

This section presents a picture of North San Rafael in the past, as well as the community today.

The Community in the Past

North San Rafael is rich in history. Below are snapshots of the early settlers.

John Lucas was nephew of San Rafael pioneer Timothy Murphy (Don Timoteo), recipient of the Mexican Ranch Grant of San Pedro, Santa Margarita Y Las Gallinas of which North San Rafael was a part. When Lucas brought his bride to San Rafael in 1855, he found Don Timoteo had died leaving him the Santa Margarita Rancho. Lucas and Maria built a home in North San Rafael, where they lived until Lucas' death in 1896.

Manuel T. Freitas emigrated to California from the Azores in 1853. He became a business leader in San Francisco, as well as Portugal's Consul General. Although Freitas and his wife, Maria, owned a string of six ranches from Marin to Solano counties, they built their mansion and raised their nine children at their 'Home Ranch' in North San Rafael.

Shown here in 1953, the valley had been part of the Freitas Home Ranch since 1896. The ranch was transformed after the end of World War II. Highway 101 (across the lower half) a four-lane country road, became an interstate highway, and St. Isabella's church replaced the Home Ranch (buildings in the middle). Named Terra Linda ('beautiful land' in Portuguese) by Freitas' daughter Rose, the land today is home to 15,000 people.

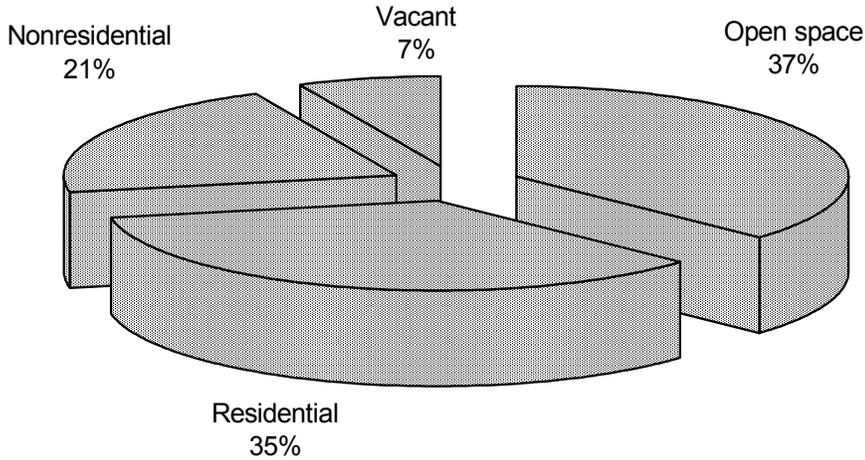
The Community Today

Over the past 40 years, North San Rafael has developed into a complete and well-balanced community. During the 1960s and 1970s the area was annexed into the City of San Rafael. With its variety of housing, shopping centers, corporate headquarters, industrial businesses, protected open spaces and the Marin County Civic Center, North San Rafael is a vital part of Marin County.

Land Use

North San Rafael has a variety of residential, civic, entertainment and business activities. In addition, hundreds of acres of protected open space and parks have been secured for the enjoyment of future generations.

Land Use in North San Rafael

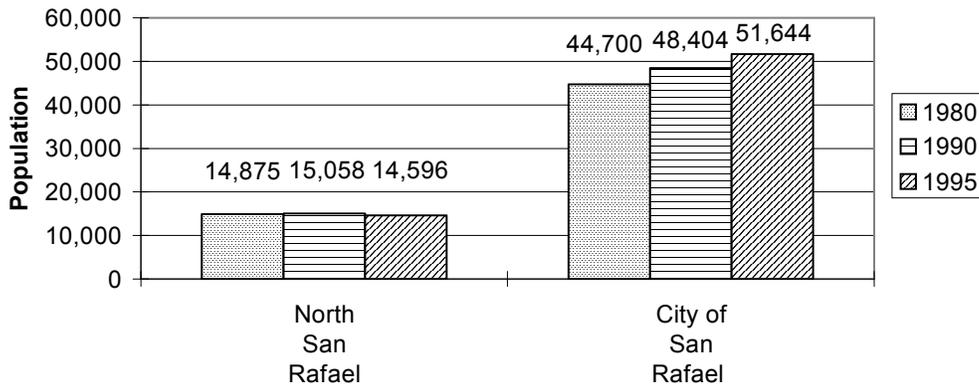


Source: San Rafael Community Development Department, 1997.

Population

Between 1980 and 1990, North San Rafael’s population increased slowly, by only 183 persons. In northern Terra Linda, the population declined by more than 1,000 people as household size decreased and the population grew older. The growth in North San Rafael since 1980 is due to new construction in southern Terra Linda and east of Highway 101. North San Rafael has about 28 percent of the city’s total population of 51,644.

Population, 1980, 1990 and 1995 (est.)

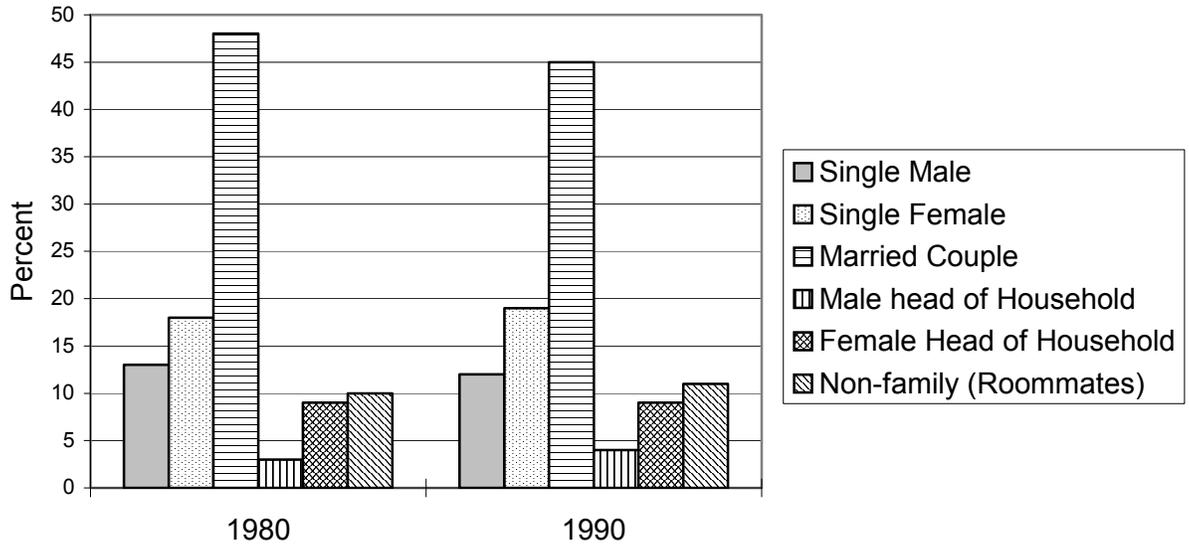


Source: U.S. Census, 1980, 1990, and Claritas, Inc. estimates

Types of Households

Overall, North San Rafael had more husband/wife households and single female households than the city as a whole, and fewer single male or non-family households. However, household types vary greatly by area, depending on the type of housing in the neighborhood.

Types of Household in North San Rafael, 1980 and 1990

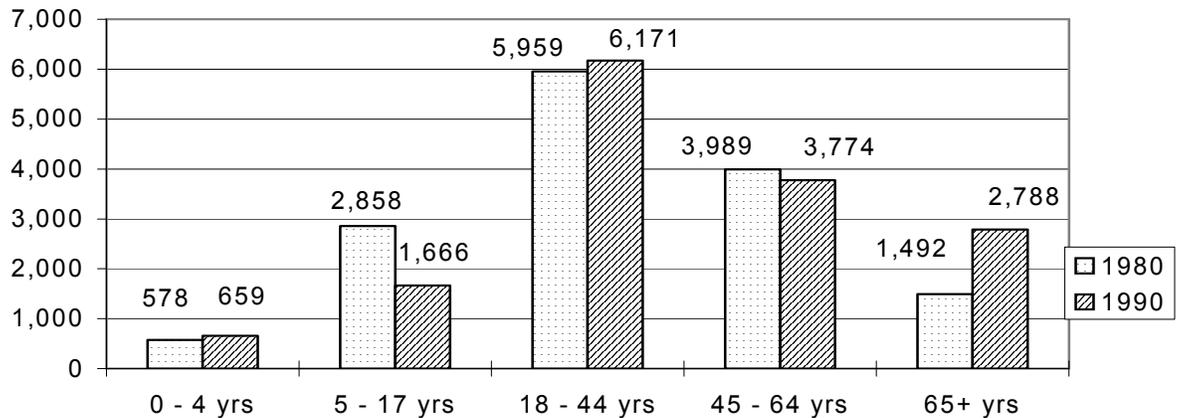


Source: U.S. Census, 1980 and 1990

Age of the Population

Throughout North San Rafael the number of persons over 65 years old increased from 10 percent in 1980 to 25 percent in 1990. Correspondingly, the number of children in North San Rafael declined between 1980 and 1990. The decrease in children aged 0-17 was most striking in Northern Terra Linda, declining from 28 to 19 percent of the population.

Age of Population, 1980 and 1990



Source: U.S. Census, 1980 and 1990

Household Income

In 1990, North San Rafael had higher incomes and fewer lower income households than the City as a whole. Within the community, northern Terra Linda had the most number of households with incomes over \$100,000, while southern Terra Linda had a higher-than-average percentage of households earning incomes less than \$20,000.

Household Incomes by Neighborhood, 1989

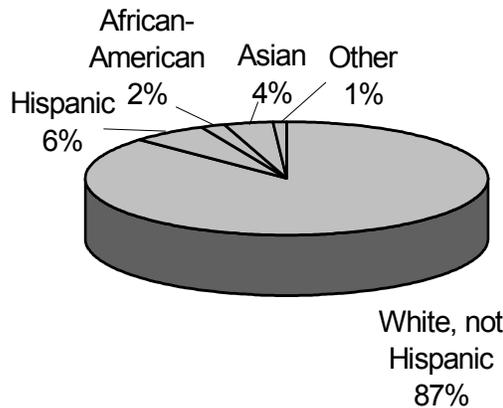
	Less than \$20,000	\$100,000+	Median
North San Rafael	18%	13%	\$46,250
San Rafael	21%	13%	\$41,992

Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Ethnicity

Similar to the City as a whole, ethnic diversity in North San Rafael increased from 1980 to 1990. Overall, however, this area of town remained less diverse than the city.

Ethnicity, North San Rafael, 1990

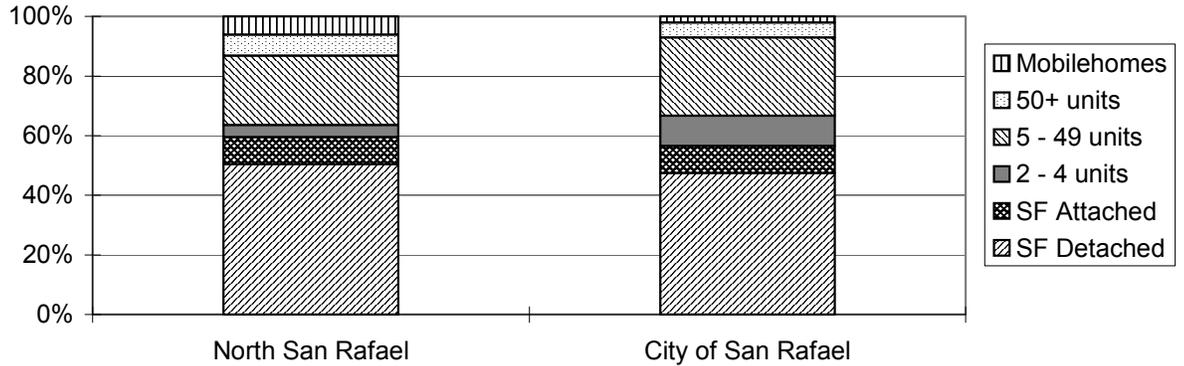


Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Types of Housing

North San Rafael contains a wide variety of housing, similar to the City as a whole. Because North San Rafael developed more recently than other parts of San Rafael and at a time when larger scale subdivisions and apartment complexes were popular, there are few two- to four-unit structures.

Housing Types in North San Rafael, 1990

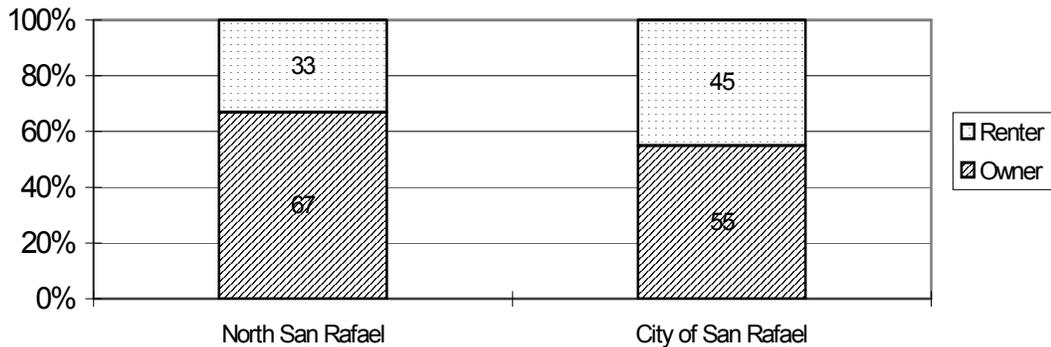


Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Owner and Renter Housing

Overall, North San Rafael contains fewer rental units and more owner units than the city as a whole. Northern Terra Linda, which is largely single-family, had a very high homeownership rate. Rental units tend to provide needed housing for low-income households, young adults, and seniors.

Owner/Renter Percentage of Occupied Units, 1990



Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Crafting *Vision North San Rafael*

Vision North San Rafael is a description of what the community would like North San Rafael to be like in the future. People who live, work, shop or own property in the area helped shape the vision described in this document. The overall response by participants was enthusiastic and supportive, with hundreds of ideas generated.

To “cast the net” and reach as many people as possible, the North San Rafael Steering Committee initiated a widespread community involvement and outreach program. Bold in its scope and approach, the program successfully included more than 1,400 people at a variety of community events, stimulated interest among community members through flyers, newspaper articles and a web-page, and educated the community on issues facing North San Rafael. The Vision process was organized into four phases.

Phase One: Invitation

Early on and throughout the process, the Steering Committee used local newspapers, neighborhood associations, partner groups, and the schools to invite people to participate in community events. Although the focus of the vision process was on the incorporated areas of the city of San Rafael, participation was welcomed from the broader North San Rafael community, including Santa Venetia, Los Ranchitos and Marinwood.

Phase Two: Exploration and Visioning

The purpose of Phase Two was to draft the Vision Statement. A variety of community activities were conceived to reflect on our community in terms of where we are and where we want to go in the future.

- o *Partner Groups* are neighborhood, community, civic and governmental organizations who were interested—but may not otherwise participate—in the Vision process. In the fall, over 750 adults and children in Partner Group discussions were asked: “*What do you like in North San Rafael? What don’t you like? What would you like to change? What would you like to keep?*”

In the winter, Steering Committee members shared with their Partner Groups our draft Vision statement. In the summer, members briefed the Partner Groups on preliminary Vision Concepts and invited everyone to the final workshop.

Overall, people appreciate the wonderful qualities of North San Rafael. At the same time, many identified areas of dissatisfaction and a desire to make changes to make the area a better place to live.

- o *Schools*. To learn more about what our young people feel about and desire in our community, the Steering Committee invited the schools to participate in the vision process. In the fall, students from sixteen classrooms took part in a school curriculum. Students were asked to name and draw their favorite places, places which were scariest to them, and places which were the ugliest and the most beautiful. Results were displayed at Northgate Mall and City Hall, and during the Vision Festival.
- o *The Vision Festival* was an all-day event that included guided bus tours of the area, booths from North San Rafael community and business groups, food, live music, and small group Visioning sessions. Building on the work of the small groups, the Steering Committee drafted a vision statement which reflected the community’s direction that would be revisited and revised throughout the process.

Below is a summary of community comments received during Phase Two, including the Partner Group sessions, school curriculum and the Vision festival.

We like:	We don't like:	Changes we'd like are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Open spaces • Weather • Retail shops and services • Community feeling • Friendly, small town atmosphere • Sense of community • Excellent schools • Beauty of the area • Farmer's Market • Pleasant, clean and quasi-rural ambiance • Proximity to open space • Quiet • Parks and recreation • Feeling of safety • Low traffic levels • Nearby hiking trails • Airport and open space at Marin Ranch Airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic congestion • The lack of a center, core or heart of the community • Dearth of social spots • Absence of gathering places • Insufficient landscape maintenance • Inadequate teen activities • Scarcity of safe pedestrian and bike ways • Lack of public transportation • Dangerous Freitas interchange • The idea of 'big box' retail on the now-vacant (Fairchild) site on Redwood Highway along the north side of the North Fork of Las Gallinas Creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A center to the community which brings us together • More community events • Improved landscaping • A public library • More zoning flexibility for small businesses • Housing which is affordable so that people who work here can also live here • Improvements at the mall • More and better restaurants • More "hangout" places • More pedestrian and bike ways

Phase Three: Directions

The “nuts-and-bolts” of creating a vision began in January 1996 and continued through the winter and spring with a series of eight community workshops. These workshops focused on specific issues that emerged during Phase Two. Steering Committee members hosted the workshops, collecting background information, writing Fact Sheets, and using the results to draft goals and actions.

- o *Kick-Off Workshop.* In January 1997, Reverend Doug Huneke was invited to share his thoughts about how a vision can spark a community and how—like a kaleidoscope—the many voices of a community emerge to support shared values and common dreams.

Working in small groups, participants saw the draft Vision statement for the first time, and gave the Steering Committee their feedback. After the workshop, members revised the draft statement to reflect the community's input.

- o *Design, Beautification and Maintenance Workshops* focused on the “look” and “feel” of North San Rafael—on the attractiveness of streetscapes and buildings and, in particular, maintenance of public and private spaces.
- o *Land Use Workshops* focused on identifying a desirable land use mix (open space, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational) while at the same time enhancing and conserving the basic community character.
- o *Transportation Workshops* focused on the ease of mobility and access, and safety for various modes of transportation. The interrelationship with land use and design was noted as critical.
- o *Community Events and Services Workshops* focused on organizing community activities, providing cultural gathering places and assuring excellent services and facilities.

Phase Four: Celebration

The purpose of Phase Four was to present the draft Vision to the community, celebrate our cooperative efforts and begin the process of implementing the Plan.

- o *A Community Open House*. The nine vision concepts which emerged during the community workshops were shared with the community during an Open House in July. Overall, participants were pleased with the direction, and enjoyed the opportunity to see and comment on the work-in-progress.
- o *Business Focus Groups*, co-sponsored by the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, brought together nearly 30 business owners to discuss issues affecting the business community, and to share ideas for what could be done to improve the business climate in North San Rafael.
- o *Final Workshop*. On September 20, 1997 the Steering Committee held its last workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to present the draft Vision to the community, prioritize the most important Actions and recognize everyone's efforts in working together to create and implement a vision. The **top priority actions** identified at the final community workshop are summarized in the introduction for each of the nine Vision Concepts described in Section IV. Note, however, that the goals and actions under each concept are not ranked in any particular order.

Vision Framework

The Vision is organized into four parts, reflecting the thoughtful process used by the Steering Committee in developing the Vision.

Our Community Values

Our Vision is supported by a statement of community-shared values. These values express how we share our community life and what we hold most important. They define who we are and are the ultimate key to where we want to go.

Vision North San Rafael

Our Vision was written with the community. Over the years our Vision will serve as a catalyst for community initiatives and as direction for improvements in our neighborhoods.

Vision Concepts, Goals and Actions

During the course of the visioning process, several themes emerged as key Vision Concepts. Collectively, these concepts represent our hopes and aspirations for a beautiful, safe and close-knit community. As highlighted within, the concepts are further supported by overall goals and specific actions.

Our Implementation Strategy

Realization of our Vision will be based on our ability to live the values articulated by the community and to pursue our implementing strategies. As we dream about what North San Rafael will be like in the future, we look to the many different ways we can make it happen. Here we work in alliance on projects, bringing together residents, employers and employees, civic groups and non-profit organizations to find ways to make the vision a reality.

SECTION II
OUR COMMUNITY VALUES

Our shared values guide our life together, shaping over time the foundation and character of North San Rafael. As we consider improvements and changes, we rely on the values we hold in common to help us make the best decisions. We value above all the quality of life in North San Rafael as reflected in the following:

Community	Respect for all people Safe, healthy and friendly neighborhoods A diverse population Places where we can gather A sense of belonging A hometown feeling where people know their neighbors
Environment	Natural environment as an integral part of our community Protection and stewardship of our wildlife and our natural areas including the hills, creeks and wetlands
Beauty	Beautiful natural setting from the hillsides to the bay front Attractive architecture and landscaping Well-maintained neighborhoods and business areas
Education	Excellent schools Library services and easy access to information
Resources	Valued and limited lands Our surrounding natural environment People who contribute to our community in various ways
Vitality	Creativity and innovation Cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities Diverse local economy with variety of thriving businesses Variety of housing Ability to move around easily
Partnerships	Participation in making decisions about our future Working together to meet the evolving needs of our community Cooperation between residents, businesses and government

SECTION III
VISION NORTH SAN RAFAEL

A vision is a dream about the future, shared by the community. It paints a picture of the type of place in which we want to live, work and play. Our vision is more than just a description of what we hope to see in North San Rafael. It also describes the legacy we hope to achieve and defines the way we want to work together to create a more livable community.

In the year 2010 ~

We are a balanced, vital and evolving community with a diverse population. We preserve the things that we have so long appreciated—our hills, wetlands and parks, safe and stable residential areas, vital diverse businesses, and convenient shopping and services.

Our entire community is beautiful and well-maintained, with excellent, well-integrated architecture, abundant landscaping, and tree-lined streets. As we come home to our clean and friendly neighborhood, we pass through attractive, distinctive gateways. Getting around our community and out to surrounding areas is easy—whether by foot, bicycle, bus, rail or car.

Our business community continues to be healthy and innovative, supporting entrepreneurship. We are known for economic stability with a full range of employment opportunities. Various vibrant centers provide opportunities for us to meet, interact and reaffirm our sense of community. We enjoy gathering together at local shopping areas, restaurants, cultural attractions and plazas.

We offer a variety of housing options for our diverse and changing population. Our concern for residents of all ages is expressed in excellent schools, libraries, youth activities, senior services, entertainment, recreational and cultural opportunities.

We gracefully adapt to changing needs of residents and businesses while respecting our environment and quality of life. Neighborhoods and businesses work together. Through cooperation, we create a community everyone loves.

SECTION IV
VISION CONCEPTS, GOALS AND ACTIONS

As a result of input received during the community visioning process, the Steering Committee identified nine overall *concepts* which describe the unique opportunities to build upon and enhance the North San Rafael environment and community. These concepts are further supported by *goals*, or statements of direction to realize our vision. The *actions* listed under each goal bring us even closer to seeing our vision become reality by identifying more specific steps to pursue.

The nine Vision Concepts are:

Natural Environment

We will protect the beautiful hillsides, wetlands and creeks for future generations.

Easy to Get Around

We will be a safe and enjoyable community to walk and bicycle,
with convenient transit and smooth traffic flow.

Northgate Promenade

We will establish a new connection from Terra Linda to the Civic Center
where people can walk and ride a bike safely.

Gathering Places

We will have many opportunities for residents and workers to get together
for entertainment, recreation and relaxation.

Town Center

We will create a heart to North San Rafael in the Northgate shopping area
with an active mix of uses and places where everyone comes to shop, visit and celebrate community life.

Business Vitality

We will ensure that our business community is healthy and dynamic.

Homes for a Variety of People

We will have many wonderful places to live for individuals, families,
people who work here and seniors.

Community Services

We will be known for our excellent library and schools,
and a variety of high quality City recreation and public safety services.

Design, Beautification and Maintenance

We will have a beautiful, well-maintained community with
well-designed buildings and abundant landscaping reflecting pride and care.

Protecting our Hillside

By the late 1960s, much of the floor of the Santa Margarita Valley had been developed with housing. Terra Linda residents grew to enjoy the way the hills and the natural environment framed their community. As development began to spread into the hills, people wondered if it would be possible to protect the remaining hillsides.

Over the next few years a core group of residents searched for ways to preserve the privately-owned hills as protected open spaces. Purchase seemed impossible at the beginning, for the hills were extensive and high-priced undeveloped areas. During the early 1970s, there were several attempts to raise money to buy the land, and many negotiations were initiated with property owners to reach acceptable purchase prices. Joining together with immediate neighbors and with the wider Marin County community, residents in the valley voted overwhelming to approve a number of funding sources for open space purchase. These included:

- 1972 San Rafael residents approved a bond issue of \$2,250,000 bond issue to purchase open space city-wide, including parcels in North San Rafael.
- 1972 Marin County residents created and funded the Marin County Open Space District to preserve lands of county-wide importance.
- 1973 Mont Marin neighborhood formed an assessment district to purchase the 184 acre Mont Marin Open Space for \$314,000.
- 1975 Terra Linda residents, with a 76 percent yes vote, established a community services area with a \$1,150,000 bond issue to purchase open space properties. These funds were combined with \$500,000 from the 1972 San Rafael bond and \$500,000 from the Open Space District to buy the Nunes, Freitas, de Long and Turski lands, the semi-circle of ridges around Terra Linda.

The 1,252 acres which make up today's Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide Open Space Preserve are owned and managed by the Marin County Open Space District. The *Terra Linda, Sleepy Hollow & San Rafael Ridge Open Space Preserve Land Management Plan* (1991) sets out a detailed program for maintenance and improvement of these publicly-owned open space lands.

It took nearly ten years to see the vision of preserved open hillsides become a reality. Thanks to the dream and efforts of a small group of people, everyone today takes great joy and pride in the views of the hills and the protected natural habitat.

Natural Environment

North San Rafael is set in a valley surrounded on the north, south and west by expansive hillsides, undeveloped ridgelines and open space. The San Francisco Bay and waterways with wetlands and other marine habitats create the eastern boundary. Riparian habitats, scattered along creeks, are rich with wildlife, birds and native plants, and are a **valued resource** and integral part of North San Rafael. Retaining the beauty of the surroundings and protecting the wildlife is a high priority for our community.

At the same time, however, people want to enjoy this valuable resource. Access to these areas would be balanced with the sustainability of their natural habitats. **Education and stewardship** are essential factors in protecting our natural environment.

The top priority actions are to protect and preserve surrounding hillsides and habitats and to increase wetlands habitats.

GOAL - A	ACTIONS
<i>Protect, restore and enhance our hillsides, bayfront, wetlands and creeks.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preserve and protect the surrounding hillsides and habitat areas.2. Protect hillsides from erosion.3. Remove invasive plants from open space and other public and private lands.4. Repair large eroded ravines off fire roads.5. Protect Russom Park Creek walk by controlling creek and hill erosion onto the trail.6. Ensure hillsides are well-maintained and fire safe.7. Encourage regular fire safety education in schools regarding our hillsides8. Wherever feasible, restore and enhance the natural wildlife habitat, particularly habitat for endangered species, by providing wildlife corridors, adequate buffers along wetlands and creeks and other environmental protections.9. Whenever feasible, seek out opportunities to protect, restore and increase wetlands habitat.10. Restore creeks and incorporate sound flood control practices and riparian vegetation, such as at the large meadow site next to the transit line, the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood and the Valley Baptist Church (the PG&E site).

GOAL - B*ACTIONS*

Assure that environmental considerations are always a high priority in North San Rafael.

1. Promote active community participation in maintaining and appreciating open space, such as supporting volunteer projects to care for the hills, open spaces and trails.
2. Provide innovative ways for domestic and wild animals to cross the freeway or surface roads safely. For example, consider providing a "Duck Crossing" sign on Civic Center Drive to slow traffic to allow these birds to cross safely from the Lagoon to the West side.
3. Encourage the Design Review Board to emphasize and enhance views of the hillsides, wherever possible.

GOAL - C*ACTIONS*

Allow habitat friendly access to open space.

1. Provide opportunities for people to enjoy the natural environment.
2. Allow recreation uses in open space areas only when they are compatible with environmental protection and the sustainability of habitat.
3. Improve signage in public open space and trails.
4. Continue to prohibit motorized vehicles on hillsides.
5. Support the San Francisco Bay Trail project.
6. Retain Freitas Parkway and Del Ganado as cul-de-sacs.
7. Where possible, use bike paths with removable barriers for emergency connectors, instead of building new roads.
8. Work collaboratively with Marin County and environmental organizations to provide access and interpretive center(s) to facilitate the public's enjoyment of wetland areas, where appropriate.

Easy to Get Around

The ease, frequency and safety of getting around are important for our community. Circulation both within North San Rafael, especially east-to-west connections, and to surrounding areas such as Downtown San Rafael needs to be improved. A variety of transportation options can better link us to each other and to places we frequent. Improving the many ways we move about can help combat auto congestion.

Installing and maintaining wider sidewalks and well-landscaped walkways, separate from the main roads, will make the area more **pedestrian-friendly** and safer. If walkways are more inviting and safer, people are more inclined to walk as a way to get to a destination, and for exercise and enjoyment. **Bicycling** continues to be a highly popular way to travel in Marin County, enjoy the outdoors, and get exercise. To accommodate the needs of bicyclists, safe bicycle paths, lanes and parking would be provided throughout North San Rafael. Public **transit** would enable children going to school, commuters and seniors who may not want to drive a car an affordable and reliable way to get around North San Rafael. **Traffic calming** would be a major improvement in the community to reduce speeding and cut-through traffic, and to make the streets safer for all.

The priority actions are to create a local shuttle bus service, and to install hike-and-bike paths throughout North San Rafael.

GOAL - A

ACTIONS

Create safe, convenient, pleasant walkways throughout the community.

1. Connect the Terra Linda Shopping Center and Recreation Center, the Northgate shopping area and the Civic Center with a central promenade.
2. Connect the east and west sides of Highway 101, particularly north of Freitas Parkway, under Highway 101 from Merrydale to Civic Center Drive along the railroad tracks, and possibly along Las Gallinas Creek.
3. Complete landscaped walkways on at least one side of all existing roads. Improvements are specifically needed on Redwood Highway near the Professional Center Parkway, the west side of Northgate between Thorndale and Quail Hill, Los Ranchitos, Lucas Valley Road, and Civic Center Drive.
4. Install walkways on both sides of new streets, where appropriate.
 - Assure sufficient width of sidewalks and pathways, and lighting, so people can walk comfortably.
 - Provide frequent and inviting places to sit and rest, some of which should offer shelter from the rain.
 - Ensure wheelchairs and strollers accessibility (improvements for the walkway at 755 Las Colindas through Penny Royal, Pine, Del Ganado, Bamboo to Monticello).
5. Provide safe, well-landscaped walkways between Northgate One, Northgate Mall and Northgate Plaza.

6. Increase the amount of time at pedestrian crossings at Freitas Parkway intersections, especially at Las Gallinas and Freitas.
7. Design parking lots to minimize conflicts between pedestrian walkways and cars.
8. Create walkways in the area between two rows of parked cars instead of having people walk in the driving area. For example, Northgate should have automobile-free passageways between shopping areas and to the stores.
9. Where possible, locate building entrances so that people do not have to walk across parking lots to enter the building.
10. Avoid multiple driveways across public sidewalks.
11. Provide safe and inviting access from parking lots to shops.

The reorganization and hedge screening of parking on the Old Redwood Highway frontage road could allow installation of a continuous sidewalk with tree planting and undergrounding utilities.

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

Support bicycling as a normal mode of transportation.

1. Form a bicycle advisory committee to promote public involvement and support for bicycle use, create a bicycle master plan, and pursue funding and other implementation initiatives.
2. Create bike lanes wherever possible, especially along major roads, along Nova Albion to the schools, and to the parks.
3. Install hike-and-bike paths along the promenade, and next to the

railroad right-of-way in accordance with the Marin County North-South Bikeway Feasibility Study (1994).

4. Provide a setting conducive to safe and enjoyable bicycling --
 - Provide shade trees where possible.
 - Provide adequate bike lane width, drainage, parking and signage.
 - Separate bike paths and pedestrian paths wherever appropriate.
 - Create a free public bike transportation system with pick-up and drop-off points along the promenade and at major destinations throughout North San Rafael.
 - Provide bike racks and lockers for convenient storage at bus and shuttle stops, park and ride lots, schools, shopping centers, and the recreation center.
 - Remove barriers on sidewalks, pathways, and streets that prevent easy passage by bikes, wheelchairs and strollers.
 - Where possible, provide bikeways separate from the road.

GOAL - C

Create useful, convenient, local bus service, which also connects to Downtown San Rafael.

ACTIONS

1. Create a community advisory team, including youth and seniors, to determine options for providing local bus service, to work with local public and private transportation providers and to seek funding opportunities at all levels of government.
2. Create a local bus shuttle service:
 - Connect neighborhoods to shopping, the Civic Center, the transit center, schools and other major destinations including Downtown San Rafael.
 - Study extending bus hours from 6:00 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week.
 - Where feasible, use small electric or natural gas powered buses (20 - 30 passengers).
 - Provide bus service that accommodates bicycles and wheelchairs.
 - Provide adequate bus pads where large numbers of students wait for buses.
 - Offer, when possible, free or discount youth, senior and/or handicapped fares, and consider weekly or monthly passes.
 - Investigate the possibilities of contracting inexpensive taxi service for seniors, and sharing buses with senior housing and schools.
3. Encourage organizers and producers of large events at the Civic Center to provide shuttle service to the Civic Center from Downtown San Rafael and local park-and-ride lots.
4. Provide safe, comfortable and convenient bus stops:
 - Reroute freeway buses so pedestrian access to bus stops along

Highway 101 is safe and convenient. Do not require pedestrians to cross highway on- or off-ramps in order to board or leave the bus.

- Locate bus stops adjacent to sidewalks for easy wheelchair and pedestrian access. For example, connect the bus stop on Civic Center Drive in front of the Lagoon to a sidewalk.
- Provide benches, preferably covered, at all bus stops.
- Provide a Park-and-Ride lot in the vicinity of Civic Center Drive and McInnis, and re-route the buses from 101 to this lot.
- Ensure safe access from transit stops to businesses along Redwood Highway.

GOAL - D

Preserve and support rail service through North San Rafael.

ACTIONS

1. Preserve the existing rail track for future rail transit service.
Plan for a transit center at the junction of McInnis Parkway and Civic Center Drive:
 - Ensure that new rail service mitigates adverse impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.
 - Design rail stops so patrons can get to the stop safely and conveniently by walking, bicycling, bus or car.
 - Minimize potential vehicular conflicts as pedestrians move through parking lots and cross driveways to purchase tickets and board trains.
 - Design stations and stops so bicyclists can ride to the station and board easily, without unnecessary curbs, barriers or conflict with vehicles, pedestrians, and other bicycles.
 - Provide bicycle racks (preferably rain-proof) close to the main entrance.
 - Provide bike storage on the trains.
 - Where feasible, route autos so they do not cross bikeways and sidewalks.
 - Provide a park-and-ride lot screened from view on the street side with clearly marked safe walkways to the trains.
2. Coordinate bus and train schedules. Where possible, bus drop-off and pick-up areas should be designed to minimize vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle conflicts.
3. Design attractive crossings at the transit line which are safe for pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles.
4. Minimize visual and noise impacts along the rail line.

GOAL - E

ACTIONS

Create livable streets that are safe for children, pedestrians and bicycles, and reduce commuter traffic through our neighborhoods.

1. Slow traffic and improve safety for children, pedestrians and bicyclists. Possible traffic calming tools include:
 - Add landscaping.
 - Calm traffic in neighborhoods surrounding Terra Linda High School.
 - Prohibit widening of Civic Center Drive.
 - Maintain parking by the pond and the lawn of Civic Center Drive.
 - Locate stop signs at critical intersections when warranted (for example, at Yosemite and Smith Ranch Roads).
 - Narrow streets, where appropriate, in order to calm the traffic, increase safety and make it easier for pedestrians to cross at intersections.
2. Redesign traffic circulation adjacent to the Northgate Mall areas. Consider, for example, continuing Del Presidio into the Mall's parking area rather than a "T" configuration.
3. For safety's sake, redesign Freitas Parkway between Highway 101 and Las Gallinas with appropriate signage.
4. Improve, or reduce if possible, traffic flow at North San Pedro Road and Civic Center Drive. Alternatives include an additional exit off Highway 101 at the maintenance buildings directly into the Civic Center, or a second left-turn lane from North San Pedro Road going east to Civic Center Drive.
5. Maintain Merrydale Road and Las Gallinas Avenue in San Rafael Meadows as dead ends with no through traffic.
6. Enforce current traffic regulations to the maximum extent of the law by increasing the number of enforcement personnel and the frequency of the patrols in the critical commute times.

The continuation of Del Presidio Boulevard could create a grand entrance into Northgate Mall and provide an important link in the promenade between activity areas.

Northgate Promenade

Throughout North San Rafael there are many diverse neighborhoods, shopping areas and parks. Because Highway 101 physically divides our community, people find it difficult to get from one place to another by foot or on bicycle. To remedy this artificial separation, a **linear parkway**, or Promenade, would be created to connect the Terra Linda Shopping Center and Recreation Center to the Civic Center. A unifying hike-and-bike path—complete with attractive directional signs, landscaping, public restrooms, places to enjoy a cup of coffee, areas where children can play, public art and transit stops—would bring the community together. Together, people of all ages could stroll, jog, walk or bike, safely removed from traffic.

The Promenade will conveniently link other important destinations, such as Redwood Highway business areas, Terra Linda High School and neighborhoods on both sides of Highway 101 and to the north and south. It will have many benefits: bringing neighbors, workers and visitors together to enjoy the outdoors, helping people get to work or shop safely on foot or by bike, and providing many opportunities for people to meet each other.

The top priority actions are to construct pedestrian and bicycle pathways along the Promenade, and to create safe pedestrian connections across Highway 101.

GOAL - A

ACTIONS

Encourage bicycling and walking along the Northgate Promenade.

1. Construct pedestrian and bicycle pathways along the Promenade.
2. Wherever possible, the pathways should be at least 12-feet wide and allow for drainage, landscaping and signage, and incorporate pocket parks.

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

Provide linkages to other activity centers.

1. Create safe pedestrian connections across Highway 101.
2. Provide convenient and efficient connections between popular destination points, such as Northgate Industrial Park, Vallecito Elementary School and San Rafael Meadows area.

Gathering places, outdoor dining areas, landscaping and signage improvements would rejuvenate the Terra Linda Shopping Center.

Gathering Places

Gathering places provide an essential forum for social interaction and enhance a sense of shared life for the people who work, live and visit our community. Good gathering places are easy to get to and provide opportunities for a variety of activities such as shopping, eating, sitting, socializing and recreation.

Parks are wonderful places for people to get together. These facilities can be improved with picnic and barbecue areas, playgrounds and benches to encourage family events, and children’s play and “hanging out” places. Outdoor music concerts, dances, neighborhood picnics and community fairs would be offered in our parks. One specific improvement many would like to see is restoring water play to Freitas Park. Others would like to have better recreation facilities in the vicinity of Merrydale/Los Ranchitos and North San Pedro Road.

North San Rafael **shopping centers** can also be neighborhood gathering places. This has begun at Northgate One with the addition of a coffee shop and outdoor seating. Our shopping centers would include restaurants and cafes with outdoor eating areas, bookstores and plazas to create places with vitality and excitement. Many people want nighttime activities as well as places to go with friends at the end of the day.

Sports and recreational facilities provide special places for the community to gather and have fun. These facilities could include skateboard parks, dog parks, lighting for evening sports events, and soccer fields—each offering opportunities for the young and old alike—to spend time together and to get to know each other.

The top priority action is to establish a beautiful, viable neighborhood center and gathering place at Terra Linda Shopping Center.

GOAL - A	ACTIONS
<i>Enhance the use of gathering places within walking distance to spark social interaction and sense of community.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish beautiful, viable neighborhood centers and gathering places at Terra Linda Shopping Center, along Merrydale in San Rafael Meadows, and at other neighborhood centers by using incentives to encourage a coordinated site design.2. Create gathering places that include: outdoor eating places, library, schools, parks, community gardens, farmer’s market, museum and transit stops, for example.

GOAL - B	ACTIONS
<i>Use parks, recreation and cultural facilities as fun gathering places to enhance our sense of community.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide daytime “green spaces” which can include multi-use recreation areas, sports fields and sitting areas.2. Improve parks by adding landscaping and amenities such as benches, public art, play equipment, gazebos and bandstands, as appropriate.3. Encourage both daytime and nighttime gathering places, such as cafes, bookstores and restaurants.

Building a Town Square

A town square is more than just a place; it is people and activity, art and festivities, homes and shops. Essential ingredients are:

<i>Mix of Activity</i>	Shops, offices, residential, public (such as child care, a library, and churches), recreation, education and entertainment
<i>Food</i>	Markets, restaurants, cafes, street vendors and other eating places
<i>Events</i>	Celebrations, concerts, fairs, memorials
<i>Public</i>	Open to everyone at all times of the day throughout the year
<i>Visible</i>	Open to view from the streets and buildings for safety and security
<i>Contained</i>	Outdoor room with buildings defining the edges
<i>Connections</i>	Doors, passageways and windows connecting the outdoors to indoor activity
<i>Seating</i>	Places for people to sit and view the action
<i>Recreation</i>	Passive ways for people (especially children) to have fun, a gazebo for music
<i>Art</i>	Cultural identity, a landmark

Town Center

A town center is a focal point where the values and history of the community are expressed and supported, where community identity is strengthened and neighborhood cohesion is fostered. It is a place where residents and workers can gather—formally and informally—to share community life. The Town Center will have public art, a wide variety of unique shops, many places to eat, and a number of entertainment options.

Our town center will be a major destination point on the promenade, a place where everyone feels welcome, something is always happening, and strolling is a pleasure. It will also include one of North San Rafael’s principal gathering places—in the form of a **town square**! Over time, the Town Center would change, expand and evolve to become the heart of the North San Rafael community.

The priority actions for the Town Center are to create a sense of enclosure, pedestrian-scale and easy accessibility and to provide high quality retail stores for local residents as well as the broader community.

GOAL - A

ACTIONS

Create an attractive, thriving heart for the North San Rafael community—a centerpiece of commerce and activity which is easy to get to—with a diversity and synergy of activities for all ages.

1. Create a Town Center with high quality retail stores for local residents as well as the broader community.
2. Allow uses that will enhance the Town Center, including retail, office, housing and community services.
3. Consider providing library services at the mall.
4. Provide planning and financial incentives to establish a Town Center.
5. Assure quality of design.
6. Create a sense of enclosure, pedestrian-scale and easy accessibility.

Outdoor gathering and dining spaces at the retail centers could be encouraged, with storefronts and signage improved to match the quality of the interior spaces.

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

*Establish places for enjoying
community life.*

1. Encourage outdoor public gathering places.
2. Improve access and pedestrian connections between Northgate One, the Mall and Northgate Plaza.
3. Consider the feasibility of providing automobile-free passage ways between shopping areas, i.e. between Northgate Plaza and Northgate Mall, and between the Mall and Northgate One.
4. Redesign traffic patterns adjacent to the Northgate Mall, and consider ways to improve the entrance into the mall.
5. Design parking lots to minimize vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle conflicts.
6. Improve landscaping and maintenance of buildings, and unify the signage and architecture at Northgate Mall.

Business Vitality

North San Rafael has a very healthy, broad-based business community. Northgate businesses are an important part of San Rafael's healthy economy, comprising half of the city's professional services, and a quarter of its retail establishments. Northgate Mall is the city's largest retail shopping center, with more than one million square feet of building area, contributing over \$1 million in sales tax revenue annually.

Two major concentrations of businesses include the Northgate Industrial Park and the Northgate shopping centers. In addition, Terra Linda Shopping Center, Redwood Highway offices and services, Kaiser Hospital, Guide Dogs for the Blind, two major hotels and large office buildings, and several corporate headquarters are located in North San Rafael. These local diverse businesses provide jobs for residents, goods and services for residents, taxes for City services, and donations for local schools and non-profit agencies.

Maintaining business vitality is essential for a **prosperous economy**. We want to keep the competitive edge of the North San Rafael business community, and to continue to enjoy the convenient local shops and employment opportunities.

Residents and workers alike would benefit from retaining homegrown businesses and industrial uses, bringing in more upscale and unique shops, and increasing the number of restaurants and cafes. The Terra Linda Shopping Center holds tremendous potential to be a thriving neighborhood center. The businesses along the Redwood Highway frontage road would benefit greatly from targeted physical improvements. Most importantly, the large vacant site on Redwood Highway where there once stood a big manufacturing plant could be home to a new office/light industrial complex complementing the adjacent Northgate Industrial Park. Of particular delight to the community would be a restaurant located here along the beautiful north fork of Las Gallinas Creek.

Our highest priority is to make our business areas function better with a mix of uses, improvements to make these places more attractive, and changes that support a business-friendly community. It is also important to ensure that environmental, traffic, design, parking and access concerns are met in all business development.

GOAL - A

ACTIONS

Support existing local businesses and help them adapt to the future.

1. Encourage amenities and services to support the business community such as restaurants, outdoor dining, child care and convenience retail.
2. Use incentives to accommodate growth and change of businesses.

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

Support home businesses, new businesses and small businesses.

1. Encourage live/work and home-based businesses.
2. Encourage incubator businesses.
3. Preserve small tenant spaces.
4. Streamline permitting and provide other incentives.

GOAL - C

ACTIONS

Create distinctive businesses and public complexes, and make these areas work better

1. Improve the design and function of business areas.
2. Encourage innovation and public/private partnerships to meet parking needs.
3. Encourage property owners to maintain and remodel commercial buildings.
4. Encourage a new business at the corner of Freitas Parkway and Northgate to enhance the entryway. Appropriate uses could include office, small retail or a sit-down restaurant.
5. Ensure that environmental, traffic, design, parking and access concerns are met in all new business development or when renovation or remodeling occurs.

Homes for a Variety of People

Because of its beautiful setting, moderate climate, accessibility to natural and cultural amenities, and convenient location, North San Rafael is a **very desirable place to live**. Subdivisions such as San Rafael Meadows, Terra Linda and Marin Lagoon provide wonderful, family-centered communities with a reputation for being a great place to raise children and for maintaining excellent schools.

In addition, there is a **range of options** for apartment dwellers, from units that are affordable to low income households to luxury units for higher income households. These are well-established as well as very new condominium developments. Other housing includes a variety of senior housing, a mobilehome park, and group homes for the handicapped.

An adequate diversity of housing is a crucial part of creating a complete and vibrant community. Like many other cities in California, however, housing prices are high in North San Rafael. Consequently, young people starting out cannot afford to live near their families, families share units or are crowded into housing too small for their needs, seniors become “trapped” in homes that are larger than they need and local employees are forced to live in outlying areas and, therefore, become part of the commuter rush.

Providing more housing in North San Rafael is a challenging task. Many residents are concerned about excessive development, unmanageable traffic and the loss of views and privacy. At the same time, the limited housing supply is a major concern for employees and local business owners, parents seeking excellent schools for their children, and elderly residents wishing to sell their homes yet stay in the neighborhood.

The supply of housing may increase by offering more variety in housing choices and by using innovative ideas such as mixed use housing, live/work units, higher density housing close to public transit, and sensitive development of unused or underutilized lands. Above all, new housing must fit in with surrounding development, and must maintain the friendly, safe character of existing neighborhoods.

The top priority action which was reflected in the final workshop was to encourage a variety of housing types, including mixed use and live/work units.

GOAL - A

Provide homes for individuals, families, people who work here and seniors.

ACTIONS

1. Identify opportunities for development of housing on vacant or underutilized land.
2. Encourage second dwelling units, wherever feasible.
3. Encourage housing to be incorporated as part of renovation or redevelopment of property.
4. Promote and build partnerships with other organizations to support housing development.

GOAL - B*ACTIONS**Promote innovative ways to house people.*

1. Allow innovative approaches to combining housing and workspace.
2. Encourage a variety of housing types, including mixed use and live/work units.
3. Where appropriate, encourage housing in gathering places, thereby adding to the vitality of these areas and facilitating the use of public transit.

Affording a Home

Housing which costs 25 - 33 percent of a household's income is referred to as "affordable housing." Income levels vary from one household to another, for example, a large family with one small income would afford a different type of housing than a DINK ("double-income/no kids") household. Income levels are identified by the California Department of Housing and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In Marin, examples of income levels by household size for 1997 are:

<i>Income Level</i>	<i>One Person</i>	<i>Two People</i>	<i>Four People</i>
Very low income	\$22,550	\$25,750	\$32,220
Lower income	\$31,750	\$35,950	\$44,950
Moderate income	\$54,100	\$61,850	\$77,300

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development, 1997

A senior citizen with a very low income would typically be able to pay \$470 - \$620 month for housing. A family of four with a moderate income would be able to afford housing costing \$1,610 - \$2,126 a month.

Community Services

North San Rafael is a family-centered, multi-aged community with many different social needs ranging from recreational activities to informational services to neighborhood meeting places. In order to have an enriched and fulfilled community, quality activities, facilities and services are essential.

Living in a **safe** community is critically important to North San Rafael residents, particularly in the neighborhoods and public places. Although North San Rafael is considered very safe, it is important to maintain a high sense of security by assuring excellent public safety services.

People emphasized the need for **communication** of information, whether by library services, computers or information kiosks. Although the Civic Center library is located in North San Rafael, it is difficult to reach for most residents. There are many opportunities for providing a City library in North San Rafael, including possible partnerships with the School Districts, the private sector and the County. A library, located west of Highway 101, would be more accessible to more North San Rafael residents, providing an invaluable community service, evening activities, and a community meeting place.

The Terra Linda Recreation Center with the city's only public swimming pool, the many pocket and neighborhood parks, and the Marin County Civic Center offer a wide range of **recreational opportunities**. Many people would like to improve current facilities, and to make the most of what they have in order to help enhance the sense of community in North San Rafael. The recent acquisition of the Bernard Hoffman playing fields is an example of what is possible when sports organizations, the City and the School District cooperate for the good of the greater community.

Youth in particular have varying interests and would benefit from increased opportunities to pursue these interests without having to travel too far. Our young people would like to have places just to "hang out" and get to know each other. Facilities such as a teen center, a skate park or a technology center would be ideal.

Top priority actions are to provide recreational and entertainment facilities for children and youth, public safety programs and a library west of Highway 101.

GOAL - A

ACTIONS

Provide a public library in North San Rafael west of Highway 101.

1. Establish convenient and accessible library services for everyone in North San Rafael.
2. Form a North San Rafael Library Booster Group of teens, parents, teachers and homeowners associations.

A north San Rafael branch library west of the freeway could be located anywhere that is centrally located and provides adequate parking..

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

Encourage safe places for the young people in our community to gather and use to explore and pursue their interests.

1. Provide and maintain recreation and entertainment facilities for children and youth such as a skate park and a teen center.
2. Encourage a variety of safe gathering places where teens can meet and socialize.
3. Promote and facilitate activities for children and youth.

GOAL - C

ACTIONS

Encourage cultural, entertainment and recreational activities.

1. Establish an annual signature community event to celebrate life in North San Rafael, and create shared memories for residents.
2. Support cultural activities throughout the community.
3. Provide a variety of facilities for cultural activities such as an art gallery, a cultural center, a band shell, or a gazebo for outdoor concerts.
4. Improve and expand equestrian connections from Los Ranchitos to the Civic Center.
5. Seek ways to enhance horseback riding opportunities in North San Rafael.
6. Support the Farmer's Market.

GOAL - D

ACTIONS

Optimize use of all public and private sites for entertainment.

1. Maximize the use of City, religious and school facilities for cultural, educational and recreational purposes.
2. Restore the water feature to Freitas Park.
3. Maintain the restroom facilities at Santa Margarita Park.

GOAL - E

ACTION

Continue to provide and enhance City services for a safe community.

1. Continue to provide and enhance public safety programs that maintain a high sense of safety in the neighborhoods and adequate public safety services, including disaster preparedness and wildfire safety.

GOAL - F

ACTION

Improve communication in North San Rafael about community issues and activities.

1. Encourage information kiosks, a web site, neighborhood newsletters, and informational inserts in the local newspapers.

Design, Beautification and Maintenance

North San Rafael is blessed with a spectacular setting of open hills, large oak trees and views out to the bay. The **beautiful natural surroundings** form a backdrop treasured by residents, workers, and visitors. Apart from the unique Eichler homes and other residential neighborhoods, many of the buildings in North San Rafael are considered bland, isolated and indifferent.

Residents yearn for an **inviting, charming and attractive** community. They want a place that is beautiful to live in and walk around in, one which has grown gracefully into a pretty town. A beautiful community inspires its residents. Where beauty is pervasive, inhabitants share a common pleasure and a sense of civic pride essential to community life.

To create a physical environment that is pleasing and appealing to residents, workers and visitors, the open spaces and buildings must be interesting, complex and diverse. Beautiful buildings create places to go, to see and be seen, and to be exposed to the tangible legacy of those who have gone before us. Areas such as the Town Center, Redwood Highway, Terra Linda Shopping Center, Civic Center Drive and McInnis Drive can be transformed into exciting places to explore with a diversity of buildings, beautiful architecture and landscaping, and delightful pedestrian areas.

Above all, our public and private places need to be **cared for**. We collectively have an investment in the infrastructure of our community. We will begin long-needed maintenance projects and repair our roads and sidewalks, irrigate our landscaping, remove the litter, and use code enforcement to keep our public places and private homes in good and safe conditions.

Many residents have expressed a special desire to improve the appearance to the Del Ganado ditch. Others wish for the overhead wires to be undergrounded. These were priorities reflected in the final workshop.

GOAL - A	ACTIONS
<i>Create attractive community entries welcoming all and lending an identity to our area</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create a beautiful entryway to North San Rafael at the corner of Freitas Parkway and Northgate.2. Install artistic groupings of landscaping and art on Freitas between Highway 101 and Northgate Drive.3. At all entries and intersections, plant trees, and improve and maintain City medians and Caltrans property (including interchanges, highway frontage and parking lots).4. Develop clear and unified signage at entries and commercial centers (perhaps with the same Mission bell signage theme found in Downtown San Rafael).5. Improve the entry to the Civic Center from San Pedro Road.

Landscaped medians along Del Ganado could not only improve its appearance, but create safer driving conditions.

GOAL - B

ACTIONS

Ensure clean, beautiful and well-maintained public spaces.

1. Improve the appearance of the Del Ganado ditch.
2. Begin a phased undergrounding of overhead power lines as funding becomes available.
3. Maintain roads, sidewalks and lighting.
4. Provide lighting for pedestrian walkways where acceptable to neighbors.
5. Develop realistic funding plans for maintenance and capital improvements.
6. Encourage Caltrans to remove litter from Highway 101.
7. Encourage the County to maintain the Civic Center, the Lagoon and surrounding areas.
8. Encourage the City and County to create a public/private partnership to maintain public plantings.
9. Support and encourage participation in neighborhood clean-up days.

Landscaping could improve the appearance of parking lots in north San Rafael.

GOAL - C

ACTIONS

Improve design and function of our built environment.

1. Promote design standards to unify the community and enhance a sense of connection.
2. Upgrade and unify the architecture and signage along Redwood Highway on the east side of Highway 101.
3. Improve the landscaping and sidewalks along Redwood Highway on the east side of Highway 101.
4. Coordinate design and colors at the Terra Linda Shopping Center. Signs should be removed from rooftops to under the eaves.
5. Establish a tenant identification sign for Terra Linda Shopping Center, consistent with the center's appearance.
6. Provide kiosks and maps of Northgate Industrial Park.
7. Use code enforcement to remove illegal business signs.

GOAL - D

ACTIONS

Improve and expand existing landscaping.

1. Improve the appearance of the northwest corner of Freitas Parkway and Northgate.
2. Provide additional landscaping to Montecillo, Freitas Parkway and along Del Ganado.
3. Provide additional trees and shrubs at Terra Linda Shopping Center.
4. Encourage native trees and plantings in parking lots, bus stops and park-n-ride lots.
5. Improve and maintain landscaping on medians and roadways.
6. Irrigate landscaping, trees and shrubs regularly, using reclaimed water where possible.

GOAL - E

ACTIONS

Ensure that private spaces reflect community pride.

1. Enforce San Rafael Municipal Code regulations relating to maintenance of private property.
2. Maintain the design integrity of the neighborhoods.

SECTION V
OUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

North San Rafael is entering a new era. From a time of ranching days, to seeing the latest buildings take form, North San Rafael is transforming into a mature community. Neighborhoods are welcoming new families, schools are bursting with young children, and businesses are enjoying a strong economy. Our Implementation Strategy starts with our vision of a more beautiful and sustainable community, outlining the basic steps which must be taken to see the vision unfold into reality.

Our implementation strategy focuses on **immediate action-oriented** cooperative activities and investments to gain momentum with quick small and large changes. These changes will become the impetus for more improvements. Other more modest **incremental changes** will have a noticeable impact on our appearance and the overall long-term health of our community.

Our strategies assume the alignment of public, private and civil sectors as well as individual commitment. The lead for different projects will come from various levels of the community and the government, and from different sectors of the economy. Separately, individuals, businesses and government are limited in what they can achieve. By sharing our resources and creating partnerships throughout the community we will guide the patterns of change in North San Rafael.

Our Vision contains several projects which are new for San Rafael. The promenade, library and neighborhood beautification depend on new funding. Fortunately, there are a variety of sources to pursue. Through cooperation and partnerships we can find the resources to make a difference in our future. It's the investments we make today that will bring us the results we envision for tomorrow.

While all the actions identified in Section IV, Vision Concepts, Goals and Actions are important, the Implementation Strategy establishes broader priorities for achieving the Vision. These priorities are based on community support and a sense of urgency, manageability, cost effectiveness, feasibility, and positive impact on a goal.

STRATEGY
Community Participation

Organize the community to work together on Vision projects

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Form an implementation committee to serve as ‘guardians’ of the vision.
2. Form volunteer action teams such as the library booster club.
3. Promote local volunteerism, such as Boy Scouts helping with landscape maintenance.

STRATEGY
Financing

Identify ways to finance the improvements in Vision North San Rafael.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Explore financing options, including a possible assessment or other taxing district, or a bond measure.
2. Pursue federal and state grants, as well as grants from non-profit agencies for capital projects such as traffic calming, entryway, landscaping and promenade improvements.
3. Use traffic mitigation fees to make traffic improvements.

STRATEGY
Maintenance

Maintain community improvements.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Identify methods for maintaining our public infrastructure.
2. Determine adequate levels of service for maintenance.
3. Seek agreement on maintenance responsibilities

STRATEGY
Feasibility and Coordination

Look for innovative approaches and allow for flexibility in implementing the Vision.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Ensure that development standards are consistent with *Vision North San Rafael*, including standards for environmental protection, traffic, floor area ratio, density, bonuses and other incentives, design requirements for architectural excellence, and parking.
2. Create a transportation system which acknowledges a balance between our current and future land use patterns and protection of our open space.
3. As new development occurs, address transportation issues, including walkways, bikeways and, where feasible, bus service.
4. The total amount of development in North San Rafael will not cause city traffic to exceed level of service D.

STRATEGY
Partnerships

Coordinate with other organizations, and create partnerships to undertake implementation projects.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Coordinate implementation both at the staff and at the policy level, with the County, State and federal agencies, as well as with civic and non-profit organizations.
2. Work with the City's Traffic Coordinating Committee to begin a traffic calming program, beginning with a pilot program for Las Gallinas.

STRATEGY
Public Information

Inform the community about our Vision, and implementation projects.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Simplify ways for the community to learn about local governmental activities affecting our community and the resources available to make things happen.
2. Provide information to the community about issues, events and places to go on an ongoing, regular basis.

STRATEGY
Policy Development

Amend the General Plan, zoning ordinance and other regulations consistent with the Vision.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Consider flexibility in floor area ratios in order to respond to changing business needs.
2. *Marin Ranch Airport.* Amend the General Plan land use designation to Parks/Open Space, and amend the General Plan policies to be consistent with the covenant.*

* The intent of the Steering Committee's General Plan recommendation is to recognize the unique and valuable recreational and environmental characteristics of the Marin Ranch Airport site. The San Rafael General Plan *Parks/Open Space* land use designation's allowed uses are "Dedicated parks, secured open space, and areas identified as having visual or other natural resource significance that should be protected through the development review process." In addition, the Steering Committee notes that the following uses are listed in the *Declaration of Restrictions* (covenant) for Marin Ranch Airport, and recommends that they be allowed as activities on the site:

- Existing uses consisting of an airport and related uses.
- Public utility uses as approved by the appropriate government agencies, including flood control, sanitary sewer, gas and electric, and public safety facilities.
- Airport and airport related uses.
- Roadways.
- Open space.
- Private and public recreational uses.

3. *Site at 4300 Redwood Highway along the north fork of Las Gallinas Creek (Fairchild site).* Allow office, light industrial, business-serving retail and service, and restaurant uses, and:
 - Prohibit big box retail.
 - Provide creek restoration and widening to handle flooding and improve habitat.
 - Assure quality building design.
 - Provide a pedestrian and bicycle path along the creek with connections to the bike path along the railroad.
4. *Site on the east side of the hill off of Channing Way (Del Gatti property).* Change the General Plan land use designation to clustered low density housing.
5. *Site near N. San Pedro Road and Los Ranchitos (PG&E property).* Change the General Plan land use designation to ensure a mix of housing, neighborhood recreational and environmental protection areas that enhance the community, and seek ways to assure that the character of the development offers a strong sense of community and identity for the site and the neighborhood. This would include the following issues, among any other potential environmental impacts:
 - Improvements to local drainage and flooding potential.
 - Architectural excellence.
 - Provision of a readily accessible, active neighborhood park or green with sports area with a size appropriate to neighborhood.
 - Traffic impacts and access.
 - Potentially hazardous soils conditions.
 - Housing that blends with and enhances neighboring homes.
 - A variety of housing types responding to community housing needs.
 - A preference of clustering of housing in order to maximize environmental and recreational uses.
 - Environmental restoration and enhancement if feasible.
 - Potential school impacts.
 - Safe bicycle and pedestrian connections.
 - Good connections to the Civic Center and Northgate Mall.
6. *McInnis Parkway.* Do not extend to Smith Ranch Road, and create a turnaround area at the existing terminus of the parkway.

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 Alisa Wyad
 John Yates
 Vera Young
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 Jeff Zane
 Paul Zensivo
 Hilda Zoyas

North San Rafael Organizations

*Autodesk
 Catholic Charities
 Christ Presbyterian Church
 Christian Church of San Rafael

City of San Rafael Volunteer Center
 Congregation Rodef Shalom
 Dixie Elementary School
 *Dixie School Board

Environmental Forum
*Fair Isaac
*Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods
First Congregational Church
*Kiwanis
Los Ranchitos Improvement Association
Lucas Valley Homeowners
Lutheran Church of Resurrection
*Marin County League of Women Voters
*Marin A.I.A. Task Force
*Marin Association of Realtors
*Marin Builders Exchange
*Marin Conservation League
*Marin County Office of Education
*Marin County Parks and Open Space
Commission
*Marin Fellowship of Unitarians
*Marin Lagoon Homeowners Association
Marin County Farmers Market
Miller Creek Middle School
*Miller Creek Middle School Home & School
Club
*Mont Marin Homeowners Association
*North San Rafael Coalition of Residents
*Northgate Industrial Park Business Group
*Northgate Mall
Quail Hill Homeowners Association
Rafael Meadows Improvement Association
Terra Linda Valley Property Owners

*R.U.F.F.S.
St. Isabella's Elementary School
St. Mark's School
*San Rafael Chamber of Commerce
*San Rafael City Council
*San Rafael Downtown Vision Committee
San Rafael Library Board
*San Rafael Park and Recreation Commission
*San Rafael Planning Commission
*Santa Margarita Homeowner's Association
*San Rafael Sunrise Lion's Club
*Santa Venetia Improvement Association
*Smith Ranch Airport Pilots Association
*Terra Linda High School Home & School Club
*Terra Linda Homeowners Association
*Terra Linda Leadership Class
*United Way
*Vallecito PTA
*Vallecito SLT
Vallecito Elementary School
Valley Baptist Church
Villa Marin Homeowners Association
Volunteer Center of Marin
*Y.M.C.A.

* North San Rafael Partner Groups