

Steve Stafford

From: Loren Powers <lorenpowers@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2019 10:17 AM
To: Steve Stafford
Cc: tlhoa.email@gmail.com; Susan Coleman; kpmarin@yahoo.com; Pat Warnock
Subject: Project 1007, 1010 and 1030 Northgate Dr. - Independent Shading Study
Attachments: Northgate Walk Shading Study 2019-01-29.pdf

Dear Steve,

I am a resident of Terra Linda and participate in a Community Development Committee for the Terra Linda HOA. I have significant concerns with the current design for Northgate Walk at 1007, 1010 and 1030 Northgate Dr. specific to the impact it will have on the neighborhood to the northwest of the development. As you will see in the attached shading study, a tall structure situated on a hillside with an existing community immediately northwest of a property is the worst case you can have since the structure causes considerable shading during morning and limited shading during early afternoon hours from October to March. Please note I have taken considerable time and effort to ensure that my study is independent and accurate given the information provided by the developer.

The attached shading study shows shading at 8, 9, 10, 11am for each month of the year and an hourly profile from 8-4pm on the winter solstice in December which is not limited to that day but can characterize and be applied to determine the overall impact during the winter months without including daily profiles. I have worked in the solar PV industry with large utilities for a professional global 15k employee company for the past 13 years as engineer of record for many utility scale solar farms and perform shading analysis daily to support large complex projects. I am licensed in 15 states including CA and 1 province in Canada and take great pride in the due diligence and neutral position that I take during my career providing both independent and owner engineering services. I encourage you and your team to review this shading study. I am also the Chair for a PV Solar design design working group with the IEEE standards association.

I also encourage you to view supporting animations at the following link. They are larger files, so I could not attach them to this email and while you watch you can see the date stamps in the right most column of the simulation program change. I recommend reading the report prior to watching the animations:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1DqhEUqieFjhEibGNs158N49TT-dQNM80>

The report includes the development impact first and then shows for comparison the existing shadows cast on the community due to the hillside and existing hotel. The contrast is remarkable and should be taken seriously by all parties.

I stayed late during the design review board meeting on January 23rd with the board members and they were shocked to eventually realize that the developer's shading study is so erroneous that it essentially implies the sun sets in the east, which is obviously wrong. They also chose hours where shade is simply not a concern, with shadows that are clearly misleading. My involvement to date on this project as an open minded resident who is not simply against development has been extremely disappointing and along with many other errors within the LCA Architects design set I constantly question the transparency, integrity and quality control behind the work that they are providing to the Board.

I am also disappointed with the political landscape that I have witnessed first hand at Planning commission meetings and general plan meetings involving our city officials, as they appear to operate based on the pressures felt from Sacramento/colleagues to essentially approve development (based on the housing crisis) without performing the due diligence required to keep the developers in check.

The fact that blatant errors are being made by the developer, CEQA is being bypassed in such a shady/questionable manner and Mark Lubamersky keeps repeating the statement that the neighbors will simply have to get used to it is in my mind an unacceptable position from a public official. The Planning Commission also made statements that bulk, mass, density and other engineering units are all essentially the same indicated that we do not have the technical leadership needed to be making such important decisions for our community. All aspects need to be scrutinized and otherwise we are stuck with a structure that will negatively impact existing and future residents for the next 100+ years. I wish that the developer was forced to build a transparent 3D model (just like the old days) of their development so everyone can visualize and better understand the units specific to bulk, mass, density and topography.

Please take the time and consideration to review this study and share this study asap with the Design Review Board and with the Planning Commission. I do not live in the neighborhood immediately adjacent to the property, but I can truly sympathize and from what I gather, that neighborhood is extremely concerned, scared and upset regarding the impact to their quality of life at their residences.

Everyone focuses on how much the developer has "reduced" the density of the original proposal without looking at the actual design. The fact that we do not have standards in place to ensure developers cannot build projects that reflect such considerable impacts to others in such a profound way uncovers many weak points within our city planning department.

Please feel free to ask me any questions related to the study.

Please confirm receipt given the 12MB file that it attached since I do not know the limit that your email server can receive.

Sincerely,
Loren Powers 415-696-8428
17 Bolanos Dr.
San Rafael CA 94903

Northgate Walk Shading Impact Study

29 January 2019

By: Loren Powers (Solar PV Engineer and Resident of Terra Linda)

The shading study provided by the developer for the new development named Northgate Walk in Terra Linda, San Rafael, CA has been prepared with major errors. Errors include shade lines with the sun on the opposite side of the buildings relative to the timestamps (essentially implying the sun sets in the East). We have prepared the following shading study depicting significant impact to the neighbors during the morning hours from October all the way through March. This impact is considerable and should be revisited by all parties and specifically be brought to the attention of the planning commissions and the design review board.

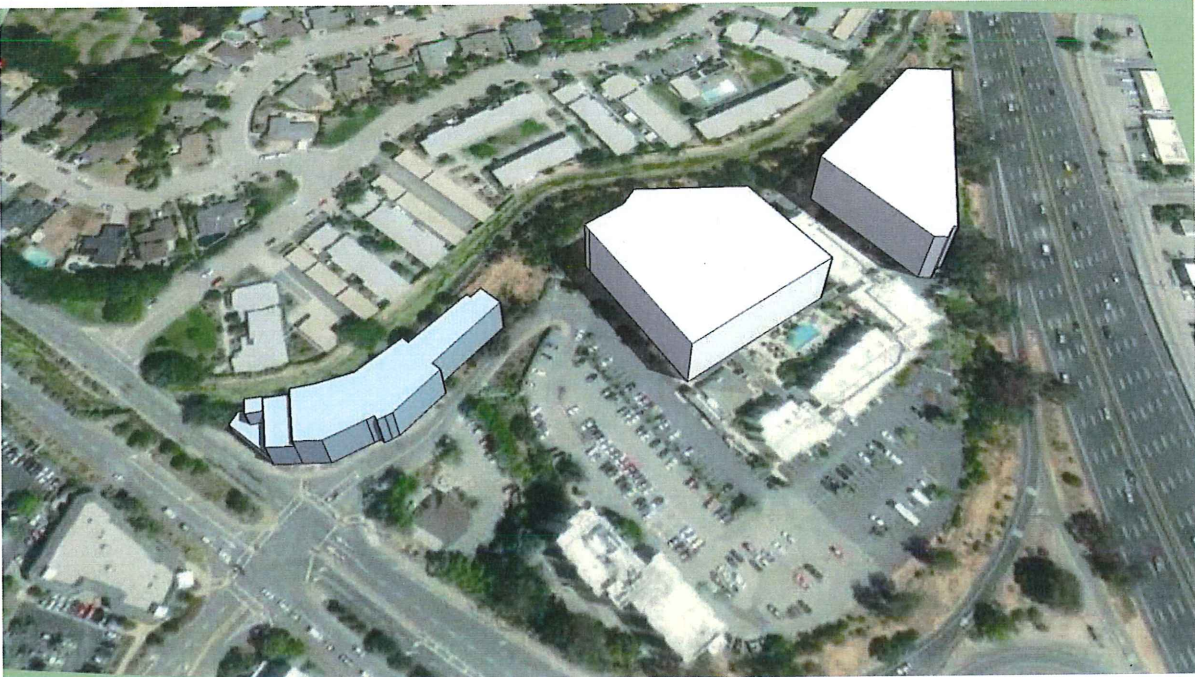
December 21st (the winter solstice) is often referenced in shading studies since the sun's path is closest to the horizon and therefore the worst case for the orientation of this development relative to the neighbors. Please note that the December 21st results represent a greater period of the year where the shadows cast by the new development impact the neighbors' properties from 8am until 4pm with sunset at 4:54pm (the sunset time does not account for the horizon shading caused by the mountains that are due west which put them in the shade at about 4:15pm). Given this severe impact, portions of their properties may see very little or no direct sun during the winter months and therefore the neighbors are severely impacted. Vegetation decline, mold growth, standing water, mud, erosion reduced property values and reduction in overall quality of life will result.

The following study starts on the summer solstice showing no shading and will progressively illustrate shading impact as winter solstice approaches and leaves. Please note that on December 21st the number of illustrations has been expanded to include the entire day between 8am and 4pm to show that the shadows imposed on the properties do not leave several of properties all day. The building dimensions may appear extreme, but they are accurate and represent the "lift" caused by the topography of the hillside rather than modeling the hillside topography dimensions (Note: this approach is accurate and was taken rather than modeling the topography of the hillside, which requires more information than what is provided in the project design package).

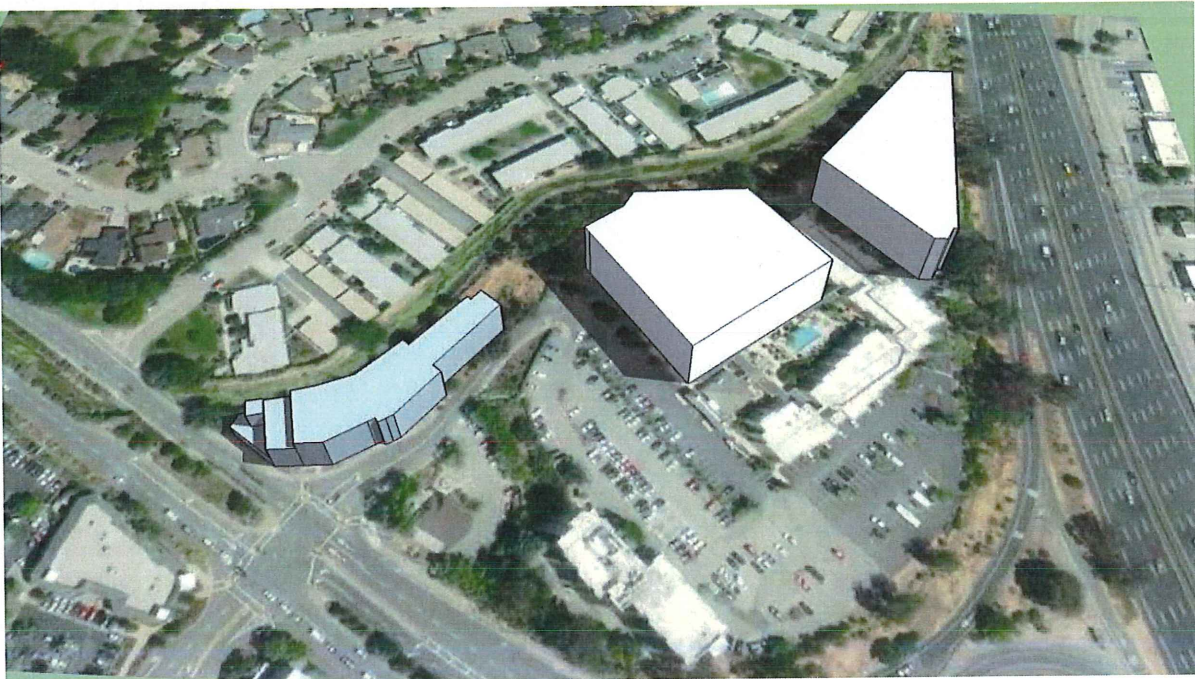
Immediately following the illustrations showing significant shading from the new development, the same approach and illustrations are included showing no shading impact from the hillside without the new development and significant but localized shading from one of the existing hotel buildings. It is unknown if a shading study was performed when the hotel was built, but at least the leading edge of the shade line from the existing impacting structure is short and therefore a "passing" shadow that does not have as profound an impact on the quality of life for the neighbors.

Please note that this study was performed given the information provided in the design documents.

21 June @ 8:00AM



21 June @ 9:00AM



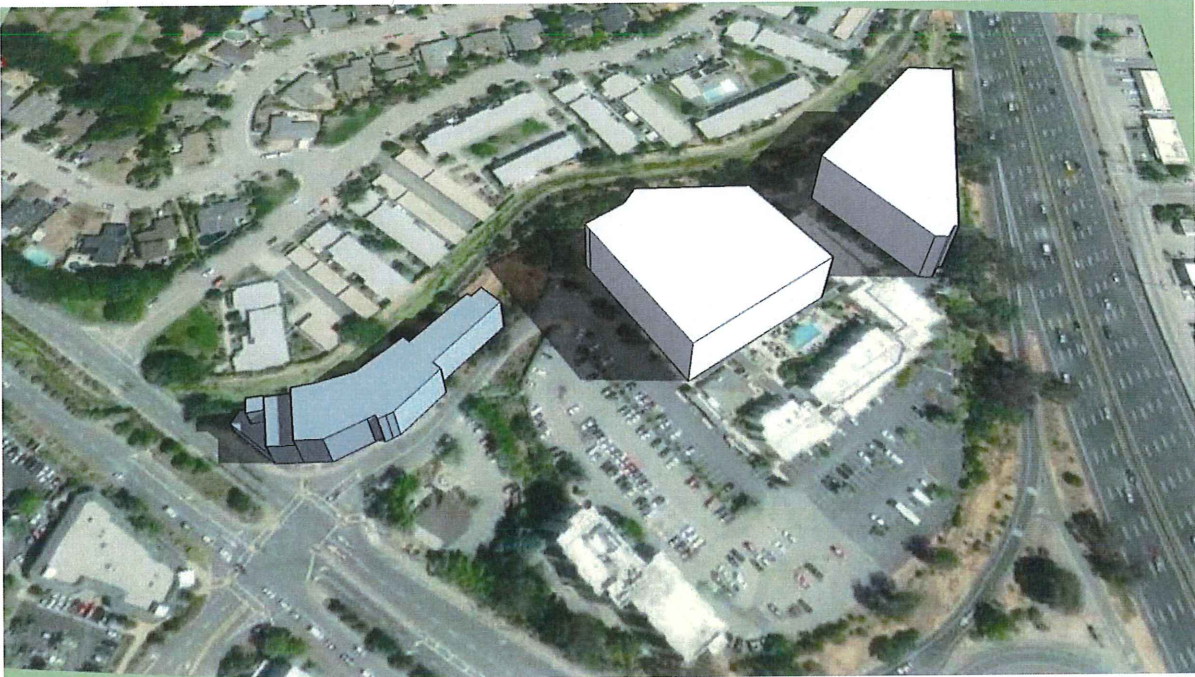
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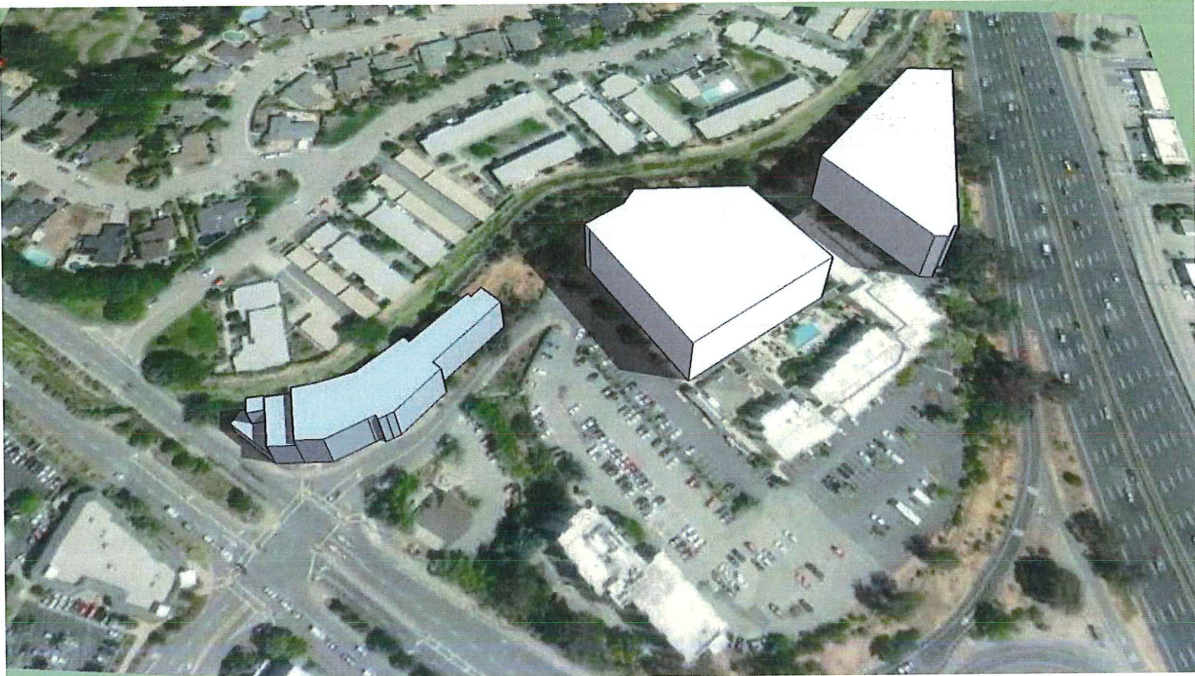
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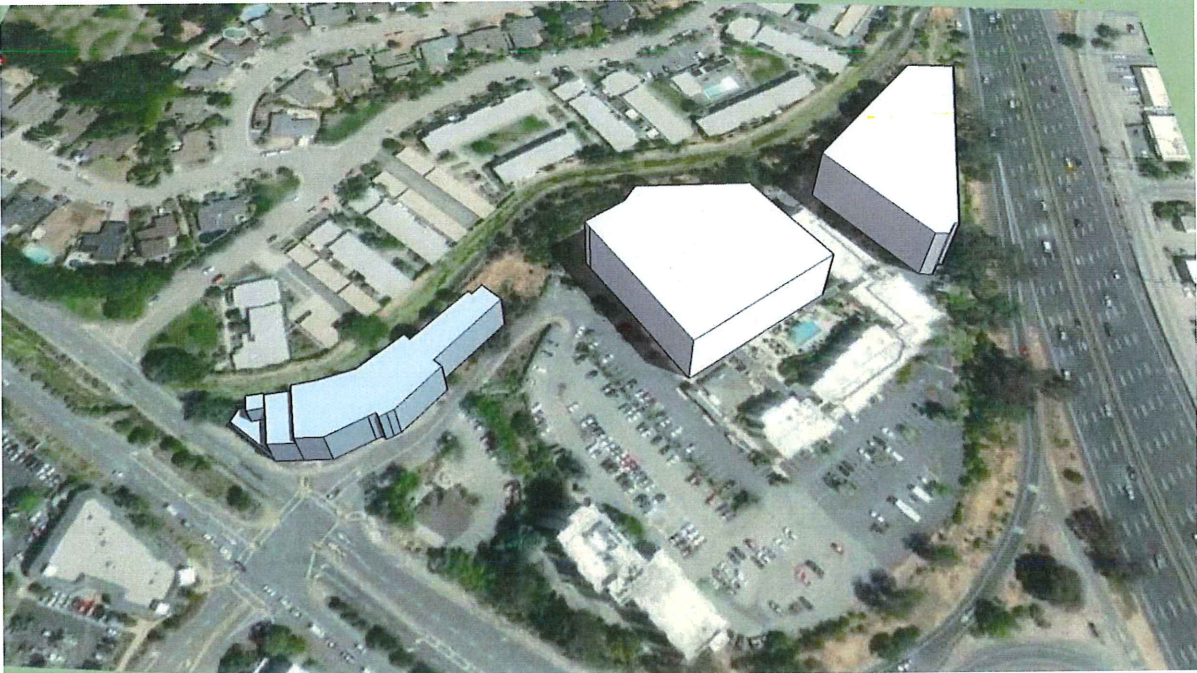
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21 July @ 9:00AM



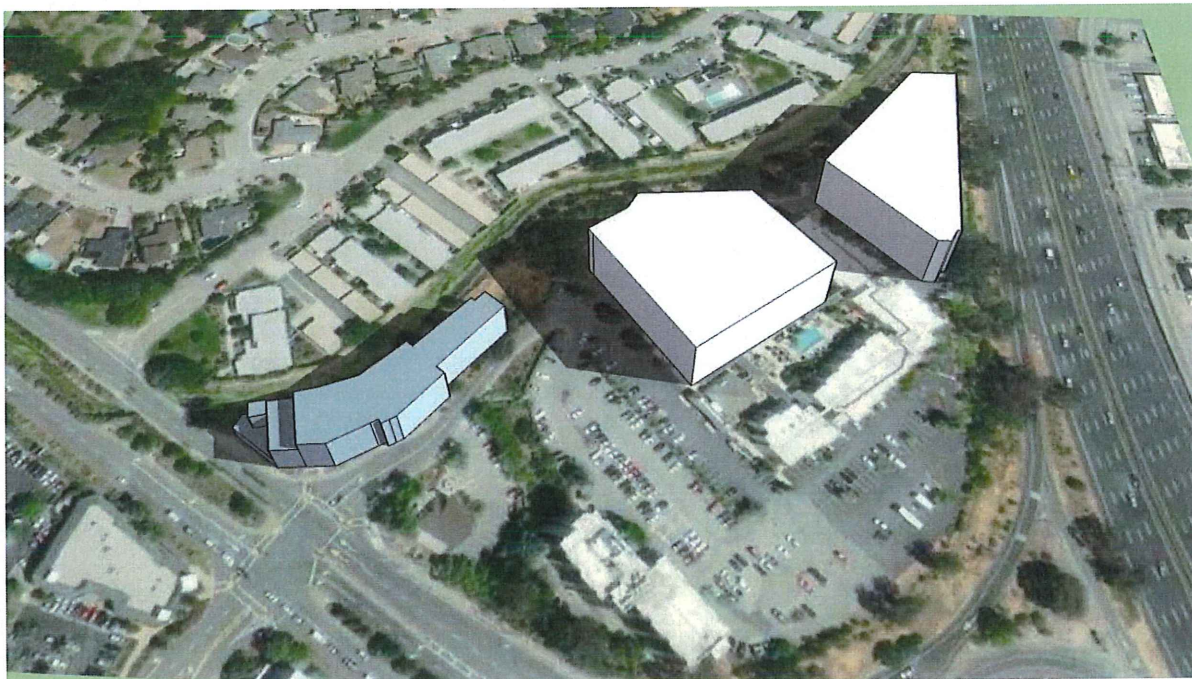
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21 July @ 11:00AM



21 August @ 8:00AM



21 August @ 9:00AM



21 August @ 10:00AM



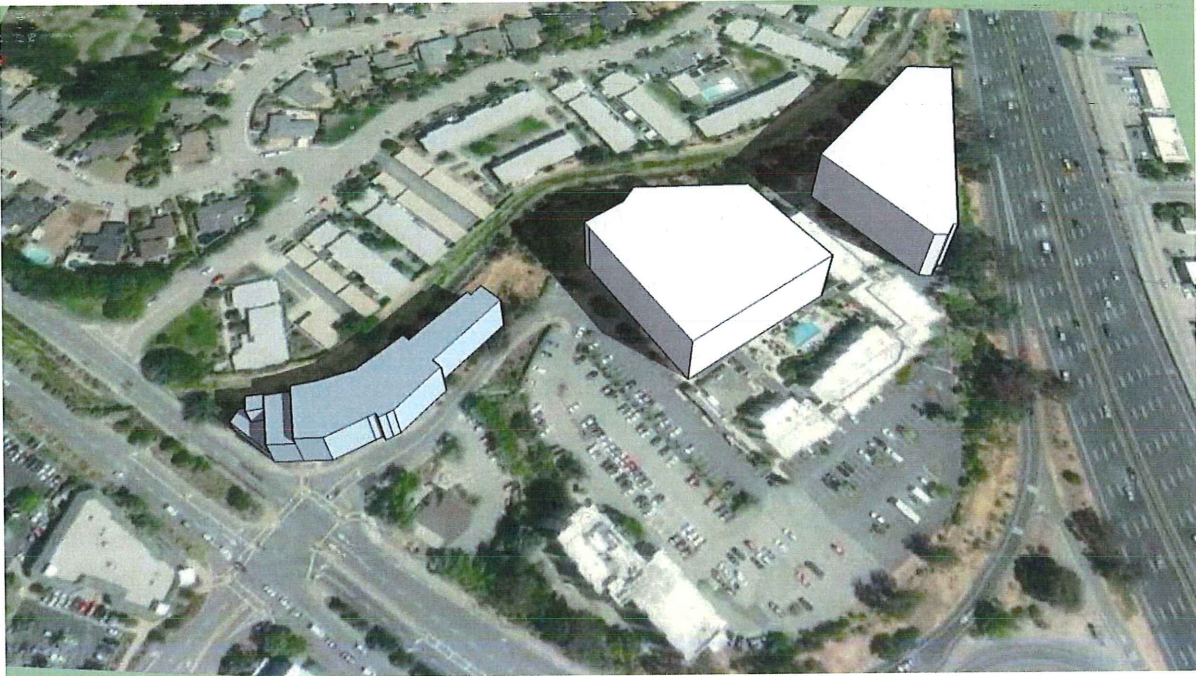
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21 September @ 8:00AM



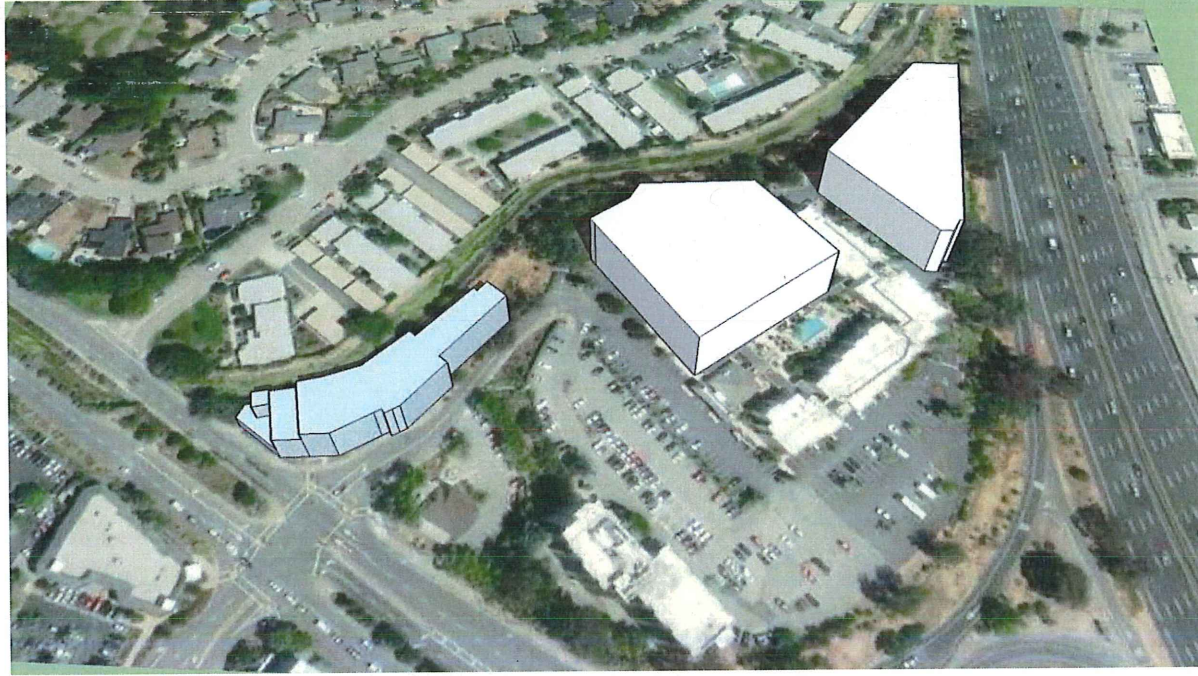
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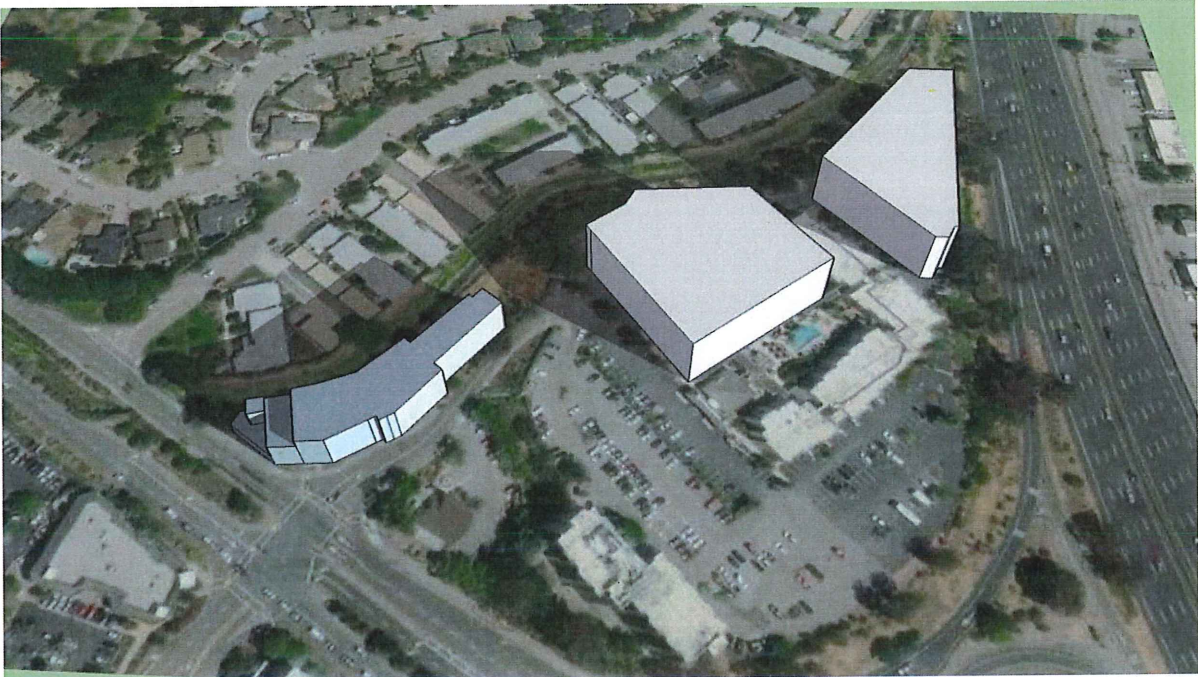
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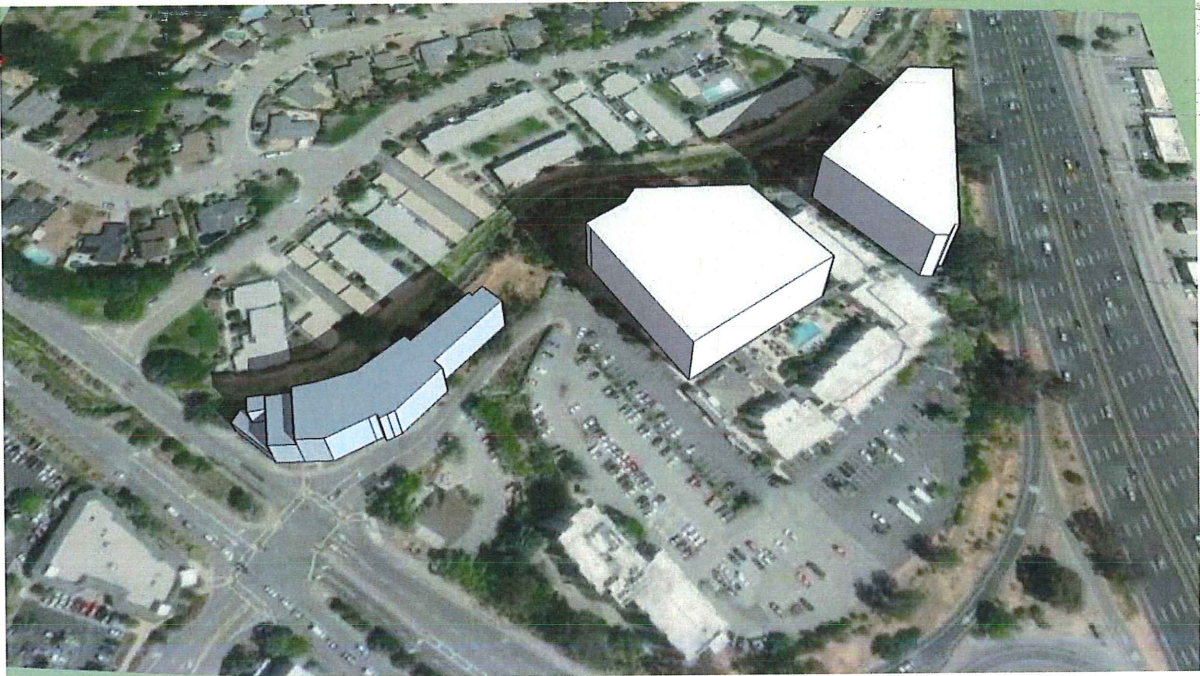
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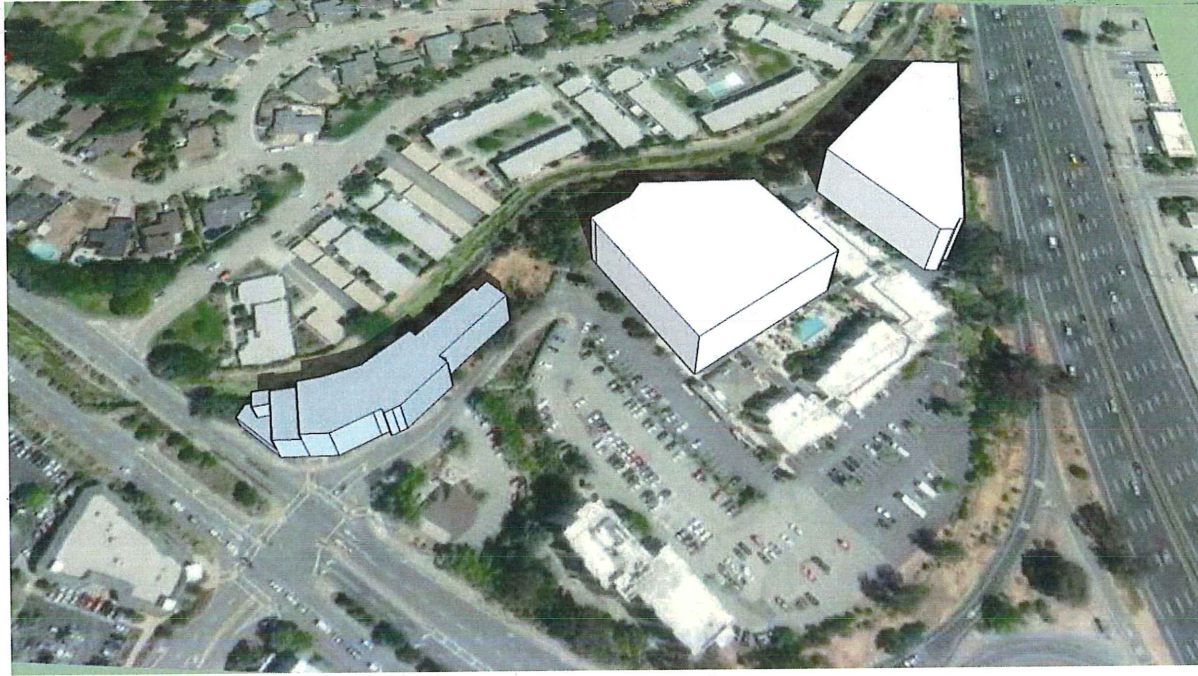
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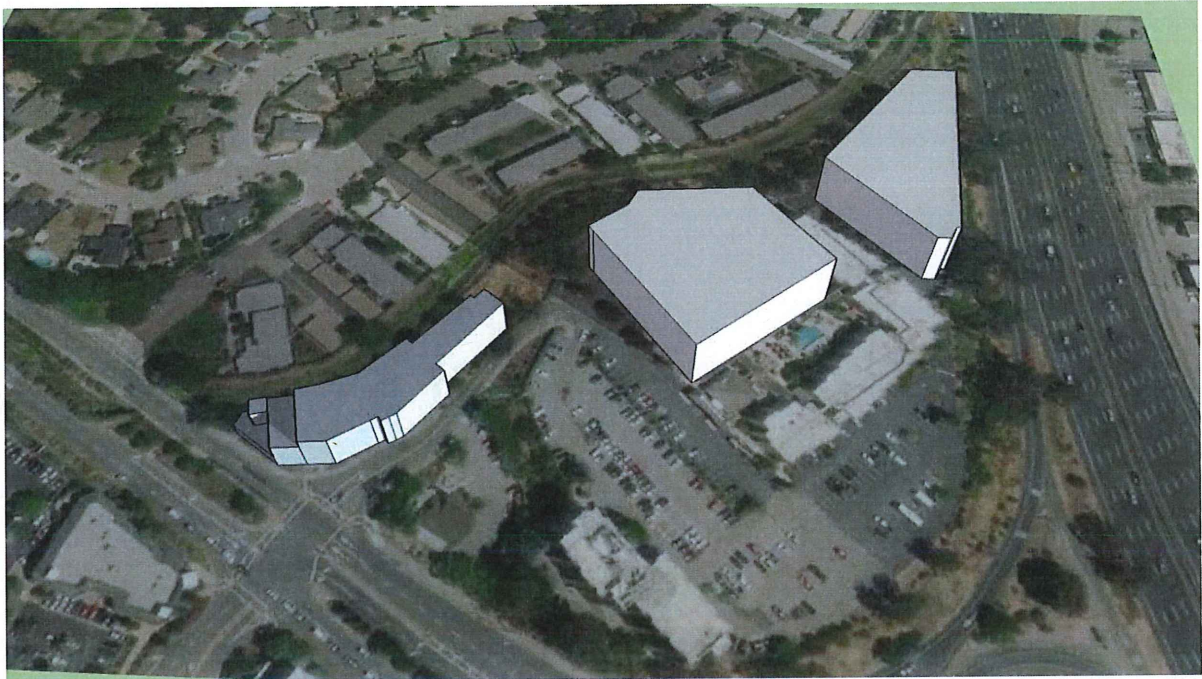
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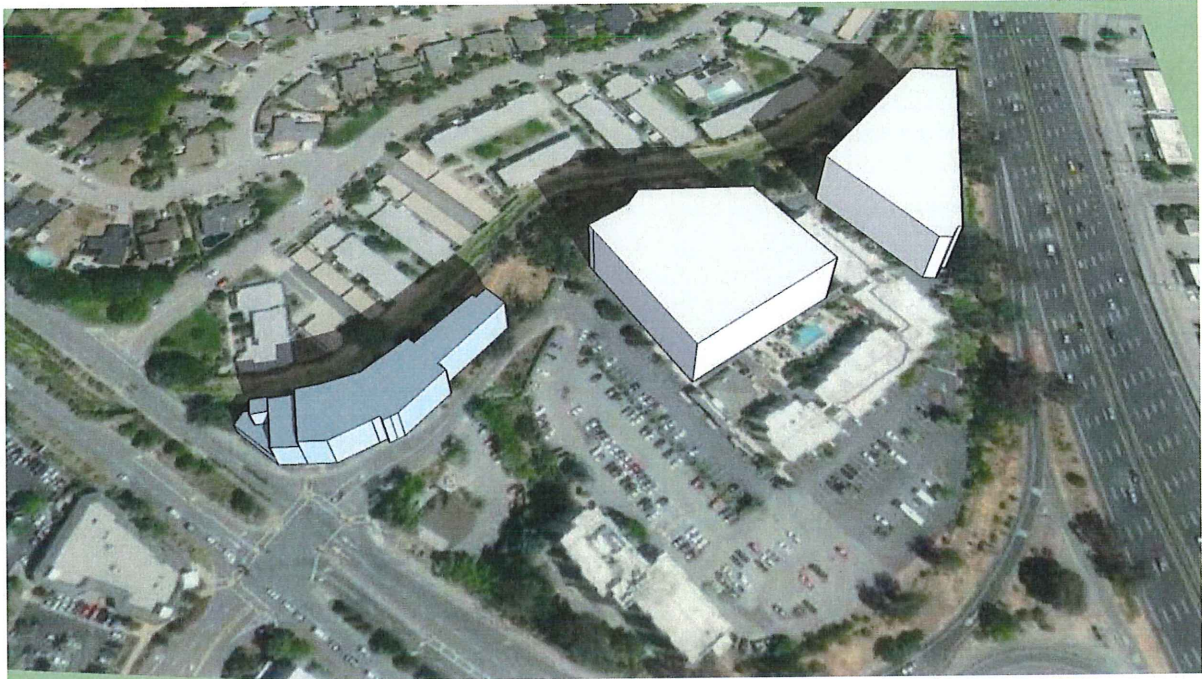
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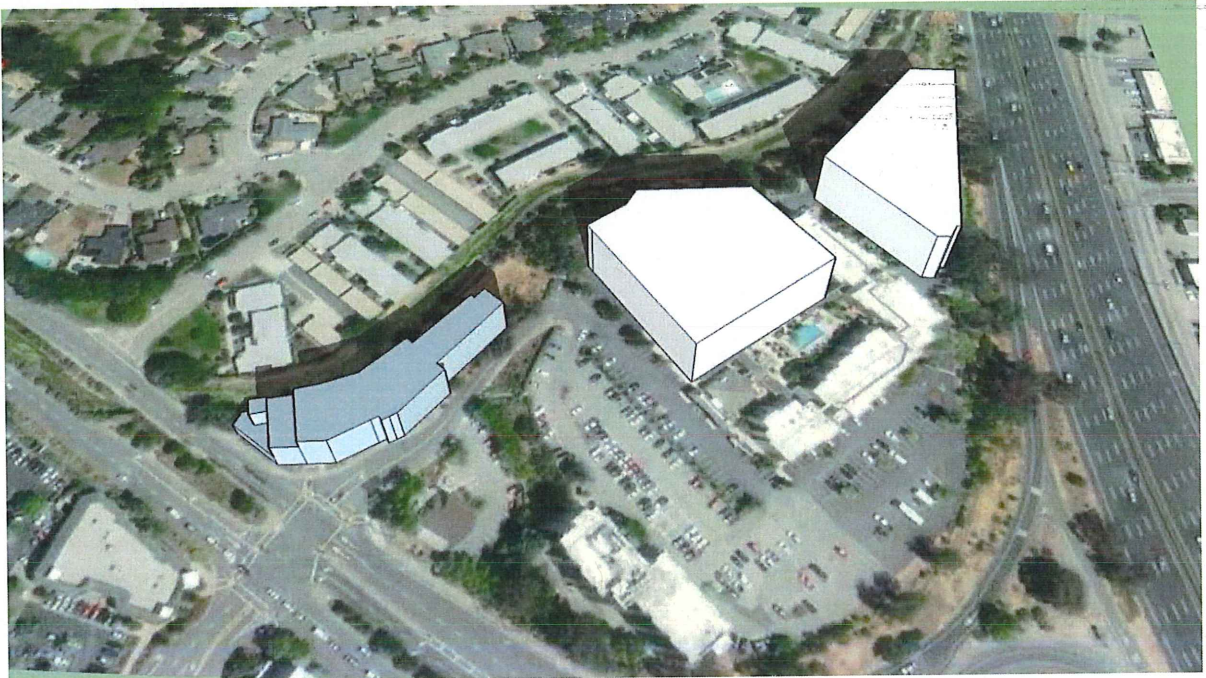
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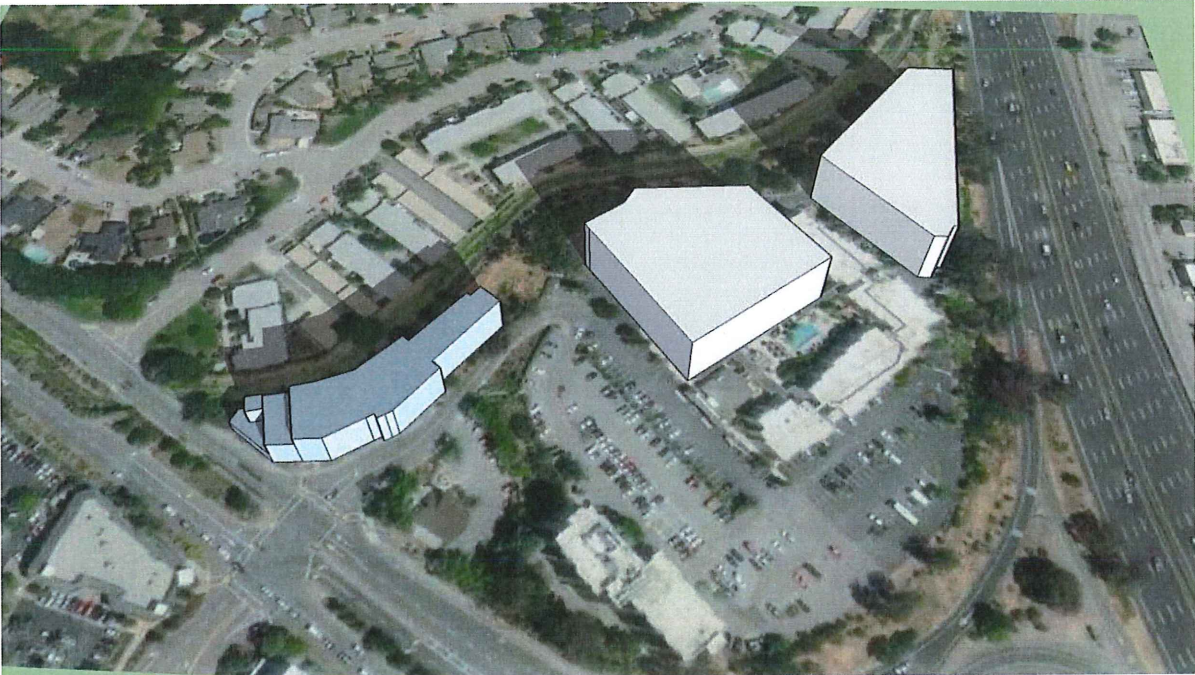
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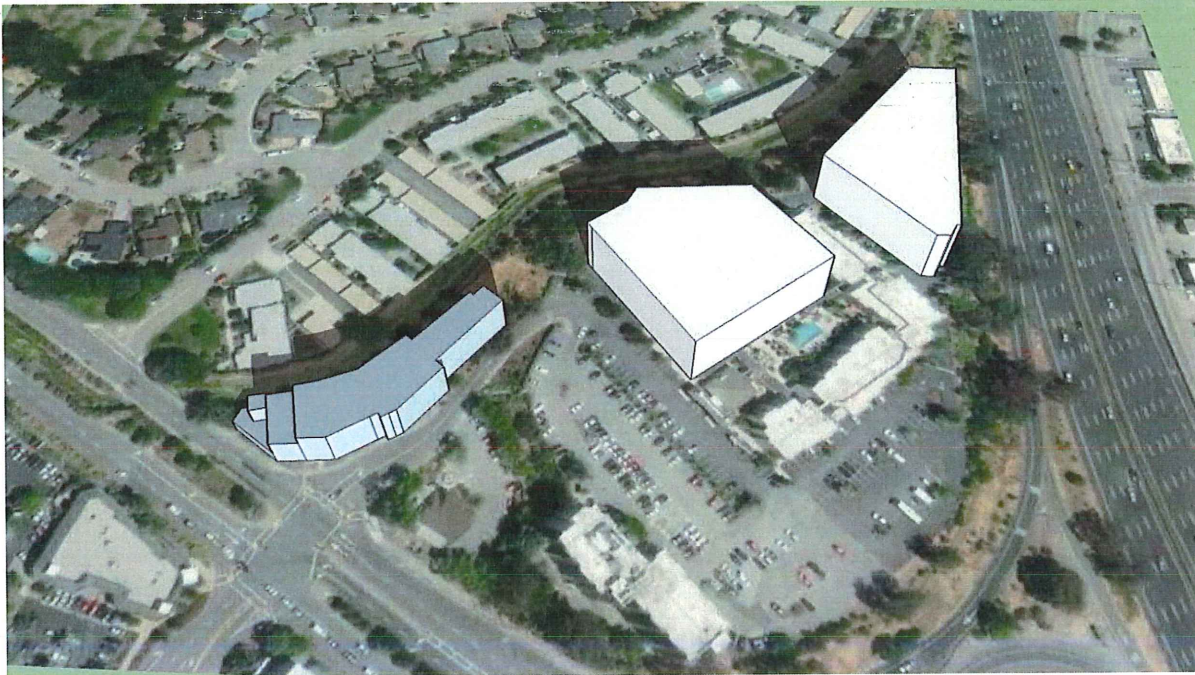
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21 December @ 10:00AM



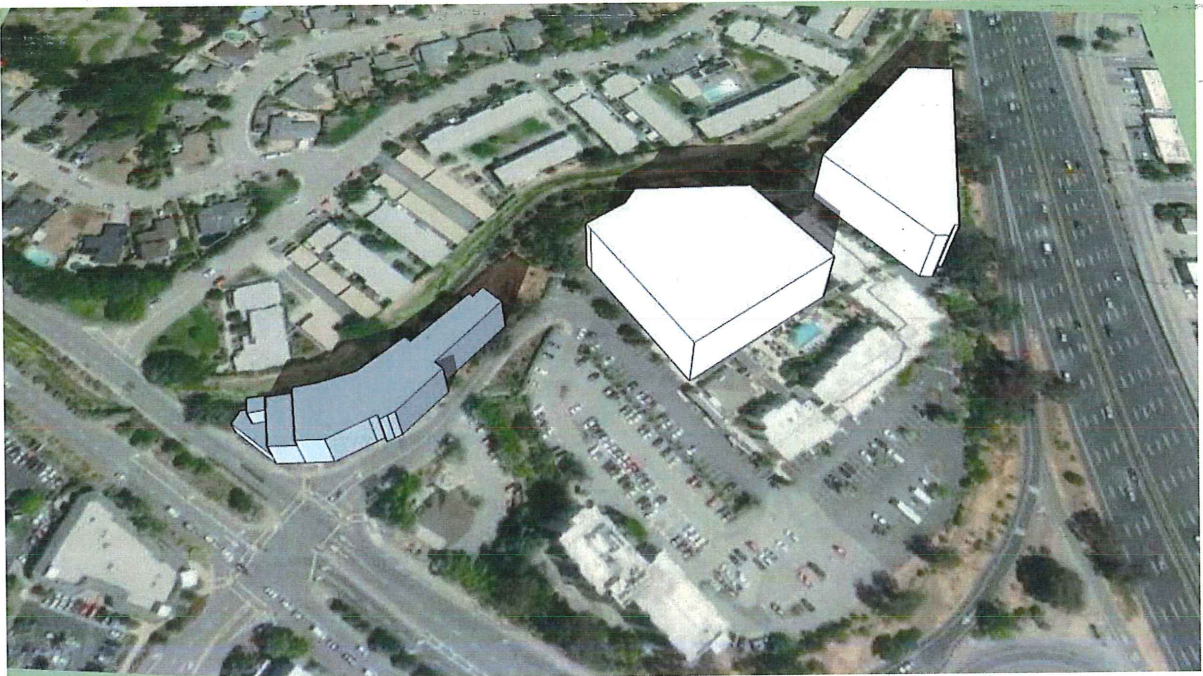
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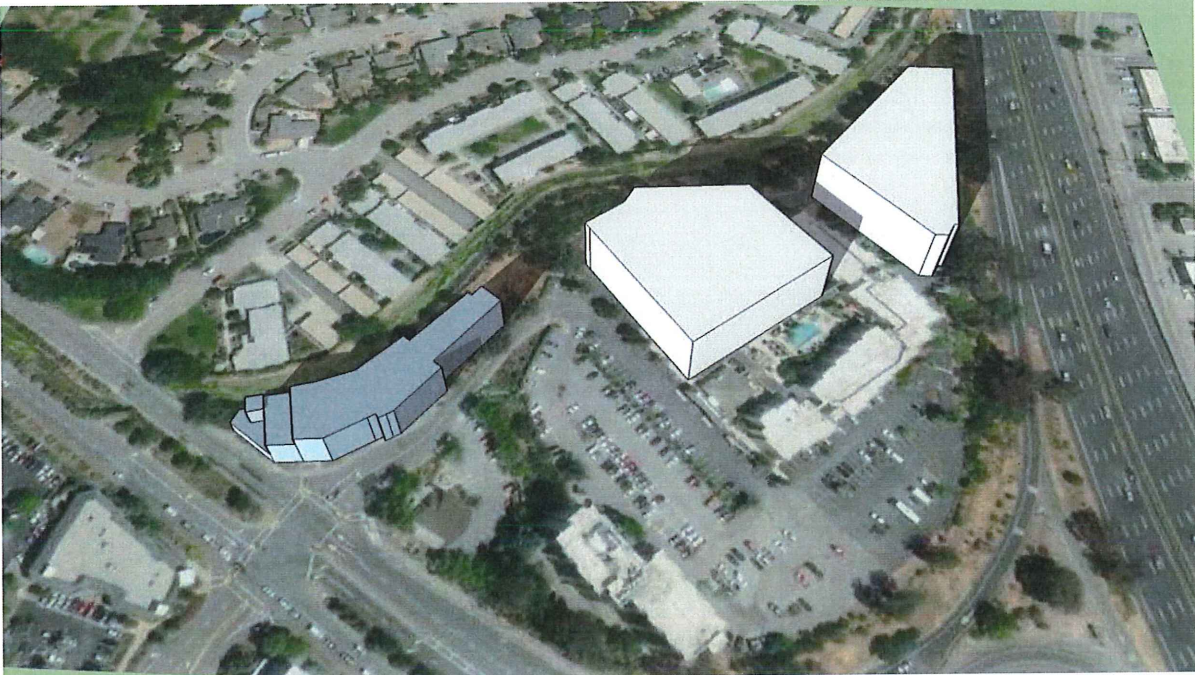
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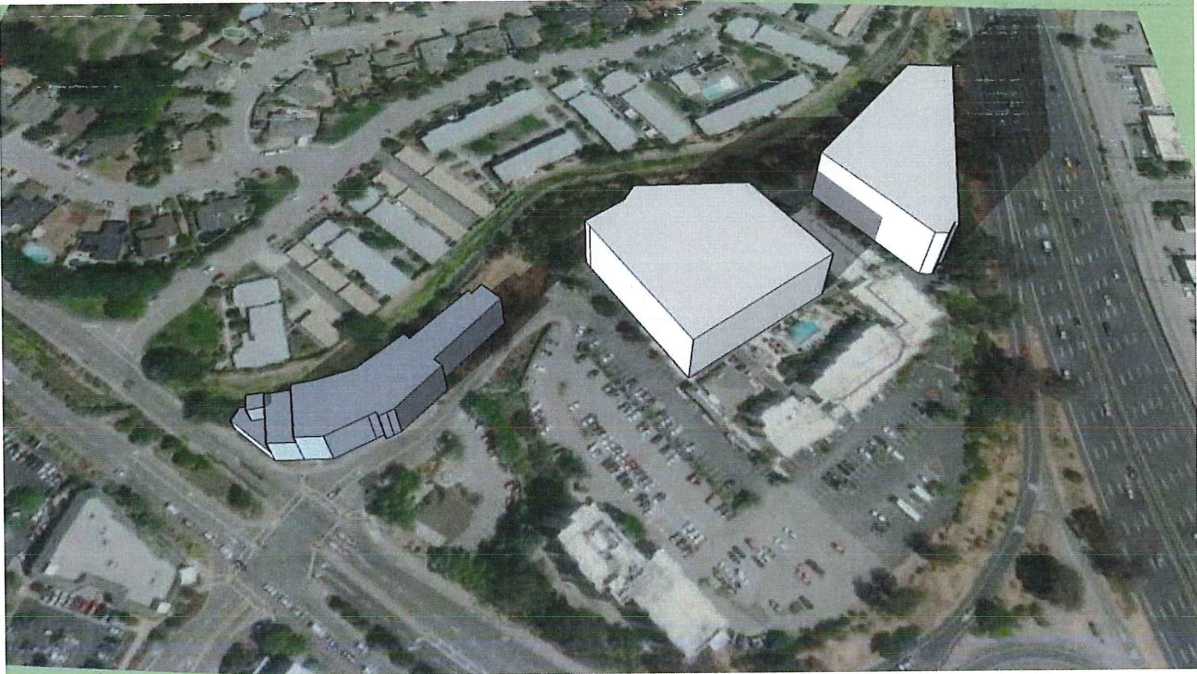
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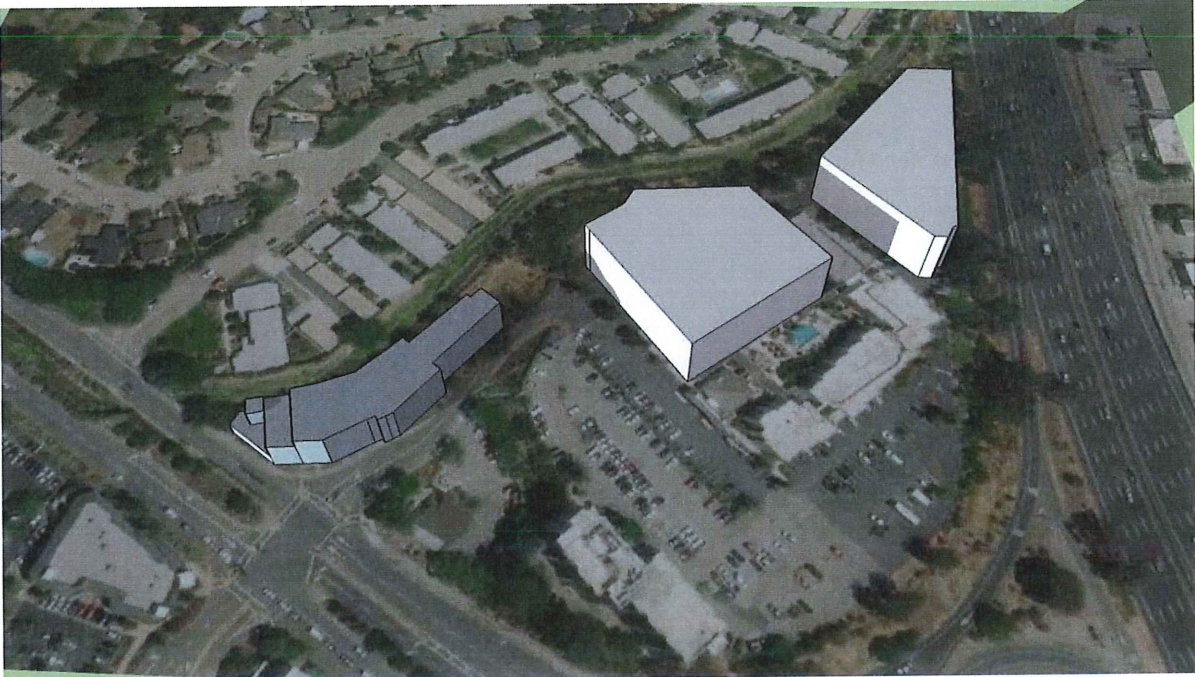
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21 December @ 3:00PM



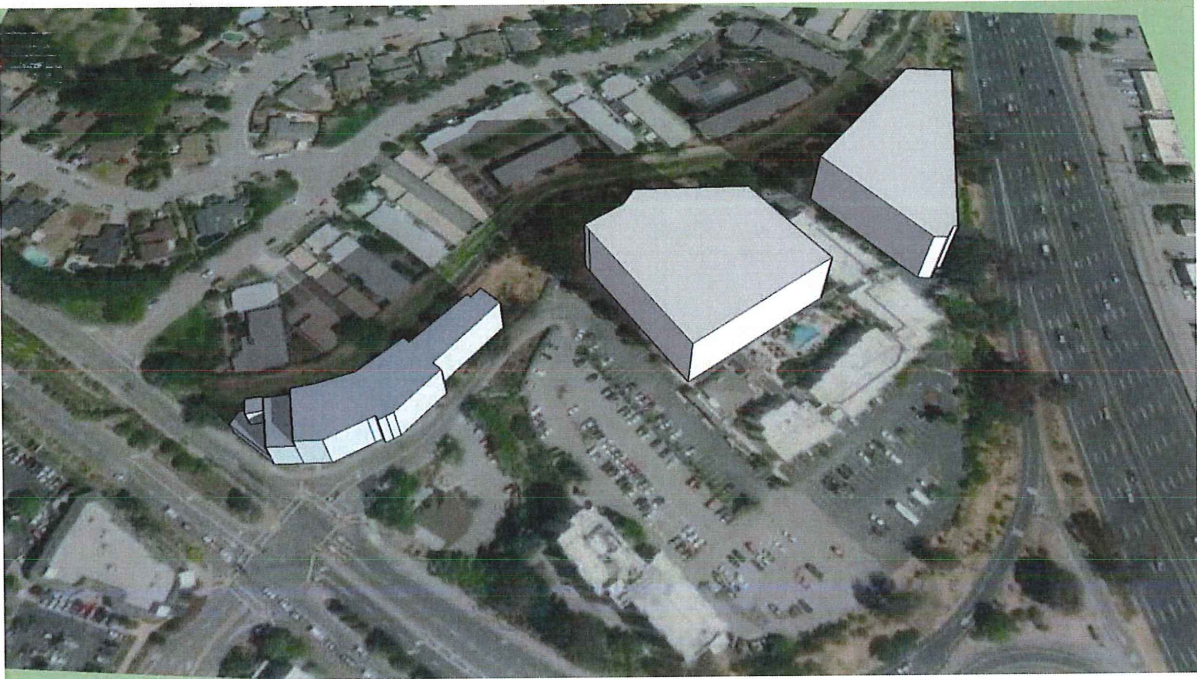
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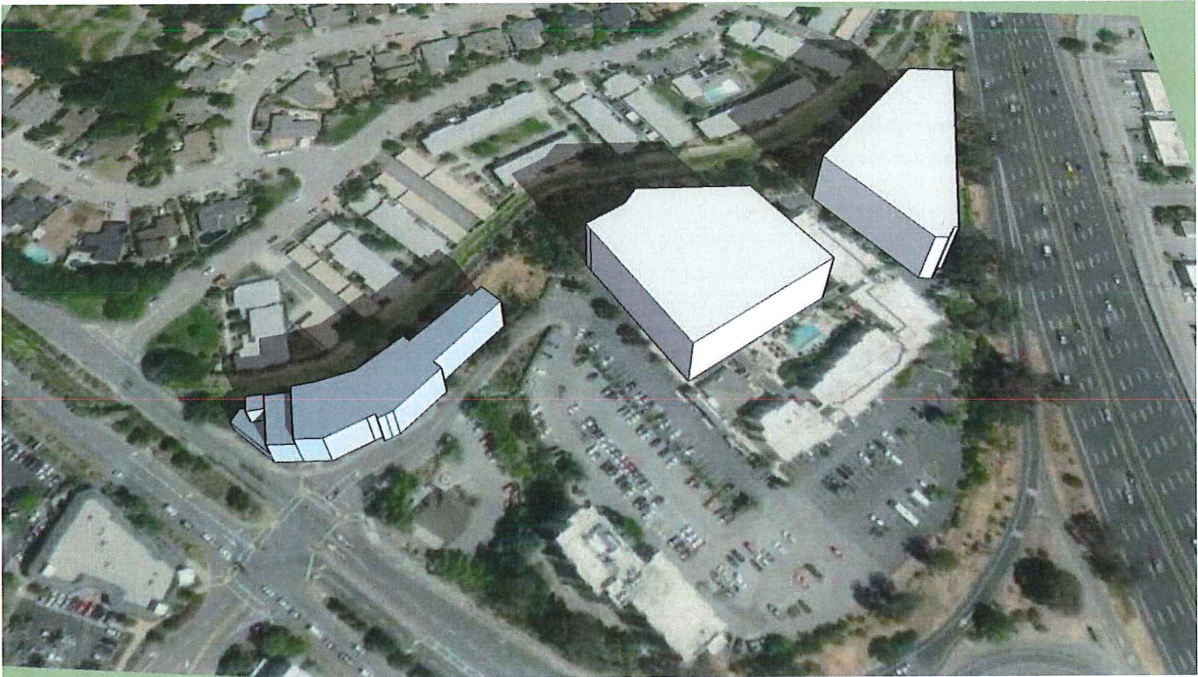
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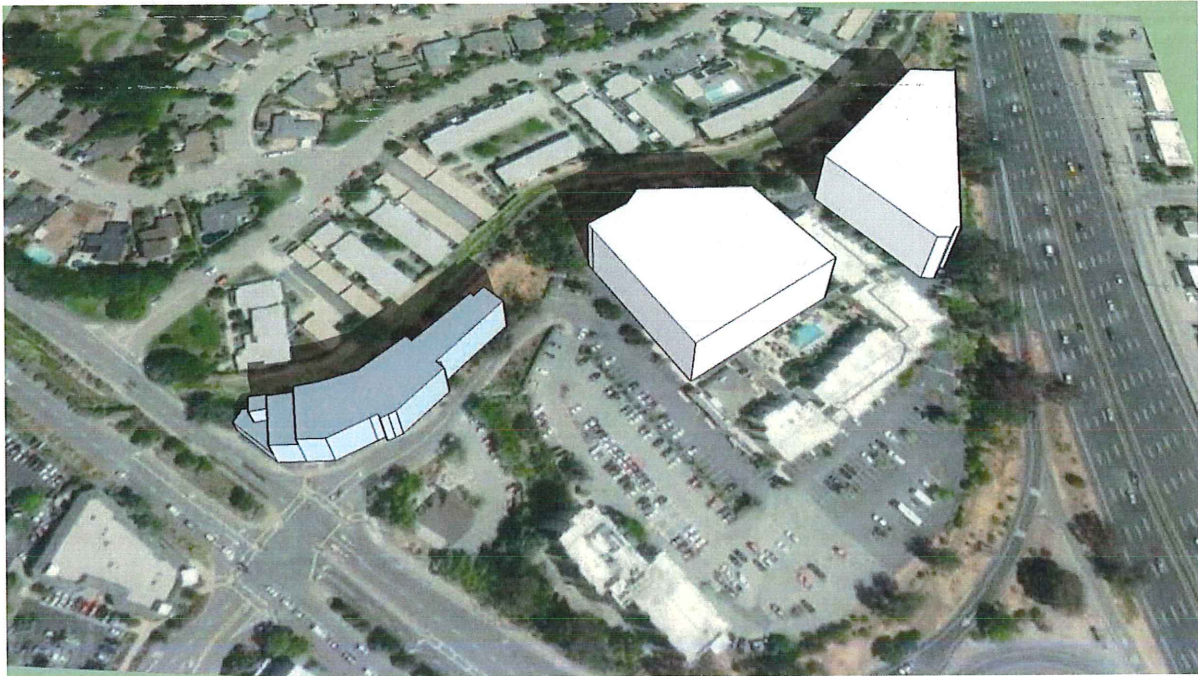
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21 January @ 11:00AM



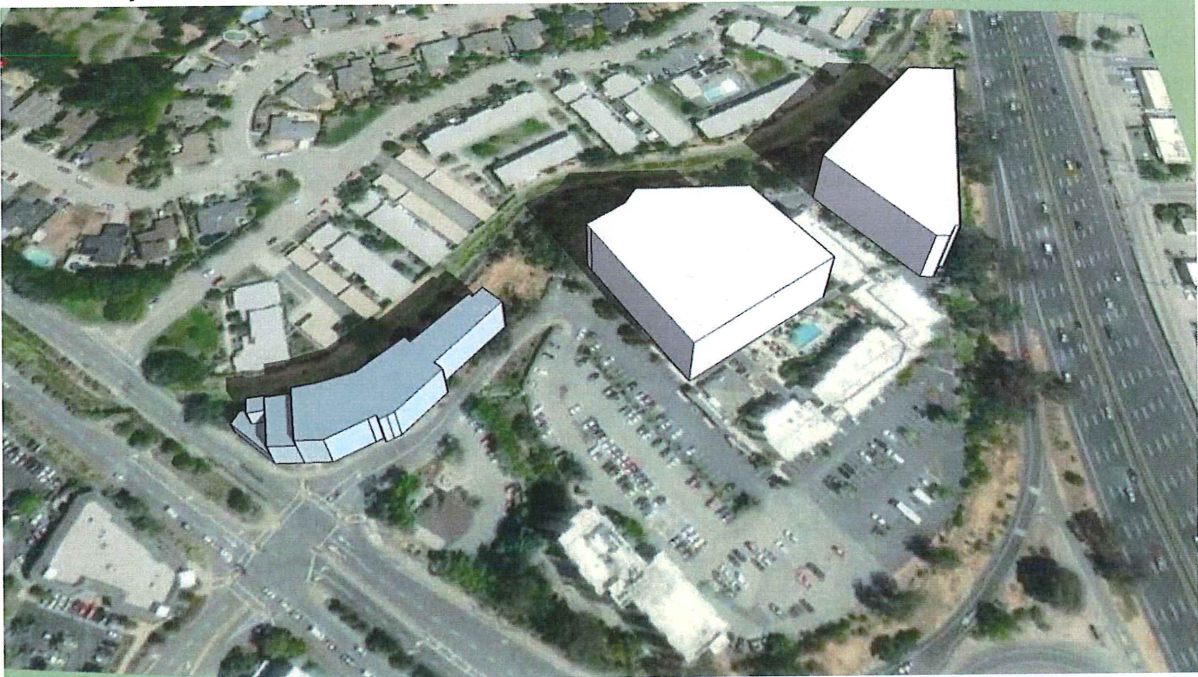
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21 February @ 9:00AM



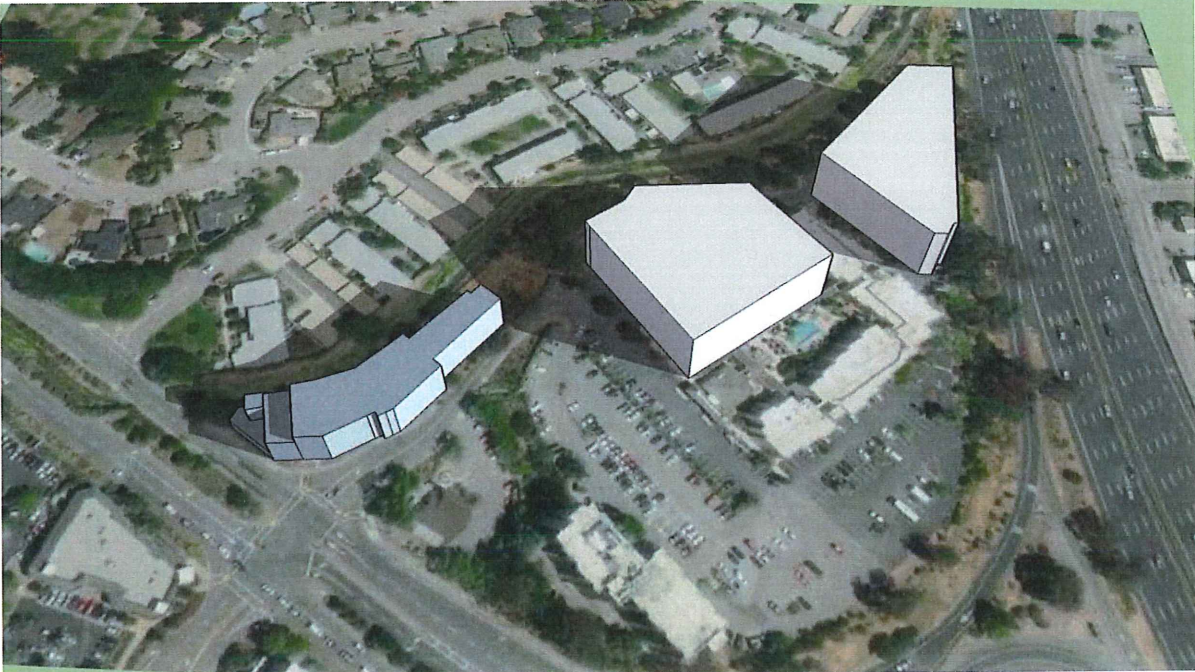
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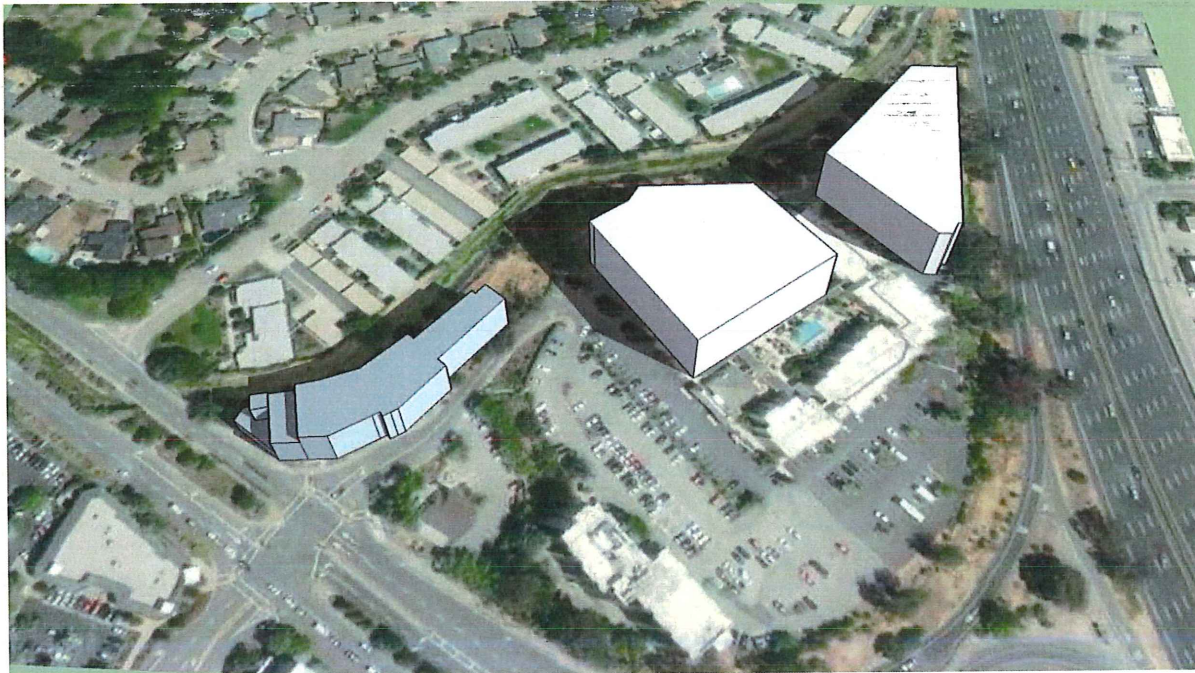
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21 March @ 9:00AM



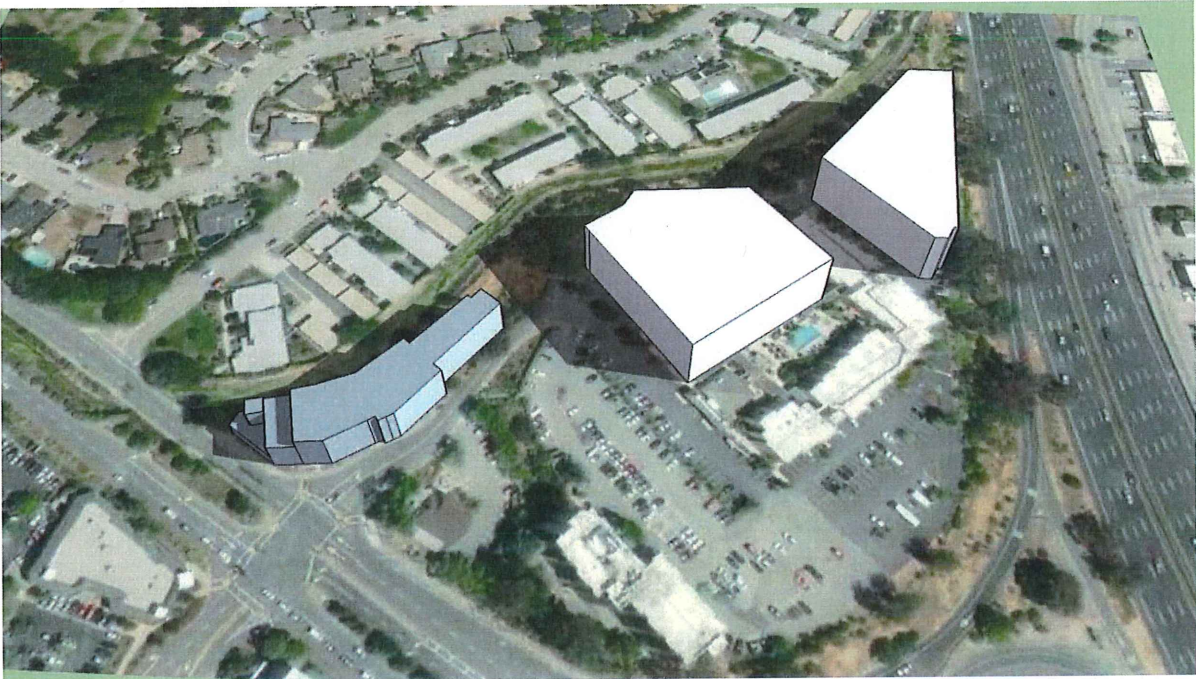
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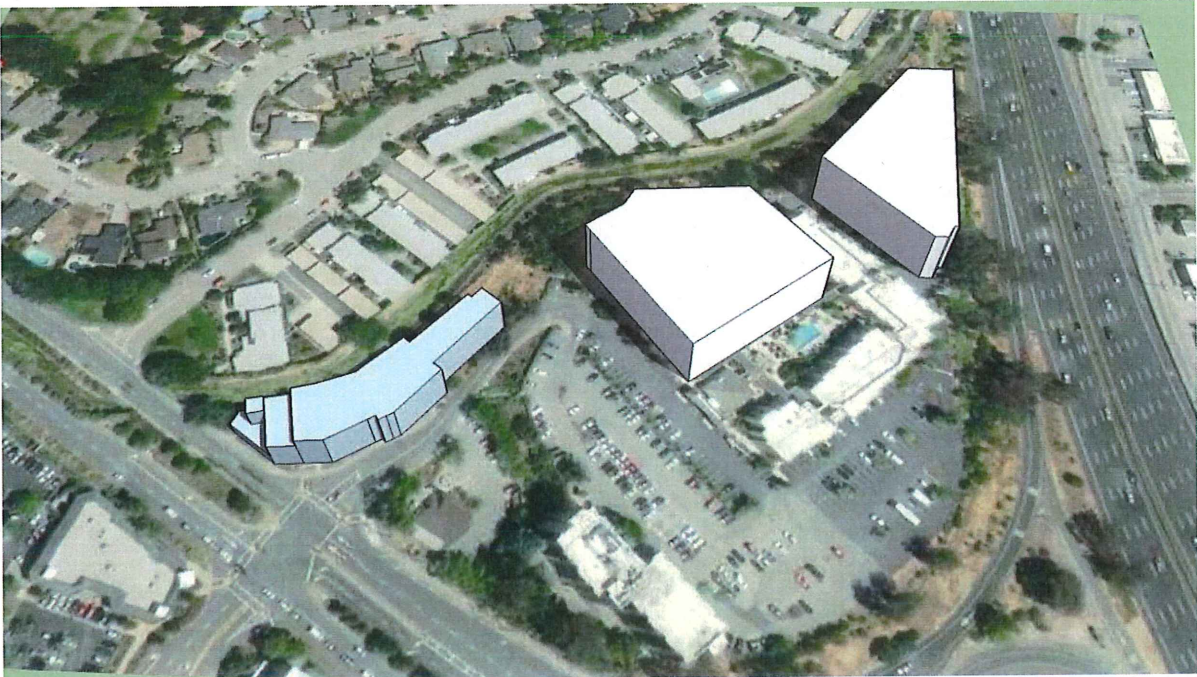
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21 April @ 11:00AM



21 May @ 8:00AM



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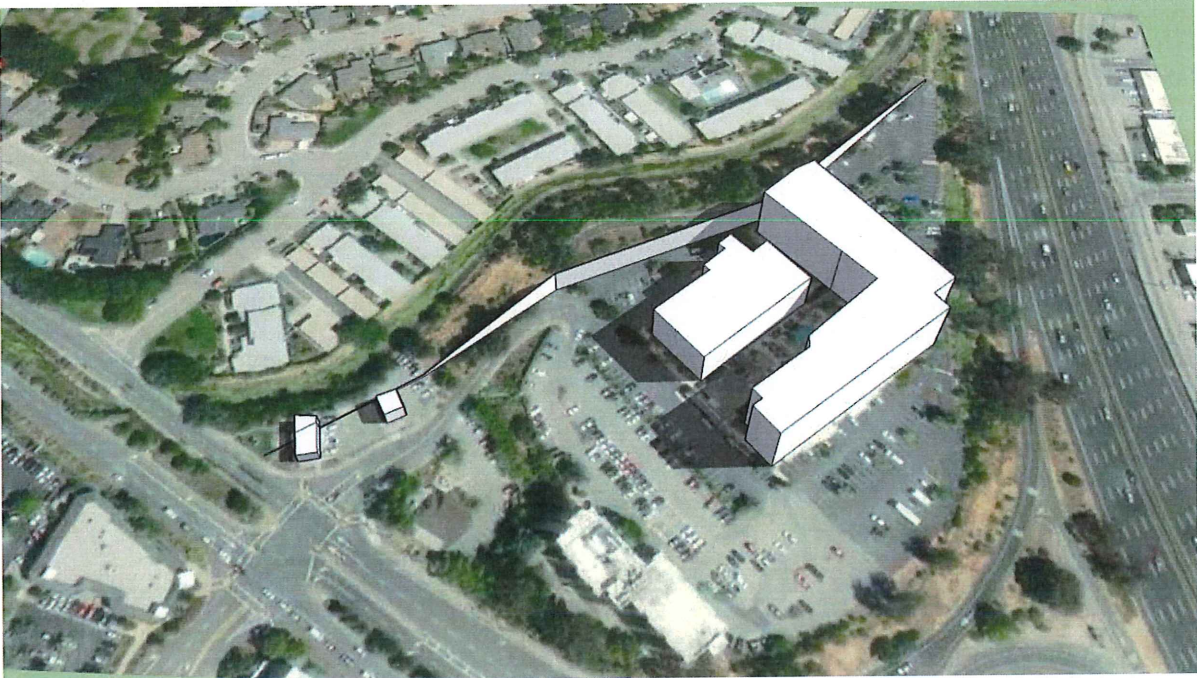


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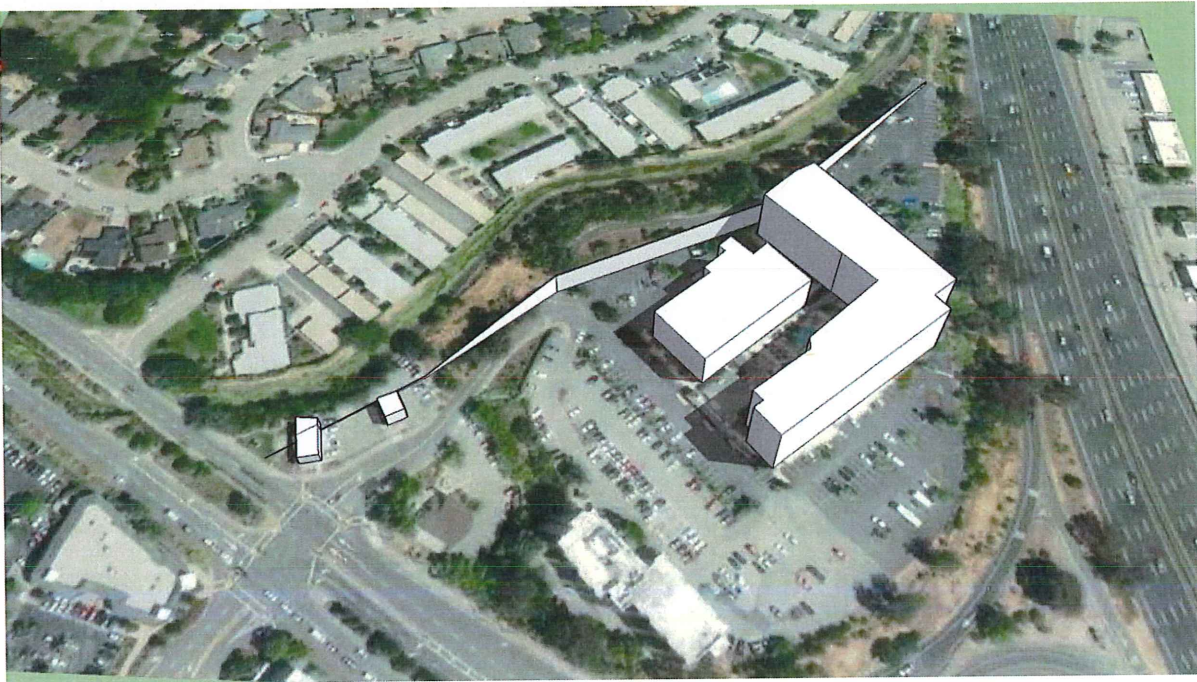


The Following study shows existing shading with no development for Comparison.

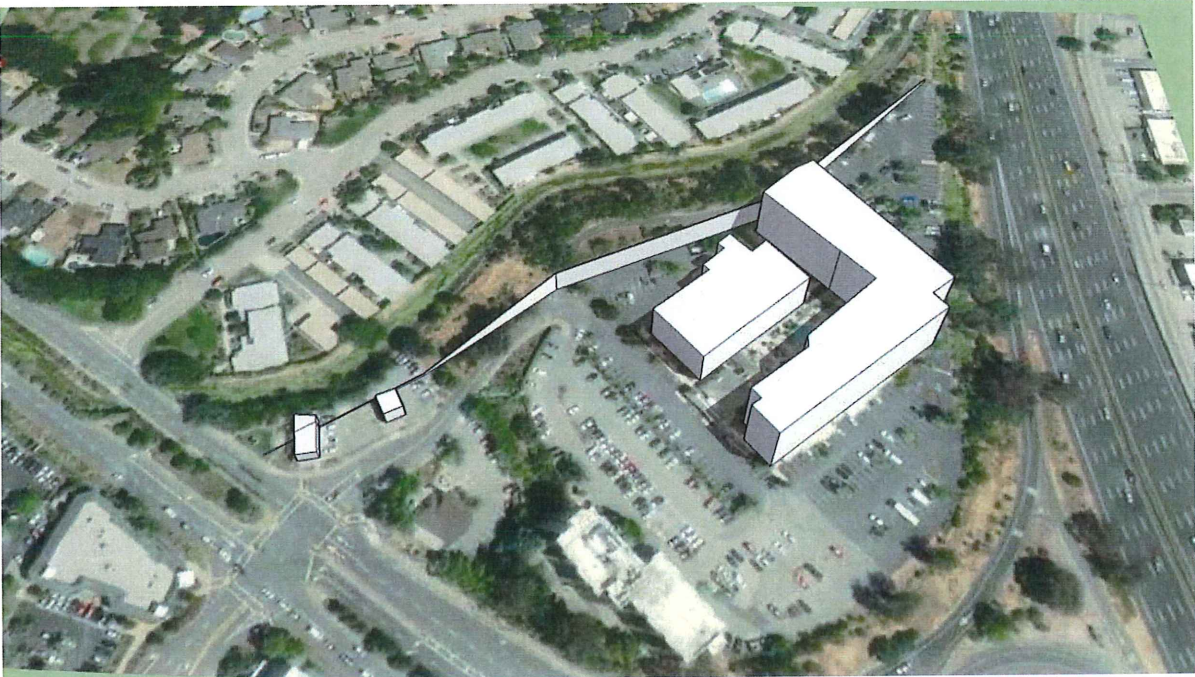
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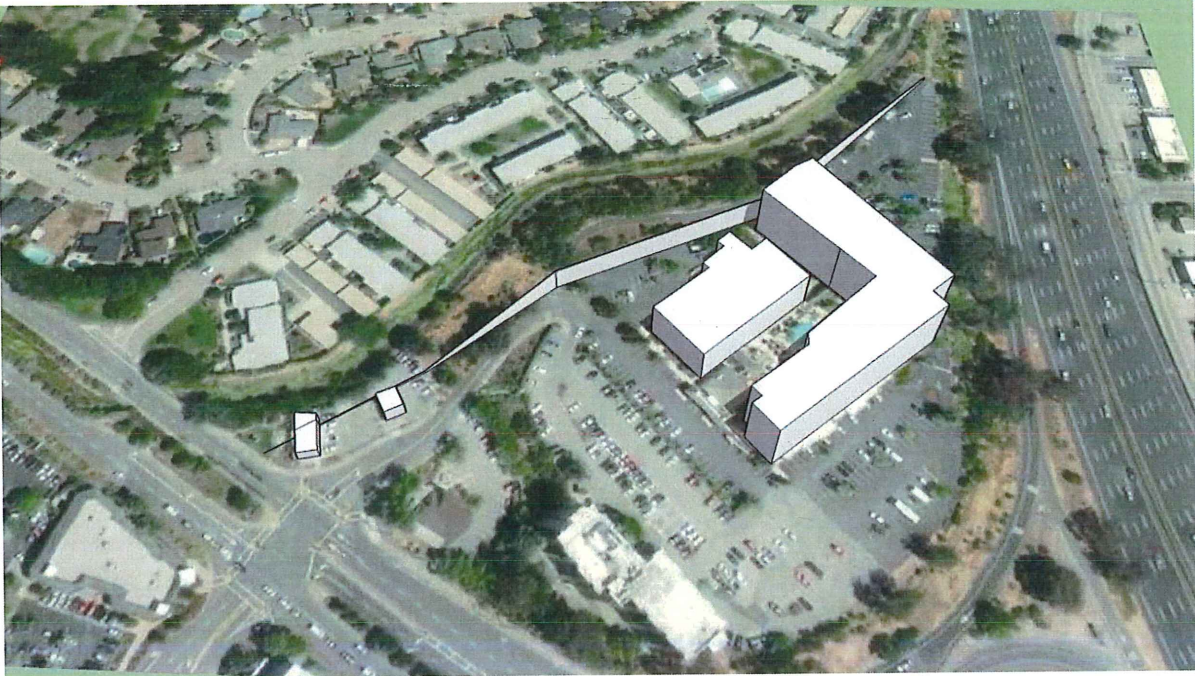
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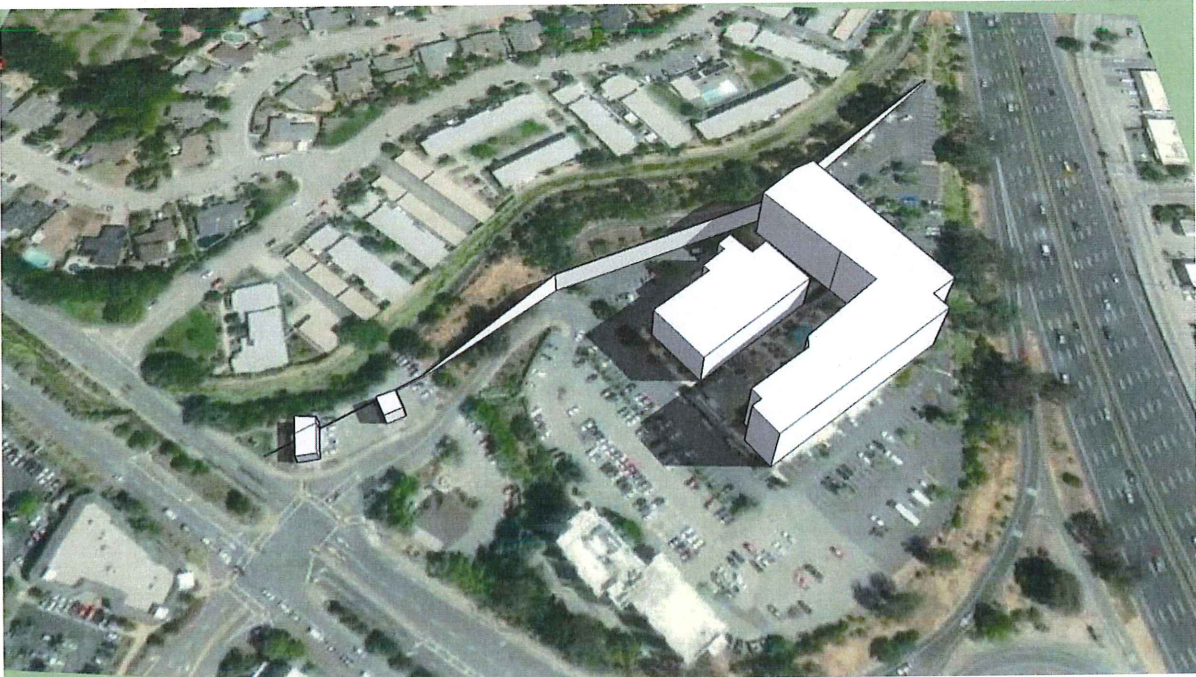
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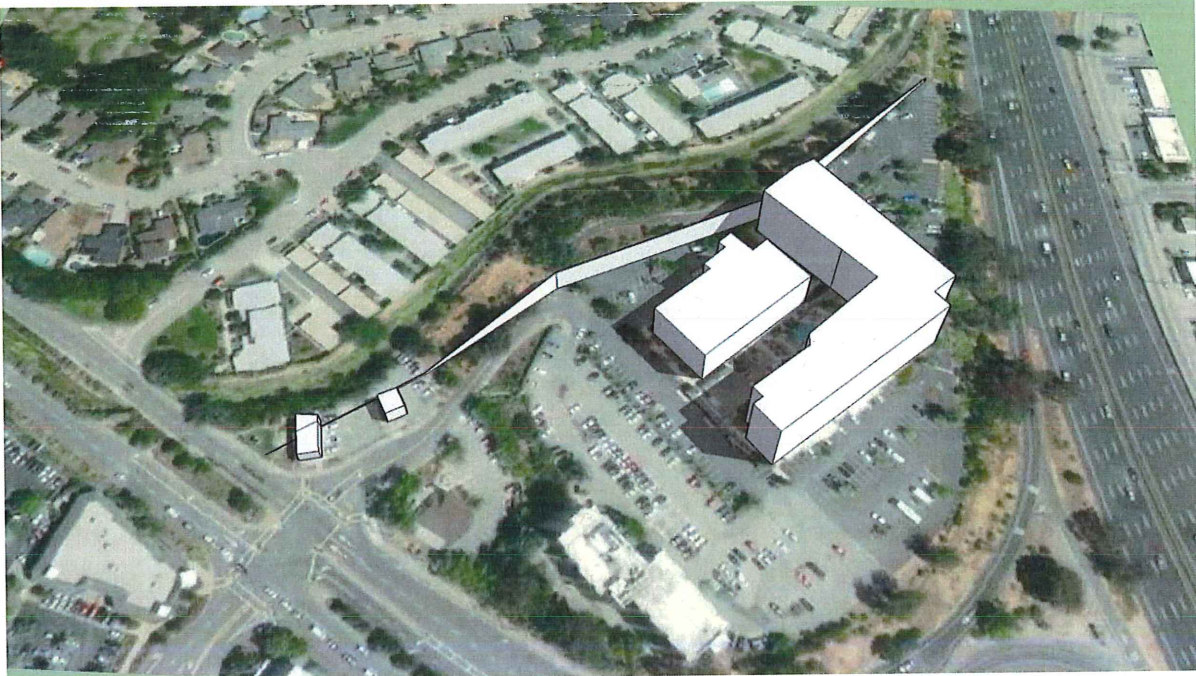
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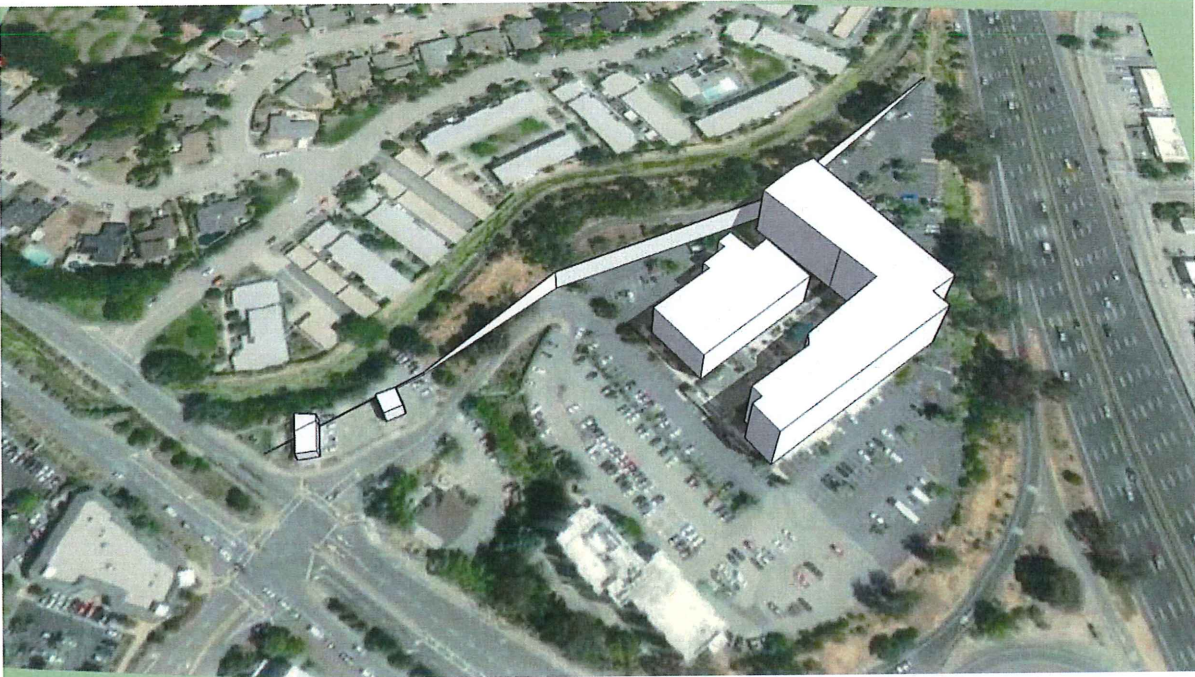
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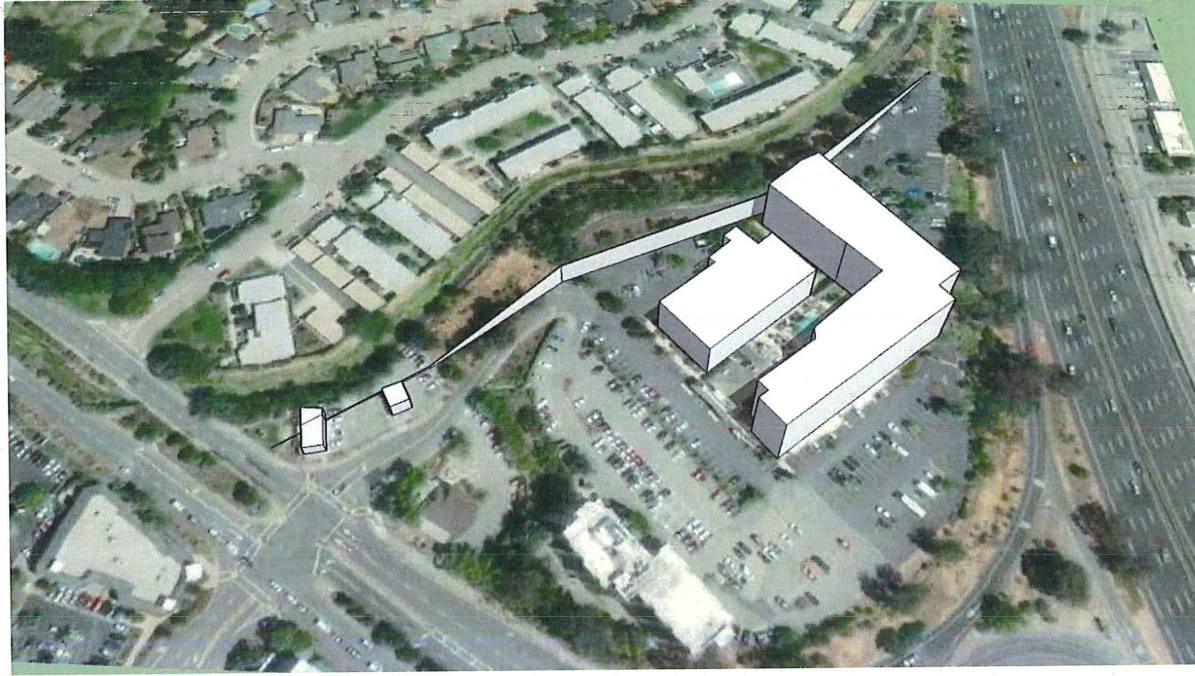
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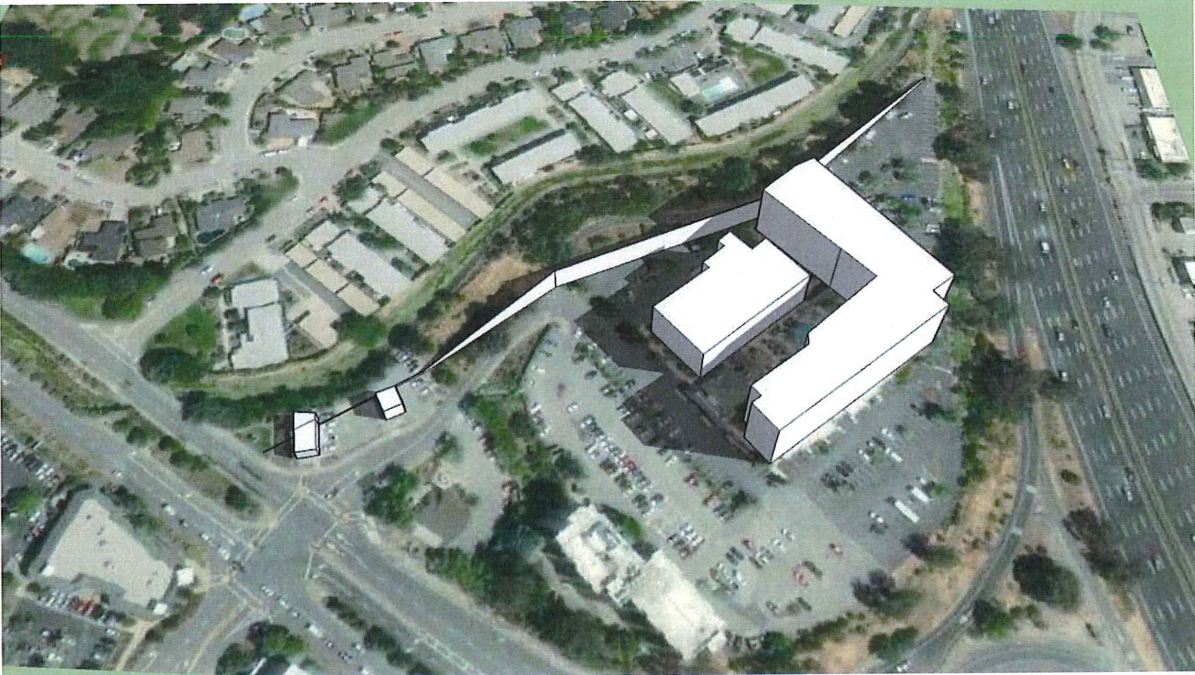
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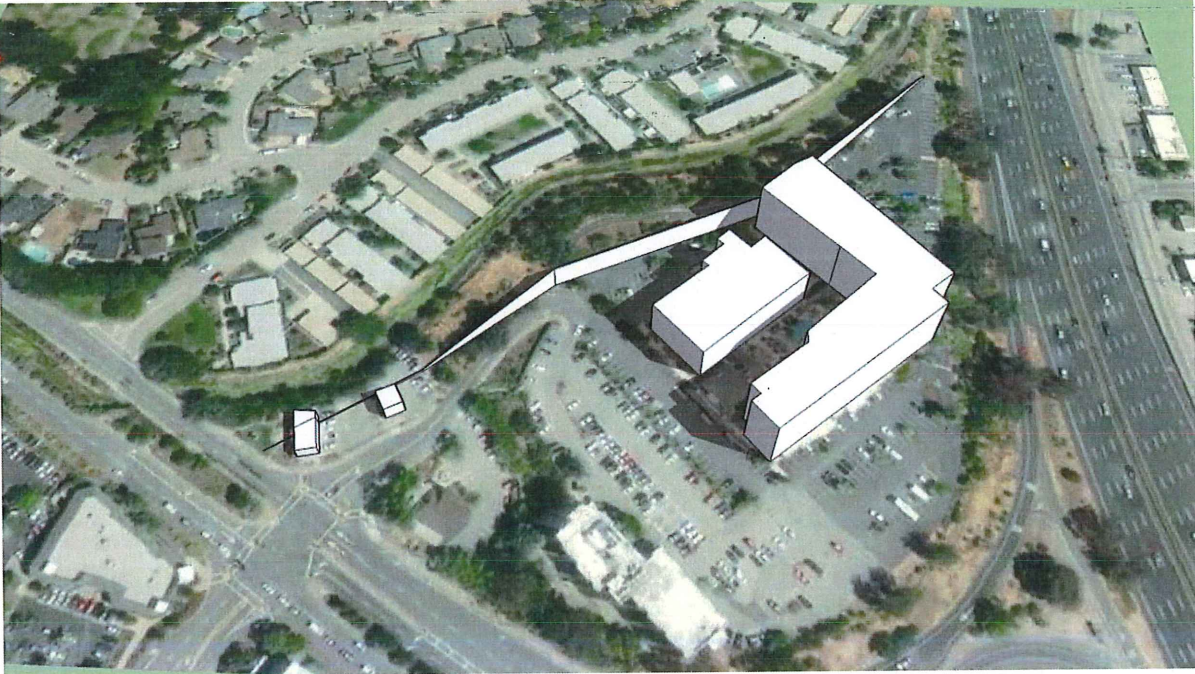
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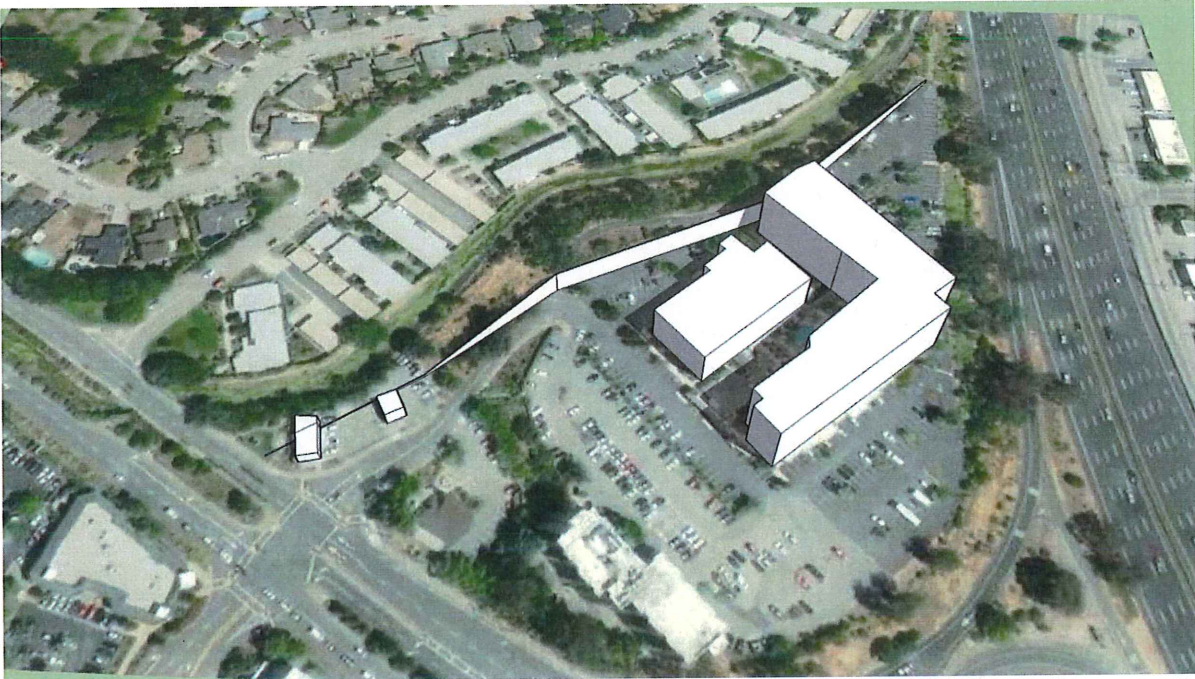
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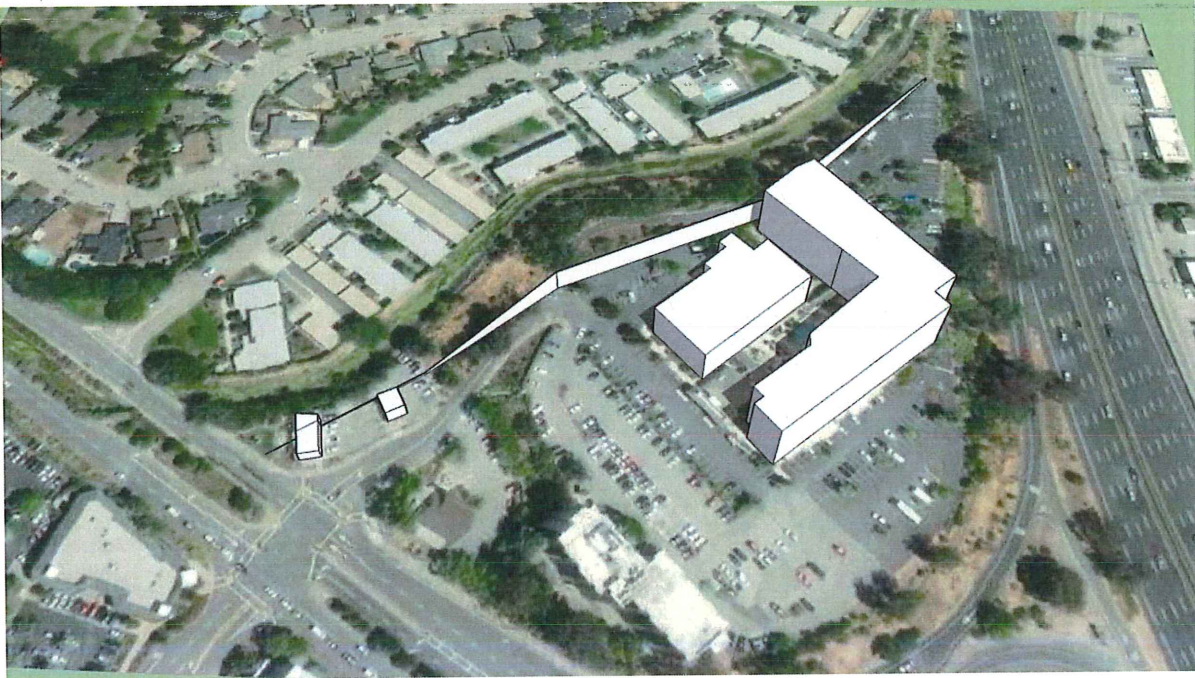
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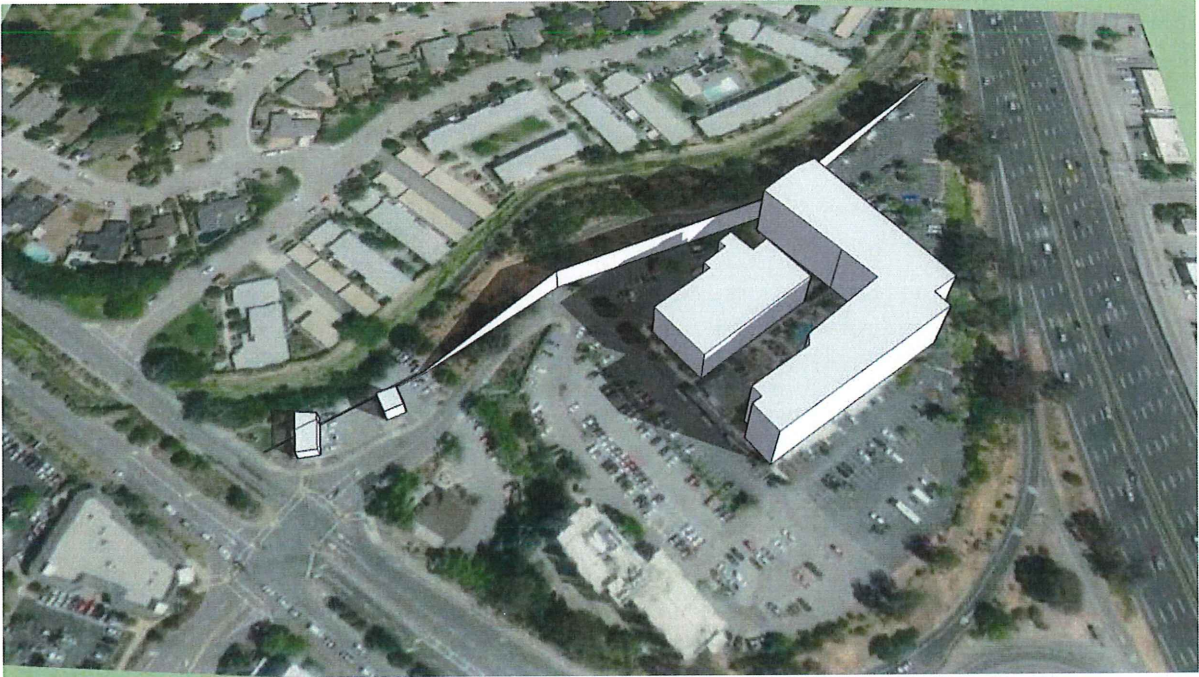
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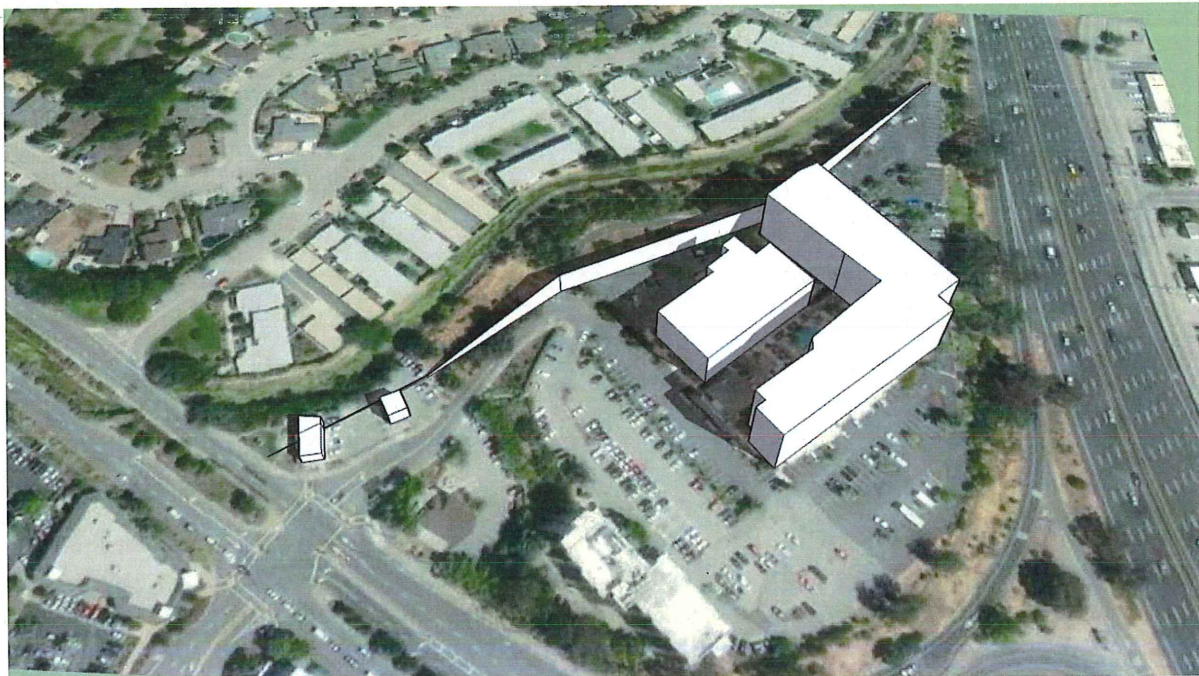
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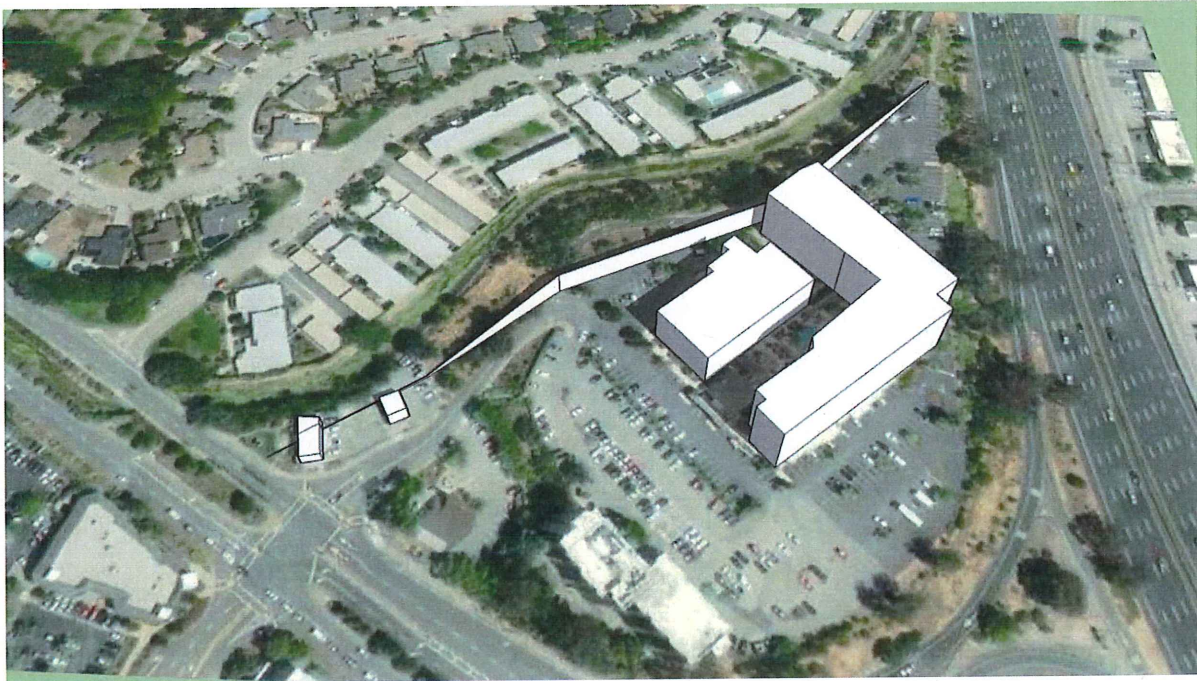
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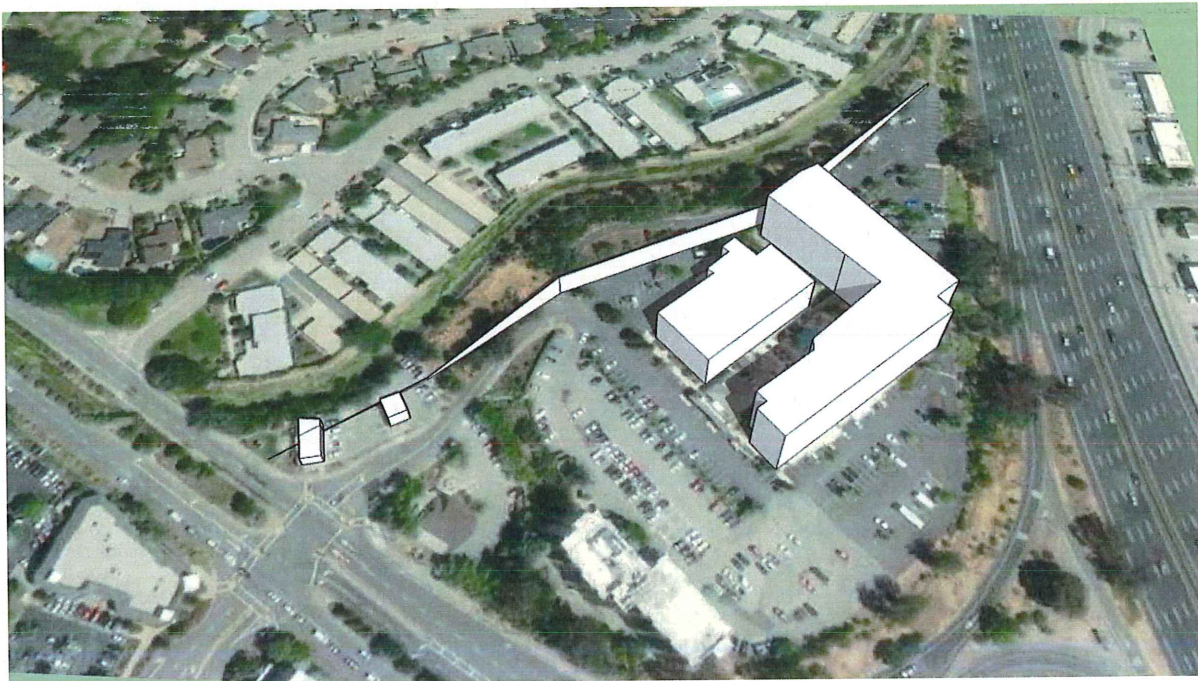
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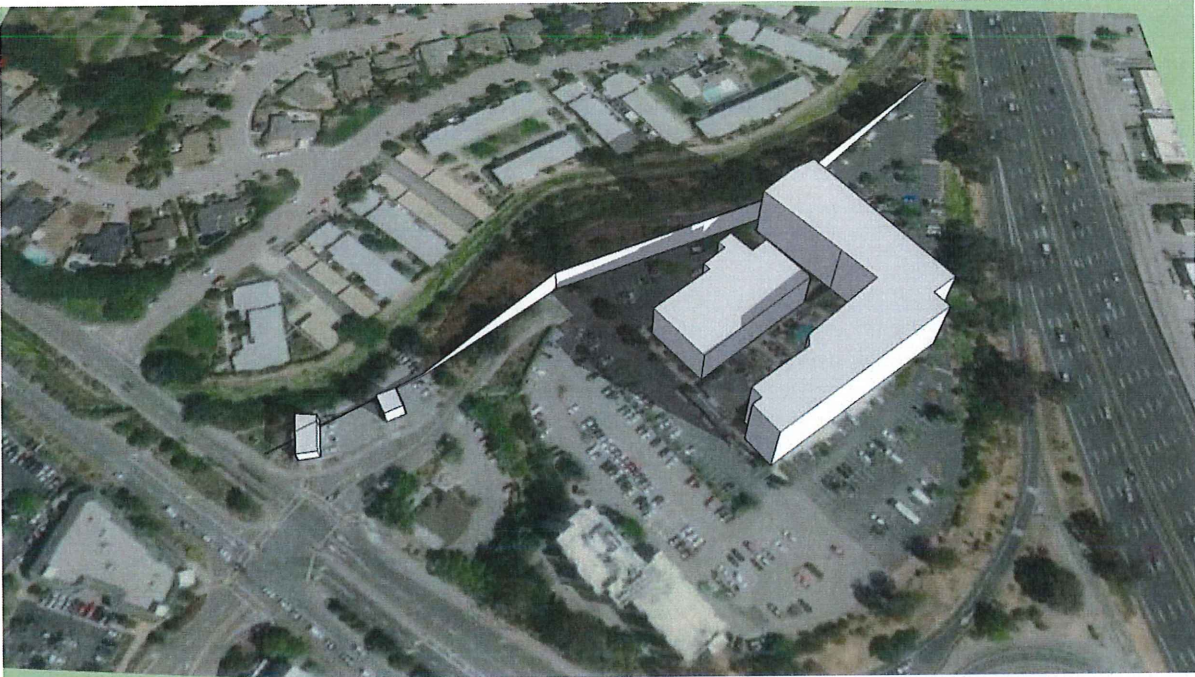
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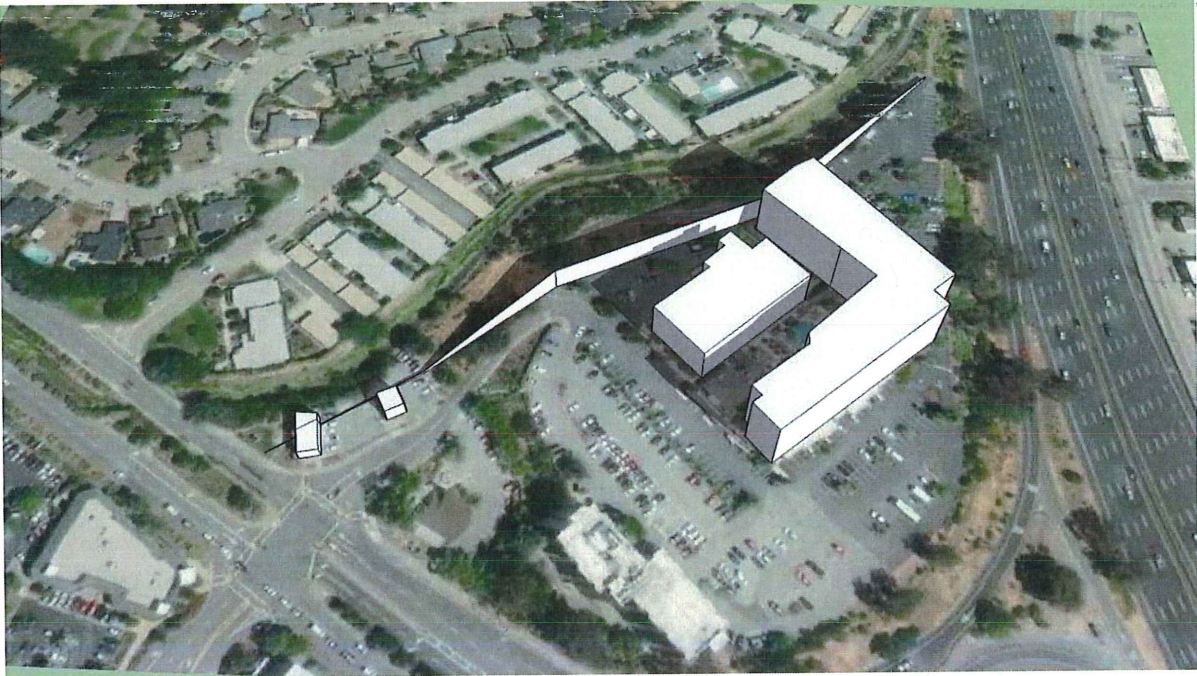
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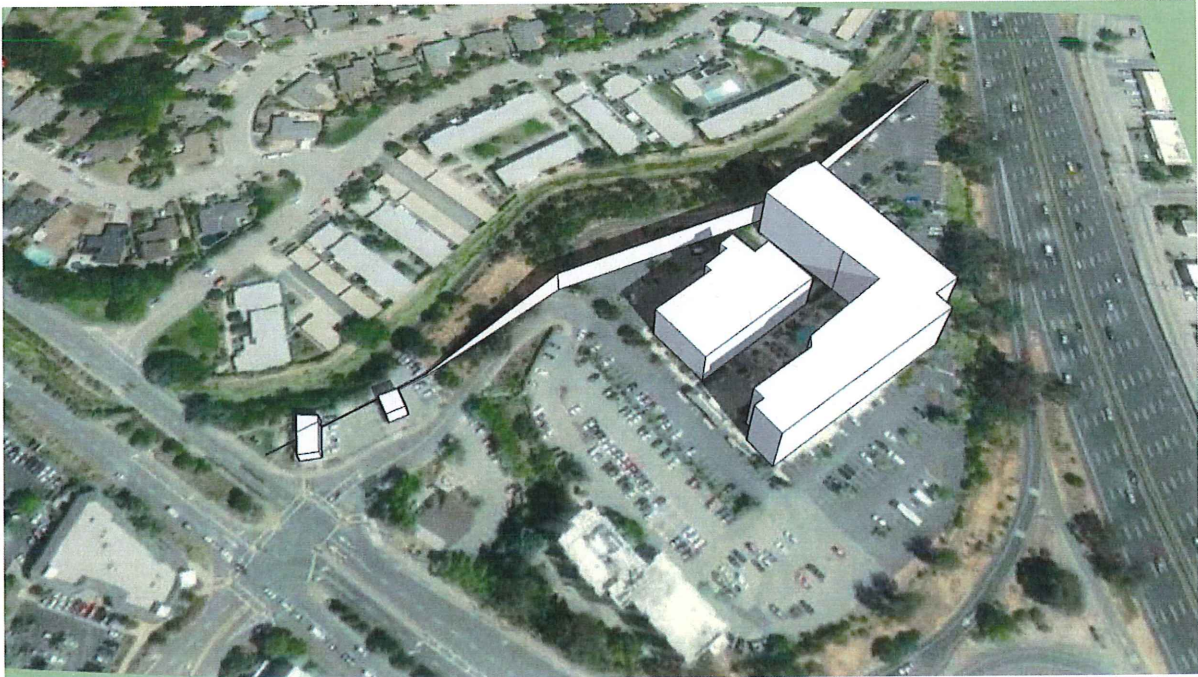
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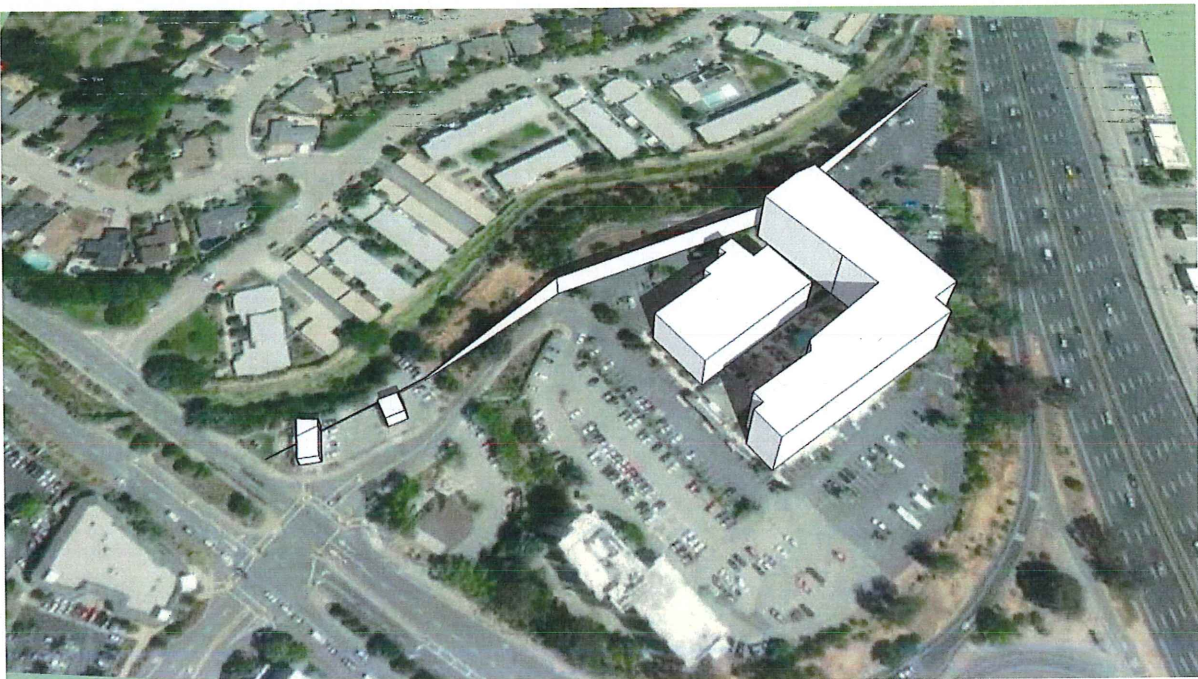
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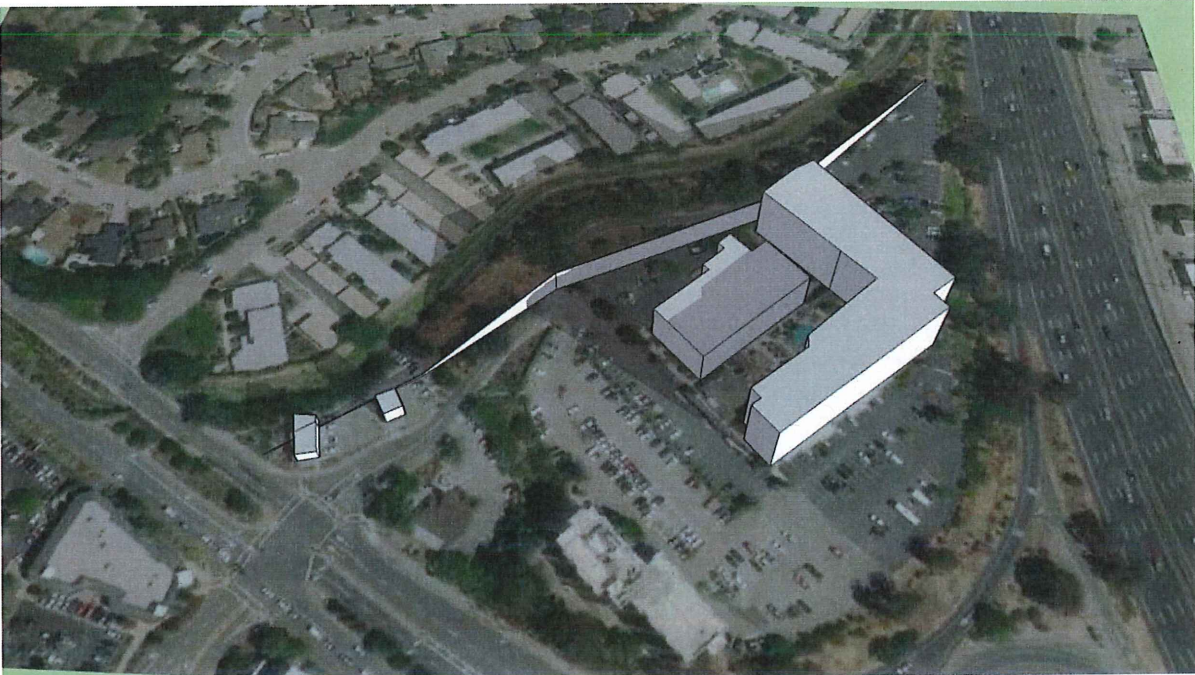
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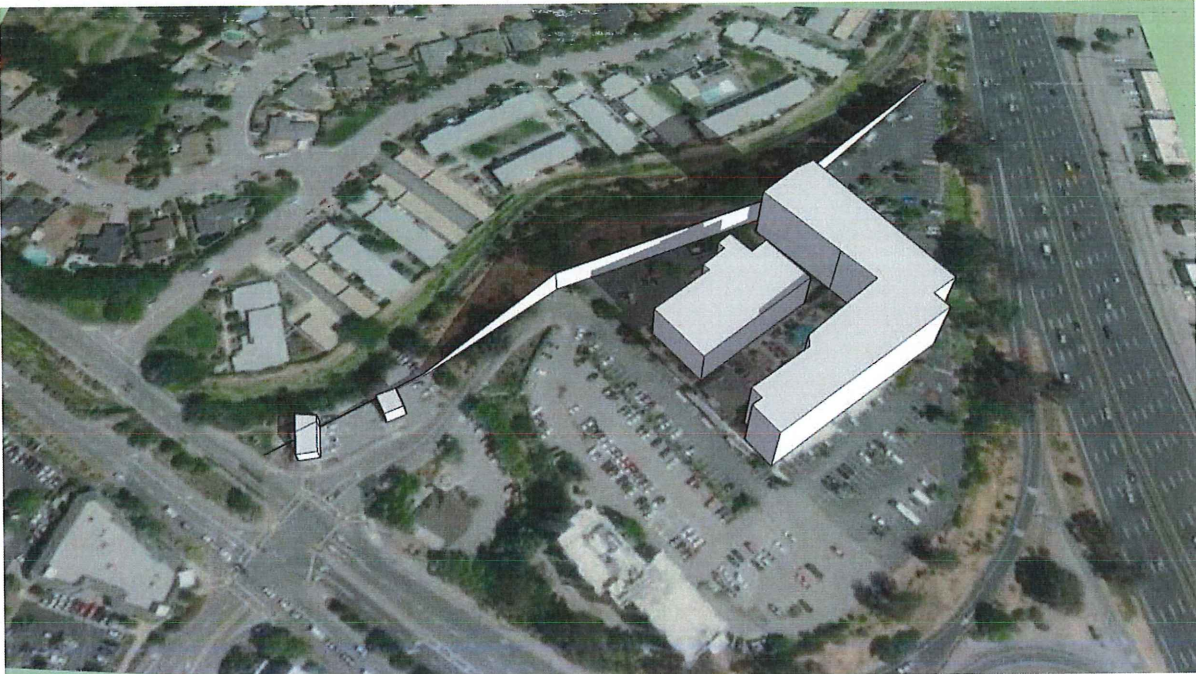
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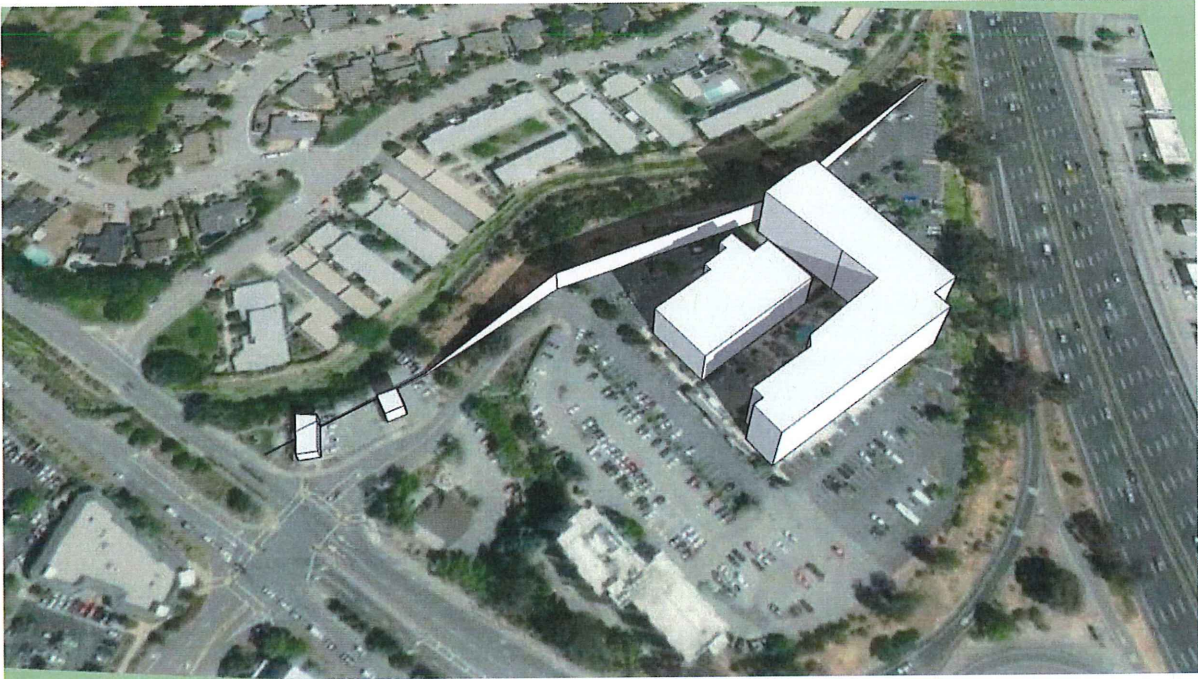
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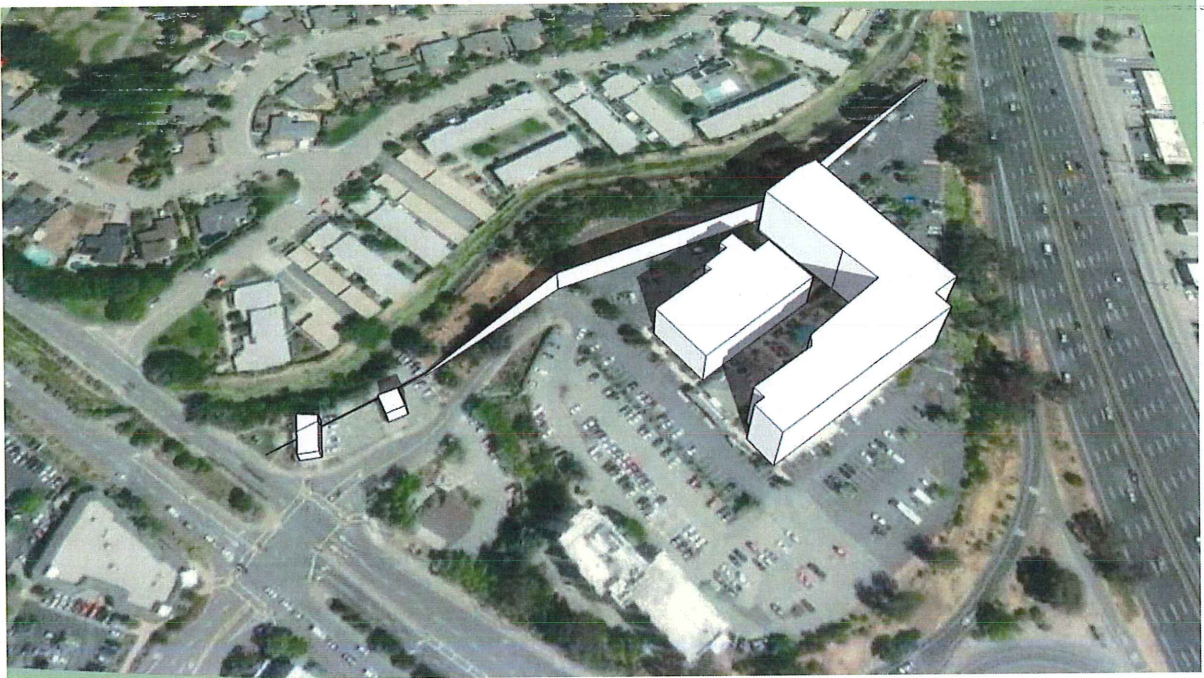
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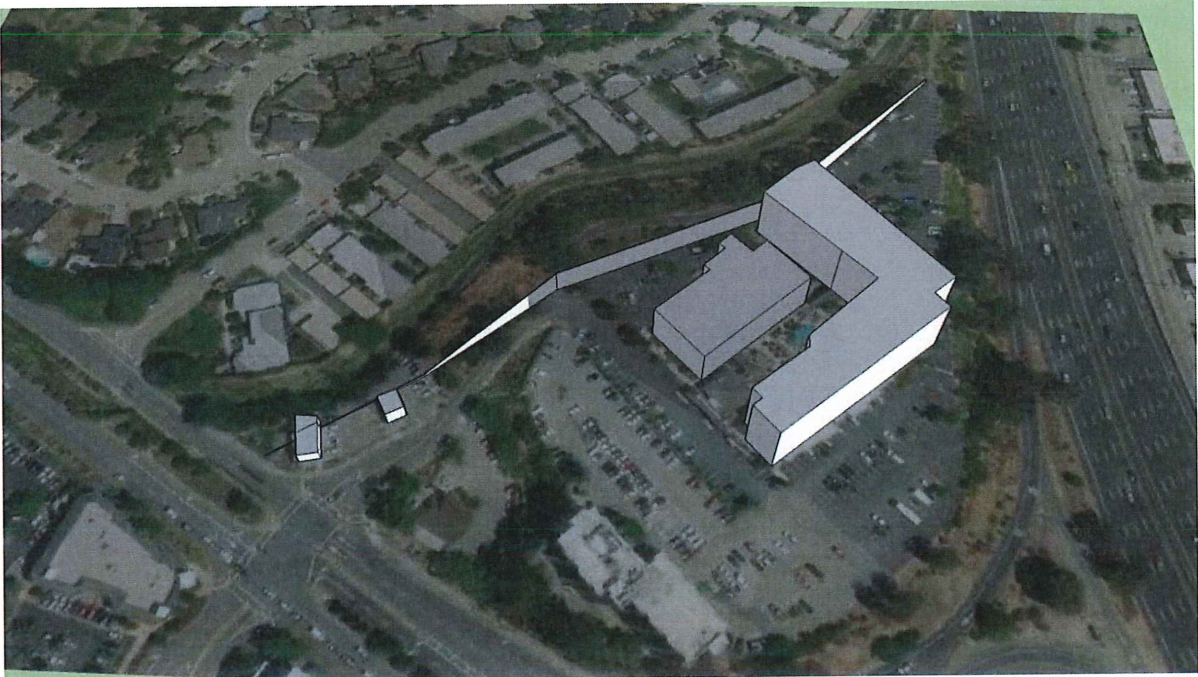
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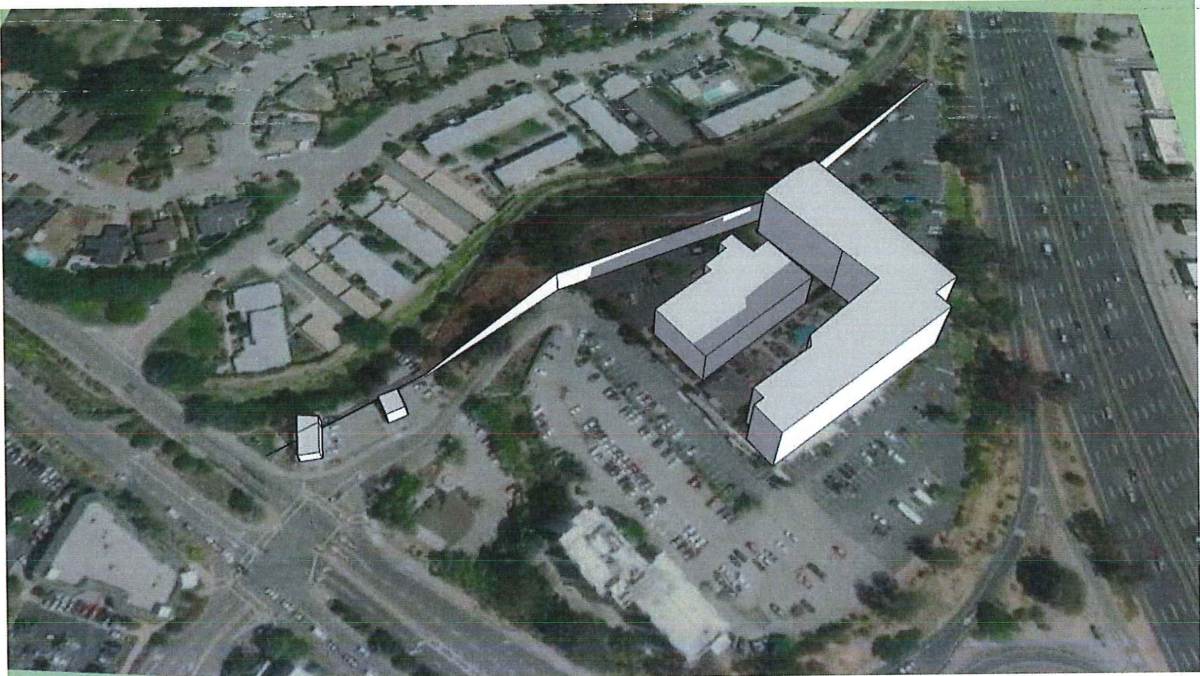
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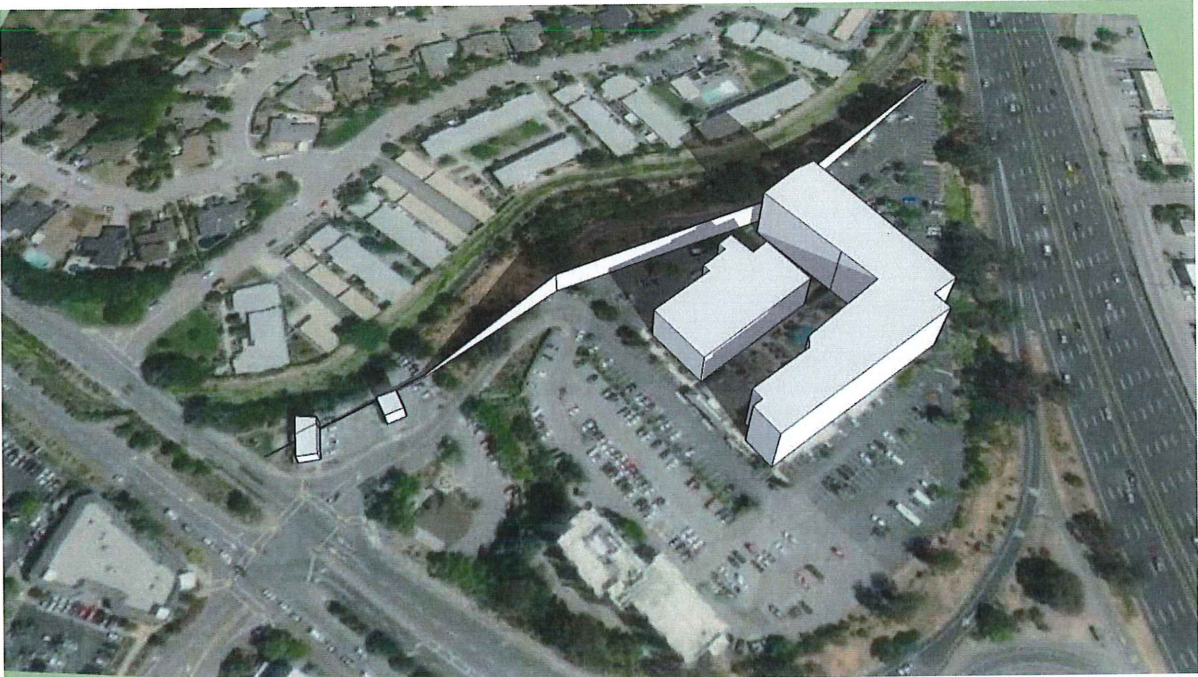
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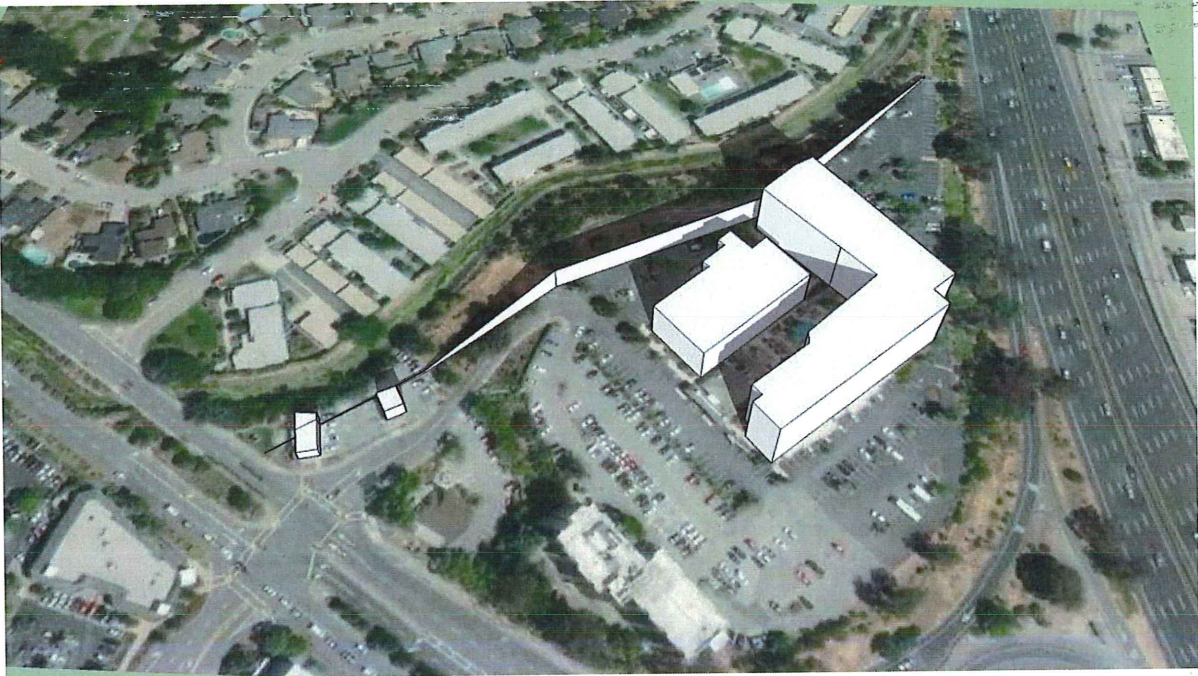
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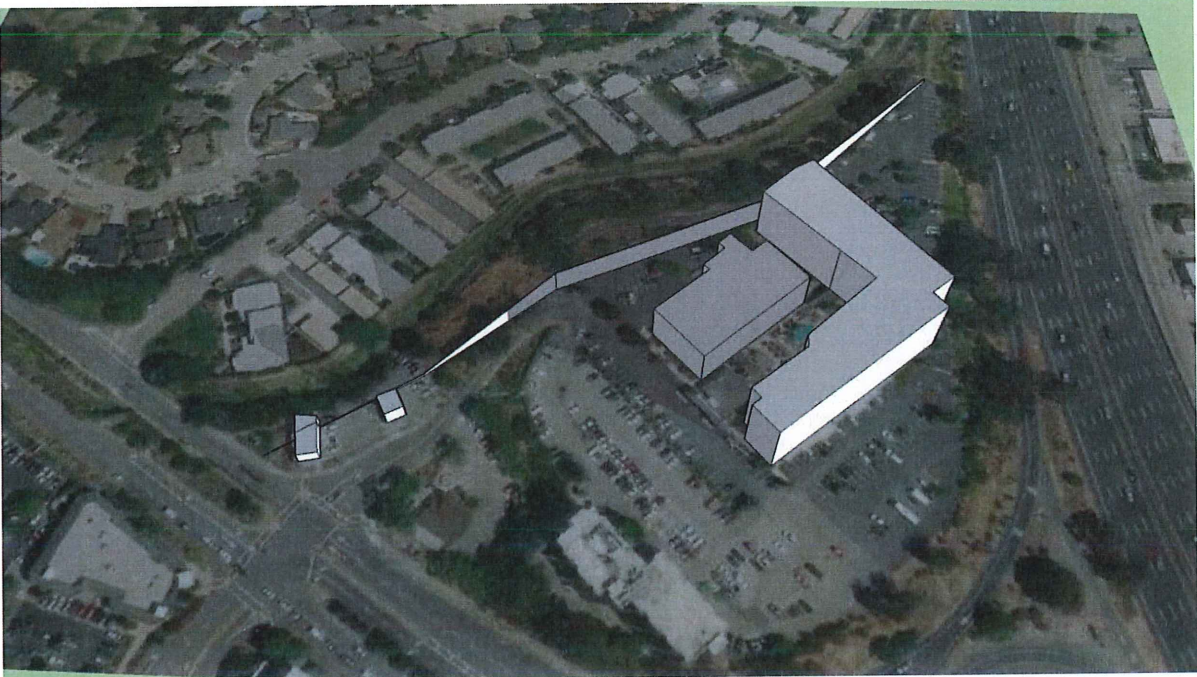
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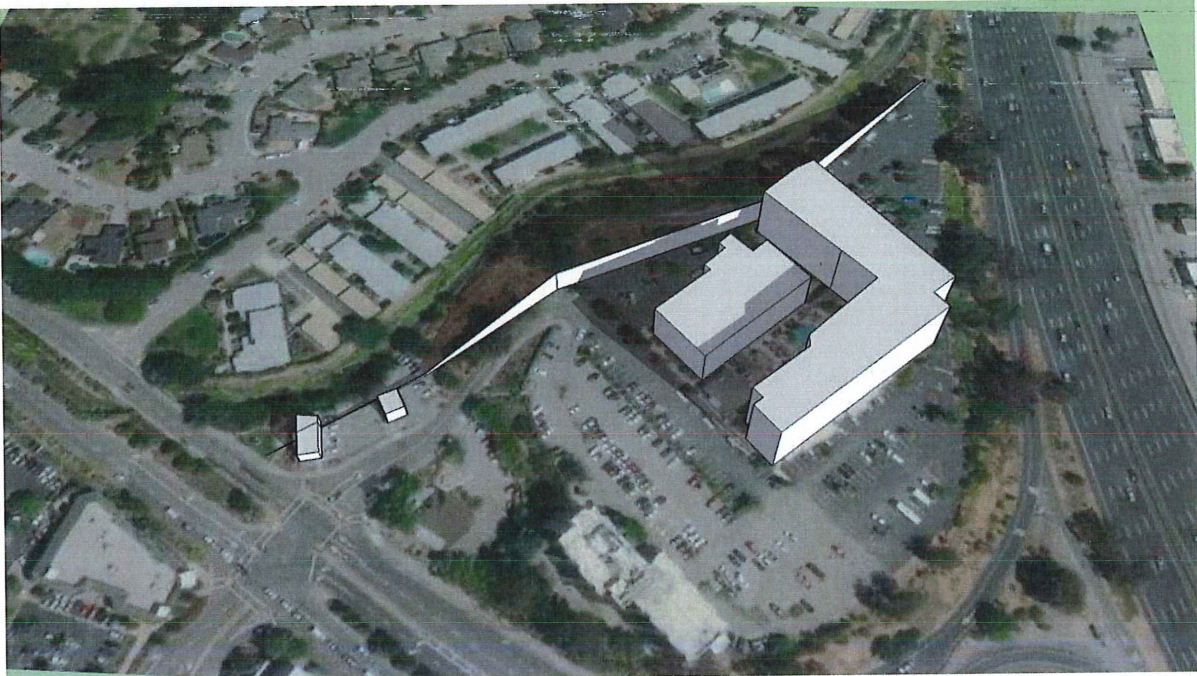
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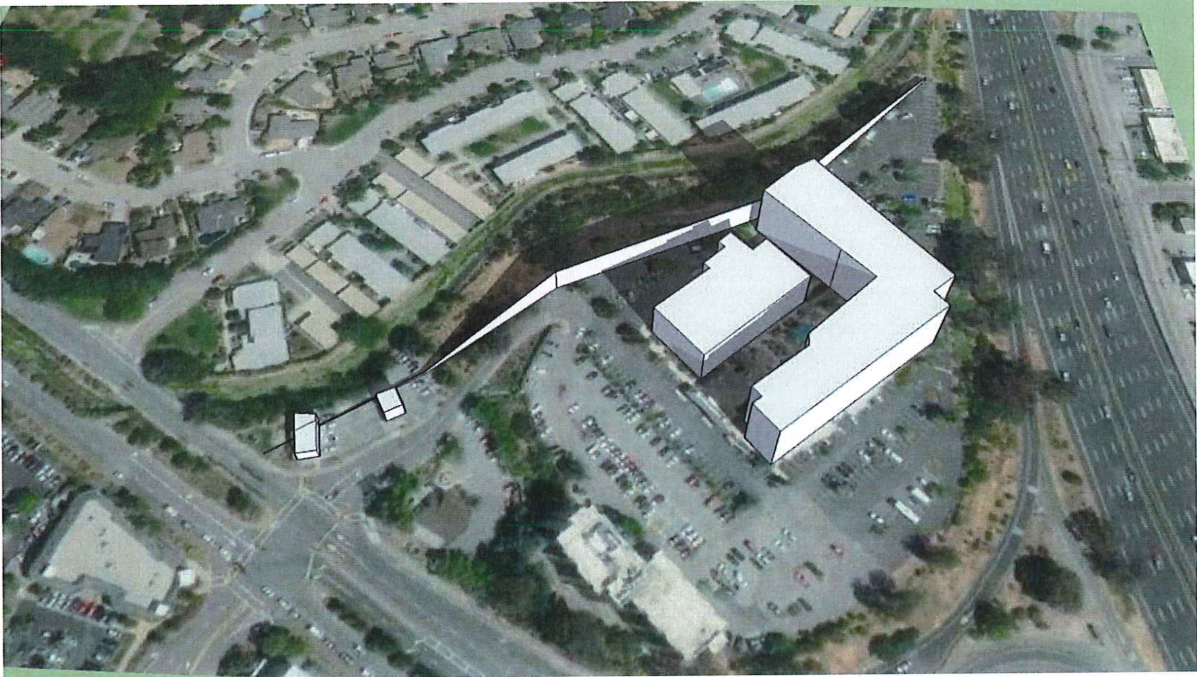
21 January @ 8:00AM – EXISTING WITH NO DEVELOPMENT



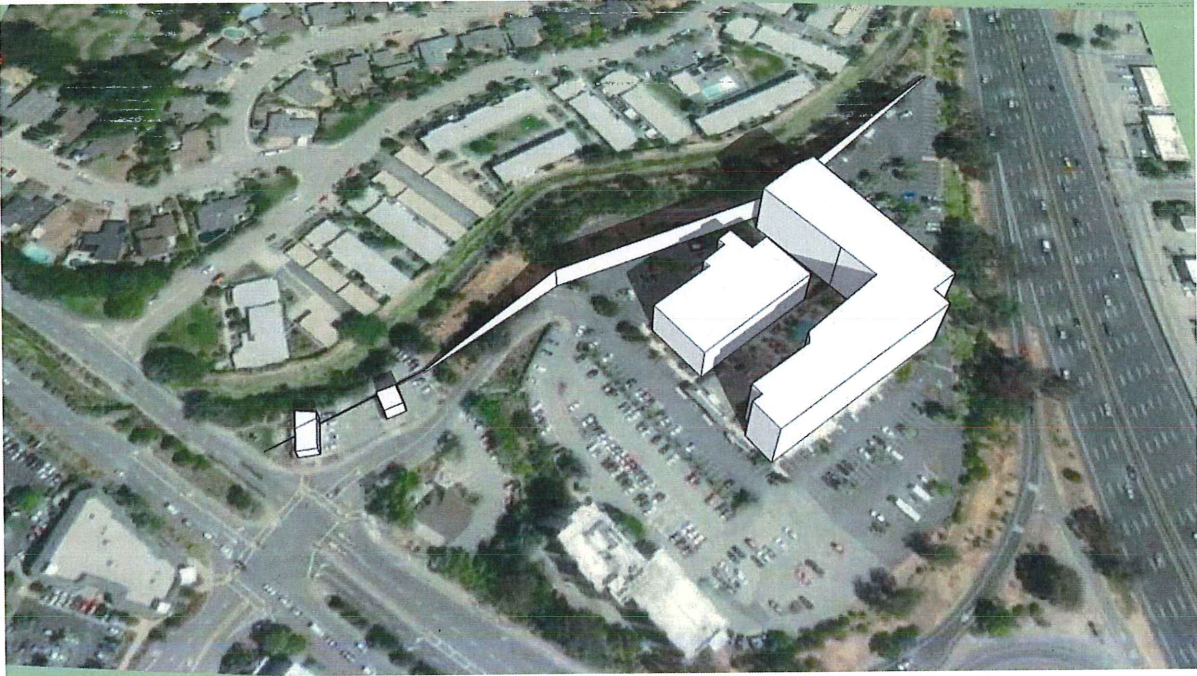
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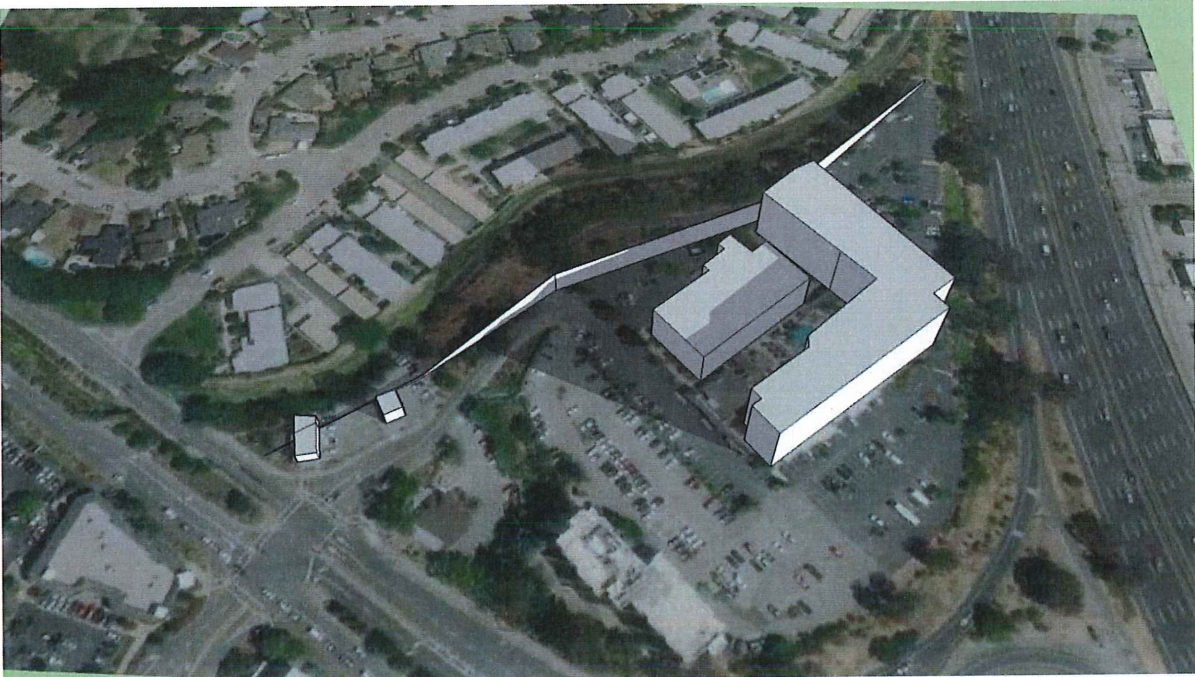
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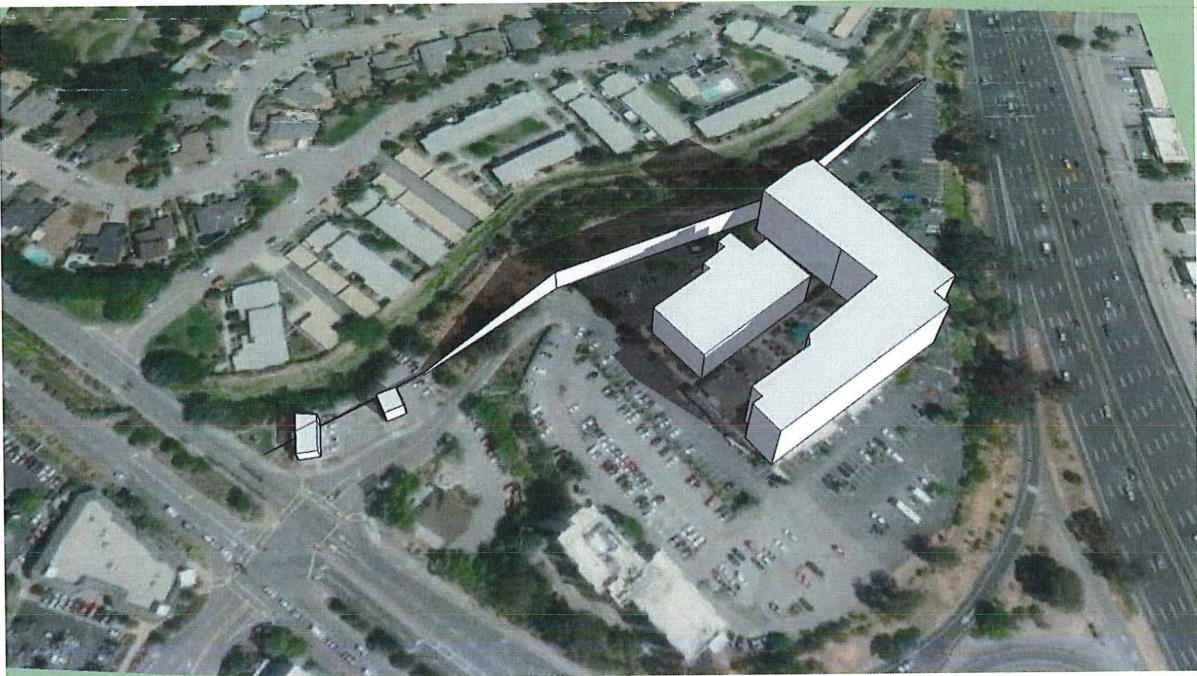
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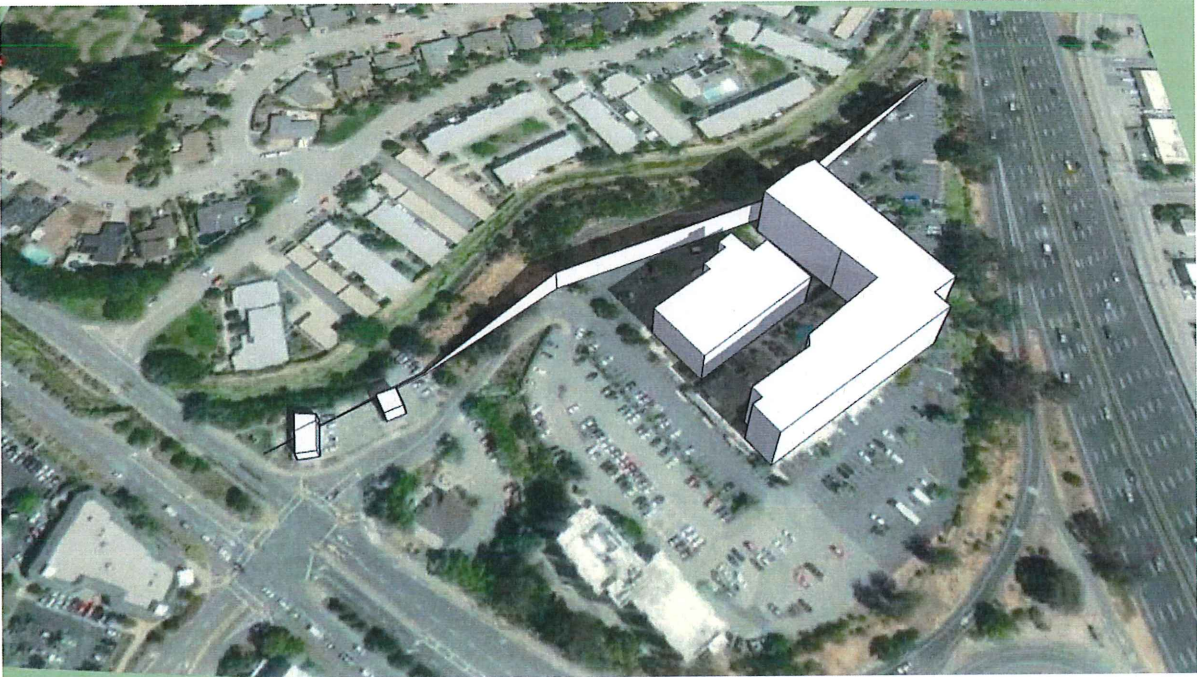
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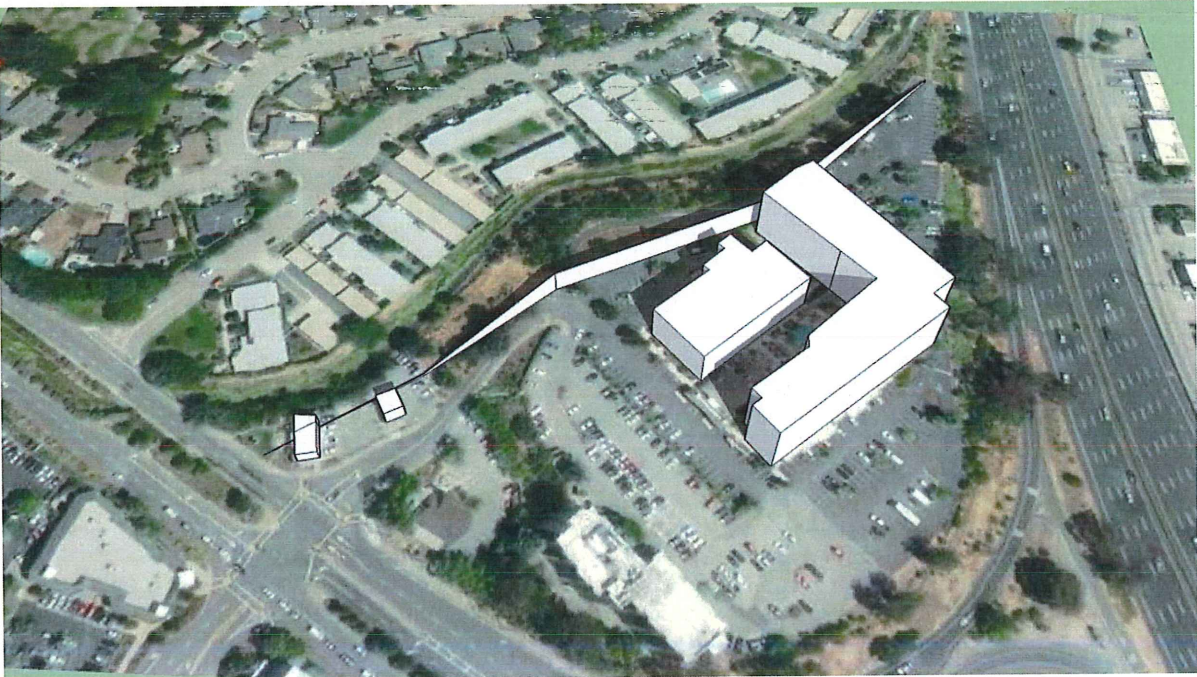
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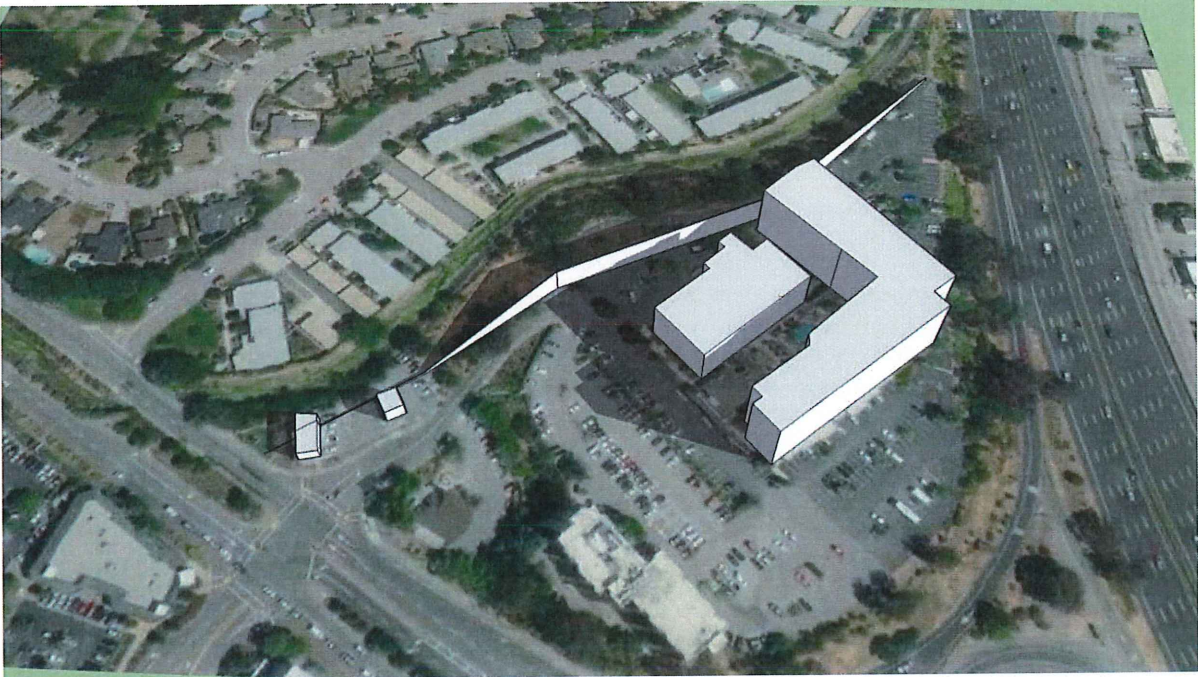
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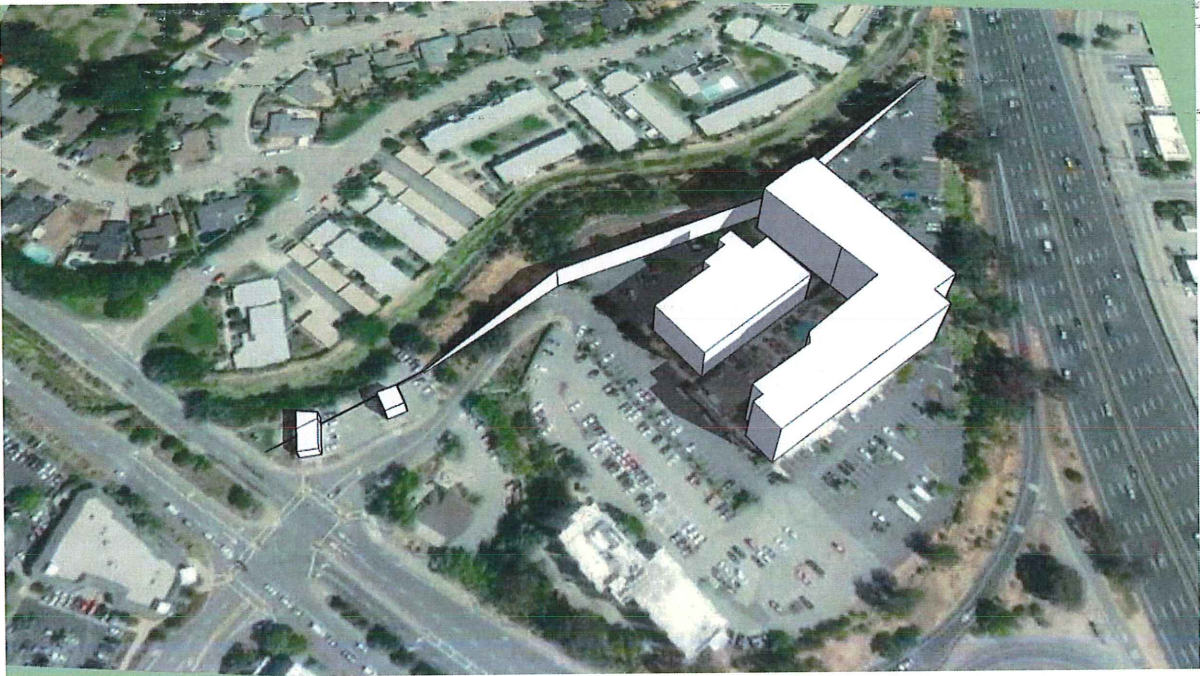
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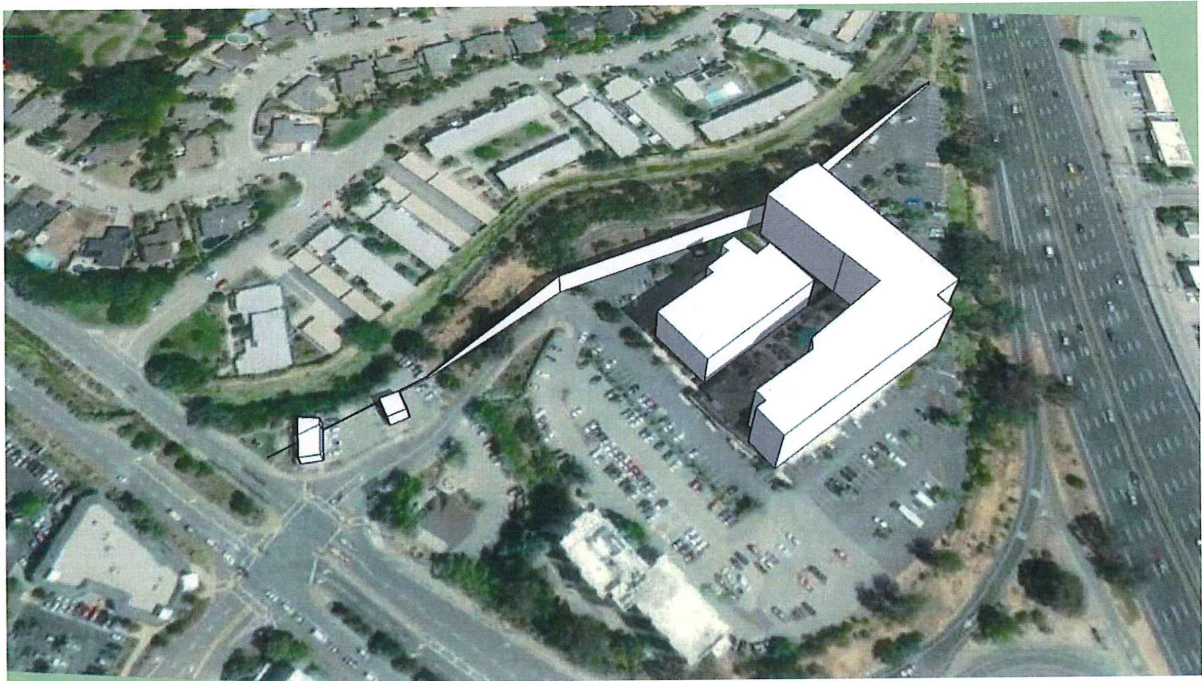
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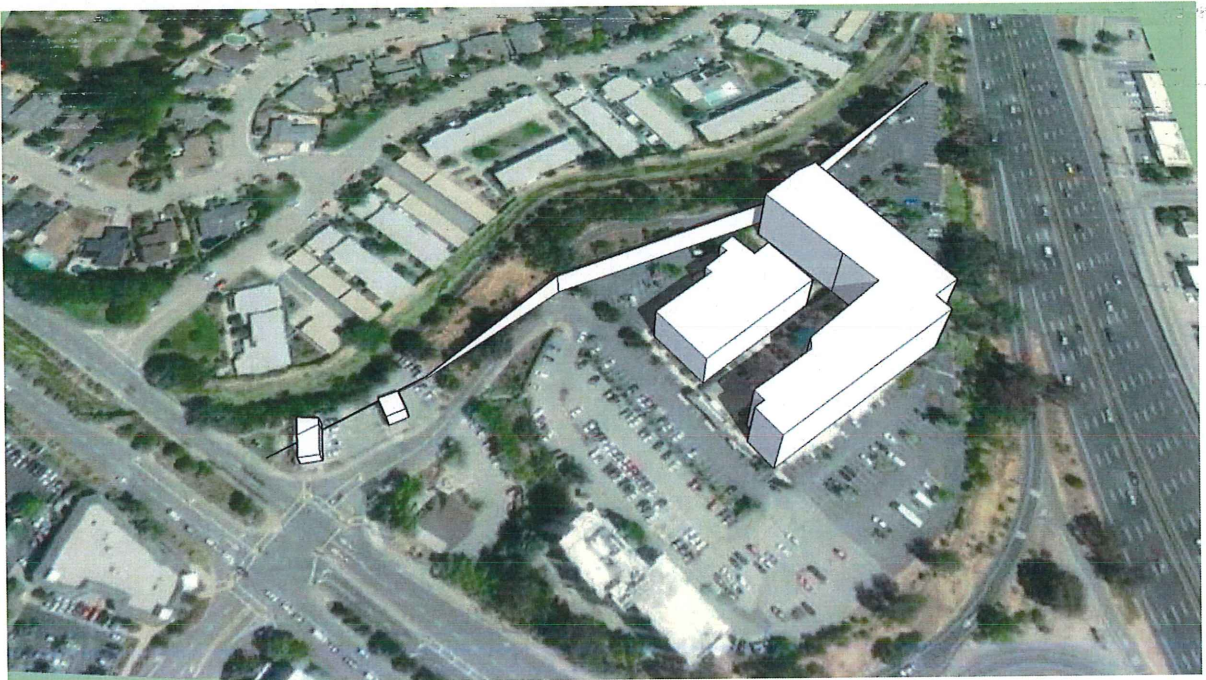
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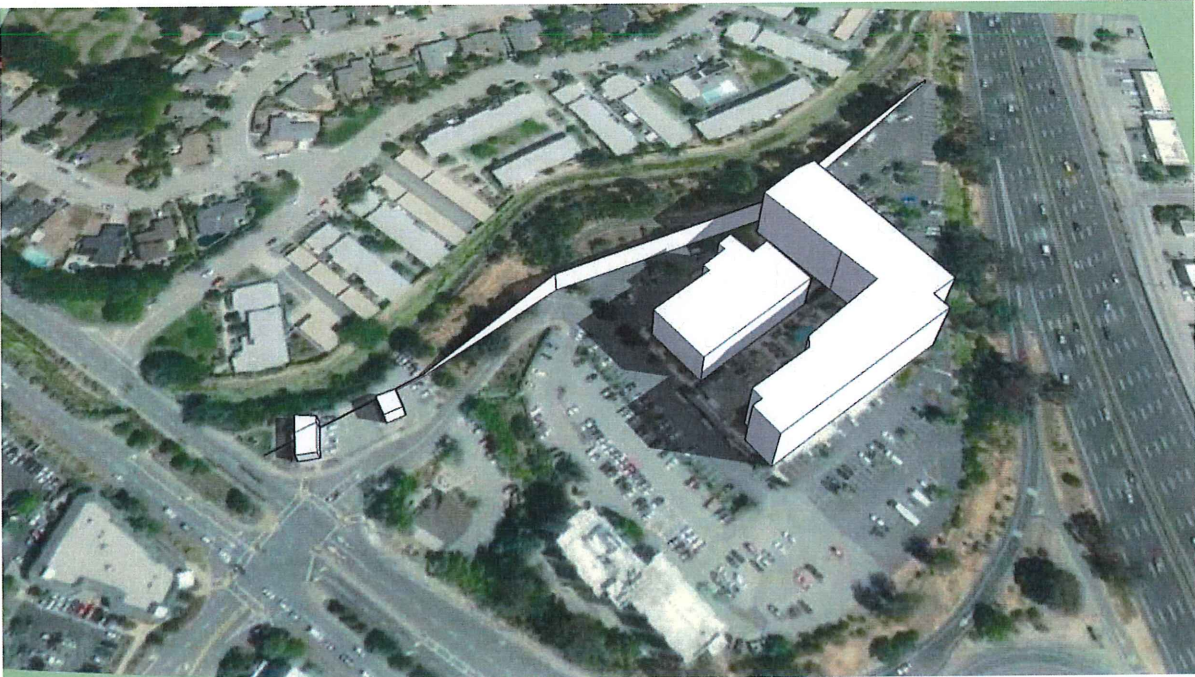
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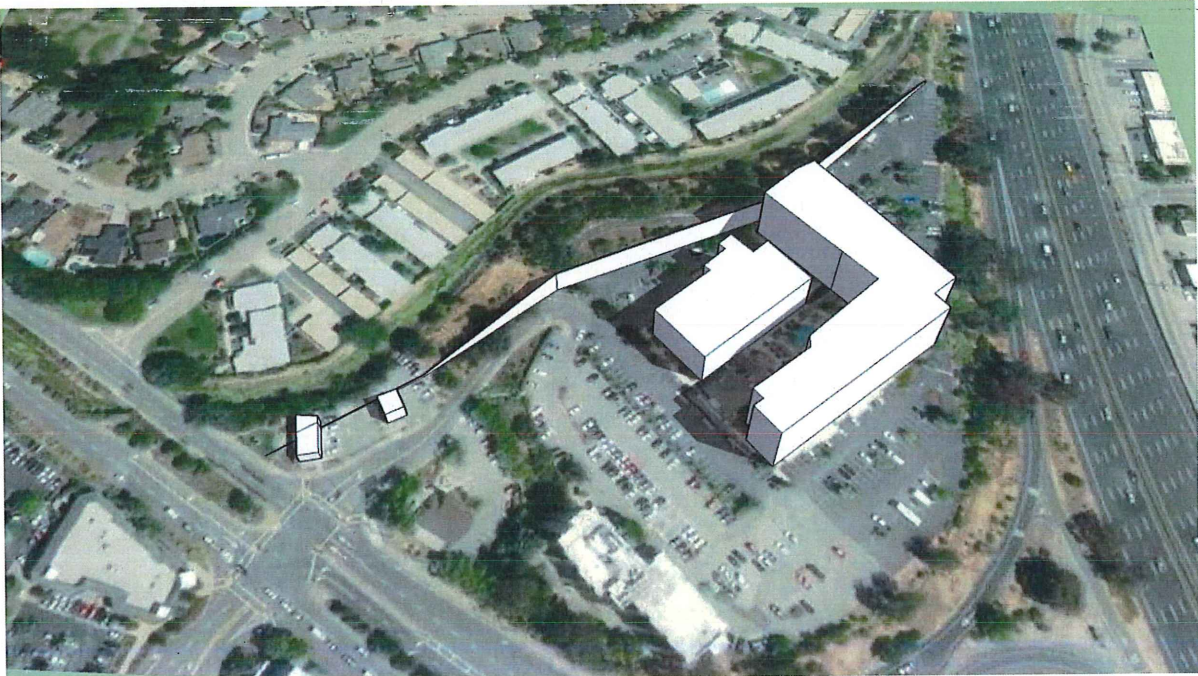
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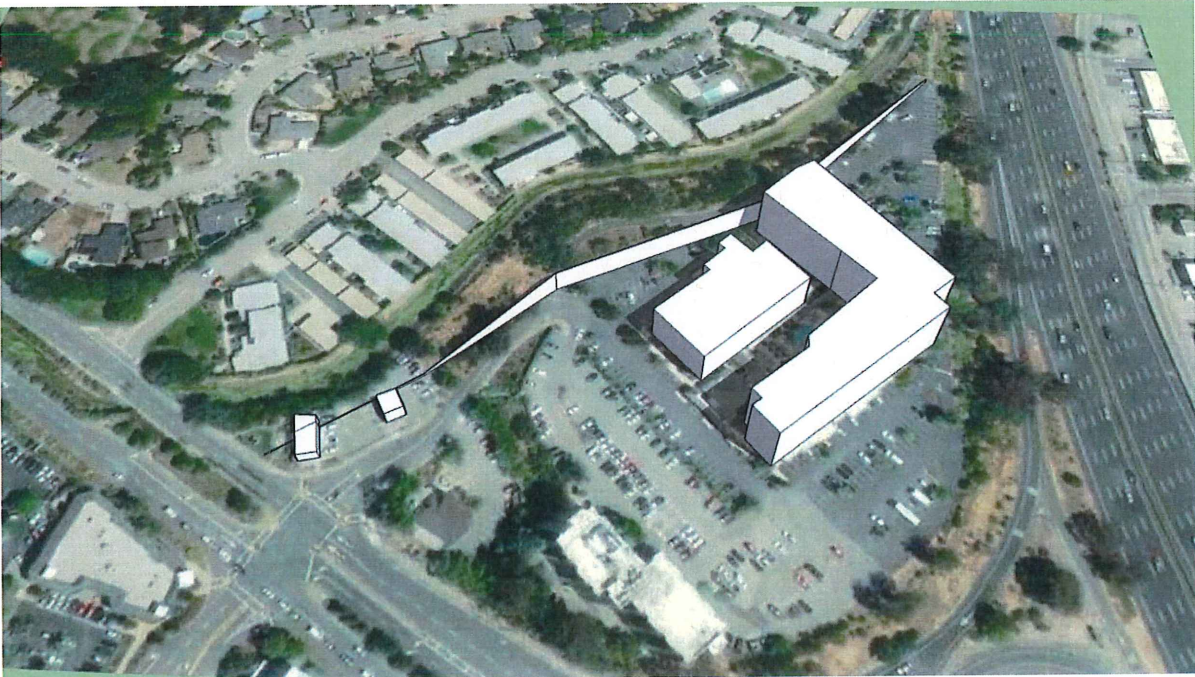
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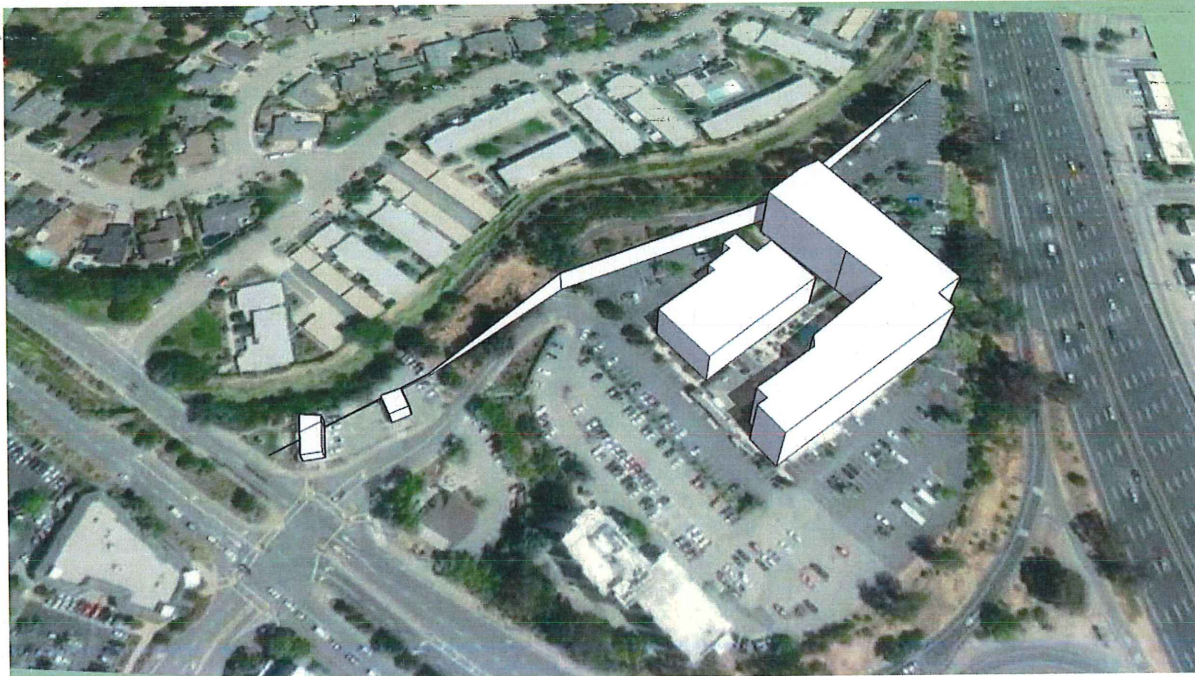
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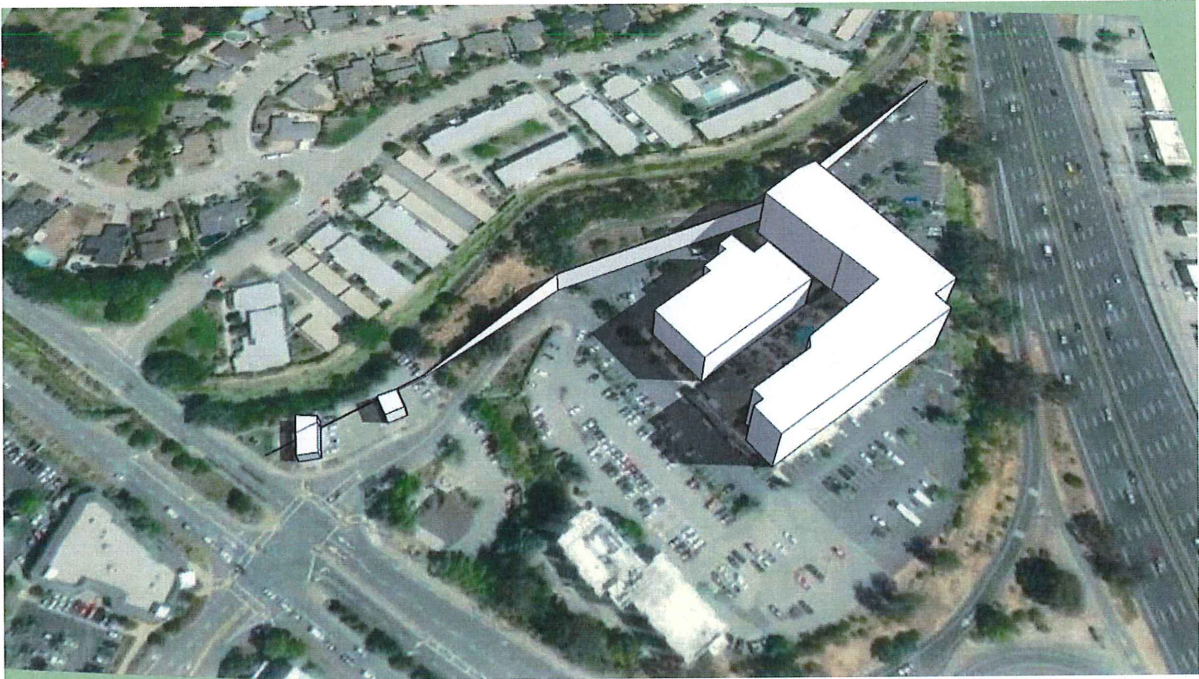
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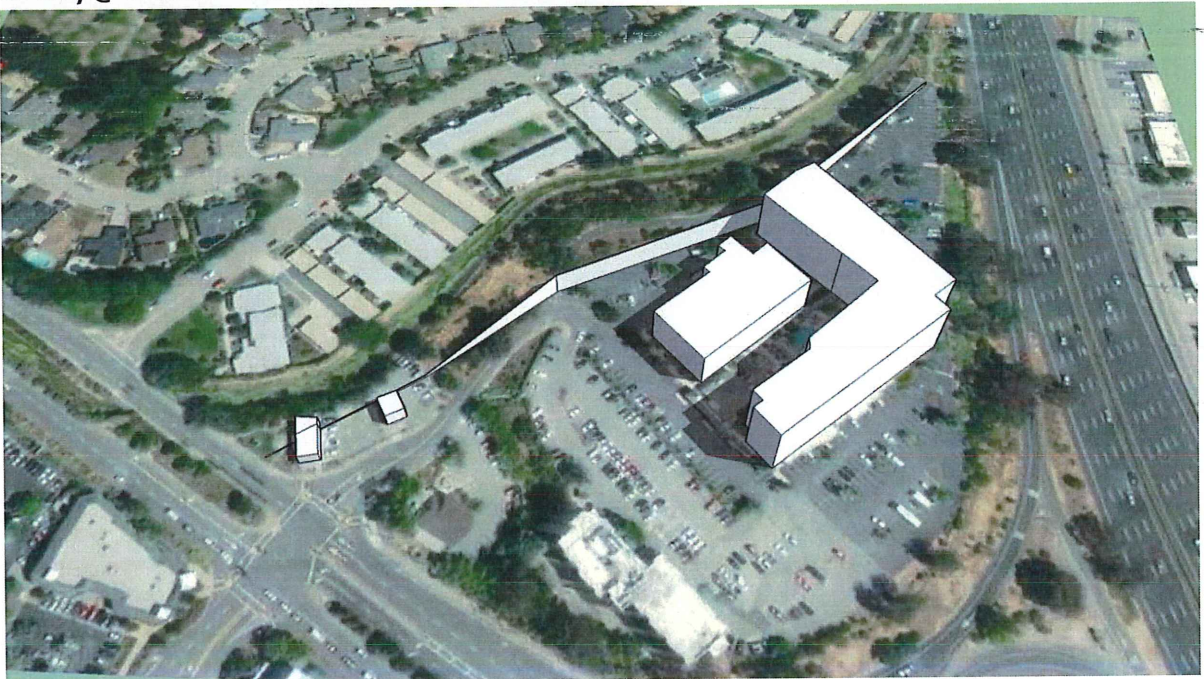
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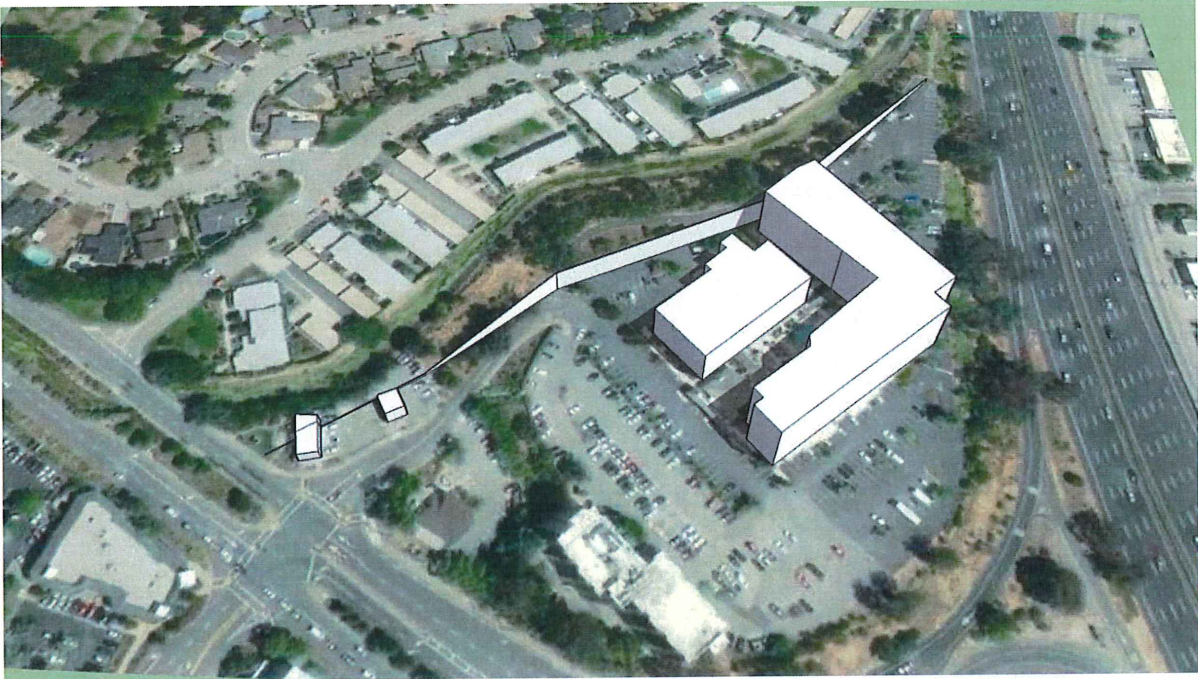
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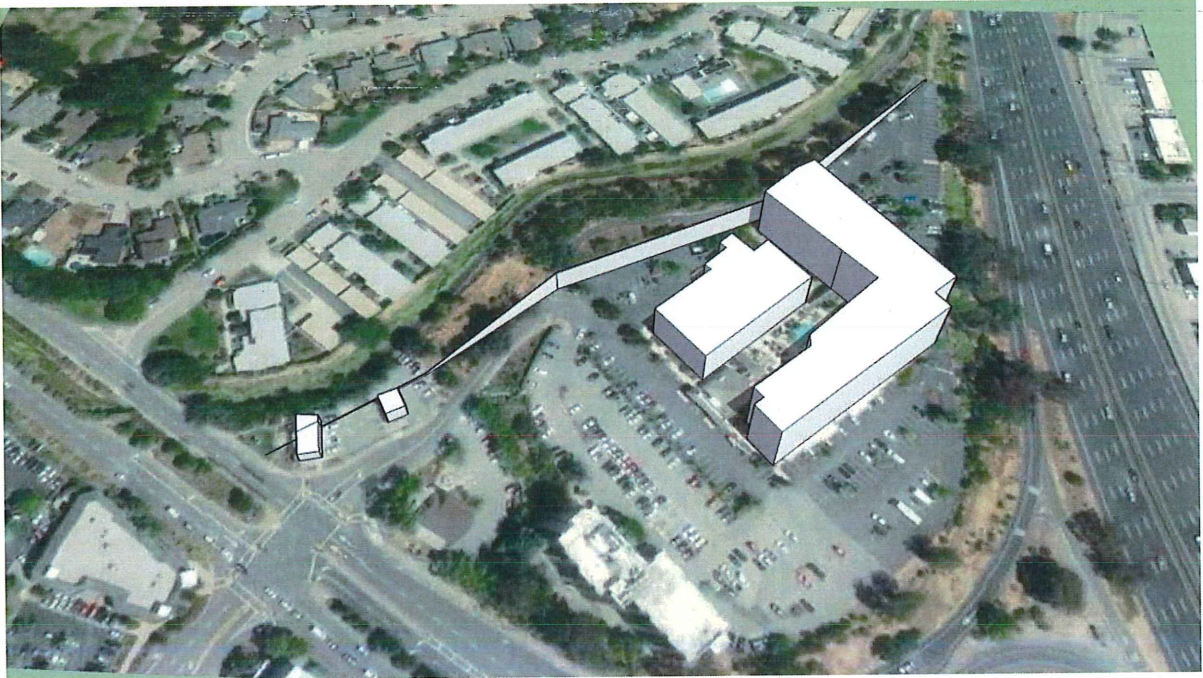
21 May @ 9:00AM – EXISTING WITH NO DEVELOPMENT



21 May @ 10:00AM – EXISTING WITH NO DEVELOPMENT



21 May @ 11:00AM – EXISTING WITH NO DEVELOPMENT



Steve Stafford

From: Pamela Reaves <pamela1reaves@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 6:53 PM
To: Steve Stafford
Subject: Proposed Northgate Walk development comments

Dear Mr. Stafford,

I have been a homeowner in Terra Linda Valley, 1500 feet from the proposed development. I have been an advocate for affordable housing in San Rafael and think this site may indeed be a good enough location for more housing. However, the way it is currently presented to you provides inadequate information that is significant. We won't know if it is designed with San Rafael's standards or not until these questions are answered.

1) The noise analysis left out an essential test. There are at least 5 upper decks proposed as well individual decks that face downhill neighbors in Terra Linda Valley. Placement of these decks is consideration of the development and most certainly not the neighbors, particularly those at Los Gamos area and on up to Colindas Rd. Please request the applicant to provide a realistic study for noise created from the decks. These decks will include pools, spas, fire pit with the noise directed directly away from highway 101 but towards the residential area. San Rafael General Plan 2020 Noise Element states that in Table 6, page 15 that noise impacting a bedroom must be less than 40 dB, higher is deemed "Clearly Unacceptable" "New construction should not be undertaken." The 12-15-5 noise abatement new development must orient away from disturbing others.

2) The shadow study is meaningless until the applicant provides shadow impact in the A.M. The San Rafael Manor may have significant shading from the sun rising from the East. This should be noted at winter, spring, summer and Fall. It's a very easy task. The applicant has not complied with repeated requests from the community for the last two years; request that they do so.

3) The mock up views provided to show the proposed site again, neglects to show the view from the Los Gamos street area. It will be an enormous 60 ft wall looking down on the San Rafael Manor and those across the street.

4) The applicant does not show how it will comply with the proper setback from the Gallinas Creek not the hillside need provisions. Parts of the site at 1007 are 45 degree slope.

On another note, I am a business owner with an office at 1050 Northgate Drive. How will I and my clients get to my place of business during construction?

What protections will be in place for the creek during construction?

Sincerely,
Pamela Reaves

Steve Stafford

From: MARYANN SOLTIS <soltis1218@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 11:07 AM
To: Steve Stafford
Subject: Added housing in terra linda

Dear Steve, Why don't those people stop trying to build on Gateway Gas and Four Points by Sheraton? It's about money and all about money. They intend to make "Big Bucks" by building there if though it's a bad idea. What is the bad idea? They don't care about housing; they just care about \$\$\$\$\$. The mistake they're trying to make is about density. A bottleneck will be created by traffic. There is only in one way and out one way on Freitas. All Freitas drains on the freeway at that point, in and out. In the morning and evening, traffic will held up at that point, making tempers flare. There's no street parking on Los Gamos where I live so that extra parking is impossible. Again, when nighttime comes, all the street parking is taken. It's a horrible place to put living quarters due to the noise. San Rafael will regret putting housing in that area and it will make living in Terre Linda undesirable. Sincerely, Mary Ann Soltis, 1056-B Los Gamos Road

Steve Stafford

From: Martha Lee <4parks2016@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 6:08 PM
To: Steve Stafford
Subject: Comments on proposed Northgate Walk development

Dear Mr. Stafford:

I am a 13-year resident of the San Rafael Manor Coop on Los Gamos Road in Terra Linda. I live in a second floor unit in the 1016 Building, which will be directly across the creek from the proposed new 1020 building of the Northgate Walk project.

The mission of the City of San Rafael is “to enhance the quality of life and provide for a safe, healthy, prosperous and livable environment in partnership with the community.”

I am hoping that the part of the city’s mission that calls for “partnership with the community” is cultivated and respected in the case of the proposed Northgate Walk development in Terra Linda. I realize that some of my comments and concerns may come across as NIMBY, but I believe that they are also in line with providing for “a safe, healthy, prosperous and livable environment for San Rafael residents” – both for those of us who are now here and those who may chose to move to a new development on the hill above Gallinas Creek. I will couch my comments under the elements of the city’s mission statement (i.e., safe, healthy, prosperous, livable).

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Traffic at intersection with Freitas: This intersection is already problematic with dangerous interaction between vehicles coming off the freeway, turning into adjacent shopping areas, trying to get to 101 from the west, and pedestrians and bicyclists using the crosswalks. I question the conclusion that traffic volume after completion of the project will be less than current traffic, due to elimination of the current gas station and business. The number of trips into those small businesses is noted at 1,145 trips a day currently and this plan claims that trips per day, once all the residences are developed at the top of the hill, will be only 719 trips a day. I would like to know how this number was arrived at.

Parking: It does not seem that one parking place per unit for the proposed development will accommodate need, pushing people to look for street parking in the adjacent community. Street parking along Los Gamos, the closest street to the development, is already at a premium with demand growing each year.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT (for both residents and the environment)

Impacts to creek: Have potential impacts to the stream system and the animals that depend upon it, as well as those that live in the open spaces along the eastern creek bank been analyzed?

Cut and fill of creek banks: It is hard to determine from the plans that have been submitted whether the existing slopes above the creek will be maintained in their current status or if there is a plan to dig them out (cut) in some way. It is also hard to determine contour lines on the map graphics to see where the construction would start (elevation above the creek). The Air Quality Impact Analysis for the project cites that there will be 58,160 cubic yards of cut – but nowhere in the plans can I see where that would come from.

PROSPEROUS ENVIRONMENT

While I am not sure how this development contributes to a prosperous environment for any but the project's developers, I think it is important to point out that San Rafael Manor is currently some of the most "affordable" housing in the Bay Area, and certainly in Marin County. Our community is made up of residents who range in age from young children and their parents to those who would be considered "senior." Most of us have worked all our lives in jobs that keep our economy and our community prosperous, though not jobs that would allow us to purchase housing in most portions of Marin County. I feel fortunate to have found this community and very much enjoy being able to live in Marin because of it. I recognize that others who might buy into a new development on the hill might appreciate the same amenities that I do: easy access to shopping and 101, as well as the close proximity to open space. However, this development would seem to impair those same values for those of us "lower income" and "seniors" who already live here.

LIVABLE

As I write these comments, I am sitting at my desk looking across at the hillside that rises up from the creek – a hillside that is host to numerous sizable oak trees and other vegetation. This hillside is home to deer, birds, raccoons, and skunks, to name the most commonly observed residents. The creek below is home to mallards, great blue herons, and egrets. And at the top of the hill, I see an unobtrusive railing along a rarely used hotel access road and sky beyond. In the morning, the sun streams into my windows. At night, weather conditions favorable, I see night sky. This is a view that is invaluable to me and it is one of the primary reasons that I purchased the particular unit that I did. I note that the view analysis on the City's website did not include any views of what the new construction would look like from San Rafael Manor or the community around Oleander Park. The only view that is relevant to these concerns is taken from the corner of Freitas and Los Gamos. This seems like a major missing element of disclosure. What about the view from Oleander Park or from the open space up by the water tanks as well as from the walking path along the west side of the creek?

Should this project be constructed as designed, those of us along the east side of Los Gamos will lose our access to morning sun and instead be faced with a towering wall of residences. I find it interesting that shadow studies cited were performed at noon and 3:00 pm, while the maximum impact of potential loss of sunlight to San Rafael Manor would be in the morning hours.

We will also live with the noise produced by residents in their units, accessing parking, and using a spa, pool, fireplaces and community roof terraces. Noise from the current hotel area carries clearly and loudly down to the SRM community already (e.g., we can clearly hear spoken conversations of people walking on the access road). I believe there needs to be a study analyzing potential increase in noise emanating FROM the project, once built, on the surrounding community – specifically, the neighborhood that includes San Rafael Manor and the houses around Oleander Park. The only noise citation I could find on the city's website was for impacts of noise from Freitas and 101 TO residents of the new construction.

Overall, I am opposed to the development of this project. I believe that the size and massing of the component parts of the design would have significant adverse impacts to the quality of life for residents of the Oleander Park and Los Gamos communities of Terra Linda. I also feel that such development would be better suited for the eastern portions of the current hotel parking lot – design the buildings to look toward the east and be situated along the freeway rather than directly impacting an existing community with placement looming over Los Gamos and the Oleander Park communities.

Thank you.

Martha J. Lee

1016 Los Gamos Road, Unit G
San Rafael, CA 94903

Steve Stafford

From: cynthia gottlieb <cegottlieb@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 2:13 PM
To: Steve Stafford
Subject: Project:1007,1010,1020,1030 Gateway Gas and Four Points Sheraton

We will not be able to attend tonight's hearing, so are sending you our comments via email.

We live in Terra Linda in a neighborhood off of Freitas Pkwy, so drive by the proposed site every time we enter or leave Terra Linda. A FIVE story building sitting on top of a rather large hill is much to big for the site. Imagine what the view will be for the residents of los Gamos. Please have some empathy for them (an emotion that is much missing in our nation currently....)

Also, the traffic at that intersection and all up Freitas as far as Safeway is already horrendous. We do not believe that the removal of the "busy" gas station will offset the amount of residents' vehicles going up and down that little street up to the Sheraton.

We encourage a design more in fitting with our community.

Cynthia & Rick Sapp
9 Bolanos Drive, San Rafael, CA