

To: San Rafael City Council meeting April 15,2024

From: Jon Freudman

Re: Northgate Mall Re-development Project

New proposal presents an opportunity for traffic impact modeling

Regarding the project for 1,422 residences at Northgate, the Environmental Impact Report from a few months back has been appropriately criticized for underestimating the impact that the project will have on traffic and parking in the Terra Linda community. I understand another project is being proposed by the same builder with less retail and more residences.

The second proposal provides an opportunity for a more useful vehicle impact study; and I urge the City Council to work with the Planning Commission to see that this happens. A more useful analysis will include more granular baseline data and modeling from these assumptions.

This might include

- Estimates regarding the current number of people, vehicles, and drivers in the proposed project versus the numbers in the existing Terra Linda population.
- Estimates regarding vehicle use by those who will live in the new Northgate residences: for commuting outside of Tera Linda and use within Tera Linda
- Number of parking spaces for the new residences
- Traffic pattern heat maps at various times of the day to assess impact at key locations at potential high-volume times including 101 access as well as non 101 options to leave Terra Linda (i.e. Las Gallinas Ave to the North , Merry Dale Road to the east, and Los Ranchitos Rd to the South).
- Traffic pattern heat maps should assess access to Terra Linda High, Vallecitto Elementary and Mark Day School as well as the Kaiser Hospital Montecillo Road campus
- Routes of Golden Gate Transit routes during commutes – especially regarding the Smart Train and the central San Rafael bus depot. And how these would be impacted by the traffic patterns described above.

This effort will require use of existing DMV data and traffic monitoring studies - some of which may have been completed and others may need to be added]. And making a variety of intelligent estimates to test. Traffic patterns can be modeled to show impact

for different Northgate redevelopment scenarios (e.g. number of residential units , different estimates of number of new residents who will commute out of Terra Linda).

I understand that at the environment is complex: There is a very important need for additional housing as well as California State mandates and a complicated Builders Remedy law. None the less, City government has a responsibility to assess the impact of the project in order to make a reasonable decision regarding the size of the project. The traffic and parking issues will impact the quality of life and safety of existing Terra Linda residents as well as those who will live in the new townhomes and apartments. There is now the opportunity to gather the data needed to help guide decision making.