

May 19th, 2022

California APA Awards Jury
American Planning Association



RE: Support for Nomination of San Rafael's General Plan 2040 for Chapter Award

Dear Members of the California APA Awards Jury:

Marin Conservation League (MCL) wholeheartedly supports the nomination of San Rafael's General Plan 2040 (GP 2040) for a 2022 California Chapter Planning Award. Three MCL board members served as representatives on the GP 2040 Steering Committee. MCL is a nonprofit organization that has worked more than eighty years to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural assets of Marin. We are currently focused on the challenges posed by climate change.

San Rafael's GP 2040 is a deserving document in part because of the expert leadership and process that brought it through to adoption. The process provided participants with an understanding of how environmental, economic, and social goals are linked, and the Elements of a general plan related to each other. There was broad participation by many representatives of San Rafael's communities, both during Steering Committee meetings and through public workshops, walking tours, and site visits. Input was listened to and analyzed, and many participant recommendations were included in the final plan.

As an environmental organization, we believe the GP 2040 effectively balances San Rafael's need for growth and land use planning with San Rafael's need for sustainability planning and conservation. The plan builds on the environmental stewardship of San Rafael's previous general plans by strengthening policies for air and water quality, by protecting sensitive habitats including wetlands and watersheds, and by integrating San Rafael's Climate Action Plan designed to shift toward renewable energy sources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

It's very satisfying to see the vision of GP 2040 already taking shape: North San Rafael neighborhoods are providing input on a shopping mall infill redevelopment project; development of a tree ordinance consistent with policies that increase tree canopy and preservation is underway; San Rafael is hiring a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Planner to develop a citywide climate adaptation plan and implement a neighborhood-level sea level rise project that will address San Rafael's unique challenges as well as how it fits within the larger landscape of the San Francisco Bay.

As cities throughout California face many challenges ahead, this GP 2040 not only provides San Rafael with a blueprint on how to move toward a more resilient and sustainable future, it also has laid a foundation for the City's many stakeholders to work together toward that shared vision. It's an award-worthy plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Miller".

Robert Miller
MCL President
GP 2040 Steering Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Powers".

Kate Powers
Land Use, Transportation, Water Committee
GP 2040 Steering Committee

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Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.