

CHAPTER 6. IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter provides a roadmap for implementing the recommendations described in this Plan. In many cases, such as improvements already described in other City plans (e.g., General Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan), the City of San Rafael will take the lead in implementing the recommendations. In other cases, implementation may require coordination among many agencies. This chapter provides guidance for implementing improvements, including timing, funding, areas for additional study, and key coordination efforts that may be required.

6.1 KEY IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendations in this Plan are the product of a community-based process with an Advisory Committee over the course of 24 months. The recommendations were developed by the Committee, with input from the public at regular monthly meetings as well as two public workshops. The recommendations have been reviewed by the Joint Project Team (JPT) for technical feasibility, but further detailed study is still required and environmental review has not been done. Through the course of developing this Plan, some key considerations have evolved that form some guiding principles for implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

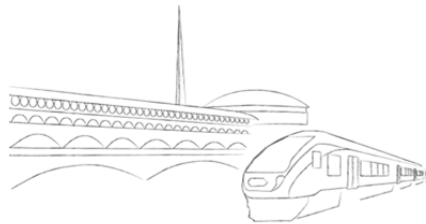
6.1.1 *Take Advantage of Previous Extensive Planning Efforts*

The North San Rafael area has been the subject of numerous visioning and planning efforts over the past several years. In addition, the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and General Plan have both recently evaluated the needs of this area and developed a detailed list of specific improvements to improve circulation and accommodate future development. Rather than revisit many of these proposals, this Plan incorporates, and in many cases, builds on, the planning and visioning efforts previously conducted. Specifically, this Plan incorporates bicycle and pedestrian improvements listed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, roadway improvements described in General Plan 2020, and elements of the North San Rafael Promenade from Vision North San Rafael. Changes to the area to better support the Civic Center SMART Station should be considered in the context of substantial effort that has already been conducted.

6.1.2 *Station Access and Neighborhood Connectivity for Bicycles and Pedestrians*

A common theme that developed from Committee feedback and public workshops was that improvements to the area should focus on bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Many Committee members and other members of the public noted that bicycle and pedestrian activity in the area would be key to establishing a vibrant, transit-supportive community that would make the area attractive for residents and businesses.

In the context of this Plan, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity takes two forms. First, improved bicycle and pedestrian access to the new Station is essential. For existing and potential future development in the area to take full advantage of the new station, strong sidewalk and bicycle connections need to be established that make cycling or walking to the train a pleasant and inviting experience. New and/or improved sidewalks, new bicycle lanes, and adequate bicycle parking at the Station are all key elements of the Plan aimed at encouraging adjacent businesses and residents to walk or bike to the train.



The second component of improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity is to improve linkages between sub-areas of the existing station area. The freeway and the railroad tracks currently serve to separate and isolate major portions of the study area, making walking or bicycling between these areas difficult. The completion of the Multi-user Pathway (MUP) along the SMART railroad right of way will help to alleviate this issue; preservation and enhancement of existing rail crossings, such as the one at Walter Place, as well as establishing appropriate connections at the station itself, such as the recommended new crossing at the west side of the Civic Center Station, will further encourage travel between these isolated areas in the community. As the recommendations in this Plan are developed further, and trade-offs emerge, the designs should consider the importance of bicycle and pedestrian access to the station, and within various parts of the Study Area, with respect to establishing a vibrant neighborhood.

6.1.3 Ensure that Station Parking Does Not Overwhelm Neighborhoods

Many members of the public and the Committee expressed concern that the Station would be a popular park-and-ride destination, and that station users may overwhelm neighborhood parking. SMART is proposing to dedicate a substantial number of parking spaces for the Station (nearly double the projected demand), all of which would be on the east side of the freeway. Despite this provision, there is some concern that users coming from the west side may find it more convenient to simply park in the existing residential neighborhood west of US 101, rather than travel through congested intersections to the east side of the freeway. The Plan identifies a number of new on-street spaces on Merrydale Road north of the tracks, includes new turnarounds on Merrydale Road both north and south of the tracks to facilitate drop-offs, and also identifies new programs, such as residential parking permits, that may be implemented to ensure that neighborhood parking is preserved for residents and visitors.

6.1.4 Limited New Development Near Station Should Preserve Character of Area

One of the purposes of this Plan is to identify opportunity sites for new development that can better serve the SMART station. Ideally, both residential and commercial development would be situated as close to the Station as possible, encouraging as many trips as possible to be made by train. However, while the Committee and public endorsed this idea in general, they also stressed the importance of preserving the existing character of the area, including preserving view corridors and protecting the many creeks in the area. Simply put, new transit-supportive development in the area is desirable, so long as it does not compromise the elements that the community feels make this a great place to live and work. The Plan recommends a limited amount of new development, with design guidelines to ensure that important characteristics of the existing neighborhood remain intact. As these design guidelines are further refined and established, they should recognize the importance of preserving the character of the area.

6.2 IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

With the above context in mind, this Plan identifies specific actions that should be undertaken to accomplish its recommendations. Table 5, below, identifies specific transportation and circulation, parking, and land use changes recommended in this Plan, describes the implementation actions, the responsible party, priority, and general cost estimate for each recommendation. Zoning changes and the associated CEQA review could be done collectively as a unit, or individually, as determined by the City Council, as City priorities, budget and staffing permit.



**TABLE 5
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Improvement	Responsible Agency	Cost (Est.)	Priority	Notes
Transportation / Circulation Improvements				
1. "Complete Streets" treatments on area streets, including:				
- Merrydale Road (North)	City of San Rafael	TBD	Medium	See Complete the Promenade – North Section, below.
- Merrydale Road (South)	City of San Rafael	TBD	Medium	Requires additional study to determine what elements may be technically feasible.
- Merrydale Overcrossing	City of San Rafael	TBD	Long	Requires additional study to determine what elements may be technically feasible.
- Civic Center Drive	City of San Rafael	TBD	Medium	See discussion of Promenade – South Section, below.
- McInnis Parkway	City of San Rafael	TBD	Long	Requires additional study to determine what elements may be technically feasible.
2. Complete the Promenade:				
- North Section	City of San Rafael	\$\$\$	Medium	Estimated, based on the City's General Plan 2020, which estimated the cost of the entire Promenade at \$2,000,000. That estimate did not include the extension of the Promenade through Northgate III; however, that extension could be completed by a developer, as part of potential future redevelopment of that site, ensuring no net cost increase to the City.



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Improvement	Responsible Agency	Cost (Est.)	Priority	Notes
- Station Section	City of San Rafael/ SMART	Included in SMART Implementation	Near	
- South Section	City of San Rafael	\$\$	Medium	Estimated, based on the City's General Plan 2020, which estimated the cost of the entire Promenade at \$2,000,000.
3. Complete the sidewalk network, including:				
- Civic Center Drive	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	
- North San Pedro Road	City of San Rafael	\$	Medium	
- Los Ranchitos Road	City of San Rafael	\$\$	Long	
4. Maintain and improve the Walter Place Crossing:				
- Maintain existing at-grade crossing of railroad tracks, and install appropriate safety and warning devices	SMART	Included in SMART Implementation	Near	
- Upgrade existing pathway to meet Class I standards (minimum 8-foot paved width with 2-foot shoulders on either side)	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	Should be coordinated with improvements to crossing constructed by SMART
- Improve access to Walter Place crossing from west side of Los Ranchitos Road	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	Should be coordinated with improvements to crossing constructed by SMART



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5. Construct new crossing at the west end of the station	SMART / City of San Rafael	\$\$\$	Medium	Requires additional study and design, as well as approval by the California Public Utilities Commission. This is also part of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
6. Complete the Citywide Bicycle Network within the Plan Area	City of San Rafael ¹	\$\$	Various	Based on cost estimates in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for improvements specified in this Plan. Represents cost for all improvements within the Plan Area. Specific elements of that Plan can be implemented separately for much lower cost. Does not include costs for new crossing at west end of station or for construction of the Promenade, which are in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, but listed separately in this Plan.
7. Implement SMART-proposed shuttle service	SMART	Included in SMART Implementation	Near	
8. Construct a transfer point for bus and shuttle service connecting to the SMART Station	SMART / Marin Transit	\$ / Included in SMART Implementation	Near	Some elements of the transfer point, such as bus pull-outs, etc., will be constructed as part of the Station and will be funded by SMART. Other enhancements called for in this Plan that are beyond what is proposed by SMART may be funded by the City.



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Improvement	Responsible Agency	Cost (Est.)	Priority	Notes
9. Construct vehicular turnaround areas at ends of Merrydale Road (North and South)	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	The turnaround on Merrydale Road South requires acquisition of land from the Public Storage site, and may not be feasible unless that site redevelops.
10. Widen Las Gallinas Avenue, from Merrydale Road to Del Presidio Boulevard	City of San Rafael	\$	Medium	This improvement is from the San Rafael General Plan 2020.
11. Construct improvements at Freitas Parkway and US 101 interchange, including:				
- Consider double right-turn lanes on northbound Del Presidio Boulevard at Freitas Parkway, and widen on-ramp to southbound US 101	City of San Rafael/Caltrans	\$\$	Medium	
- Widen off-ramps from northbound US 101 to Freitas Parkway and signalize Freitas Parkway / Civic Center Drive / Redwood Highway intersection	City of San Rafael/Caltrans	\$\$\$	Medium	
- Construct flyover ramp from Civic Center Drive to Freitas Parkway	City of San Rafael/Caltrans	\$\$\$	Long	
12. Signalize US 101 Southbound Ramps / Merrydale Road intersection	City of San Rafael/Caltrans	\$	Near	



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13. Install directional wayfinding signage for all modes directing people to and from key destinations in the area	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	
Parking Improvements				
1. Explore residential parking permits and time limits	City of San Rafael	\$	Upon request	City would consider implementing program upon request from neighbors. Program would be cost-neutral to City. Cost of implementing and administering program would be covered through permit fees.
2. Maximize use of available parking and consider additional commuter parking throughout the area, including:				
- McInnis Parkway on-street parking	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	This parking is already provided and not highly-utilized. Consider adding signage encouraging SMART patrons to use this parking if SMART-provided parking is fully occupied.
- Merrydale North	City of San Rafael	\$	Near	Similar to McInnis Parkway, this parking exists today and some will continue to exist once Promenade improvements are constructed. No additional actions are required, other than possibly providing signage as part of the wayfinding recommendation.



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Improvement	Responsible Agency	Cost (Est.)	Priority	Notes
- Vacant parcel northeast of station	City of San Rafael / SMART	\$	Near	There is likely to be adequate parking in the area; however, if need for additional parking arises, this may be a good site for providing accessible parking.
- Pursue use of other public lots in the area for SMART parking, if needed	City of San Rafael	\$	Long	This option would only be pursued if SMART-proposed parking and other non-residential on-street parking in the area were fully utilized
- Consider providing real-time technology to communicate parking availability to station area users	City of San Rafael	\$	Long	
3. Coordinate parking controls amongst jurisdictions	City of San Rafael / County of Marin / SMART	\$	Near	Coordination among the jurisdictions is essential to ensure that SMART parking does not intrude into residential neighborhoods such as Rafael Meadows. Every effort should be taken to prevent this from happening.
4. Reduce parking requirements in some circumstances	City of San Rafael	None	Near	This would only be considered if applicants demonstrate that their demand would be less than what the City would otherwise require



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5. Provide bike parking at station and throughout area	City of San Rafael / SMART	Included in SMART implementation	Near	
Land Use and Urban Design				
Modify General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, as necessary, to implement land use and urban design recommendations	City of San Rafael	\$	Medium	
Notes:				
1. \$: Less than \$500,000 \$\$: Between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 \$\$\$: More than \$1,000,000				
2. Although the City of San Rafael is responsible for the majority of the recommendations in the San Rafael Citywide Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan, several elements of involve regional projects, such as the SMART Multi-user Pathway, that are the responsibility of others.				