City of San Rafael
Economic Vitality Workplan
Progress Report March 2009 - January 2012

I. NEW DEVELOPMENT

a) **West Francisco Boulevard (WFB)**.	• Expedited permit approvals for a new VW & Audi facility. • Construction completed on RAB dealership remodel & pre-owned vehicle lot.
b) **East Francisco Boulevard (EFB).**	• Honda opened for business at GM site at Shoreline Center. • Pre-owned Luxury Car facility opened in former Ford facility, initial sales tax revenue in 4th quarter 2010. • Infiniti dealership facility remodeled & opened. • Toyota Scion facility remodel underway.
c) **Shoreline Center Completion**.	137,000 sq. ft. Target approved by City Council in 2011.
d) **Marin Square Area Redevelopment**.	No application received yet from property owner, Sutter Health. Existing businesses continue to operate in the Center.
e) **Completion of the San Rafael Corporate Center**.	Two new buildings & a parking structure have been constructed. The addition of BioMarin will increase the Center's occupancy rate to 85%.
f) **Reuse of PG&E's 999 Third Street Site**.	PG&E is completing soil & groundwater testing & developing the property's Remediation Action Plan for State approval. With this plan approved & in place, PG&E & the City will develop a joint developer selection process in 2012.
g) **Caltrans Remnant Properties**.	Caltrans staff evaluating a sale process for Caltrans Rice Drive parcel. The long term outcome of the adjacent property owned by former RDA will be under consideration by City, as Successor to the SRRDA.

II. REUSE, RE-TENANTING & REHABILITATION

a) **Economic Study.**	Report presented to City Council: *(Completed items italicized.)* • Prioritize attracting tenants to large retail sites. *(Honda opened for business at former GM site.)* • *Developed Shop San Rafael Campaign.* • *Improved Economic Development website*. • Consider re-use opportunities of office sites. See *Incubator discussion below.* • Assist with training businesses on websites. • *Surveyed (interviewed) business community on constraints*. • Improve perceptions of permit process. *(Coordinated with Marin Economic Forum to explain the process to businesses, continued improvement of business section of City website.)* • *Coordinated with workforce development efforts*. • Increase office occupancy, especially with green office users. (*BioMarin leased San Rafael Corporate Center, CD instituted*

a) **Economic Study (con't).**	*over the counter approvals of tenant improvements & zoning ordinance changes which will assist applicants.)* • *Coordinated with Countywide energy efficiency/retrofit efforts.* • Consider incentives for green businesses. This item is on hold due to City's financial situation.
b) **Re-tenanting Vacancies.**	• Mi Pueblo opened at the former Circuit site. • TJ Maxx opening at former Border's space. Arizmendi Bakery opened at Rafael Town Center. • George's opened in what was referred to as the Kimball's site. • Pizza Orgasmica opened in former Rafters. • Sol Food expanded Lincoln Avenue location into adjacent space & filled 811 Fourth (former Golden Orb/Pie Shop). • Lotus Chaat & Spices opened in former Pier 6 space in West End. • Fenix nightclub approved for former See's Candy location. • Majority of West End storefronts have been leased. Changes to parking regulations in this area helped. • Working with Home Depot to fill old Yardbirds site. Home Depot has stated Letters of Intent will be secured in first quarter 2012. • Working with property owner of Marin Commons to plan re-use. County purchased one building for Emergency Operations Facility. Prepared information handouts for key sites to assist potential tenants. Two of the sites, GM & Ford, have been leased. Continued meetings with Marin Economic Forum, to explore "business incubators" that would create jobs & fill vacant space in the long term as businesses grow. Initial research indicates no City funds will be required & instead City facilitation & collaboration with local partners could result in a San Rafael incubator of some type. Participate with Council Member Connolly on Steering Committee of Dominican University's "Venture Greenhouse", a business accelerator effort physically located in East San Rafael.
c) **Rehabilitation of Northgate Mall**.	54 stores opened out of a potential 65. New Rite Aid completed. Future use of former Rite Aid building under study. Promenade completed. Music & entertainment taking place in Oak Plaza.
d) **"Marin Rocks" Exhibition**.	Marin History Museum experiencing financial issues including loss of Executive Director. Project on hold.
e) **General Plan Update**.	Housing Element update approved by State HCD.

III. SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES

a) **Green Businesses**.	Improved Economic Development webpage includes promotion of green business certification & resources. City received $100,000 grant from Marin Community Foundation for collaboration with SR Chamber & Dominican University for pilot program on Resilient Businesses & classes are underway.
b) **Climate Change Action Plan Implementation**.	Assisted with business outreach on potential requirement for "green" food containers at food outlets. CD convened committee, including business representatives, to prepare recommendations for banning single use carryout bags & reducing takeout food containers. On hold now due to lawsuit appeal. Received grant from Co. Hazardous & Solid Waste JPA to fund City staff for activities related to construction & demolition ordinance & new rate structure for garbage & recycling. City's franchised waste hauler (MSS) has instituted programs to comply with new CA mandatory commercial & multi-family recycling law. Created webpage for businesses which includes links for the following : • What Green Means to San Rafael • Marin County Green Business Program • San Rafael Climate Change Action Plan • Green Resources
c) **SMART**.	Managing the Station Area Planning (SAP) efforts for Downtown & Civic Center stations. Downtown SAP draft is completed & has been presented to all partner agencies & SR Planning Commission & DRB. Civic Center SAP draft will be completed in summer. Working with Whistlestop to consider relocation locations & re-use possibilities for existing building.
d) **Energy Efficient Decorative Lights**.	Completed. Installed LED twinkle lights in Downtown street trees to save energy.
e) **Pedestrian & Bicycle Improvements & Linkages**.	Completed business outreach for Non-motorized pilot programs (NTPP). City completed $15 Million in NTTP improvements & grant funding for design of Grand Avenue pedestrian bridge.
f) **"Greening" of Community Events**.	Participated in discussions regarding "green" food containers at events. Making City event recycling containers available to non-profits hosting events in San Rafael. Participated in planning & implementation of County's "Way to Go" program to promote non-motorized access to Downtown events.

IV. Promotions & Events

a) **10th Anniversary of the re-opening of the Smith Rafael Film Center**.	Completed. Assisted Film Center with a June outdoor movie as well as "A" Street movie in September, 2009.
b) **West End Village Event**.	Continue to support community-based efforts. July 2009 street festival was successful, held two Farmers' Market & fall festivals in October 2009 & 2011.
c) **Public Arts Installation Program**.	Collaboration with Art Works Downtown provides ongoing temporary public art program in the City Plaza & other civic locations. Added two additional locations in 2011.
d) America's Cup	Working with Marin Tourism Bureau & subcommittee of San Rafael Chamber of Commerce to develop a strategy to capitalize on the event.
e) Sponsorships for Events	Due to dissolution of Redevelopment & loss of funds for events, staff has commenced efforts to raise funds through sponsorships or other means to continue to hold community events.

V. Fiscal Strategies

a) **Redevelopment Bonds**.	Interim Bond refunding completed. Due to dissolution of Redevelopment agencies statewide on Feb. 1, 2012, no further action on new bonds. The City, as Successor Agency to SRRDA will continue to pay existing debt service & meet bond covenants.
b) **Business Improvement District (BID) Strategy**.	Agency/BID retained consultant & conducted survey to change from business based to property based BID. Not enough interest from property owners to proceed. BID has incorporated as 501(c)6 tax-exempt status & entered into a service agreement with SR Chamber. Increased membership from WEV & a WEV merchant currently serving on BID Board.
c) **Financial Resource Development**.	ARRA funds have been secured for street repaving, Police Citizens Academy, & energy efficiency improvements for City Hall.
d) **Emergency Preparedness/Business Recovery Plan**.	"Get Ready" for Business was held in 2009. Business Strategy drafted for how to better prepare & recover in the business sector. Disaster Preparedness Worksheet prepared with phone numbers & websites for businesses & tips for protecting business from a disaster. Post-Disaster Business Resilience Kit published in English & Spanish. Both documents posted on City website.
e) **Real Property Management**.	Environmental testing of 519 Fourth Street, owned by the former RDA, is complete & a final site closure letter for the underground tanks has been received from the Water Quality Control Board.

VI. COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION & OUTREACH

a) **Communication to the Community**	Participated in Business Retention & Expansion interviews with San Rafael Chamber, BID, & Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Marin. On an ongoing basis, attempting to meet with one business per month. Improved Economic Development website. Includes Business Assistance & links to available properties. Several larger sites in San Rafael are highlighted to assist in business attraction to key retail locations. Participated in Bilingual Entrepreneurs' Fair.
b) **Managers of Vacant Property**.	In communication with owners/managers of former Yardbirds & Dodge sites. Facilitated temporary use by non-profit & community groups with Marin Square Manager.
c) **Re-Leasing Assistance**.	City "Coffee and Codes" meetings were conducted to assist with information helpful for releasing. Coordinating with Planning staff, held several meetings with commercial brokers to explain land use application processes, City zoning & regulations, etc. Building Department instituted over the counter approvals for tenant improvements, facilitating quicker re-leasing.