

MEMO

To: Valerie Knepper, MTC

C: Case Study Cities

Date: June 29, 2007

From: Elizabeth Cruz/Bill Hurrell

Subject: Infill Analysis and Policy Recommendations –San Rafael

Introduction

This memorandum presents an analysis of infill feasibility for the downtown parking lots and Northgate Mall in the City of San Rafael for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) *Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth Study*. This memorandum includes a description of the study site, a review of supportive policies, and makes recommendations based on the feasibility analysis

Methodology

To determine the feasibility of infill opportunities in the downtown and for Northgate Mall a review of the City's *General Plan 2020*, *Vision North San Rafael*, and Zoning regulations for parking and density requirements was conducted. This review identified the City of San Rafael's current policies, strategies, guidelines and standards that affect and relate to development in the study areas. Following this document review, the study sites were examined in relation to these policies. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are drawn regarding the feasibility of infill opportunities in the study areas.

Background

Downtown San Rafael

For this infill analysis, the downtown study area is comprised of the area bounded by Fourth Street to the north, Second Street to the south, Lincoln Avenue to the east, and D Street to the west. This study area was selected as a representative portion of the San Rafael downtown, as it contained the main commercial street as well as several typical on- and off-street parking facilities. The downtown study area contains several distinct zoning districts:

- Fourth Street Retail Core District;
- Cross Street Mixed Use District;
- Second/Third Mixed Use District East; and
- Second/Third Mixed Use District West;

Fourth Street Retail Core District

This area serves as the heart of downtown San Rafael. A regional serving center with both small scale and larger shops, it hosts a mix of businesses, restaurants, and entertainment, and cultural uses.

To provide robust retail activity, zoning allows the highest development intensities in this district. Mixed-use buildings are encouraged and building heights range from 2 to 4 stories with allowable height bonuses.

Cross Street Mixed Use District

A transition area between the Gerstle Park Neighborhood and the Fourth Street Retail Core, this district is intended to be an active pedestrian area along A and B Streets. High intensity development is also encouraged in the district and building height bonuses are allowed.

Second/Third Mixed Use District East

A major transportation corridor bordering the south edge of downtown, from Highway 101 and Brooks Street. The district is defined by the two one-way streets, Second and Third Streets. Due to the District's proximity to Highway 101, parking areas in the district should be attractive, screened, and easy to find. Street frontages should pay special attention to pedestrian safety and setbacks and landscaping should lend to pedestrian comfort. This district has one of the highest allowable densities in the downtown area.

Second/Third Mixed Use District West

Continues the same functions as the adjacent district to the East and carries traffic through downtown. Unlike its neighboring district, the West district focuses on uses that do not require heavy pedestrian traffic, i.e. office and office supportive retail.

Downtown Parking

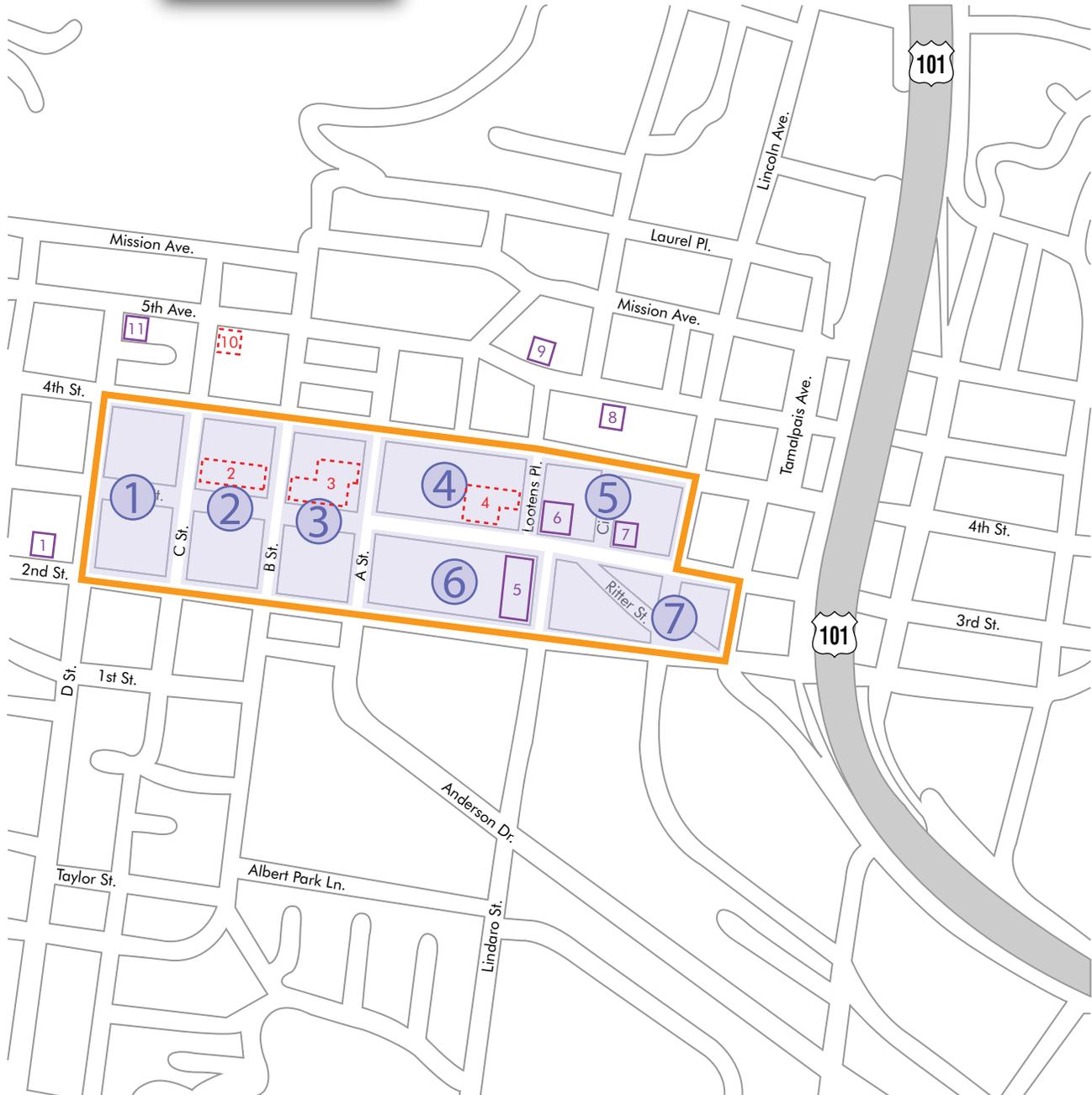
Within the downtown study area, 11 off-street public parking facilities provide a total of approximately 1,315 spaces. Figure 1 presents the locations of the existing off-street facilities.

Existing parking conditions were assessed within the downtown study area during a typical Friday and Saturday evening. Existing conditions data reveal that the City has a surplus of underutilized and disconnected public parking lots which currently act as unattractive gaps in the urban fabric. Overall, the majority of off-street facilities were shown to operate well below levels of practical capacity (85 percent). Notably, weekday (Friday) evening parking occupancy averaged 25 percent, while the average weekend evening parking occupancy was only 30 percent.



LEGEND

- Off-Street Lot
- Off-Street Garage
- Parking Study Area
- Block Number



Source: WSA July 2006

Northgate Mall

The second study area is Northgate Mall, located in North San Rafael, in the area bounded by Las Gallinas Avenue to the north, Ranchitos Road to the east, and Northgate Drive to the west and south. The Mall extends over approximately 39 acres, is highly accessible by Highway 101, and is Marin County's only enclosed regional shopping center. Northgate first opened its doors in 1965 and since that time has grown to accommodate over 100 specialty stores and a 15-screen movie theater complex. Major anchor retailers of the mall include Macy's, Mervyn's and Sears. The mall was built in 1962, expanded in 1972 and 1986, and enclosed in 1987. The most recent remodel was in 1983 when retail space was converted to a multi-screen movie theater.

As such, Northgate Mall is in many ways emblematic of the malls built between the early 1950s and the late 1980s. It is located in a generally middle-class suburb accessible to the region's major arterials and freeways, and under the single management of a private company (Macerich Company). During its early years, the Mall was regarded as a favorable destination for residents and regional visitors to meet their retail needs. The mall included desirable brand-name stores and provided customers a clean, safe, and predictable shopping environment with plenty of parking. However, over the years the appeal of the mall has declined as it has had to compete with other regional retail centers.

Northgate Mall, now decades old, in many ways has become obsolete when compared to other Marin shopping centers that have expanded to competitively attract key retail stores. The Northgate Mall site is among one of the City's largest land parcels. Purchased at a time when land values were low, the value of this prime real-estate has dramatically increased. Much of the value of the mall land remains untapped in the form of underutilized parking lots.

Infill Supportive Policies Infill

The City of San Rafael has various policies which support infill development; these policies are documented in the City's General Plan, Vision North San Rafael, and Zoning Ordinance. The following presents a list of existing pertinent infill policies.

General Plan

Housing Element

H-22 - Infill near Transit

Allow higher densities on sites adjacent to a transit hub, such as the Downtown Transportation Center or the potential Civic Center SMART station and along major bus corridors.

H-22a - Higher Density Infill Housing Near Transit

Revise the Zoning Ordinance to encourage higher density infill housing near transit service.

Neighborhood Element

NH-88b. Safe Walkways and Bikeways

Encourage the provision of lighting and sidewalks to ensure safe and attractive walkways and bikeways from the transit center, on both sides of Civic Center Drive, to the Northgate area.

NH-131. North San Rafael Town Center

Create an attractive, thriving heart for the North San Rafael community: a centerpiece of commerce and activity with a diversity and synergy of activities for all ages.

NH-133. Northgate Mall

Revitalize the economic health of the Northgate Mall and surrounding business areas. Encourage efforts to revitalize and expand Northgate Mall, including improving the mix of activities and the quality of shops, and upgrading the appearance of the buildings and landscaping, while maintaining a scale consistent with the surrounding community and not exceeding infrastructure capacity. Allow the addition of residences, maximize the potential for affordable housing, and incorporate promenade improvements as described in the North San Rafael Promenade Conceptual Plan in any substantial rehabilitation or expansion of the mall. See LU-2a (Development Review) and C-24a (North San Rafael Promenade).

NH-135. Incentives

Provide planning incentives for uses that will enhance the Town Center, including retail, office, housing, and community services. Allow a height bonus of two stories for affordable housing.

NH-137. Northgate Business Park

Protect and maintain existing industrial uses and industrial sites that are important to San Rafael's economy and needed for the convenience of its residents and businesses. Allow uses such as delis and copy shops that serve businesses and employees in the area. See LU-2a (Development Review)

NH-139. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Accessibility

Improve access and bicycle/pedestrian connections between Northgate One, the Mall at Northgate and Northgate Three.

NH-139a. Promenade and Other Improvements

Through the development review process, encourage improvements consistent with this policy. Considerations include:

1. Support routing of the North San Rafael Promenade in the Town Center area to include safer and more convenient pedestrian and bike crossings from the Civic Center to Northgate Three, Northgate Mall, Northgate One, and along Freitas Parkway.
2. Support routing of Marin County north-south bicycle route along Northgate Drive, and increased availability of bicycle racks at the Town Center.
3. Support increased public transit to and from the Town Center.
4. Align crosswalks with bus stops.
5. Encourage shuttle service within the Town Center area during holiday season.
6. Implement traffic calming as needed on roadways in parking lots and redesign traffic flow to minimize conflict between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
7. Encourage design for additional stores and parking structures to maximize pedestrian access and minimize traffic conflicts.
8. Improve pedestrian safety along Redwood Highway with improved sidewalks and parking lot landscaping.

NH-140. Pedestrian Scale

Create a sense of enclosure, pedestrian-scale and easy accessibility by improving the pedestrian “feel” of the Town Center area. Examples include welcoming, pedestrian friendly entrances to the shopping areas; pleasant, landscaped walkways between the shopping areas as part of the North San Rafael Promenade; and a focal point at a public plaza.

NH-141. Mall Entrance

Consider ways to improve the entrance into the mall.

NH-140a. Improved Entrance to the Mall

Support redesign of traffic flow and intersection improvements along Las Gallinas, Northgate Drive, Del Presidio, and Merrydale to expedite traffic to and from the shopping areas and to improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles. Support realignment of driveways along Las Gallinas to form safer intersections and pedestrian crossing.

Municipal Code

Zoning

Chapter 14.05 Commercial and Office Districts

In addition to the general purposes listed in Section 14.01.0430, the specific purposes of the commercial and office districts include the following:

- A. To promote specialized commercial environments which provide appropriately located areas for retail, service and office development, and provide the city with a wide range of neighborhood, local and regional serving uses;
- B. To promote appropriately located businesses which provide local employment opportunities and/or generate tax revenue for the city;
- C. To promote commercial and office projects at appropriate building intensities and trip-generation characteristics which will maintain acceptable traffic-operating standards;
- D. To promote high-quality design in new or remodeled commercial and office development consistent with design guidelines;
- E. To promote and encourage commercial and office sites and designs which are accessible by a variety of transportation means;
- F. To promote San Rafael's downtown area as a viable commercial and financial center, and as an urban center with a mixture of civic, social, entertainment, cultural and residential uses;
- G. To retain and enhance the Northgate Shopping Center and surrounding retail area as a regional shopping center;
- H. To provide housing opportunities by encouraging a variety of housing in *mixed-use* districts.

The additional purposes of each commercial district follow:

L. Fourth Street Retail Core District (4SRC)

1. Existing Character. The Fourth Street retail core district is the heart of Downtown San Rafael. Fourth Street is a popular shopping and restaurant center serving a regional market with small-scale and larger shops, restaurants and service businesses lining the street. The district offers many events and entertainment and cultural opportunities for San Rafael residents and greater Marin. There are also a number of financial institutions and upper floor offices in the district.
2. Allowed Uses. The Fourth Street retail core will continue to be an active and growing regional retail and cultural center offering a mix of small specialty retail shops, larger retail stores, personal services and offices. Uses along the street are those which foster an active and healthy retail center. These uses typically have a high customer turnover, contribute to and benefit from a high volume of pedestrian traffic, provide storefront and window displays, and offer merchandise or a service likely to be included during a shopping visit downtown. Evening activity is promoted by maintaining a mix of uses including businesses and restaurants with evening hours of operation, and entertainment and cultural uses. In keeping with the district's existing character, mixed-use buildings with housing or offices above ground floor retail uses are encouraged. Residential uses are allowed on the rear ground floor, second floor and above.
3. Design Intent. Facade changes and new development must be compatible with the pattern and character of the many attractive and historic buildings along Fourth Street. Pedestrian-oriented street frontages must be provided to maintain human scale in building design. A continuity of retail stores and display windows is required. In order to promote robust retail activity, the highest development intensities in San Rafael are allowed in the Fourth Street retail core.

Building height will typically range from two (2) to four (4) stories with opportunities for additional height up to five (5) stories where a specific amenity or community benefit is provided.

R. Second/Third *Mixed Use District East* (2/3 MUE)

1. Existing Character. The Second/Third mixed use district east is part of a major transportation corridor bordering the southern edge of downtown, from Highway 101 to Brooks Street. The district is comprised of a “one-way pair” of Second and Third Streets carrying traffic through downtown. There is a mix of uses, including large and small-scale offices and retail shops, and residential uses. This area is highly visible to the Marin community, is adjacent to the planned vitality of the Lindero office district, and provides many opportunities to enhance the overall impression of downtown.
2. Allowed Uses. The Second/Third mixed use district east is to become more attractive, efficient and better utilized with a mix of compatible uses serving local, community and regional needs. Because of the district’s proximity to Highway 101 and the Transportation Center, this area is suitable for office and office-support retail and service uses. Limited auto-serving retail stores are allowed. Housing is encouraged as part of a mixed use project.
3. Design Intent. New development will help create an inviting appearance to Second and Third Streets. Parking areas should be attractive and screened, yet easy-to-find. Because of the high volume of traffic, the street front design should give special attention to pedestrian safety and comfort through setbacks and landscaping. This district has one of the highest levels of development intensity downtown because of its proximity to the Highway and the Transportation Center. Building heights are four (4) stories with height and FAR bonuses possible in limited circumstances to allow buildings up to five (5) stories when desirable amenities are provided.

S. Second/Third Mixed Use District West (2/3 MUW).

1. Existing Character. The Second/Third mixed use district west is part of a major transportation corridor bordering the southern edge of downtown, from “C” Street to the West End. The district is comprised of a “one-way pair” of Second and Third Streets carrying traffic through downtown. Existing uses include small- to medium-scale offices, retail shops and residential units. This area is highly visible to the Marin community and provides an opportunity to enhance the overall impression of downtown. It also serves as a transition between the Gerstle Park neighborhood and the Fourth Street retail core.
2. Allowed Uses. The Second/Third mixed use district west is to become more attractive, efficient and better utilized with a mix of compatible uses serving local, community and regional needs. Uses which benefit from the high visibility along Second and Third Streets and which do not require heavy pedestrian traffic, such as office and office-support retail and service uses, retail usually accessed by car (i.e., daily needs retail such as grocery and drug stores, etc.), and limited auto-serving and large item retail are allowed. Housing is encouraged throughout the district.
3. Design Intent. Development will help create a more inviting appearance in the district. Parking areas should be attractive, screened and easy-to-find. Because of the high volume of traffic, the street front design should give special attention to pedestrian safety and comfort through setbacks and landscaping. Each cross street should have a pleasant walking environment as well as an individual and unique identity. Building heights are three (3) stories, and intensities transition

from a higher FAR close to Fourth Street to a lower FAR south of Second Street near the neighborhood.

T. West End Village District (WEV)

1. Existing Character. The West End is an older commercial village adjacent to several neighborhoods. Small-scale shops and restaurants and small businesses along Fourth Street provide convenience goods and services to the nearby residential areas as well as specialty retail shopping opportunities for the wider San Rafael community.
2. Allowed Uses. The West End Village will continue to be a unique and desirable place to shop and live. A variety of goods and services is encouraged, ranging from one-of-a-kind shops, neighborhood-serving offices and services, family and youth-oriented entertainment activities, and restaurants. New parking areas are strongly encouraged. Limits on drive-up facilities and late-night activity protect the livability in the West End Village, and promote an attractive pedestrian setting. Mixed-use residential development is encouraged.
3. Design Intent. Infill development should remain compatible with the area's historic low-scale pattern and character. New buildings will typically range from one to two (2) stories with opportunities for occasional three (3) story mixed use commercial/residential buildings which complement the older buildings in the district.

U. Fifth/Mission Residential/Office District (5/M R/O).

1. Existing Character. The Fifth/Mission residential/office district is a mixed-use residential and office area between the Fourth Street retail core and nearby residential areas. Many cultural and civic uses, such as city hall, the Falkirk Cultural Center and the San Rafael Mission, are in or adjacent to this district. Fifth and Mission Avenues have some of downtown's nicest places because of their beautiful street tree canopies, historic buildings, and Boyd Park.
2. Allowed Uses. The Fifth/Mission district should continue to have residential, office, civic and cultural uses. The district provides suitable sites for a wide variety of office uses, including medical, bank, professional and administrative offices. These uses are compatible with residential uses, provide a sensitive transition between the core and the neighborhoods, and are better located along Fifth and Mission than on downtown's retail streets. Cultural and educational uses are allowed throughout, and ground floor retail and personal service uses are allowed from "C" Street east, on cross streets between Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue. Limits on retail uses and drive-up uses protect the livability of the Fifth/Mission district. This area is a desirable location for residential uses because of the convenience of living close to downtown's cultural, entertainment and shopping opportunities.
3. Design Intent. Infill development will preserve the scale and elegant character of existing buildings along Fifth and Mission Avenues. Building heights will typically range from one to three (3) stories, with larger scale buildings closer to the center of downtown. (Ord. 1831 § 1 (part), 2004; Ord. 1757 § 1, 2000; Ord. 1694 § 1 (Exh. A) (part), 1996; Ord. 1625 § 1 (part), 1992).

Chapter 14.16 Site and Use Regulations

Section 14.16.150 Floor area ratios and densities applicable to nonresidential and mixed use development.

A.

1. The intensity and density of development in nonresidential and mixed-use districts is identified by floor area ratio (FAR) and by the number of units allowed per one thousand (1,000) square feet of lot area. The FAR is the total building square footage (gross floor area) divided by the lot area excluding public streets. Total building square footage excludes parking areas (covered and uncovered), hotels, and nonleasable covered atriums. Floor area for permanent child care facilities in nonresidential structures may be excluded in the FAR, subject to the provisions of Chapter 14.22, Use Permits.
2. See subsection G, floor area ratio limit maps for FAR limits in nonresidential zoning districts. The maximum allowable FAR is not guaranteed, and shall be determined by the following factors: site constraints, infrastructure capacity, hazardous conditions and design policies.

B. Mixed-Use Development

3. Commercial or Office with Residential. FAR limits apply only to nonresidential development. The number of units allowed on a lot is based on the minimum lot area required per dwelling unit. For example, a ten thousand square foot lot in the 2/3 MUW District (FAR is 0.7 and density is one thousand square feet of lot area per dwelling unit) could develop with up to the following mixed-use amount, subject to meeting other zoning standards related to height, parking and design:

Size of Lot	FAR/ Density	Development Potential
10,000 sq. ft.	FAR 0.7	7,000 sq. ft. commercial (10,000 sq. ft. of lot area × 0.7 FAR = 7,000 sq. ft.) and
	Lot area/dwelling unit: 1,000 sq. ft.	10 units (10,000 sq. ft. of lot area/1,000 sq. ft. = 10 units)

Section 14.16.190 Height bonus.

- A. Downtown Height Bonuses. A height bonus may be granted by a use permit approved by the planning commission in the following downtown zoning districts. No more than one height bonus may be granted for a project.
3. In the Second/Third mixed use east district, a twelve-foot (12') height bonus for any of the following:
 - a. Affordable housing, consistent with Section 14.16.030 (Affordable housing);
 - b. Public parking, provided it is consistent with the downtown design guidelines;
 - c. Skywalks over Second or Third Streets, with the approval of the traffic engineer, and the recommendation of the design review board;
 - d. Mid-block passageways between Fourth Street and parking lots on Third Street, with the recommendation of the design review board that the design is attractive and safe.

Chapter 14.18. Parking Standards

Section 14.18.040 Parking requirements.

- B. Off-street parking shall be provided in accord with the following chart. Where the specific use in question is not listed, the planning director shall determine if another similar use exists which may be used to select an appropriate parking standard. In order to make this determination, the planning director may require the submission of survey data from the applicant or collected by the planning department at the applicant's expense.
- C. The parking requirement for any specific use listed may be modified so as to provide adequate parking which is fair, equitable, logical and consistent with the intent of this chapter. Such modification shall be subject to review by the planning director and traffic engineer, and approval by the planning commission.
- D. For properties located within the downtown parking assessment district, see also Section 14.18.060, Downtown parking assessment district, for additional information on parking requirements.
- E. In addition to the off-street parking requirements listed below, off-street loading and unloading shall be provided for certain uses in accord with Section 14.18.050, Off-street loading and unloading.
- F. For properties in the downtown area, residential parking is not required to be covered.
- G. Off-street parking is not required for FAR increases up to ten percent (10%) of the building or seven hundred fifty (750) square feet, whichever is larger, as granted under Section 14.16.150(G)(2)(b).

In the parking assessment district downtown, for residential uses, no parking is required for up to three units, provided the units are an infill addition to an existing nonresidential structure, and that the units are 2 bedroom or less and no larger than 900 square feet in size.

Chart 14.18.040

Use Classification	Off-Street Parking Required			
Residential	Note: No parking is required for up to 3 units in the parking assessment district, provided the units are an infill addition to an existing nonresidential structure, and that the units are 2 bedroom or less and no larger than 900 square feet in size.			
Studio (duplex unit), 500 sq. ft. or less in size	1 covered space per unit.			
Studio (duplex unit), more than 500 sq. ft. in size	1.5 spaces per unit (including 1 covered space).			
	Downtown: 1 space per unit.			
Studios (multifamily unit)	1 covered space per unit.			
One-bedroom units	1.5 spaces per unit (including 1 covered space).			
	Downtown: 1 space per unit.			
Two-bedroom units		Parking Assessment District	Downtown (Outside District)	San Rafael (Outside Downtown)
	Less than 900 sq. ft.	1 space	1.5 spaces	2 spaces (1 covered)
	900 or more sq. ft.	1.5 spaces	1.5 spaces	2 spaces (1 covered)

Use Classification	Off-Street Parking Required
Three or more bedroom units	2 spaces per unit (including 1 covered space).
Guest parking, multifamily	1 space per 5 units. Note: Guest parking not required downtown, unless within 200 feet of a residential district.
General commercial uses	
Retail sales (non-bulky items)	1 space per 250 gross building sq. ft.
Food and beverage service establishments, excluding fast food restaurants	1 space for each 50 sq. ft. of floor area intended for public use.
Fast food restaurants	1 space per 100 sq. ft. for 50 percent of the gross building sq. ft.; and one space per 65 sq. ft. for 50 percent of the gross building sq. ft. or one space per 2.5 interior seats, whichever is greater.
Personal service establishments	1 space per 250 gross building sq. ft.
Offices and related uses	
Financial services and institutions	1 space for each 200 sq. ft. gross building sq. ft.
	Downtown: 1 space for each 300 sq. ft. gross building sq. ft.
Offices, excluding mental health practitioners	1 space per 225 gross building sq. ft.
Offices, mental health practitioners	1 space per 250 gross building sq. ft.
Administrative, business and professional offices	1 space per 250 gross building sq. ft.
	Downtown: 1 space for each 300 sq. ft. gross building sq. ft.

14.18.060 Downtown parking assessment district.

Parking for nonresidential uses in the parking assessment district shall be provided consistent with the following:

- A. Parking for up to 1.0 FAR of the total square footage of the building is provided by the parking assessment district.
- B. Parking for building square footage above 1.0 FAR and for all residential uses shall be provided consistent with the parking requirements in Section 14.18.040.
- C. A parking study is required for a development subject to a design review permit pursuant to CEQA requirements, or to a use permit for a change in use, to assist in monitoring parking conditions downtown.
- D. For projects subject to parking studies, mitigation may be required including provision of on-site parking if it is determined the district has inadequate available parking. (Ord. 1694 § 1 (Exh. A) (part), 1996; Ord. 1625 § 1 (part), 1992).

14.18.070 Parking requirements for multiple uses.

- A. Multiple Uses--Basis for Calculation. Where there is more than one use in a single structure or on a site, or two (2) or more separate instances of the same use, off-street parking requirements shall be the sum of the requirements for the various uses. Off-street parking required for one occupant of a structure shall not be considered as satisfying the required parking facilities for another occupant of the structure, unless otherwise provided in this chapter.
- B. Changes in Occupancy in Multi-Tenant Buildings. Master use permits filed in accordance with Section 14.22.040, Master use permits, for multi-tenant buildings or sites with multiple uses shall specify the types and allowable amounts of various uses. The total parking provided for the site shall be consistent with subsection A above. When occupants of a multi-tenant building or a multiple-use site change, the approved mix and amount of land use shall be consistent with the master plan approval to ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities. (Ord. 1625 § 1 (part), 1992).

14.18.080 Parking requirements for reciprocal uses with shared parking facilities.

When two (2) or more uses share a common parking area and when a significant and complementing variation in period of daily demands occurs (i.e., exclusive day and night uses), the planning director may grant reductions in the total parking required through a use permit; provided, that in no instance shall the total parking required be less than would be required for any one of the independent uses. (Ord. 1694 § 1 (Exh. A) (part), 1996; Ord. 1625 § 1 (part), 1992).

Infill Analysis

Why Infill is Important

After many years of following conventional methods of development that promote outward suburban expansion, cities are now turning their attention toward alternative modes of development. Notably, cities are beginning to look at infill to meet their development needs. Infill development generally refers to the planning, design, and construction of environments that make cities and towns more livable. This process includes the construction of homes, stores, workplaces and facilities that add to the city or town's viability, including the reuse of property and buildings in ways that make economic sense for property owners, local governments, and the regional economy. Successful infill projects are those that spur or sustain economic growth within existing communities, and that conserve natural resources at the edges of cities and towns. In this way, infill development is a key hallmark of smart growth which directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize available resources, increasing the efficiency of already developed land and infrastructure, and reducing the development pressure in edge areas while preserving open space.

San Rafael, in particular, faces impending pressure to maximize the use of its existing land because there is so little remaining vacant land. As such, San Rafael must focus on building on the small and underutilized sites that remain sprinkled throughout the city. Given the City of San Rafael's current land constraints, infill appears to be a development alternative worth exploring to further its citywide goals. These sites are especially important as they present opportunities for the city to meet its ever-growing housing need. As previously noted, infill development is a key component of Smart Growth and one of the initial strategies that cities can implement to focus growth in very specific and controlled ways. However, while infill may be regarded as one of the key tenants of Smart Growth it is certainly not a "one size fits all" solution and may not be applicable or feasible in all circumstances. Therefore infill must be carefully considered with respect to the context in which it is to be applied. As such, the City has identified two areas for potential infill development: the downtown off-street parking facilities and the Northgate Mall. The following presents a discussion and analysis of infill feasibility for each area.

Infill Feasibility

Downtown

Smart growth infill opportunities are scattered throughout Downtown, and include public parking facilities. The Friday evening parking survey conducted on a Friday evening (12/26/06 draft of findings) indicated an average occupancy of 26%, ranging from 6% to 90%. Downtown San Rafael parking facilities as a whole operate below capacity during the Friday evening period. Notable exceptions are parking lots 5 and 6 which operate at 83 and 90 percent occupancy respectively (refer to Figure 1).

It should be noted, however, that while existing parking conditions were examined for the downtown study area, these occupancy rates only provide a snapshot of downtown parking conditions for Friday and Saturday evenings. As such, it is recommended that further data be collected within the study area to capture typical weekday parking conditions. Based on that information, overall parking conditions can be more accurately described and used as a basis for identifying appropriate downtown parking management strategies.

The available existing parking utilization data suggest great opportunity to capitalize on San Rafael's existing infrastructure through the application of Smart Growth principles. The City's Redevelopment Implementation Plan supports and enables its infill vision in the Downtown. The opportunity to develop mixed-use sites in the downtown area is further supported by development regulations which allow densities between 32-62 units per acre in the Fourth Street Retail Core, Cross Streets Mixed Use and Second/Third East zoning districts, and 37 units per acre along Second/ Third West zoning district. Additionally, select projects in the area may also be eligible for height bonuses provided that they include an affordable housing element, consistent with State law.

Notable examples of new housing projects in and adjacent to the study area include:

San Rafael Town Center – The largest of the new mixed-use developments in the downtown is six-stories tall and includes 113 apartments, 26,000 square feet of retail space, and 40,000 square feet of office space. The development located on Fourth Street at City Plaza includes 38 apartments which are specifically designated as low/moderate income housing.

Clocktower – Another mixed-use development located on Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue is the Clocktower. This development which includes 30 rental units and 12,000 square feet of office/retail space was made possible through an awarded density bonus for the inclusion of affordable housing units (17 percent of which are low/moderate income). For this particular development, the developer was allowed to increase the density by 53 percent.

Boyd Court – Boyd Court is located on B Street (between Mission Avenue and Fifth Avenue). It consists of 25 owner-occupied condominiums (28 percent of which are low/moderate income units) for which a density bonus was awarded.

Centertown – Located on C Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, the development consists of 60 apartments for very-low, low and moderate-income families. The development was made possible as part of a public, private, and non-profit partnership between the Redevelopment Agency and Centertown Associates (non-profit).

Lone Palm Court – Located directly across from the Centertown development on C Street, the development is comprised of 60 residential units, 40 percent of which are classified as affordable to very-low income residents.

As the above projects indicate, the City has much of the policy framework needed to transform small surface parking lots and underutilized garages into high density mixed use developments. Through the use of development guidelines, density bonuses, increased height limits, and redevelopment funding, San Rafael has enabled a new type of infill development to thrive. This new development in turn attracts both new residents and commuters to the area, boosting local businesses and helping to revive downtown.

Opportunity Sites

As demonstrated above in the successful examples of downtown development, there is great potential for the City to further pursue infill development. Key sites for infill development have been identified along Downtown's Third Street corridor. Notably these sites include parking garages and surface lots which

experience low utilization during the weekday and weekend. The following presents a sample of potential infill sites located downtown:

Parking Garage 3 – Located on the north side of Third Street bounded by B Street to the west and A Street to the east. The garage is approximately 26,393 square feet and has the capacity to accommodate 396 vehicles.

Parking Garage 4 – Garage 4 is a smaller garage compared to 3 with capacity to accommodate 196 vehicles. Located on the north side of Third Street in the southeast corner of the block bounded by A Street on the west and Lootens Place on the east.

Lot 7 – Lot 7 is located on the northwest side of Third Street at Cijos Street. This surface lot is approximately 19,718 square feet and has the capacity to accommodate approximately 59 spaces.

Each of these opportunity sites is located within the Second/Third Street Mixed Use area. The existing character of the district is defined by its proximity to Highway 101 and the Transportation Center. As a result, the area experiences a high degree of traffic volume. Notably, the City has indicated that in light of this fact, particular attention should be paid to the street front design of development in order to increase pedestrian safety and comfort through such mechanisms as setbacks and landscaping. It should be noted that the district has one of the highest levels of development intensity downtown with building heights of four (4) stories. Development in this district is also eligible for height and FAR bonuses allowing for buildings up to five (5) stories when desirable amenities are provided. As defined by the City, these amenities may include but are limited to the following: affordable housing provisions, public parking, mid-block passageways between parking lots, etc. (Section 14.16.190 Height Bonus).

In general, typical infill development works within a framework of standards that regulate and define how the site can and will be developed. Table 1 presents a comparison of how Smart Growth infill development standards compare to development standards for the Second/Third Street Mixed Use District (East).

Table 1 – Infill Development Characteristics Comparison		
Site Characteristics	Smart Growth Supportive Standards	Second/Third MUE Standards
Minimum Lot Sizes	2,000- 4,000 sq.; 6,000 sq. ft. (typical)	6,000 square feet
Maximum Lot Sizes	5,000 sq. ft. or less for single family homes in many infill locations	Not specified
Dwelling Units allowed per lot	Allow second units on existing lots; allow multiple units on vacant lots in single family districts if building design conforms to neighborhood context	
Allowable densities, downtown areas	Eliminate maximum densities; rely on height, bulk, and/or design restrictions instead. Institute a minimum of 20-30 d.u./acre	FAR: 1.5
Allowable densities, residential areas	Establish minimum residential densities of 8-10 units per acre for new single family development and 20 units per acre for multifamily development; allow residential infill at this level	FAR:1.5
Height Restrictions, downtown areas	At least 3-5 stores in downtown and neighborhood centers; a 2-3 story minimum	36-42 feet; height bonuses granted per section 14.16.190
Height Restriction, residential areas	At least 3/1/2 stories of 40 feet	
Lot coverage	No Maximum	NR
Floor Area Ratio	At least 1.0-2.0 maximum, 0.5 minimum in downtowns, or use height limits instead	1.5
Front Setbacks	No minimum necessary in many areas; consider adding maximum	5 Feet
Side Setbacks	Allow zero line construction with appropriate design	NR
Lot Widths	No minimum necessary	60 feet
Mixture of Land Uses	Allow a finer mix of land uses to reduce driving and enhance community vitality; allow housing and shops to be added to office parks, offices, and shops to housing districts	Office and office-support retail and service uses. Limited auto-serving retail stores are allowed. Housing is encouraged as part of a mixed use project.
Mixed use buildings	Allow mixed-use buildings within neighborhood centers and along arterial strips: provide incentives for these	
Secondary Units	Allowed as of right in single family residential districts	

Source: Smart Infill A guide for Bay Area Leaders (200X), City of San Rafael Municipal Code (2007)

In general, existing development policies for the second/third mixed use district reinforce the development of smart growth infill projects. With respect to three of the key characteristics for infill development (lot size, density, and height) the City’s policies tend to support dense projects on small parcels with appropriate heights. Notably, the City’s floor to area ratio (which largely determines density) is generously set at FAR 1.5. This standard allows for even small lots to provide a balanced amount of mixed-uses within individual developments.

Now we will take a closer look and assess the infill development potential for one lot in the downtown area. An inventory of parking facilities in the downtown was conducted as part of an existing conditions assessment for the area. As such, a total of 11 off-street facilities were identified. Table 2 presents the facilities by location and size.

Table 2 – Downtown Parking Facilities by Size		
Lot/Garage	Location	Size
Lot 1:	Second/Third Street MUW	7,300 sq. ft.
Lot 2 (Garage):	Second/Third Street MUW	37,800 sq. ft.
Lot 3 (Garage):	Second/Third Street MUW	26,393 sq. ft.
Lot 4 (Garage):	Second/Third Street MUE	35,139 sq. ft.
Lot 5:		30,000 sq. ft.
Lot 6 :	Second/Third Street MUE	10,258 sq. ft.
Lot 7:	Second/Third Street MUE	19,718 sq. ft.
Lot 8:	Fourth Street Retail Core	11,092 sq. ft.
Lot 9:		11,360 sq. ft.
Lot 10 (Garage):		16,130 sq. ft.
Lot 11:		14,700 sq. ft.

Source: City of San Rafael, June 2007

Lot 7 was previously identified as a potential infill site due to its location and the fact that it currently operates well under practical capacity in the low to mid 30 percent range for both the weekday evening and weekend midday periods. Lot 7 is located within the Second/Third Street Mixed Use District (East) and is approximately 19,718 square feet in size. Based on the district’s existing lot size and density allowances, Lot 7 has the potential to become a mixed-use development including 19.7 units and 29,577 square feet of commercial space as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Infill Mixed-Use Development Potential of Lot 7		
Lot Size	FAR/Density	Development Potential
19,718 square feet	FAR 1.5	29,577 sq. ft. of commercial space
	Lot area/dwelling unit: 1,000 sq. ft.	19.7 dwelling units

Source: City of San Rafael Municipal Code

It should be noted that the development potential of the lot is also based on its adherence to the district's other zoning standards including height, parking, and design requirements. Currently, Lot 7 includes 59 spaces which would have to be replaced if an infill development was constructed on the site. Under Section 14.18.040 of the San Rafael Municipal Code, a proposed mixed-use infill project would also be required to provide 20 spaces for the residential uses (one space per unit) and 120 spaces for the retail uses (1 space per 250 sq. ft. retail space). Overall, the project would have to provide approximately 199 spaces. Table 4 summarizes the proposed project's parking space requirements.

Table 4 Summary of Parking Space Requirements			
Land Use Type	Size	Requirement	Number of Spaces Required
Residential: 1-Bedroom	20 units	1.0 space per unit ¹	20 spaces
Commercial: Retail sales	30,000 sq. ft.	1 space per 250 sq. ft	120 spaces
		<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>140 spaces</i>
Parking Lot 7	59 spaces	1:1 replacement	59 spaces
		<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>59 spaces</i>
		Total	199 spaces

Source: City of San Rafael Municipal Code

Notes:

1. Section 14.18.040 1-bedroom units in the downtown

Based on the capacity of existing parking facilities in the downtown, it is likely that the city would have to build a multilevel off-street facility to provide the amount of parking required for such a development. Unfortunately, while the City has adopted innovative and supportive development design guidelines with respect to building heights and densities that promote infill, the parking requirements for the infill project render it infeasible by stipulating that excessive parking be provided as a condition of development. The City may want to consider revising its Municipal Code to further reduce or eliminate parking requirements for infill types of development as the existing policy is prohibitive towards these ends.

Infill Financing

Additionally, the feasibility of an infill project is inherently tied to its financing mechanisms. Local governments have access to a number of different resources which they can use to encourage infill development. Public sector financing tools fall into four categories: (1) Direct Investment, (2) Indirect Investment, (3) Financial Assistance, and (4) No Risk Financial Assistance.

- **Direct Investment** – Occurs when a city contributes cash or other contribution (i.e. construction of infrastructure) to assist in the development of a project. The source of the funds may come from general obligation bonds or from the general fund.
- **Indirect Investment** – There are two types of indirect investments: (a) present-value subsidies and (b) value-creating subsidies. Forms of present-value subsidies include below-market loans and direct tax abatements or another form of tax incentive. Value-creating subsidies include such things as granting density bonuses, purchasing land, razing structures.
- **Assistance** – The city can issue industrial revenue bonds, bonds funded through tax-increment financing, and fee-based financing.

- **No Risk Funding Assistance** – The city could apply for funding from state or federal sources.

Direct Investment

One approach the City could take to finance infill development direct investment would be through a public/private partnership. The City could choose to engage in an agreement with a private developer that stipulates each party's responsibility in the development project. For example, the City may choose to provide the funding for a site clean up (if required) prior to development while the developer will fund the development process. Refer to the case study examples Mizner Park and Bay Street for further discussion about public/private partnerships.

Indirect Investment

Depending on its characteristics, the infill project could qualify for local, state, or federal tax credits or abatements. For example, the City of Atlanta offers a ten-year tax abatement on housing development in its urban enterprise zones if at least 20 percent of units are set aside for low-income occupants. In addition, the city can offer other incentives to entice developers of infill projects. These incentives could include streamlining the project approval process by reducing or waiving fees for permits.

Financial Assistance

The City could opt to implement tax increment financing (TIF) as part of a benefit district to capture the increase in net tax capacity that results as new development occurs within the district. Tax Increment Revenues are payments made to the Agency by certain local taxing units in an amount equal to designated property taxes that accrue through the appreciation of property. The benefit would be that any increase in tax revenue is directly returned to the TIF as opposed to the City's general fund. In this way the collected tax revenue could be used to pay for such things as development costs, demolishing substandard buildings, or building low-to-moderate income housing.

No Risk Financial Assistance

The City could seek out State and federal resources to finance infill development. One common form of assistance exists through Community Development Block Grants (federal resource) which help provide funding for site development costs. The state of Colorado has instituted a Housing and Financing Authority which issues bonds and notes and uses the proceeds to provide low-cost loans to eligible housing and business borrowers.

Feasibility Plan

It is recommended that the City of San Rafael use a plan to determine the feasibility of infill mixed use parking/residential projects on existing parking sites. The following presents a checklist of steps that the City should take to gather relevant data that will help inform the basis of future infill projects.

1. Conduct a parking utilization study

The first step in identifying if infill projects will be feasible in the downtown begins with an assessment of existing conditions on the areas considered for infill development. The study should include parking utilization surveys to capture typical weekday and weekend conditions. Existing parking conditions need to examine a typical weekday during the morning, midday, and evening hours to identify peak parking demand. Parking conditions for the weekend should be examined similarly to identify overall parking utilization trends and unique parking behaviors. The parking utilization study should be conducted by parking consultant professionals who are well experienced and can conduct in-depth analysis of the resulting data and further identify key parking trends for the area.

2. Identify proposed infill area lot size, height, and density requirements

As former parking lot sites are opened up and identified as potential sites for future infill development, the City needs to consider the appropriateness of the existing lot size, height, and density requirements for the specific area of the downtown (e.g. Fourth Street Retail Core District versus Cross Street Mixed Use District or Second/Third Mixed Use District East, etc.). Based on the city's existing policies, infill projects are eligible for height or density bonuses if they include an affordable housing component. As demonstrated in Table 1, the majority of San Rafael's existing policies regulating development in the downtown are supportive of infill projects. However, some consideration should be given to increasing flexibility in allowable uses. Additionally, development incentives (e.g. density bonuses, height bonuses, etc.) should be actively encouraged in the Municipal Code. In order to identify policies that may be hinder infill development, compare the City's existing policies to current infill development guidelines and practices. Also refer to examples of Best Practices and Case Studies which have similar downtown characteristics and can help provide a similar basis for comparison.

3. Estimate existing and future parking demand

After identifying the potential infill site and adequacy of development standards for that area, an analysis of the existing parking demand for the area must be conducted. Additionally, an analysis for the future parking demand generated by the proposed infill uses must similarly be conducted. These processes help the City to identify and quantify the impacts the proposed infill project would have on the surrounding parking environment and how to address those impacts. Refer to the MTC toolbox and parking model methodology to assess the area's existing and future parking demand.

4. Phasing of Development

As existing parking facilities are eliminated to make way for infill projects, the city must consider how it will address the remaining gap in the parking supply. Notably, the responses to shifts and parking demand generated by the proposed infill sites need to be measured together with the phasing of the future development. As such, the city should carefully examine how the amount of parking eliminated due to new infill development will be replaced. This may require changes to the zoning ordinance to eliminate parking requirements for certain infill projects based on the provision of TDM measures, transit availability, etc.

5. Identify possible parking strategies to help reduce parking demand

Based on the results of the parking demand for the proposed infill site, the City can then turn to identifying the most appropriate parking strategies to mitigate the added parking demand. The City may

opt to consider any number of policies after consulting with the *MTC Best Practices Handbook*. A few parking strategies/policies the City may consider include the following¹:

- *Differential pricing*
- *Consolidated parking structures*
- *Shared Parking*

The City currently utilizes a form of differential pricing which prices on-street meters and lots differently depending on their location. Table 5 presents the existing downtown parking fees.

Table 5 – Existing Downtown Parking Fees			
Area	On-Street Meter	Lot/Garage	Price
Downtown	✓	Lot	\$0.65/hour
Fourth Street	✓	Lot	\$0.80/hour
Downtown		Garage	M-F before 6 PM 1 st hour: Free 2 nd hour: \$1.00; 3 rd hour: \$50 cents \$8.00 Maximum
Downtown		Monthly Garage	\$68/month
Downtown		Monthly Surface Lots	\$58/month

Source: Marin Independent Journal

The City is taking steps in the right direction to price parking correctly and has plans to institute a new parking rate in August 2007. As such, the City should closely monitor and collect data of parking utilization after the price increase to provide a basis for comparison of parking behavior. The upcoming increase in pricing can be thought of as a pilot that will test pricing sensitivities and its effects on parking utilization. In addition, the City can use the pricing module developed as part of the MTC Toolbox to better understand and analyze the effects of price changes on demand for parking. The City can experiment by running the model to calculate how an increase (of a given percentage) in the existing price of parking for different locations will affect its demand in different locations of the downtown.

After the pricing changes have gone into effect and data on utilization is collected, the model can then be calibrated once again to further fine tune pricing to obtain efficient utilization of on- and off-street facilities and achieve practical capacity (85 percent on-street). Differential pricing is a key tool to help achieve this balance as it advocates pricing the most convenient parking higher than more remote parking located in the periphery. In the case of downtown San Rafael, on-street parking should be priced to reflect its convenience and short-term availability, while off-street facilities should be priced to incentivize use for long-term parking patrons.

6. Compile identified strategies into a comprehensive parking management plan

Based on all the work completed above, the city can turn its attention into compiling the data into a comprehensive parking management plan for its downtown. Taking into account the parking utilization data, parking demand, site feasibility, and parking demand strategies the city can take this data together

¹ Refer to the MTC Best Practices and Toolbox for detailed explanations of each policy/strategy

and apply policies that reinforce and promote efficient parking utilization and smart growth parking practices.

Northgate Mall

According to the General Plan, Northgate Mall is identified as part of the North San Rafael Commercial Center which includes the Northgate “Town Center” area, the Northgate Industrial Park, and the offices and YMCA located on Los Gamos Road. Notably, the Town Center area includes the Northgate One shopping center, the Northgate Mall, and the Northgate Three Shopping Center. This area is developed with retail and office uses. The Northgate Industrial Park, located east of Highway 101, is developed with a mix of office and industrial uses, providing spaces suited to small businesses and startup companies that comprise an important part of San Rafael’s economy.

In general, this area also includes a variety of housing including condominiums, apartments, medical facilities, senior residential care facilities, and a new industrial/office project on a former Semiconductor site. The Merrydale Overcrossing and Freitas Parkway provide pedestrian, vehicle, and bike connections between the two sections of the neighborhood. The north fork of Gallinas Creek flows through this area from along Freitas Parkway to the wetlands bordering McInnis Park.

While Northgate Mall once served at a key commercial regional destination, retail competition, changes in shopping preferences, and the inability to adapt to these forces have generally detracted from its use. In general, the mall has declined in use, and now operates primarily as a vast underutilized parking lot. While the current state of Northgate Mall and many malls built in the 1960’s across the country is a similar one, there is opportunity to unlock the latent value of this land. Over the past 10 years, the City has engaged in discussions with Northgate in hopes of implementing the visioning goals first identified in the Vision North San Rafael document and later adopted in the City’s General Plan (Policies NH 131-136).

As redevelopment efforts are focused on turning around the obsolete mall site, greater opportunities present themselves to improve not only the viability of the mall itself but also to expand investment into surrounding residential and commercial neighborhoods.

The redevelopment of a shopping mall can be thought of and approached in the following way²:

1. Create a destination
2. Use the ‘Market’ as your guide
3. Consider stakeholders
4. Think about the larger picture
5. Provide connectivity
6. Rethink parking allocation
7. Create a sense of community

² The process outlined below was taken from the Urban Land Institute’s publication *Ten Principles for Rethinking the Mall*, 2003. Note, only the principles discussed were identified as being most applicable to the San Rafael Case Study.

Create a destination

Mall patrons are interested in visiting centers that offer unique shopping experiences. This type of environment is created by providing an innovative mix of uses that provide both staple anchor stores and more distinctive retailers to attract a broad range of shoppers. As such, mall patrons are afforded the comfort of national chains as well as the excitement of distinctive smaller shops and boutiques. Particular attention should be paid to the project's anchors. While anchors are often major department stores, this does not necessarily need to be the case for future development. The purpose of anchors is to draw people to the site. This can be achieved in a number of ways such as by providing a large civic use (e.g. libraries, recreation centers, movie theaters, etc.). Additionally, including a residential component close to retail opportunities will attract those people who are in search of a unique place to live and thus reinforce the retail component of such a development.

Consider Stakeholders

When looking to redevelop and create a successful shopping mall, key stakeholders should be considered and involved in the process. At the outset, key stakeholders such as developers, local government officials, citizens, and tenants need to be identified. Following this initial step, these groups can come together to develop goals, objectives and a plan to create the desired vision for their shopping mall. During this process, realistic goals need to be developed such that they are in line with the needs of the community and also reflect the realities of the future development. The goals should be expressed as a vision for the site that all stakeholders understand and agree to. One way to facilitate communication among the different stakeholder groups is to create forums which allow stakeholders to be educated about one another's needs and desires for the development.

Think about the larger picture

While it is important to pay attention to the individual components of redeveloping a mall, it is far more important to see beyond these details and consider the larger picture. The project should have a development plan that is holistic, defined by an overall vision and supported by a development program, phasing strategy, and a financing strategy.

It is also important to note that as with any new undertaking, there will be risk involved. However, risks can be mitigated through contingency planning that help protect against costly and unexpected surprises. As such, it is important to consider possible financing mechanisms that will help finance this type of undertaking and identify sources of funding (e.g. taxes, paid parking, etc.)

Provide Connectivity

Shopping malls have been traditionally developed as islands within seas of parking. This approach has reinforced malls as auto-oriented spaces. However, as the City decides to rethink this type of approach and redevelop its mall, it should consider the fact that today's mall patrons seek a unique shopping experience. An important factor that determines this unique experience is whether patrons can feel they have "arrived in a special place." Creating connectivity within the project can help achieve this sense of place by providing pedestrian linkages, open space, and implementing a unique signage program. Connectivity can also be reinforced by creating a "park once" environment where patrons can park at a centralized location and easily walk to and from a number of retail stores within the mall. Part of this effort involves integrating land uses to promote walking and synergy between uses.

Rethink parking allocation

In general, mall parking is provided by city established codes and requirements which are based on land use type and size (square footages). Overall, the majority of cities establish these standards using the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Parking Generation*, *The Dimensions of Parking*, and/or the Urban Land Institute's publication, *Shared Parking*. The problem with this approach is that these guidelines are often based on a limited number of studies which typically are conducted in suburban settings. When applied, these parking standards are designed to accommodate the "worst case scenario," notably, the peak hour of the peak day of the year (e.g. holiday shopping season). As such, the end result is an overabundance of parking that goes underutilized for the majority of the year.

Project developers and business owners alike view parking as the lifeline which keeps them in business and therefore have little issue with providing large quantities of parking, even if that supply remains largely underutilized during the majority of the year. However, a reduction in the amount of required parking provides multiple benefits for both developers and customers alike. A reduction or elimination of parking requirements allows local jurisdictions and developers to consider more options and alternatives to simply providing more parking. For example, developers can compare the cost of a parking space to the cost of providing viable and effective transit options as part of their project feasibility analysis. These types of options can mean the difference between a vibrant mall with plenty of pedestrian and transit connections and urban design elements or a vehicle dependent mall that provides ample parking at the expense of this type of environment.

In considering how a new mall destination will be created, it is extremely important to plan and design parking to play a supporting role as opposed to a defining one that dominates the landscape. Parking should be considered as one part of the development but it should not define or overshadow the project. Key elements to providing successful parking include; providing parking in a strategic location, executing parking with proper design and programming. Integrating these elements into how parking is developed and provided can help reduce the need for cars to drive to different destinations within the same mall complex. By following creative urban design guidelines, parking structures can be designed to be wrapped by retail shops, restaurants, etc. This type of approach promotes a "park-once" and walk environment. As such, by strategically locating parking facilities between uses this can increase pedestrian trips by taking advantage of the mixed-use environment and can decrease the need for parking.

Additionally, parking requirements should also reflect the observed parking demand at peak parking periods (e.g. morning, midday, evening) for specific uses' peak parking periods, as different land use categories exhibit peaks at different time periods of the day and week. Significant potential to share parking exists between adjacent land uses with alternating demand peaks. Parking requirements can also be revised based on the internal trip capture (i.e. park once and walk to several destinations) of the mall's many land use types.

Create a sense of community

Much of the success of a shopping mall can be associated with and attributed to how well it makes patrons feel that they are a part of something larger, a place where they can gather and have a high-quality experience. This type of experience can be created through the art of "place making" where the mall is developed in such a way that it resonates with its customers. It is particularly important to consider and respond to the local and diverse context of the mall to help form its desired identity. In particular, the mall should use familiar place-making tools to create a destination and encourage people to visit regularly.

Such spaces tend to incorporate some of the following elements: intensive landscaping, fountains, cafés, and other visual stimuli.

Notably, people connect to a place and make it theirs by being able to connect with these elements and have a sensory experience through such things as natural light, listening to music or rushing water, the smell of food or flowers, and feeling the merchandise. Seamlessly connecting the site's gateways, notably parking and the surrounding streets, to all the stores places, and activities on the site completes the sensory experience. It is equally important to have the mall "tell a story." To capture the imagination of customers, the story should include a feeling of surprise, delight, and diversity. Overall, a successful place is one that engages its users actively in an emotional experience that is organized to communicate a purpose and story.

The Project for Public Space has identified four key attributes of successful spaces, they include: 1) comfort and image, 2) access and linkage, 3) uses and activity, and 4) sociability. These elements are experienced in intangible terms. For example, mall patrons may experience comfort and image through the charm of a space, its cleanliness, and the sense of safety it conveys. Access and linkage, on the other hand, can be experienced through the readability of the landscape, its walkability, and connectedness to other spaces. The uses and activity element of successful public spaces include a sense of unique activity. Lastly, sociability can be experienced through friendliness, interactivity, and a sense of welcoming.

Infill Case Studies

Mizner Park: Boca Raton, Florida

Mizner Park is a prime example of how a once declining shopping center was transformed into the catalyst that helped spur a town center. During the 1980's the Boca Mall found itself competing with the opening of the Town Center at Boca Raton and began to experience the ill effects of the development. Disinvestment in the mall slowly materialized as the mall's vacancy rates increased and only marginal tenants remained. In the following sections we will highlight the key steps the City of Boca Raton, Florida took to remove the blighted property and help revitalize the surrounding community. retailers who remained cautious and wondered about its potential.

Background

The Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency was first created in 1980 with the intent of promoting economic redevelopment in the downtown. Shortly thereafter in 1982, the City established the Redevelopment Trust Fund. It was determined that this Fund would be financed through Tax Incremental Revenues on Downtown properties. The trust fund, along with other monies generated by the Agency, provides a portion of the funding for the Agency's operation and participation in redevelopment projects. In that same year (1982), the City of Boca Raton adopted a Community Redevelopment Plan to stimulate private development in the Redevelopment Area. In 1995, the Plan was amended to include the Mizner Park Project.

Process

The hallmark and success of the Mizner Park project is attributable to the public/private partnership which made it possible. The partnership included the City Boca Raton, the Community Redevelopment Agency, and Crocker and Company (a private developer of mixed-use facilities and cultural uses). As

mentioned above, the Mizner Park project formed one part of the City's overall redevelopment strategy to achieve three main goals: (1) Creating a viable Downtown, (2) Eliminate infrastructure problems in the redevelopment area by implementing the City's Visions 90 Infrastructure Program, and (3) Eliminating impediments to Redevelopment through the Downtown Development Order.

Crocker and Company announced in 1989 they were interested in developing the Mizner Park Project Under a recently City passed development order. In response, the Redevelopment Agency (the Agency) and City formed a joint team to negotiate an agreement with Crocker and Company. The agreement between the entities stipulated that the Agency to purchase the Boca Mall property subject to several Crocker and Company leases for commercial development. Because the development was thought to be a risky investment, the Agency issued bonds for the site's purchase and backed it with additional utility tax revenues as a secondary security.

As such, the Agency moved forward and acquired the approximately 30 acres of land in downtown Boca Raton. The developer demolished the existing structures on the site and began the large undertaking of constructing the infrastructure. The next steps that followed was the construction of the commercial portions of the project which were phased. Phase I began in 1991 and included 235,000 sq. ft. of retail, comprised of 54 shops and 7 restaurants, a department store and a luxury movie theatre, 279,000 sq. ft. of office space, approximately 272 rental units and town homes, and parking for 2,500 cars. Most parking is accommodated in four multistory parking garages, placed at each corner of the site. Cars parked along the street serve as a buffer between traffic and pedestrians.

Phase II included the development of the cultural facilities element of the project. The portions of the site made available for cultural facilities were leased to the Boca Raton Museum of Arts, (40,000 sq. ft.) the International Museum of Cartoon Art (56,500 sq. ft), the Count de Hoernle Amphitheater, and a 1,400 seat indoor performing arts facility is in the planning stages. In addition, a large tree-lined boulevard encourages visitors to walk, shop, and socialize. The Park located in the middle of the boulevard reinforces the spaces as a community meeting place.

Since the approval of the Downtown Development of Regional Impact and Mizner Park, the Agency has approved 60+ development projects totaling over 3,500,000 square feet of phased new development including Mizner Park. To date completed developments include a range of mixed and single-use projects with retail uses, cinemas, restaurants, office uses, residential apartments, and condominiums.

Bay Street: Emeryville, California

Bay Street provides a local example of how redevelopment has proven to be successful in the remaking of a former industrial field into a booming retail center. Today, Bay Street consists of approximately 400,000-square-feet across three city blocks and is in the process of completing its residential component, which will include 284 apartment units and 95 townhomes. Bay Street's retail element is comprised of over 50 unique shops and restaurants, including a 16-screen movie theater. Anchor tenants include the following: AMC Theatres, Banana Republic, Barnes & Noble, Coach, Gap, Old Navy, PF Chang's China Bistro, Pottery Barn, See's Candies, Talbots and Williams-Sonoma. The following sections provide some background into the development process of Bay Street.

Background

The City of Emeryville's existing policy framework played a large role in enabling the development of Bay Street. In particular, the City's brownfields and affordable housing programs were very instrumental in this process. The City developed a "one stop shop" website that identified parcels by site location, size, ownership, contamination status, zoning and allowed density for all parcels in the City. Using this database the City was able to easily identify prime areas for redevelopment. With this information, the Redevelopment Agency Property Acquisition and Clean-up Program was able to acquire high priority sites, clean up the site, and seeking to recover the clean-up costs moved to resell the site to private developers with specific development/land use objectives.

Process

After the extensive environmental clean up of the site, which once hosted a paint factory and a pesticide plant, the site attracted interest from two development companies, MacFarlane Partners and Madison Marquette Realty Services. The developers moved quickly to begin and complete the retail phase of the project which opened in 2002. At that time the buildings ranged from four to eight stories tall with approximately 65 merchant tenants and about 9 restaurants.

With the second phase of construction (the residential component) complete, the project now offers apartments and condominium space. The apartments rise four stories above the shops on the east side of Bay Street. These apartments offer a mix of market-rate (apartments and for sale townhomes) and affordable rental housing; 20% of the apartments are designated for low-income residents, with the remainder of the units leased at market rental rates. The apartments range from 700 to 1,400 square feet in size. Notably, the residential component of Bay Street Emeryville was recently named the Best Market-Rate Residential Real Estate Deal of the Year for the Oakland/Inner East Bay area by the San Francisco Business Times in March 2007. The City's existing affordable housing policies largely supported the residential component of the project. These policies included mixed-use zoning which allows densities up to 108 units/acre, the inclusionary zoning requirements stipulating that 20 percent of units be affordable (moderate income base), and redevelopment loans and grants to assist with the costs of income restricted units.

Funding

The funding mechanism for Bay Street was a public/private partnership between the City of Emeryville and California Urban Investment Partners (MacFarlane Partners and California Public Employees Retirement System). The City itself invested a great deal and championed the project prior to having a private developer lined up. The City spent nearly \$22.5 million to assemble the 20 acre-site and an additional \$11 to remove soil contaminated with arsenic, lead and several other toxic substances. To date, the retail component creates \$1 million in annual sales tax revenue and the property taxes generate \$1.4 million annually.

Next Steps

The City of San Rafael Northgate Mall offers a great opportunity to apply the lessons learned from the previous case study examples. The City has demonstrated a commitment and a vision toward improving the utilization of its existing valuable resource and must continue moving forward to realize its development goals. As shown through the case study examples, infill development is not without its challenges and must therefore be approached methodically. Several sites have already been identified as potential infill sites, the next steps should focus on reviewing the development guidelines for the district in which the site is located and identifying the types of uses to be included on these sites and how that determination can help the city's larger plans and goals for city development, such as affordable housing.

Following these initial steps, the City of San Rafael can begin to consider potential funding mechanisms to make the project economically feasible and attractive to developers. The city should revise the municipal code to include development and financing incentives for infill projects. As previously discussed, one key step the city can take to promote infill is by providing attractive incentives. Taking these steps together will prove to greatly facilitate the infill development process leading to a more vibrant and livable downtown.

Parking Policy Next Steps

Planning officials for the City of San Rafael indicated that they intend to begin implementation of smart growth parking policies by:

- √ Gathering more parking data to corroborate study findings
- √ Discussing potential changes further with stakeholders
- √ Proposing policy changes to the city council and elected officials
- √ Changing parking requirements
- √ Changing or implementing parking prices
- √ Changing parking management strategies
- √ Creating a new parking district

Additionally, a new internal staff-level parking strategy group will assist with any future policy changes.