



NEWS RELEASE

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Supervisors Approve Civic Center Drive Concept Plan

Safety and right-of-way improvements moving forward

San Rafael, CA – The Marin County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved concept plans for upgrades to the Civic Center Drive corridor near the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael.

In addition to improving Civic Center Drive circulation for pedestrians, bikers and vehicular traffic, the County hopes to create a sense of scale and welcoming to the Civic Center campus from its northern access points. Lighting, landscaping and signage will be key parts of the plans, which have been positively received by the City of San Rafael, the Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center Conservancy and the Marin County Cultural Services Commission. The County also conducted two public workshops in September and one in November to showcase preliminary design concepts.

In January 2014, the Department of Public Works will move forward with advanced designs, environmental analyses and preparation of an initial study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County is striving to have the project completed in time for the opening of the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Civic Center Station in early 2016. According to the tentative schedule, final plans, permits and approval would be sought in fall 2014 and construction would begin in winter 2014-2015. The project is expected to take about nine months to complete.

The Board of Supervisors approved \$2 million for the project in July 2012 and staff has subsequently secured \$650,000 in federal grant funds. The improvements include accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide seamless connectivity between the Civic Center campus, the new SMART station and the anticipated permanent farmers market site to be located on the gravel parking lot at the junction of Peter Behr Drive and Civic Center Drive.

During the past 11 months, County staff has collaborated with a Board subcommittee, various County departments, the City of San Rafael,

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SMART, Marin Transit and the Agricultural Institute of Marin. Engineers are now recommending a bike path separate from the sidewalk following recommendations of several groups.

Traffic circulation analyses by both the County and the City of San Rafael were conducted to evaluate alternatives for the intersection of Civic Center Drive and Peter Behr Drive/Memorial Drive. A roundabout was the recommended solution to alleviate traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety, especially after major events at Marin Center and the Marin County Fairgrounds.

Keeping the Civic Center's National Historic Landmark status in mind, the County is committed to making improvements that are consistent with the vision that architect Frank Lloyd Wright had for the Civic Center area. The fiscal year 2012-13 was celebrated as the 50th anniversary of the Marin County Civic Center.

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