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May 15, 2023

San Rafael City Council
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: Economic Development Strategic Plan

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,
The Economic Development Plan before you this evening includes compelling steps towards a thriving community:

Sustainability/Climate Change as primary goals to address in revitalizing the local economy (along with equity and housing). We urge the City to pursue these goals in close coordination with the Recovery Strategy of the Marin Economic Forum, which identifies this sector as one of five that are driving economic development countywide. Expanded business and workforce support for building electrification, EV adoption, biomass recovery, and wildfire prevention are among opportunities of particular promise.

Housing as an economic driver, providing construction jobs while building in customers for local business. We applaud the City's entrepreneurial support of a diverse housing sector.

Downtown 'reimagination' as a hub supporting 'work from home' economic activity with places to gather and meet, 'experiential retail' of products and services that can't be purchased online, and a pleasant walkable environment--safe, well-treed, and well-connected to transit. We urge initiating the public improvements in the Downtown Precise Plan.

Innovative retail destinations including the redefinition of Northgate and activation of the Canal waterfront, as well as downtown. We encourage you to think of these districts as 'gateway' attractions to Marin.

'Transformative Climate Communities' building towards all these synergistic innovations with new funding sources like 'Climate Resilience Districts,' 'Enhanced Infrastructure Finance Districts,' 'Sustainable Communities grants,' and affordable housing and transit-oriented development funds.

Thank you for supporting this forward-thinking plan.

Sincerely,

William Carney,
President