

March 12, 2012

Andrea J. Ouse, AICP
APA California Northern Awards Co-Director
c/o LSA Associates, Inc.
395 Oyster Point Boulevard, Suite 307
South San Francisco, CA 94080



**SUBJECT: APA California Northern 2012 Planning Awards
 Comprehensive Planning Award – Small Jurisdiction
 City of Redwood City General Plan**

Dear Ms. Ouse:

Redwood City Neighbors United (RCNU) enthusiastically supports the City of Redwood City General Plan for the APA California Northern, 2012 Comprehensive Planning Award - Small Jurisdiction. RCNU is a fast-growing community organization that seeks to improve our City's quality of life by supporting the implementation of responsible growth policies that balance economic development opportunities with sustainable practices that foster preservation of our unique neighborhood, historic and open-space resources. Redwood City's General Plan provides a clear vision and direction for achieving these benefits over the next twenty years.

The General Plan fosters true "smart growth", transit-oriented development into the future, but its strength lies in the way it meets local and regional housing needs while simultaneously preserving neighborhood character and precious designated open-space. By focusing future housing growth in downtown and along major public transportation routes, the Plan provides for a wider range of housing affordability, and simultaneously promotes the revitalization of downtown and enhanced economic opportunities for local businesses, while protecting our vital Port industries.

The General Plan works to minimize traffic impacts by supporting infill development and avoiding sprawl into unimproved open space lands. In addition to placing housing near existing train and bus corridors, the Plan proposes attractive and convenient transportation alternatives. It provides for a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan, implements "pedestrian enhanced designs" (wider sidewalks, transit amenities, landscaping), promotes shuttles to popular local destinations (community colleges, employment centers, hospitals), and encourages the development of both a commuter ferry terminal and additional rail options, including a streetcar route linking downtown with the Stanford University and Port employment centers.

This General Plan is also significant in that it goes beyond simply defining a vision for the physical layout of our City. It also looks to improve the community's quality of life by fostering educational resources, including literacy, job training, and internship programs; and encouraging high quality child care at transit stations and major employment centers. The Plan supports expanding art and cultural activities/venues while providing for both traditional and innovative open space and recreational areas, such as rooftop gardens and boating opportunities on Redwood Creek. The General Plan is also committed to improving all of the City's natural resources, including our bay, wetlands, creeks, and hillsides.

From RCNU's perspective, perhaps the most significant aspect of our General Plan is that it truly represents the community's collective vision. The City actively encouraged and promoted public participation and consistently kept the community informed with flyers/letters and electronic updates throughout the Plan's preparation. This is why this plan to grow Redwood City has not been polarizing like similar plans in other cities or other proposed local projects. Through activities such as community fair booths, large interactive workshops, smaller "affinity group" meetings, an Advisory Committee, and web surveys, the citizens of Redwood City made this Plan their own. Implementation of the Plan's bold vision will therefore be enhanced by the community's buy-in.

Thank you for considering the City of Redwood City General Plan for a 2012 California Northern Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel Ponti", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Daniel Ponti
Co-Chair, Redwood City Neighbors United
P.O. Box 416, Redwood City, CA 94062