

# **ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING REPORT**

## **SAN RAFAEL TRANSIT CENTER REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

**PREPARED FOR:**

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**PREPARED BY:**

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**February 2019**

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- Notice of Preparation (NOP)

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- Informational Boards

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- Scoping Meeting Postcard
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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
District	Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
GHG	greenhouse gas
LOS	Level of Service
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NWP	Northwestern Pacific Railroad
PDA	Priority Development Area
project	San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project
SMART	Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit
TAM	Transportation Authority of Marin
U.S. 101	U.S. Highway 101

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## 1.1 Purpose of Scoping Report

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District) is serving as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project (project). As the CEQA Lead Agency, the District issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and initiated an environmental scoping period from October 16 to November 19, 2018. The EIR will be prepared in accordance with CEQA. The purpose of this scoping report is to document and consolidate the comments received on the scope of the project, the alternatives to be considered, and the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR.

## 1.2 Project Location and Background

The San Rafael Transit Center, also known as the C. Paul Bettini Transit Center, is owned by the District, which operates Golden Gate Transit regional and inter-county bus transit services. The transit center is located in downtown San Rafael at the intersection of 3rd Street and Hetherington Street (see Figure 1). With more than 500 bus trips daily and 17 operating bus bays, the transit center is the largest regional transit hub in Marin County, providing access to the regional transportation network for area residents and a key transfer point for employees, visitors, and students in San Rafael and the greater North Bay region. The transit center primarily serves bus routes operated by Golden Gate Transit and Marin Transit, but it is also served by Sonoma County Transit, Sonoma County Airport Express, Marin Airporter, Greyhound, and paratransit services. On weekdays, nearly 9,000 people board or alight buses at the transit center to make their necessary transportation connections. Downtown San Rafael is an important destination, with nearly half of the passengers travelling to or from downtown, and the remaining riders making transfers to other destinations. The 17 bus bays are fully occupied during peak-period pulse times, leaving little room for growth in bus service.

In August 2017, the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) District commenced passenger rail service on its initial corridor, consisting of 43 miles of rail and 10 stations (Phase 1) in Sonoma and Marin Counties. SMART's Phase 1 corridor parallels U.S. Highway 101 (U.S. 101), beginning at the Sonoma County Airport and terminating in downtown San Rafael just north of the transit center. SMART riders transferring from the downtown San Rafael SMART station—located north of 3rd Street—to access the current transit center south of 3rd Street, as well as riders originating from downtown San Rafael, must navigate congested vehicle traffic passing through local intersections and accessing the U.S. 101 on-ramps adjacent to the transit center.

In addition, Phase 2 of the SMART project, which was approved in 2015 and began construction in early 2018, will extend passenger rail service from its current downtown San Rafael terminus to Larkspur. The southward extension of SMART will require the construction of two sets of tracks through the middle of the existing transit center site south of 3rd Street. The SMART Phase 2 line will bisect the existing transit center, reconfigure Platforms C and B, negatively impact bus

circulation and bus bay flexibility within and around the transit center, and disrupt pedestrian access and transfer activity among the remaining platforms at the site. This change will affect how buses and people access and travel through the transit center as well as reducing the amount of space available for buses and riders, which will be detrimental to bus, vehicle, and pedestrian access and safety. As a result, the transit center must be relocated to another location in downtown San Rafael.

## 1.3 Project Objectives

The District, in coordination with the City of San Rafael, Marin Transit, Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), and SMART, plans to replace the transit center in downtown San Rafael. The proposed project is needed primarily to preserve and enhance the functionality and effectiveness of the transit center following the implementation of the SMART Phase 2 line to Larkspur and the resulting loss of some of the transit center facilities. Specifically, the purpose of the project is to:

- Provide improved transit connectivity and ease of use in and around downtown San Rafael.
- Enhance local and regional transit use by bringing together multiple modes of the transportation network—including the SMART-bus connection—into a hub that affords transit users the safest, most efficient means of using bus and rail services.
- Efficiently accommodate transit users and services and optimize operating costs and improve transit desirability.
- Design a functional, attractive, cost-effective facility that can meet long-term projected service levels and be implemented in an expeditious manner, so as to minimize the period of use of the interim facility.
- Provide a transit facility that is readily accessible to individuals with disabilities, transit users, and transit-dependent populations, including those with low incomes.
- Provide a secure, safe, and inviting space for transit patrons.
- Create a more accessible transit facility for all users by reducing vehicular, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian conflicts and improving safety.
- Provide convenient, pedestrian connections to surrounding land uses.

A new transit center solution in downtown San Rafael would address near-term and long-term transit needs while improving the desirability and usability of transit for both local residents and regional commuters. It would also, to the extent feasible, minimize traffic congestion and facilitate smooth transit operations while also promoting pedestrian safety.

## 1.4 Description of Project Alternatives

In the NOP, the District identified five preliminary alternatives. These alternatives are described below, and the conceptual design for each is shown in Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, respectively. These preliminary alternatives will be further refined and screened based on agency and public input.

- Two-Story Concept is bounded by 4th Street to the north, Hetherton Street to the east, 2nd Street to the south, and Tamalpais Avenue to the west (Figure 2). This concept includes the



parcel to the east of the SMART station as the ground-level of a proposed two-story transit center. This alternative includes 6 bus bays on the ground level and 12 bus bays on the upper level. This alternative has the smallest footprint, only requiring the acquisition of one parcel, but also would cost more due to the two-story construction.

- Across-the-Freeway Concept is bounded by 5th Avenue to the north, Irwin and Hetherton Streets to the east, 3rd Street to the south, and Tamalpais Avenue to the west (Figure 3). This alternative has two options: the first would include a three-bay transit island on Hetherton Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, and the second would shift Hetherton Street to the west to allow for on-street bays on the east side of Hetherton Street between 3rd and 4th Streets. This concept incorporates the area underneath U.S. 101, which would eliminate some existing California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Park and Ride lot parking stalls and require covering Erwin Creek (a tributary of San Rafael Creek), across a portion of the block.
- 4th Street Gateway Concept is bounded by 5th Avenue to the north, Hetherton Street to the east, 3rd Street to the south, and the SMART tracks to the west (Figure 4). In order to accommodate three curbside bus bays, southbound right-turn movements from Hetherton Street to 4th Street would be precluded.
- Whistlestop Block Concept is bounded by 4th Street to the north, Hetherton Street to the east, 3rd Street to the south, and Lincoln and Tamalpais Avenues to the west (Figure 5). This concept co-locates the proposed transit center on the same block as the existing SMART station. The Whistlestop building would either be relocated, reconfigured, or restored and used for customer service functions with the proposed transit center.
- North of 4th Street Concept would occupy the entire block bounded by 5th Avenue to the north, Irwin Street to the east, 4th Street to the South, and Hetherton Street to the west. It is generally located beneath U.S. 101 (Figure 6) and would eliminate some existing parking stalls in the Caltrans Park and Ride lot, and require covering Erwin Creek (a tributary of San Rafael Creek), across the full length of the block. While this concept would accommodate 17 bus bays within this block, it would require customer service, restrooms, and pick-up/dropoff functions to be located off site. Features common to all five alternatives include the provision of at least 17 bus bays, pickup/ drop-off areas for passenger vehicles or taxis, bicycle parking, customer service and security space, bus operator restrooms, and parking for operations staff. Some of these facilities could be provided at locations outside of the extents of the concepts shown in Figures 2 through 6 below.

## 1.5 Project Schedule

The District expects to complete the environmental review process by early 2020, and preliminary project design (30%) by the Fall of 2020; the final design, permitting, and construction would commence thereafter.

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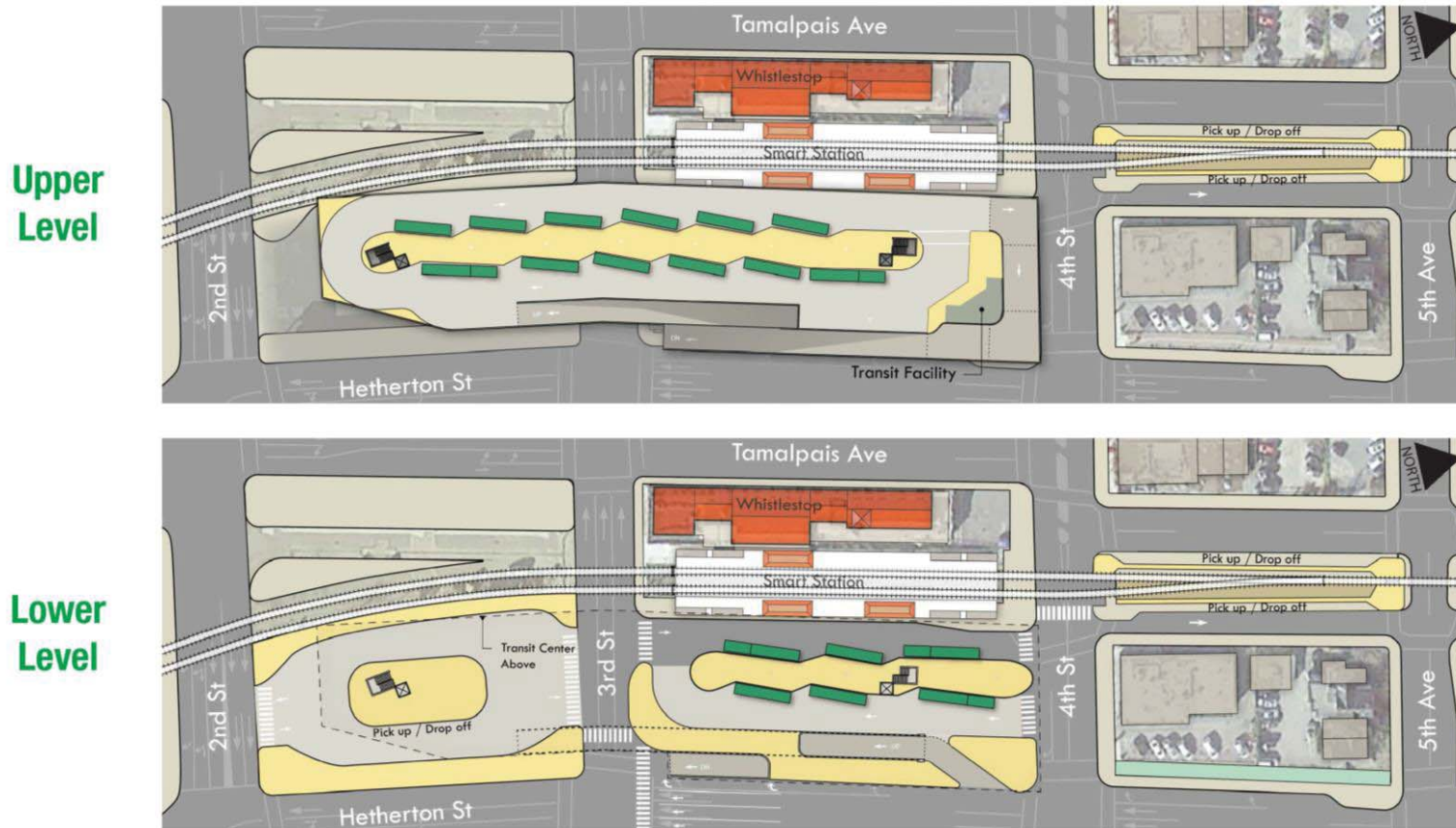


Figure 2  
Two-Story Concept



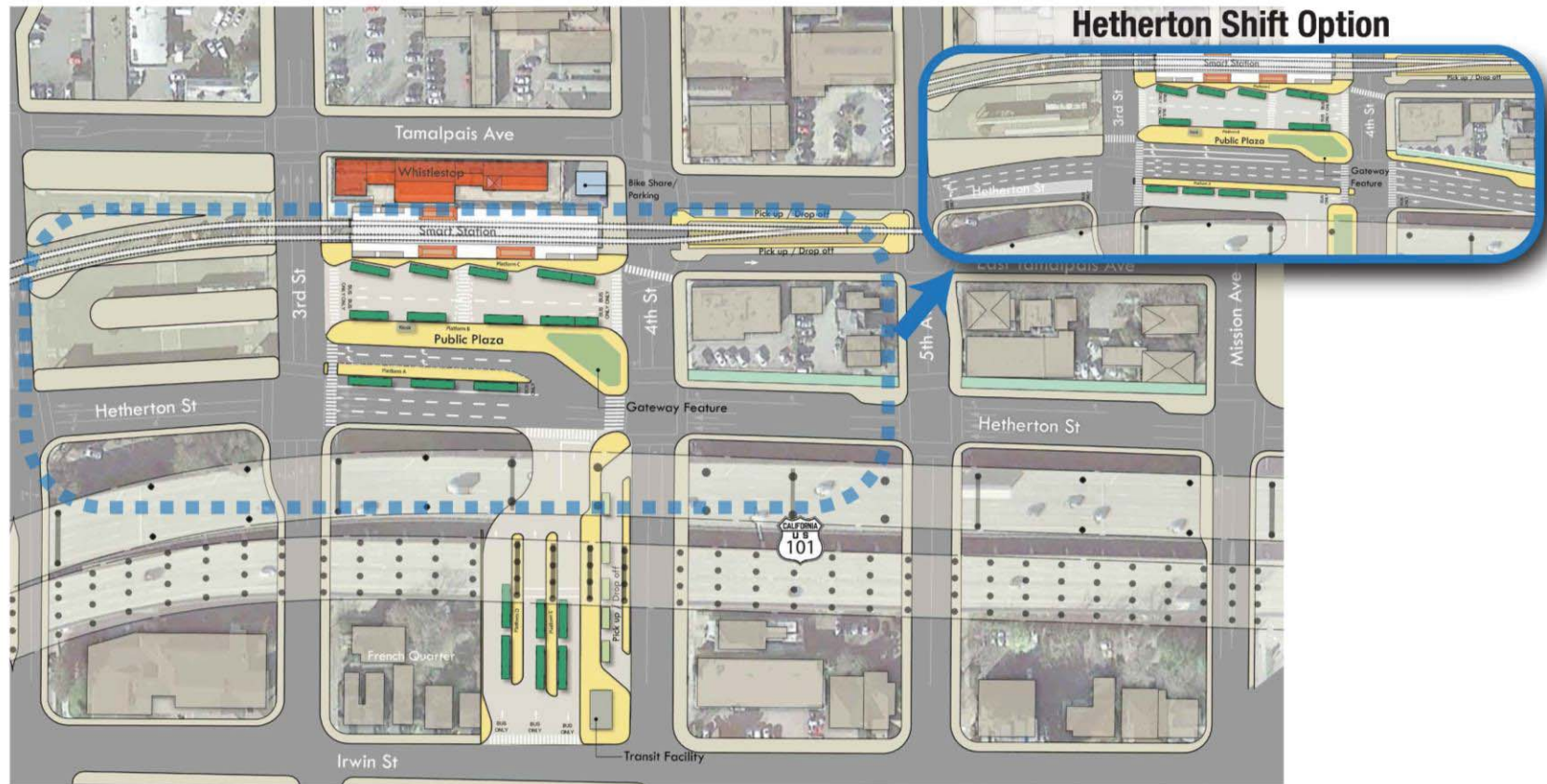


Figure 3  
Across the Freeway Concept

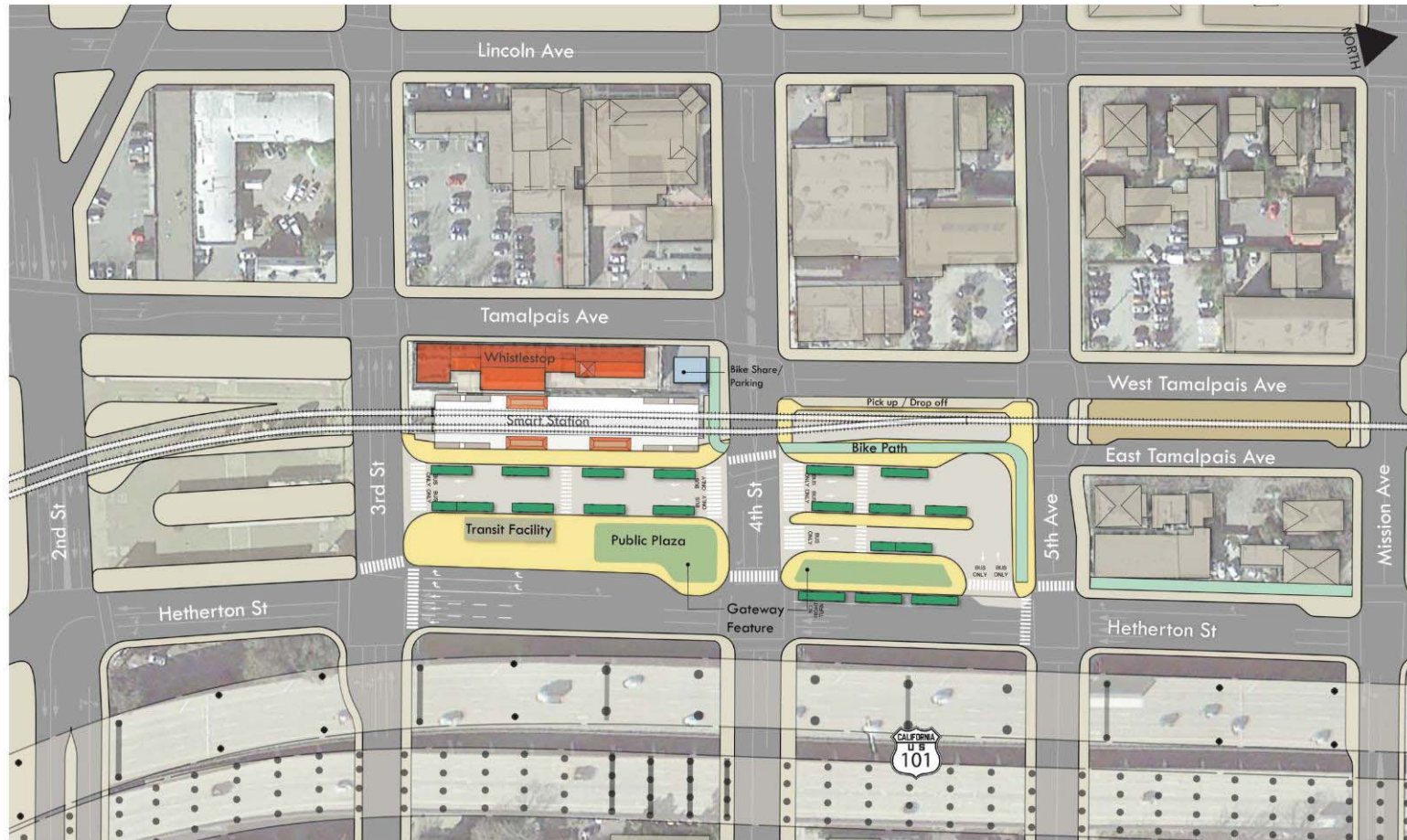


Figure 4  
4th Street Gateway Concept



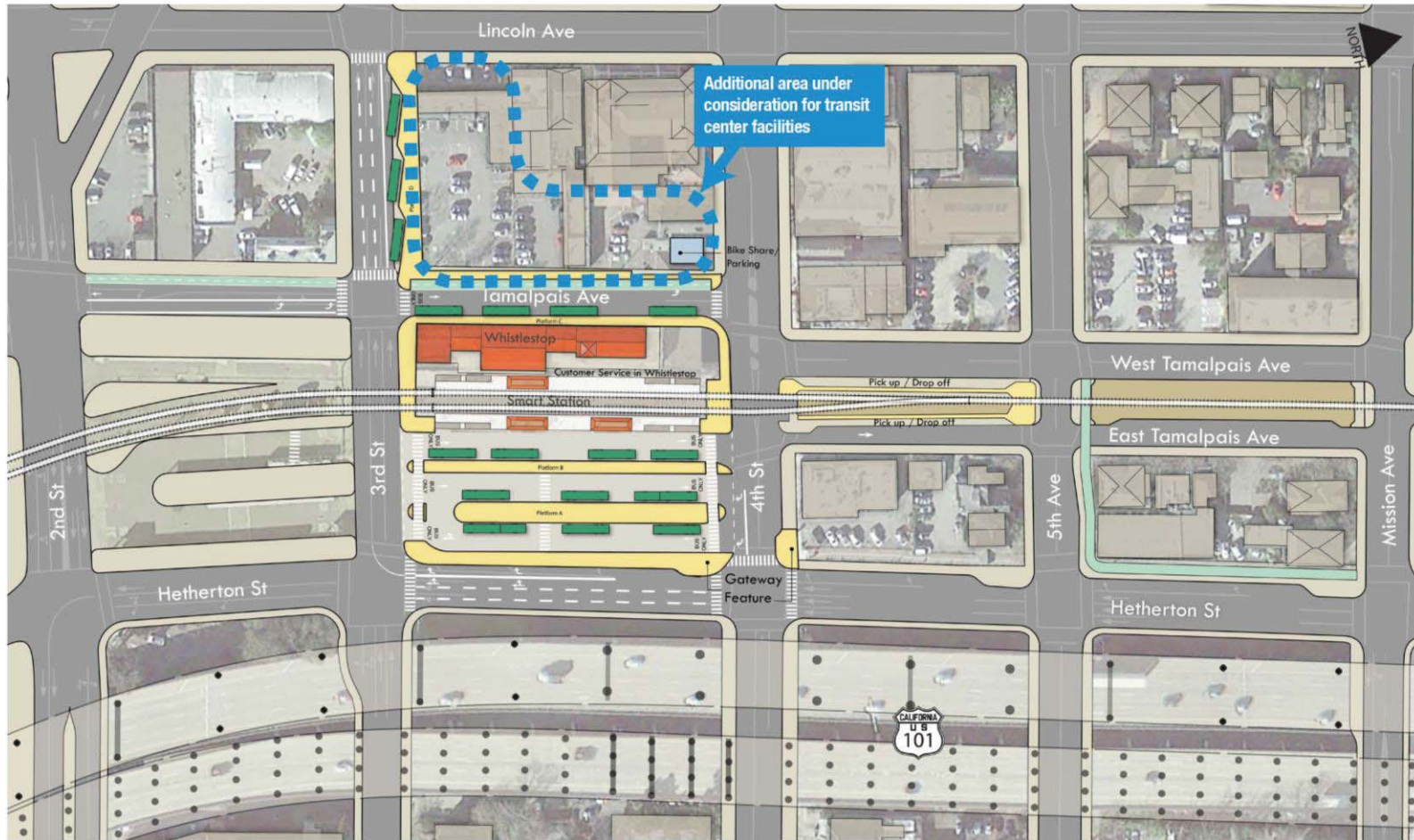


Figure 5  
Whistlestop Block Concept



Figure 6  
North of 4th Street Concept



# Chapter 2

## Overview of the Environmental Review Process

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### 2.1 Environmental Impact Report

The purpose of the EIR is to disclose the environmental impacts of the project. The NOP identified potential environmental effects to be examined in the EIR including those related to aesthetics, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions; biological resources; cultural resources; geology, soils, and seismicity; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise and vibration; population and housing; transportation and transit; and utilities and public services (including recreation). Cumulative impacts, alternatives to the project, and growth inducing impacts will also be analyzed. Impacts resulting from both short-term construction and long-term operation of the project will be identified. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as appropriate.

### 2.2 Purpose of the NOP and Scoping Process

The scoping process initiates environmental review for EIRs and is designed to determine the focus and content of the Draft EIR. An NOP is prepared to inform agencies, stakeholders, and the public that a Draft EIR is being prepared and provides information on how they may submit comments. Comments received are reviewed and considered by the lead agency, which uses them to further refine the EIR scope and alternatives, including the design and/or potential impacts and mitigation strategies of the project.

The scoping process for the project invited agencies and interested parties to provide input on the project, the proposed topics of evaluation and potential impacts, and mitigation measures to be considered. As part of the EIR scoping process, the District conducted a public scoping meeting (on October 30, 2018) to notice agencies, interested parties, and the public about the project and the Draft EIR and to initiate public involvement in the environmental review process.

### 2.3 NOP and Scoping Notification

The scoping process for the project began with formal agency notification. On October 16, 2018, the District distributed an NOP to advise interested agencies and the public that the District intends to prepare an EIR for the project. The District distributed the NOP to approximately 36 Federal, State, Regional, and Local agencies.

The District also notified potentially interested individuals and organizations regarding the scoping process and public scoping meeting for the project. The District used multiple methods to announce the scoping process and public meetings:

- Display advertisements in local newspapers

- Postcard mailings to addresses within a half-mile radius of the San Rafael Transit Center
- Poster displays attached to sandwich boards at the transit center and in nearby windows
- Project website updated with information about the event
- Information posted on the City of San Rafael's Nextdoor account
- Emails sent to the District's email database
- Press release circulated to media outlets
- Social media postings including three Facebook posts and six Twitter posts.
- Phone and email outreach to leaders of the Canal Alliance, Canal Multicultural Center, and Ad Hoc Committee.
- Automatic traffic sign display of meeting information

An article previewing the meeting and outlining the project was published in the *Marin Independent Journal* (published on October 28, 2018). The District mailed approximately 7,000 postcards to addresses within a half-mile of the San Rafael Transit Center. Content on these postcards included a Spanish translation and provided the NOP notice, project website, and information about the scoping meeting.

Information on the project, scoping meeting, and instructions on how to provide comments were also posted on the project website.

**Appendix A** includes a copy of the NOP.

## Chapter 3

# Report on the Scoping Meeting

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The District conducted a formal environmental scoping meeting to gather input and comments prior to the development of the EIR at the following time and place:

Tuesday, October 30, 2018,  
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.  
The Whistlestop  
930 Tamalpais Avenue  
San Rafael, CA

The public scoping meeting included a sign-in/open house portion where the public could view informational display boards representing the different project alternatives and concept exhibits for the San Rafael Transit Center, and a presentation portion of the meeting during which the consultant team provided an overview of the project and the environmental process in PowerPoint format. The meeting drew approximately 100 attendees. The display boards and PowerPoint presentation from the scoping meeting are provided in **Appendix B**. The materials associated with the scoping meeting, include sign-in sheets, postcards, and the scoping meeting poster, are provided in **Appendix C**.

Written comments were accepted at the meeting and via mail or email to the District until the comment deadline. **Table 1** identifies the commenters from the scoping meeting and via mail or email. Copies of the written comments received at the scoping meeting or via email and post are provided in **Appendix D**.

**Table 1. List of Commenters**

Letter #	Commenter
<b>Scoping Meeting Comment Cards collected at the October 30 Scoping Meeting</b>	
1	Barbara Alexander
2	Sylvie Anderson
3	Rick Beckstrom
4	Jill Carmody
5	Alice Cochran
6	Bjorn Gripenburg
7	Jim Harrison
8	Steve Lamb
9	Cynthia Landecker
10	Gretchen Leavitt
11	Kramati Manasa
12	Patrick Muithya
13	Hugh Murphy
14	Kevin O'Keefe
15	Jeff Olson
16	David Potter

<b>Letter #</b>	<b>Commenter</b>
17	Niko Reed
18	Niko Reed
19	Niko Reed
20	Alan Schaevitz
21	Alan Schaevitz
22	Leslie Simons
23	Ila Smith
24	Pat Soberanis
25	Pat Soberanis
26	Stan Spannok
27	Richard Turnbull
28	Eric Valls
<b>Federal Agency Comments</b>	
	NA
<b>State Agency Comments</b>	
29	Department of Fish and Wildlife
30	Department of Transportation – District 4
31	State Clearinghouse
32	Public Utilities Commission
33	Native American Heritage Commission
<b>Regional/Local Agency Comment</b>	
34	City of San Rafael
35	City of San Rafael Citizens Advisory Committee
36	San Francisco Bay and Water Trail Program
37	Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART)
<b>Organization Comments</b>	
38	EcoRing
39	League of Women Voters of Marin County
40	Marin Conservation League
41	Marin County Bicycle Coalition
42	Montecito Area Residents' Association
43	Point San Pedro Road Coalition
44	Sustainable San Rafael
45	Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund
<b>Public Comments Received Via Mail and Email</b>	
46	DJ Allison
47	Kevin Anderson
48	Terrell Anderson
49	Erin Aradi
50	Lisette Arellano
51	Steve Ash
52	Avard

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<b>Letter #</b>	<b>Commenter</b>
53	Jennifer Bair
54	Connor Barnett
55	Lilly Barnet
56	Lucia Barnett
57	AB Bauer
58	Morris Beasley
59	Terry Berkemeier
60	Katherine Bernheim
61	Jo Biel
62	Lisel Blash
63	Robert Boyce
64	Edward Branscome
65	Amanda Brown
66	Geoffrey Brunell
67	Braun Burkhard
68	Emily Buskirk
69	Chris Carvalho
70	Edward Chin
71	Erik Clyman
72	Mark Comin
73	Nathan Cohen
74	Michael Cooke
75	Helga Cotter
76	Andrew Cullen
77	Billy D
78	Darren Davis
79	Jason Davis
80	Sherna Deamer
81	Dan DeFrank
82	Dean DiGiovanni
83	Chris Dis
84	Kevin and Helen Driscoll
85	Helene Drumm
86	Christine Egan
87	Monique Epstein
88	Lorenze Ersland
89	Stacey Farrell
90	Carol Fern
91	Patsy Fleisch
92	Jennifer de la Fonteigne-Barnett
93	Kalynn S Franjieh
94	Matt Garibaldi

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<b>Letter #</b>	<b>Commenter</b>
95	Dora Gavros
96	Frank Gerber
97	Georgia Giandomenica
98	Mirto Golino
99	Chis Gospodnetch
100	J Leigh Gregg
101	Jan Gross
102	Nancy Grover
103	William Hammonds
104	Mark Harmon
105	Lori Harvey
106	Coral HC
107	Susan Hewitt
108	Robin Hildebrant
109	Kyle Hubbard
110	Rachel Huettinger
111	Georgia Hughes
112	Mark Ingwersen
113	Raoul Issac
114	Hilary Jeffris
115	Beth Jennings
116	Kyle W Jordan
117	Jack Judkins
118	Peg Kane
119	Katie Kelly
120	Stu Kneeland
121	Glenn Koorhan
122	Tuomas Kostianinen
123	Maddy Kragh
124	Paloma Krasilchik-Ojeda
125	Steve Lamb
126	Kimberly Lambert
127	William Lang
128	Stacey Lapuk
129	Olle Larsson
130	Janice Leach
131	Jason Lee
132	Min Lee
133	Mike Lenz
134	Tim Leonoudakis
135	Rick Lewis
136	Amy-Joe Likover

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<b>Letter #</b>	<b>Commenter</b>
137	Conrad Linke
138	Janet Lipsey
139	Felicia London
140	Don Magdanz (1)
141	Don Magdanz (2)
142	James Malaspina
143	Dana Martin
144	Diana McBride
145	Preston McCoy
146	Jake McKibben
147	Mark McLaughlin
148	Thomas McNulty
149	Andrea Meislin
150	Stefanie Mendez
151	Doug Moler (1)
152	Doug Moler (2)
153	Hugh Murphy
154	Ali Navarro
155	Susan Nawbary
156	Gary Novack
157	Sean O'Connell
158	Tom Olson
159	Timothy Park
160	Christine Pang
161	Rekh Pareek
162	Drew Patterson
163	Randall Potter
164	Kate Powers
165	Cornelia Provost
166	Joseph Radwan
167	Leslie Reese
168	Jeffrey Rhoads (1)
169	Jeffrey Rhoads (2)
170	Nancy Roberts
171	Ben Ross
172	Roberta Rossetti
173	Elizabeth Ryan
174	Den Satake
175	Wendy Schaevitz
176	Erik Schmidt
177	Jeffrey Schneider
178	Judy Schriebman

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<b>Letter #</b>	<b>Commenter</b>
179	Steven Schoonover
180	Jean Severinghaus
181	Leslie Simons
182	Craig Smith
183	Nancy Spellman
184	Stock
185	Christy Strobe
186	Abe Stucky
187	Liz Swearingen
188	Dan Testa
189	Christen Thompson
190	Lorraine Trautwein
191	Dave Troup (1)
192	Dave Troup (2)
193	Lada Tsibulya
194	Rachel Urab
195	Stan Urab
196	Natalie Urban
197	Nick Urban
198	David Vasser
199	Frank Valentini
200	Marc Vendetti
201	John Vipiana
202	Steve Waterloo
203	Richard Waxman
204	Paul Whiting
205	Michael Wilmar
206	Monique Winkler
207	Cindy Winter
208	Helen Young
209	Nash Zamzow
210	Jana Zanetto
211	Sharon Zurcher

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The following is a summary of the key issues raised in the comments received by the District through comment cards, mail, and email. Copies of the comments are provided in **Appendix D**.

## 4.1 Project Description and Design

### General

- Requests that the EIR analyze impacts from each alternative at an equal level of detail.
- Requests that all alternatives, descriptions, impacts, and mitigation assume future operation of SMART service to Larkspur Landing, including daily service through San Rafael.
- Requests a discussion of how the project will accommodate newer transit technologies, including minibuses, ride-sharing vehicles, and autonomous vehicles.
- Requests that EIR expressly state in Project Objectives the City of San Rafael's key design goals, which are: maximize 4th Street vitality, clearly define the SRTC access routes, improve utilization of the Caltrans right-of-way, demonstrate sustainable design, and preserve the Whistlestop building (930 Tamalpais Avenue).
- Requests an initial screening of the five site location options in order to eliminate from further consideration concepts that do not meet project objectives.
- Requests that restrooms and concessions be considered a requirement for all alternatives.
- Requests that the EIR consider potential short-term and long-term parking impacts for each alternative.
- Requests that signage should consider tourists as well as commuters and be multilingual.
- Requests that project be designed so that neither pedestrians nor cyclists need to cross the SMART tracks to reach buses or the SMART pathway.
- Requests that nearby property owners receive advance notification of proposals.
- Requests that the transit center be as close to the SMART train as possible.
- Requests that the Taxi-Cab Coalition be included in further discussions.
- Requests for a taxi stand to accommodate the taxis in Marin County.
- Requests spoken announcements of arriving buses and trains at new transit center.
- Raises concerns about any alternative that has passengers crossing/waiting under freeways or crossing Hetherton Street.
- Requests adequate shelter from the rain at new transit center.
- Requests for inclusion of protected bike lanes in the project.
- Requests that the project facilitate short and direct transfers.

- Requests a pedestrian bridge on 3rd Street at Heatherton.
- Requests that design capacity for the transit center be at least an order of magnitude higher than current patronage levels along with the suggestion that this can be achieved by building into the project the ability to expand.
- Requests information about how each alternative will affect bus delays.

## Purpose and Need

- Requests adding “ and bicycle” to the following Project Objective: Provide convenient, pedestrian, and bicycle connections to surrounding land uses.

## Two-Story Concept Alternative

- Asks to consider impacts of vertical transit center on ADA accessibility and safety for transferring passengers; stairs present difficulty in transferring for those with mobility issues.
- Asks to consider visual impacts of crossing at 3rd Street.
- Asks to consider danger of passengers making transfers across busy streets.
- Raises concerns regarding cost of a structure that would co-locate all 17 bus bays off-street to meet current and future needs.
- Raises concerns about aesthetics of building; two-story design may be visually intrusive.
- Raises concerns about cost of this alternative.
- Asks to consider utilizing the undisturbed portion of Bettini for additional bus bays.

## Across-the-Freeway Concept Alternative

- Asks to consider lack of natural light and tunnel effect below structure.
- Offers support for this alternatives as improving a visually blighted area.
- Raises concerns about undesirability of walking across Hetherton Street under freeway.
- Raises concerns about the crossing providing difficulty for those with limited mobility.
- Raises concerns about long walks between transfers.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Street Gateway Concept Alternative

- Requests that the EIR consider traffic condition on Irwin/Hetherton during peak hours and their impacts on signalized intersections.
- Asks to consider the danger of passengers making transfers across busy streets, particularly 4th Street.
- Raises concerns about safety of eliminating right turns from Hetherton onto 4th Street.
- Raises concerns about this alternative’s impacts on historic buildings (635 and 637 5th Avenue), 1895-era Queen Anne Victorians and the wish to preserve them.
- Raises concerns that public plaza would be on a busy street which doesn’t integrate with anything.

- Raises concerns with the way this alternative stretches the transit center north, creating a bus staging area which would exasperate the “wall” created by U.S. 101.
- Raises concerns about the aesthetic impacts of having the transit center as the entry to San Rafael.
- Raises concerns with traffic resulting from the transit center discouraging shopping and eating in the downtown area.

## **Whistlestop Block Concept Alternative**

- Expresses preference for the Whistlestop Block Concept and requests that it be modified so riders could transfer between bus and train without crossing streets.
- Requests the addition of four bus stops on Hetherton Street and three on opposite side of the platform.
- Requests more space to accommodate additional stops and to allow for buses traveling east on 4th Street to turn more easily onto Hetherton.
- Requests moving three bus bays on 3rd Street and four bus bays on Tamalpais Avenue to the area now used for Whistlestop parking lot at Tamalpais and Lincoln.
- Requests that Tamalpais Avenue between 3rd Street and 4th Street be designated as a passenger drop off and pick up area.
- Requests illustration of internal vehicle circulation patterns to access all properties within the block.
- Raises concerns about bus bays on 3rd Street because of negative impact on traffic and pedestrians near Lincoln Ave.
- Raises concerns about alternative resulting in additional congestion.
- Requests that the Whistlestop Building be an attractive center with shops and cafes.
- Requests bus ticketing facilities in the building.
- Requests closing Tamalpais Avenue between 3rd Street and 4th Street to create a bicycle and pedestrian boulevard/public plaza.
- Raises concerns about the extremely narrow sidewalk on Tamalpais and public safety as exiting passengers use this sidewalk.
- Raises concerns about the relocation of historic San Rafael Depot building.
- Requests reversing the direction of the four buses on Tamalpais so they enter from 4th Street and proceed south.
- Raises concerns that preserving the Whistlestop building leaves it as “an ungainly island” in the middle of the transit center.

## **North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street Concept Alternative**

- Requests a defined location for pickup and drop off.
- Asks to consider Caltrans’ potential objection to construction under the highway.

- Asks to consider the biological impacts of covering creek.
- Asks to consider the aesthetic experience for bus passengers waiting under highway.
- Requests additional parking.
- Asks to consider safety issues for pedestrians crossing from Hetherton to and from the transit center.
- Raises concerns about transfers to SMART trains requiring too far of a walk.
- Requests that the site accommodate ancillary facilities critical to providing a full-service transit center.
- Raises concerns about the safety of people crossing Hetherton or Irwin.

## Parking, Pedestrian, and Bicycles Facilities

- Requests that the EIR discuss pedestrian transportation access to/from all directions and identify crosswalks proposed to be eliminated or improved for each alternative.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts on different transit riders including residents, workers, and students in terms of Level of Service (LOS) walking time delay.
- Requests that the EIR discuss bicycle safety and accessibility of pathway and bike parking.
- Requests that the EIR discuss the compatibility and impacts on the North-South Greenway multiuse path and requests including the pathway on figures in the EIR.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts of loss of parking resulting from the project.
- Requests that project incorporates the bike routes adopted in *San Rafael Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* and the *Station Area Plan*.
- Requests putting the multi-use path on the east side of West Tamalpais in order to eliminate driveway crossings as identified in the *SMART Downtown Station Area Plan*.
- Requests that the EIR discuss how project will positively or negatively impact east west circulation for students passing under the highway to Davidson Middle School, San Rafael High School, and to shops and services downtown.
- Requests that the project include private sector provision of Transit Bicycle Center.
- Requests that North-South Greenway along Tamalpais Avenue between Mission Avenue and 2nd street be free from loading zones, parking, and other bicycle obstructions, and include a separation or physical protection for people biking.
- Requests 250–500 bicycle parking spaces.
- Requests protected bike lanes and improved, safe pedestrian crossing designs.
- Requests secure bicycle parking at the station.
- Requests protected bike lanes throughout the corridor and along 4th Street and Tamalpais.
- Requests a dedicated bike pathway along 2nd Street.
- Requests a safe, dedicated east-west bicycle route through San Rafael.

- Requests that the SMART Pathway from Anderson Avenue to 2nd to Mission Ave along Tamalpais Ave should be protected from vehicle traffic.
- Requests that the project use the property where the existing transit center is located to construct safe, accessible, additional parking in a new structure.
- Requests additional car parking to accommodate those who use the park and ride lots.
- Requests raised pedestrian walkways for protection and to increase traffic flow.
- Requests staggered signal light on cross streets of Hetherton to allow bikes and pedestrians opportunity to cross before cars.
- Requests an area for bike parking, bike share, and space for other emerging car-free mobility options.
- Asks to consider removing all buildings between 2nd Street, 3rd Street, Hetherton/Irwin to make room for drivers and pedestrians.
- Requests a bike bridge from north of the transit center to the south with one looped-exit/entrance at the station.

## Construction and Operational Activities

- Requests that the EIR analyze impacts for construction and for life of the project.

## 4.2 Scope of Environmental Analysis

### Aesthetics

- Requests that the EIR discuss visual impacts resulting from open bus movement areas and public plaza to urban built environment.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts resulting from light pollution in the area and provide mitigation.
- Requests that the EIR discuss the viewshed of the surrounding hills.
- Requests a qualitative analysis of glare associated with vehicles, buses and window glazing.
- Requests computer-generated visual simulations for the site options that identify existing and post-development conditions.
- Requests that the EIR utilize the *San Rafael General Plan 2020*, the *San Rafael Transit Center Relocation Guidance Report*, and the *“Good Design” Guidelines for Downtown* as a starting point for determining key goals and policies.
- Requests that transportation hubs be made attractive, welcoming places with landscaping and trees.
- Requests that the existing Victorian buildings be preserved.
- Requests that additional trees be planted and more color be added for atmosphere.
- Requests consideration of the aesthetic impacts of the unused portion of the Bettini property under the Two-Story alternative.

- Asks to consider the “place-making” potential of each alternative as a key impact.
- Asks how the alternatives provide “eyes on the street” to keep the area safe.
- Requests that the EIR discuss protection or loss of view corridors into downtown and to surrounding hillsides.

## Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Requests that the EIR discuss and analyze impacts on air quality and greenhouse gas emission, but also cumulative and net, including emissions from buses and vehicles, and emissions due to increased idling from potential congestion.
- Requests that the EIR include a quantitative air quality analysis.
- Requests that the EIR include a health risk assessment.
- Requests that the EIR utilize City of San Rafael’s updated *Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP)* and reduction strategy.

## Biological Resources

- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts of covering Erwin Creek, impacts on ducks and turtles and other wildlife.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts on nearly riparian or wetland habitats and biological resources, both resident and migratory.
- Asks that the project identifies whether trees will be planted as part of the project and their impacts as they grow.
- Requests a jurisdictional determination for wetland boundaries.
- Requests that a qualified biologist assesses biological resources in and around the wetlands.
- Discusses potential impacts on biological resources associated with the project.
- Requests that an arborist identify and assess impacts on trees.

## Cultural Resources

- Requests a discussion of historical setting with an acknowledgement that the area has been substantially impacted by historic regional transportation activities including rail; the elevation of U.S. 101 over city streets; and the modification of San Rafael, Mahon, and Irwin Creeks.
- Requests that the EIR discuss and assess impacts on the following potential historic resources: 930 Tamalpais Avenue (Whistlestop), 927 Tamalpais Avenue (Trevor’s), 709 4th Street (4th Street Tavern), 633 5th Avenue, and 637 5th Avenue.
- Requests a reconnaissance of the study area to determine if other existing buildings may meet the historic resource criteria.
- Requests that a qualified archaeologist prepare a report to identify potential pre-historic and archaeological site in the project area.

- Requests a thorough evaluation of all historic buildings in the transit center area including the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP) Depot and the two Queen Anne’s at 5th Street and Heatherton.
- Requests the preservation of the NWP Depot for adaptive reuse as a placemaking component of the area.
- Requests the preservation of the two Victorians on 5th Street.
- Asks that the EIR discuss the historic structures in the “green rectangle,” including 929 Mission Revival NWP Depot, Queen Anne’s at 633 and 637 5th Street, 709 4th Street, and 927 Tamalpais.
- Expresses concern that the NWP Depot be preserved.

## Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

- Requests the preparation of a Geotechnical Investigation including subsurface boring and soil testing.

## Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- Requests that a Phase I Site Assessment be prepared to confirm listed sites and property with known contaminants.

## Hydrology and Water Quality

- Asks that the EIR discuss and show existing creeks in the project area and discuss impacts and changes resulting from sea level rise scenarios as outlined in the County of Marin’s *Bay Waterfront Adaptation and Vulnerability Evaluation* (BayWAVE).
- Requests that the EIR identify what alternatives meet the goals of the California Natural Resource Agency’s “*Paying it Forward: The Path Toward Climate-Safe Infrastructure in California*.”
- Requests that the EIR describe the maximum anticipated rates and volumes of stormwater runoff and capacity of stormwater management system.
- Requests that the EIR include a discussion of toxicity of soils in the project area with a description of how contaminants will be prevented from entering waterways.
- Requests that the EIR discuss potential risks associated with sea level rise.

## Land Use

- Asks that the EIR considers questions regarding ownership and maintenance responsibility in alternatives with Caltrans as the primary landowner.
- Suggests including a discussion of the San Rafael Transit Center’s relationship to the *San Rafael Transit Center Relocation Guidance Report* and the “Good Design” Guidelines for Downtown and noting the status of these plans.
- Requests a discussion of the impact of each alternative on the appeal of area “opportunity sites” for development contributing to the “gateway” quality of the area.



## Noise and Vibration

- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts of vehicle noise on waiting and public areas.
- Requests that the EIR disclose if pile-driving is necessary or proposed for the construction of the project.
- Requests inclusion of field measurements of existing baseline conditions.

## Population and Housing

- Requests a discussion of impacts on population and housing in relation to the *San Rafael General Plan 2020* and to *Plan Bay Area 2040's* Downtown Priority Development Area (PDA) projections.
- Suggests considering potential impacts on the planned 91-unit senior residential development located at 700–703 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

## Socioeconomics

- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts from construction and operation of the project on downtown businesses, particularly in the east part of 4th Street.

## Security and System Safety

- Suggests prioritizing safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly east/west, and school kids.

## Transportation and Transit

- Requests that analysis of transportation impacts use all recent traffic studies in the project area including, but not limited to, recent studies by San Rafael's Department of Public Works, Kimley-Horn study of 3rd Street and Hetherton intersection, 3rd Street Rehabilitation Project, as well as available congestion management analysis and traffic data from Marin County's Transportation Authority of Marin.
- Requests a Travel Demand Analysis analyzing project-related trip generation, distribution, and turning movement.
- Requests the development of a Transit Demand Management (TDM) program including elements such as onsite showers and lockers, secured bicycle storage, and electrical vehicle charging stations.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts from vehicle access and exit routes from all direction, including U.S. 101 and merges that would be added.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts resulting from the relocation, elimination, or change of any traffic lanes and pedestrian crosswalks in the project area.
- Requests that the EIR identify adjacent streets and neighborhoods that could experience increased traffic backup, at what times, and include mitigation measures.
- Requests that the EIR discuss sight distances for drivers, particularly buses, as they enter or park in new bays.



- Requests that the EIR discuss provisions for passenger access and boarding in new bays.
- Requests that the EIR discuss how U.S. 101 through traffic will be affected by the project.
- Requests that the EIR discuss how the project will support City of San Rafael goals of reduced congestion and improved safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts on traffic congestion.
- Requests that the EIR discuss number of passengers estimated to be accessing the proposed project via train, foot, car, bicycle, and other appropriate modes, including at different time of the day.
- Requests that the EIR discuss vehicle miles traveled.
- Requests that the EIR review the project for consistency and/or conflicts with the circulation goals and policies in *San Rafael General Plan 2020* and *City of San Rafael Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (2018)*.
- Requests that the EIR discuss advanced signalization and other technological management system opportunities for the project.
- Requests that the EIR discuss evolving mobility options and technologies in the vicinity and include corresponding recommendations for land use.
- Requests that all areas surrounding the proposed project should be looked at as traffic calmed areas.
- Raises concerns about the elimination of the left-turn lane at 3rd Street and Hetherton.
- Requests that the EIR discuss benefits of public-private transit hub in the historic NWP Depot building.
- Requests that the EIR discuss the north-to-south bus flow on Tamalpais.
- Requests that the EIR consider Tamalpais south of 3rd Street and the sliver of the Bettini site west of the rail tracks as an alternative location for the three 3rd Street bus bays.
- Requests that the EIR analyze the intersection treatments needed at Tamalpais and 3rd and 4th Streets to assure safe access for pedestrians, passengers, and cyclists.
- Requests that the EIR discuss adequacy of car drop-off and taxi zones.
- Requests that the EIR discuss access to the project for those arriving by car, including the provision or loss of drop-off and commuter parking facilities.

## Utilities and Public Services, Recreation

- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts on local roads and highways, including the San Pedro Road corridor, during emergencies and evacuations, such as during wildfire or flood.
- Requests that the project consider creative signs for bus/taxi/train information.
- Requests that the EIR discuss essential services response times and ratios.
- Requests that the EIR discuss potential public realm impacts within a ¼-mile radius of project site, such as the need for wider sidewalks, gathering areas, wayfinding signage, and landscaping.

- Requests that the District use this opportunity to complete the Bay Trail in downtown San Rafael.
- Requests that the EIR discuss impacts of vehicular circulation around the site on emergency vehicles.

### 4.3 Project Alternatives

- Requests that the EIR consider a site south of 2nd Street at the Glass and Sash building and the adjoining roofing business to allow for future land use planning responsive to sea level rise.
- Requests that the EIR discuss what properties would have to be acquired and what businesses would have to be relocated for each alternative, as well as potential land uses for the remaining portions of parcels.
- Requests that the EIR discuss future re-use option of current site.
- Requests designs that use the current location for a least two street-level alternatives.

### Non-CEQA Topics

- Requests that the District prepare a Fiscal Impact Analysis to assist in assessing and weighing alternatives.

### 4.4 Funding/Costs

- Request that the District not discount alternatives based on funding issues.
- Requests a discussion of the merits of securing public ownership of an expanded site, including ground-leasing development rights rather than selling existing public property.
- Requests that the EIR consider the cost of acquiring private properties and relocating their tenants.

### 4.5 Other

- Requests more advanced noticing regarding meetings.