
San Rafael Project Description Memo

TO	City of San Rafael	DATE	7.30.19
FROM	MG2	PROJECT	San Rafael, CA
CC	Costco	PROJECT NUMBER	18-5086-01

Site Information

JURISDICTION:

City of San Rafael

Zoning:

GC- General Commercial

SITE ACCESS:

Access from Northgate Road

Access from Las Gallinas Avenue

PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Warehouse Retail sales area of 147,000 sq. ft., with three levels of parking above the warehouse retail space.
- Retail space for Costco is a One-to-One replacement with the existing Sears/Mall retail space.
- Proposed Uses include, without limitation, warehouse retail, tire sales and installation, motor vehicle fuel sales including diesel, optical exams and optical sales, photo center and processing, hearing aid testing and sales, food service preparation and sales, meat preparation and sales, bakery and sales of baked goods, alcohol sales and tasting, and propane refueling and sales adjacent to tire sales and installation facility. Temporary outdoor sales within the parking field adjacent to the warehouse will be available for seasonal sales, such as Christmas trees from late November through December...
- Vehicle display at the Costco warehouse entry for on-line or off-site automobile (referred) sales.
- Signage to include the Costco warehouse typical signage consistent with the Northgate Mall signage program.
- The Costco warehouse parcel would be entitled and constructed in one phase.
- Demolition of 147,000 sq. ft. of existing mall tenant structures (Sears Retail and Sear Tire Center) and additional earthwork activity to establish new design grades for new project.



Project Description

COSTCO EMPLOYMENT:

- It is anticipated that the San Rafael Costco warehouse and gas station will employ approximately 165 to 170 employees.

COSTCO SITE/LANDSCAPE PLAN:

- The warehouse is sited to help maintain the existing programming of the Northgate Mall, located at the far south side of the existing mall site and keeping the receiving activities similarly located to the current orientation. The parking lot design has incorporated a perimeter landscape buffer adjacent to the existing residential area to the south that varies in depth with the narrowest portion maintaining the 15-foot landscape buffer requirement. Parking lot trees and landscaping per City requirements will enhance the site and surrounding area and assist to minimize the visual impact to the development. Access to the warehouse and fuel facility will be from Northgate Road to the west and Las Gallinas to the east. Approximately 970 parking stalls will be provided on-site. There are 53 stalls at grade adjacent to the tire center and the remaining 917 stalls provided on three levels of parking above the warehouse space. This total substantially exceeds the required City of San Rafael parking requirement. An ADA compliant pedestrian pathway will extend from the new warehouse to the appropriate right-of-way (ROW) frontage. The project provides oversized parking stalls that are larger than the minimum requirements for the City of San Rafael to provide members with easier accessibility to vehicles.
- The parking lot will be illuminated with standard downward pointing lights, each containing two LED fixtures affixed to a 37' foot light pole. The lighting fixtures are of a "shoe-box" style. Parking lot light standards are designed to provide even light distribution for vehicle and pedestrian safety. The parking lot lights will be timer controlled to limit lighting after the warehouse has closed and most employees are gone from the warehouse. Parking lot lighting will only remain on to provide security and emergency lighting along the main driveways. Lighting fixtures will also be located on the building approximately every 40 feet around the exterior of the building to provide safety and security. Parking and site lighting will incorporate the use of cutoff lenses to keep light from overflowing beyond the project boundaries.
- The landscape plan includes a mix of drought tolerant shrubs and grasses, and a variety of shade trees will be used throughout the site and along the project perimeter that are appropriate for the climate in San Rafael.

COSTCO WAREHOUSE ARCHITECTURE:

- The warehouse design is contemporary and has set the standard for large format retail facades with a variety of massing and appropriate materials for the building. By combining precast concrete and architectural metal panels, Costco can create a variation in scale and architectural interest to minimize the visual impact of a large retail warehouse. Incorporating design techniques that utilize building materials, landscaping, and the incorporation of various massing techniques, Costco can successfully break the long elevations both horizontally and vertically at the appropriate height to create a visually appealing building. The technique of breaking a long elevation into smaller elements helps to create a more pedestrian-friendly scale as well. The color palette will relate to the proposed surrounding

development by utilizing similar building materials and architectural detailing. The building entrance, located on the northeast corner of the building, creates a visual queue to the warehouse entry.

- Building signage consists of the signature Costco red and blue corporate colors. The signage is scaled appropriately to the mass of the building elevations to not overwhelm but to reinforce the brand that Costco has established. The warehouse wall signage will consist of externally illuminated reverse pan channel letters, and the gas station signage will also be externally illuminated.
- The warehouse has one customer entrance to the main Costco store located at the northeast corner. The San Rafael Costco will include a bakery, pharmacy, optical center with optical exams and retail optical sales, hearing aid testing center, food court, and a photo center along with the sales of approximately 4,000 products. The warehouse also includes a Tire Center, a 5,185 square-foot facility with member access via a separate entrance on the south side of the Costco building, that includes tire sales and a tire installation facility. The installation facility has four bays that face south to allow Costco employees to drive the cars into the installation facility. A promotional vehicle may be on display near the entry to the building. This vehicle is only to promote online or offsite vehicle sales; no vehicles are sold on site.
- The truck loading dock is located at the west side of the building with the dock doors facing west as well to buffer noise to the adjacent residences to the south. The bay doors will be equipped with sealed gaskets to limit noise impacts. A smaller on grade door is located on the west side of the building. This door is to receive bread delivery and Federal Express type trucks. A transformer and two trash compactors will also be located along the west edge of the building. Dense landscape material provides the necessary screening to this area.
- Most of the site parking will be provided with having three levels of parking above the warehouses. The north ramp will be a speed ramp providing ability to exit and enter the ramp from the various parking levels. The south ramp will ramp separately between the three levels with the ramp footprints stacked on top of each other. The remaining parking stalls are located adjacent to the tire center and the south ramp access and will be at grade.

COSTCO FUEL FACILITY:

- The fuel facility includes an approximately 11,000 square-foot canopy and a 106 square-foot controller enclosure that will be located on the eastern portion of the planting island of the fuel station to house the control equipment. The controller enclosure will be built with steel walls and finished with paint to match the warehouse building colors. There will be three covered fueling bays, each with five two-sided fuel dispensers which will provide for the fueling of ten cars at each island. The fueling station will also have 6 stacking lanes, which will allow approximately 42 cars to wait for pumps at any given time, in addition to the 30 vehicles at the dispensers, meaning the capacity to queue 72 vehicles. The gas station will have fueling capacity for 15 dispensers. The dispensers are fully automated and self-service for Costco members only, with a Costco attendant present to oversee operations and assist members with problems. Five underground fuel tanks will also be installed at the northern edge of the gas station. Lights will be recessed into the canopy and provide both lighting during operating hours and a lower level of security lighting after hours.

COSTCO OPERATIONS:

- Costco Wholesale is a membership-only retail/wholesale business, selling high quality national brands and private label merchandise for commercial and personal use. The warehouse hours are anticipated to be: Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 8:30 pm, Saturday from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm, and Sunday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. The fuel facility hours are anticipated to be daily from 5:00 am to 10:00 pm.
- Costco anticipates an average of about 10 trucks delivering goods on a typical weekday. The trucks range in size from 26 feet long for single-axle trailers to 70 feet long for double-axle trailers. Receiving time is from 2:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., averaging 2 to 3 trucks per hour, with most of the deliveries completed before the 10:00 a.m. opening time. Deliveries to the warehouse are made primarily in Costco trucks from its freight consolidation facility in Tracy, California, coming to the site from US Highway 101, and accessing the site from Northgate Road.
- It is estimated that fuel will be delivered to the gasoline facility in two to three trucks per day. The largest fuel trucks are approximately 70 feet long. While delivering the fuel, the truck will be parked over the underground tanks located on the east side of the gas facility. The truck will not block access to any of the fueling positions or occupy any queuing space. The fuel facility is located and specifically designed to avoid traffic and queuing conflicts with the warehouse and adjacent retail commercial uses.
- To open and operate the gas facility, Costco will have to meet requirements of local, state and federal regulators and agencies, including the City Fire Department, the County Department of Environmental Health, the Air Quality Management District, the State Water Resources Control Board, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- The tire center typically will receive shipments of tires one to two times per week in single- or double-trailer trucks of up to 70 feet in length, and the same delivery truck will pick up old tires for recycling. Deliveries to and pickups from the tire center will be scheduled for pre-opening hours, typically about 6:00 a.m.

ANCILLARY USES: ALCOHOL TASTING LICENSE:

- Costco has recently developed an alcohol tasting protocol to be performed by authorized vendors within the warehouse to allow members to sample no more than three types of beer, wine or spirits in the warehouse prior to purchase. Costco is in the process of obtaining Type 86 Tasting licenses from California State Alcoholic Beverage Control in 16 locations in Southern and Northern California.
- The tastings will be performed in a small area within the warehouse that has been sectioned off by a rope/cord that allows only members over the age of 21 to enter. Unlike the more formal tasting area with seating or bar area that you may see in stores such as Whole Foods, these areas are smaller and less formal, more like a typical Costco sampling area (except with a few more rules and precautions). Costco has taken significant steps to assure that this particular product is sampled responsibly and safely.
- The following protocol will be followed:
 - The tasting area (approximately 8' x 8') is physically separated from the rest of the sales area
 - No one under 21 years of age may enter the tasting area
 - Tastings are operated by authorized vendor personnel; one ID Checker and two Pourers
 - Only one event per warehouse per day

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- o Tastings are limited to a single type alcoholic beverage, either beer, wine or spirit, by one particular vendor
 - o Amounts served cannot exceed 3 tastings PER person PER day; a serving is:
 - Wine: not to exceed one (1) oz.
 - Beer: not to exceed one (1) oz.
 - Spirits: not to exceed ¼ of one (1) oz.
 - o Open containers (glasses, etc.) may NOT leave the tasting area
 - o Tastings will take place during regular warehouse hours
 - o Like existing samplings there is no charge for tasting

COSTCO ENERGY-EFFICIENT PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- To reduce energy consumption and promote sustainability, Costco will incorporate many energy saving measures when constructing a new facility. Below are some of the significant practices that Costco currently incorporates into new buildings that help conserve energy and other natural resources:
- Energy Conservation:
 - o Parking lot light standards are designed to provide even light distribution, and utilize less energy compared to a greater number of fixtures at lower heights. The use of LED lamps provides a higher level of perceived brightness with less energy than other lamps such as high-pressure sodium.
 - o New and renewable building materials are typically extracted and manufactured within the region. When masonry and concrete are used, the materials purchased are local to the project, minimizing the transportation and impact to local road networks.
 - o The use of pre-manufactured building components, including structural framing and metal panels, helps to minimize waste during construction.
 - o Pre-manufactured metal wall panels with insulation carry a higher R-Value and greater solar reflectivity to help conserve energy. Building heat absorption is further reduced by a decrease in the thermal mass of the metal wall when compared to a typical masonry block wall.
 - o A substantial amount of the proposed plant material for the new site is native drought tolerant and will use less water than other common species.
 - o The irrigation system includes the use of deep root watering bubblers for parking lot trees to minimize usage and ensure that water goes directly to the intended planting areas.
 - o Storm water management plans are designed to maintain quality control and storm water discharge rates based on the City's requirements.
 - o Use of native species vegetation and drip irrigation systems greatly reduces potable water consumption.
 - o High-efficiency restroom fixtures achieve Achievement of a 40% decrease and water savings over U.S. standards by using highly efficient restroom fixtures.
 - o The building is insulated to meet or exceed current energy code requirements.
 - o Commissioning of mechanical systems will occur to ensure that the HVAC systems are performing as designed.
 - o HVAC comfort systems are controlled by a computerized building management system to maximize efficiency.
 - o Parking lot and exterior lights are controlled by a photo sensor and time clock.
 - o Lighting is controlled by the overall project energy management system.

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- Energy efficient Transformers (i.e., Square D Type EE transformers) are used.
 - Variable speed motors will be used on make-up air units and booster pumps.
 - Gas water heaters are direct vent and 94% efficient or greater.
 - Reclaim tanks are used to capture heat released by refrigeration equipment to heat domestic water in lieu of venting heat to the outside.
 - Main Building structure is a pre-engineered system that uses 100% recycled steel materials and is designed to minimize the amount of material utilized.
 - Construction waste is recycled whenever possible.
 - Floor sealant is No-VOC and represents over 80% of the floor area.
 - Lighting systems are designed with employee controllability in mind. Lighting is controlled by timers, but over-ride switches are provided for employee use.
 - CO2 is monitored throughout the warehouse.
 - Extensive recycling/reuse program is implemented for warehouse and office space including tires, cardboard, grease, plastics and electronic waste.
 - Use of plastic shopping bags is avoided.
 - Suppliers are required to reduce packaging and consider alternative packaging solutions.
 - Distribution facilities are strategically located to minimize miles traveled for delivery.
 - Deliveries are made in full trucks.
 - All Costco trucks are equipped with an engine idle shut off timers.

Project Objectives

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

- The proposed project has been designed to meet a series of objectives:
 - Construct and operate a new Costco warehouse that serves the local community with goods and serves from both nationally known businesses but also more regional and local businesses.
 - Reduce energy consumption by incorporating sustainable design features and systems with enhanced energy efficiencies meeting State and Federal code requirements.
 - Provide a Costco warehouse in a location that is convenient for its members, the community, and employees to travel to shopping and work.
 - Increase the number of employees and contribute to the local job/housing balance.
 - Provide a state-of-the-art Costco warehouse to better serve the membership in the greater San Rafael/Marin County area.
 - Enhance the area with a warehouse that is architecturally designed to blend into the mall development and create a strong anchor presence. While always remaining sensitive to the adjacent community, future development(s) and compatible with the need for a new warehouse in this market area.
 - Continue and increase contribution to the City's tax base by Costco.
 - Expand the space available for integrated retail sales of goods and services in the City of San Rafael.
 - Design a site plan that minimizes circulation conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians.

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- o Provide a Costco warehouse in a location that is serviced by adequate existing infrastructure including roadways and utilities.
 - o Develop a Costco warehouse that is large enough to accommodate all the uses and services Costco provides to its members elsewhere.

Merlone Geier Partners:

Costco at Northgate Mall

Merlone Geier Partners purchased Northgate Mall in 2017. Since that time, we have been exploring various ways to revive this important community destination. Along the way, we have received a tremendous amount of community input, which has helped guide our long-term vision for Northgate.

In today's changing retail landscape, we believe that Northgate must transform itself from an old-fashioned, suburban mall into a vibrant town center with diverse retail, restaurants, and entertainment uses. Northgate must be something for everyone.

Remaking an existing mall like Northgate is a complex puzzle. In our efforts to take the first step in bringing the right collection of retailers to Northgate, we need to bring a true anchor to the mall that will attract the level of stores and unique restaurants that everyone wants to see.

That is why we are very excited to have reached a partnership with one of the most desired cornerstone retailers in Costco Wholesale. Of everyone we have talked to, Costco is the ideal fit as it will immediately enhance the attraction of Northgate as a whole.

As a company, Costco is increasingly bringing stores closer to its members. They also are adapting to the retail landscape by entering existing centers in the right locations for their members. With that, the new Costco San Rafael store will be state-of-the-art, replacing the former Sears department store, catalogue sales building, and the tire center.

The local economic benefits of Costco in San Rafael are quite substantial. In addition to the anticipated increases in tax revenue and jobs, Costco supports many local small businesses and merchants through its successful Business Membership program.

Our partnership with Costco represents a vital step in a long-term process to reimagine Northgate into a town center vision, which may include new (currently unidentified) uses in the future. Merlone Geier is eager to partner with Costco and the City of San Rafael to begin the revival of Northgate Mall with this application.