

Costco Wholesale’s proposal for Northgate Mall

Christina <

Thu 11/14/2019 11:13 AM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City of San Rafael,

I moved to Lucas Valley from San Francisco 5 years ago. I vote in all elections and am an active member of my community. My children attend I’m writing to let you know that I’m completely opposed to Costco Wholesale at Northgate mall. The reason I oppose this is:

1. **This would negatively impact our community.** My friends and I yearn for an inviting area with shops and restaurants and a place for kids to play. A Costco would not provide this. So many families leave Terra Linda for other cities (Novato, Corte Madera, Larkspur) for restaurants, shops, etc. If we built a welcoming space for kids and families that had good restaurants and shops, we would be thrilled and it would be a good source of revenue for the city! We all crave somewhere to go for a drink or to hang out with kids and this is the perfect opportunity. A nice vibrant community space (like in Corte Madera) would be the ideal thing to establish at the Sears lot and would add so much to our community. I also think it would impact the bottom line.
2. **There is a Costco already nearby** (Novato)
3. **This will impact traffic** (negatively)

Thank you for your consideration

Christina

Christina

Opposing Costco in Terra Linda

Cristina [REDACTED]

Wed 11/13/2019 7:05 AM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City of San Rafael,

I am a resident and voter of Terra Linda. I am writing to express my opposition to Costco Wholesale's proposal for Northgate Mall.

My concerns include:

1. Traffic jams which would aggravate already existing problems,
2. Health and pollution concerns, how many more cars would be driving to this relatively small area, how much more can you expand roads and freeway on/off ramps at the expense of a neighborhood?
3. And particularly, I am concerned about the massive Costco gas station, causing additional cars and car exhaustion fumes to the neighborhood.
4. Truck delivery noise, refueling of the gas station, garbage trucks etc., do I need to say more?
5. This is a good idea if you are looking out for Costco's interest and profits.
6. But if you are looking out for the health and livability of our neighborhood, it is definitely a very bad idea.

Whose side are you on?

Cristina [REDACTED]

Terra Linda/San Rafael voter

No To Costco

Jane [REDACTED]

Wed 11/13/2019 5:16 PM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear Mr. Boylan,

We have been a residents of Terra Linda since 2007 and love our community. We are extremely opposed to Costco opening at the Northgate Mall. There is absolutely no reason to open another Costco 10 minutes from the Novato Costco. It is absurd. I am extremely concerned about the impact on traffic and the overall change to Terra Linda. I am perplexed why the plan for development in Terra Linda has been so fragmented and without a sense of how our community functions. Families in the area travel to Novato, Mill Valley, Corte Madera, and Larkspur for restaurants, outings with kids, and to shop. The Northgate Mall is tragic and was not built with families in mind. The most successful communities are built around shops and restaurants that people want to visit. Why are we all leaving to bring retail dollars to other cities? The ideal answer would be to use that space at Northgate to build an inviting area with good restaurants (NOT BJ's) and a place families can bring kids (think of Marin Mart in Larkspur etc.) Many of our neighbors would love to meet and have a drink in the evening but there are no good options in Terra Linda. I promise you - if you build it, we will come!

Have you tried to get on 101 South on a weekday morning? It is ridiculous and now you want to add a Costco? Have you tried to get onto 101S when the afternoon nursing shift gets out from Kaiser at 3? It can take up to 45 minutes to travel along Freitas Parkway. And to add a Costco (when there is one 10 mins away) would add to this congestion and diminish our community.

This is NOT what this community needs. Please think about how we can make our community more of a place people come to gather - not just to buy huge amounts of products we don't even need. Think of solutions that bring families together. I know many people who are considering leaving if Costco replaces Sears. We welcome restaurants, shops, places to gather - not a huge store that adds nothing to our community. There are also many teenagers in our community who would love a place to gather. The mall is not built in a way that fosters groups to get together - it is narrow and awkward. Adding shops and restaurants and gathering areas for adults and teens would make it a great gathering place.

Please consider our community needs and not the needs of big business. There are more creative and interesting options for tax revenue than Costco. Please consider our environment and traffic congestions.

I am a [REDACTED] and my husband works [REDACTED]. We work and live in our community. We understand the need for change and progress, but feel that there are other options for Terra Linda. We have kids in middle school and would love to see some positive changes for our community. Thank you for reading my email and listening to our views.

Sincerely,

Jane [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

San Rafael Community Development—Terra Linda

Anne [REDACTED]

Thu 11/7/2019 6:12 PM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City of San Rafael and Mr. Boloyan,

I am a San Rafael resident and a voter here.

I am strongly opposed to Costco's proposal for Northgate Mall. Although Northgate is across town from me, I frequent the area often and consider it as much a part "my town" as my own neighborhood.

Foremost among my concerns is that any approval of a project such as Costco's would constitute a breach of the City's commitment to—promise of—a "town center" vision.

I do not support the precept of yet another corporate big box here, one that is expected to have a footprint three times that of the existing Sears. This footprint is actually amplified beyond that simple multiplier—by the proposed huge number of gas pumps and everything that feature entails in real time, including tank trucks, increased car traffic, ground and air pollution, and ambient noise, potentially at all hours of the day.

The Costco as conceived (a) would make only a relatively small dent in local unemployment statistics, (b) would not pay its employees enough for them to be able live here in this county, and (c) would seriously disrupt and impact the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and San Rafael as a whole. There is little guarantee, based on past performance, that Costco would "give back" to our community in any meaningful way.

Instead, the physical space is better suited to and would more practically include affordable housing, and, along with that, additional or improved gathering places for public use and enjoyment.

That is, while it's a given that change is inevitable, progress must be in line with our community's actual needs—more more-affordable housing, for example—and in recognition of continual population growth as a fact of our era. Progress can certainly be accomplished in a better way than via the Costco scheme, and without stressing the existing infrastructure or the surrounding areas and residents to such an extreme degree.

Ultimately, does "A City with a Mission" translate to "A City with No Mission"? Or, I would hope, to "A City with a Vision"?

Please revisit the 2020 general plan and keep your word.

Sincerely,

Anne [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

October 27, 2019

Mr. Raffi Boloyan,

As residents of Terra Linda, we wish to weigh in once more on the proposal for a Costco Warehouse at Northgate Mall. We are inspired to write a second time in view of what we learned at the meeting of the Design Review Board on October 22.

What is being proposed by Costco and Merlone Geier as a structure is so preposterously inappropriate for the environment and the site, it's hard to believe they mean this seriously.

We particularly want to add our voices to those who spoke of the lack of sensitivity demonstrated by this plan to the style and scale of the neighborhood. Terra Linda is a small, low-key, mostly residential, gentle, green community. We love it that way. If it is true that this is the same design that has been built in Asian cities and in Mexico City, good grief, what are they thinking. I know Costco is in many ways a good corporation, but they are dead wrong with this project.

I have a Costco membership. I am very grateful to be able to purchase my hearing aid from their audiology department. That doesn't stop me from hearing this proposal as a disaster for Terra Linda.

We ask: why is Northgate not an appropriate site for the Town Center concept, like Larkspur Landing? We were there last Sunday. It was jam-packed with people shopping its good merchandise and food retail. I understand that Merlone Geier has built such a place in Mountain View. Please, why not here?

Thank you for your thorough and very informative presentations at both the Planning Commission and Design Review Board meetings. Your work is appreciated.

Francoise [REDACTED] and Ed [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PLEASE DON'T BUILD COSTCO!!!

Lane [REDACTED]

Fri 10/25/2019 11:53 AM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City of San Rafael,

I am a resident and voter of San Rafael. The purpose of this email is to advise you that I am **OPPOSED** to Costco Wholesale's proposal for Northgate Mall. I have MANY concerns, but for brevity I am going to list my top three: pollution/health risks, safety and traffic congestion. I am a San Rafael native and have lived in San Rafael for 57 years and I vote in ALL elections and am an active participant in my community. For this reason, I'm writing to let you know that not only I but all my friends and relatives in neighboring Marin communities are totally opposed to Costco Wholesale at Northgate mall.

In addition, my mother is living at AlmaVia with advanced dementia. The people who live there have people coming and going – including emergency vehicles. If you have a family member or friend living there and they need to get to the hospital or just have people visit – you would not want the major congestion at Costco and gas pumps to prohibit this. Minutes count in a medical emergency. Also - if it is too much of a hassle to park at AlmaVia (or near it) – then no one will visit these the people there...and that would be very sad.

PLEASE take into account the overall quality of life in our community and do the right thing! PLEASE Consider the health risk to our community especially the elderly and children. Is it worth slightly cheaper gas, toxic air, incredible traffic congestion and accidents, excessive noise for a small boost in local sales revenue? And, it probably goes without saying but remember the City of San Rafael's sustainability goals, the commitments and vision outlined in the general plan 2020 because I can assure you that I and my neighbors will remember when it's time to vote.

Sincerely,

Lane [REDACTED]

FW: Costco Terra Linda (?)

Steve Stafford

Fri 10/25/2019 7:24 AM

To: Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

For the file.

Steve Stafford

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Senior Planner

City of San Rafael

1400 Fifth Avenue

San Rafael, CA 94915-1560

415.458.5048 (o)

415.485.3184 (f)

Please note: City Hall and most departments/facilities will be closed from December 24, 2019 through January 1, 2020..

From: stanton [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2019 4:15 PM

To: Steve Stafford <Steve.Stafford@cityofsanrafael.org>

Subject: Costco Terra Linda (?)

Hello Steve,

Those of us who live near the erstwhile Sears site assume that traffic will become more congested than it already is, but has a traffic study been done? And what about demographics? Where will all the new customers come from? Will the store at Vintage Oaks lose a significant number of customers to Northgate?

I live in Terra Linda and make a trip to Vintage Oaks once every 6-8 weeks to shop at Costco and Target. Having a Costco within walking distance in Terra Linda seems like a trivial bonus given the negative impact of a second Costco in Marin.

Stanton [REDACTED]

Drawing for Larry Paul, DRB member. -- City of San Rafael (CT-0136139)

Keith [REDACTED]

Wed 10/23/2019 10:57 PM

To: City of San Rafael <publicworks@mail.connect.civicplus.com>; Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

📎 1 attachments (7 MB)

scale-comparisons_Costco.pdf;

Thanks Michele & Raffi,

Good DRB Meeting Tuesday night.

Design Board member Larry Paul asked two very serious questions that were dodged by the applicants and asked to see a particular drawing with no one committing to respond.

I wish to respond... I wish to contribute, not just complain. Please forward to him if possible. Or at least check it against the applicants' response if it ever comes.

Given the uncertainty of reported square footage data in all the properties, I used Google satellite photos imported at scale in to a vector program (Adobe Illustrator), added overlays from applicants' drawings, and made calculations of relative area based on graphic point measurements. Note matching scales in red circle.

I have provided these in the attached drawings showing that

- 1) The proposed Northgate Costco is 144% larger in footprint than the Cotsco in Novato.
- 2) The proposed Northgate Costco is 187% larger than the existing Sears buildings combined.

Happy to answer any question you may have.

Keith [REDACTED]

From: <publicworks@mail.connect.civicplus.com> on behalf of City of San Rafael

<publicworks@mail.connect.civicplus.com>

Date: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 at 9:20 AM

To: Keith [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Message from City of San Rafael (CT-0136139)

Michele Ginn has responded:

Thank you your message was received and Raffi received your email as well. We appreciate your feedback!

Michele Ginn

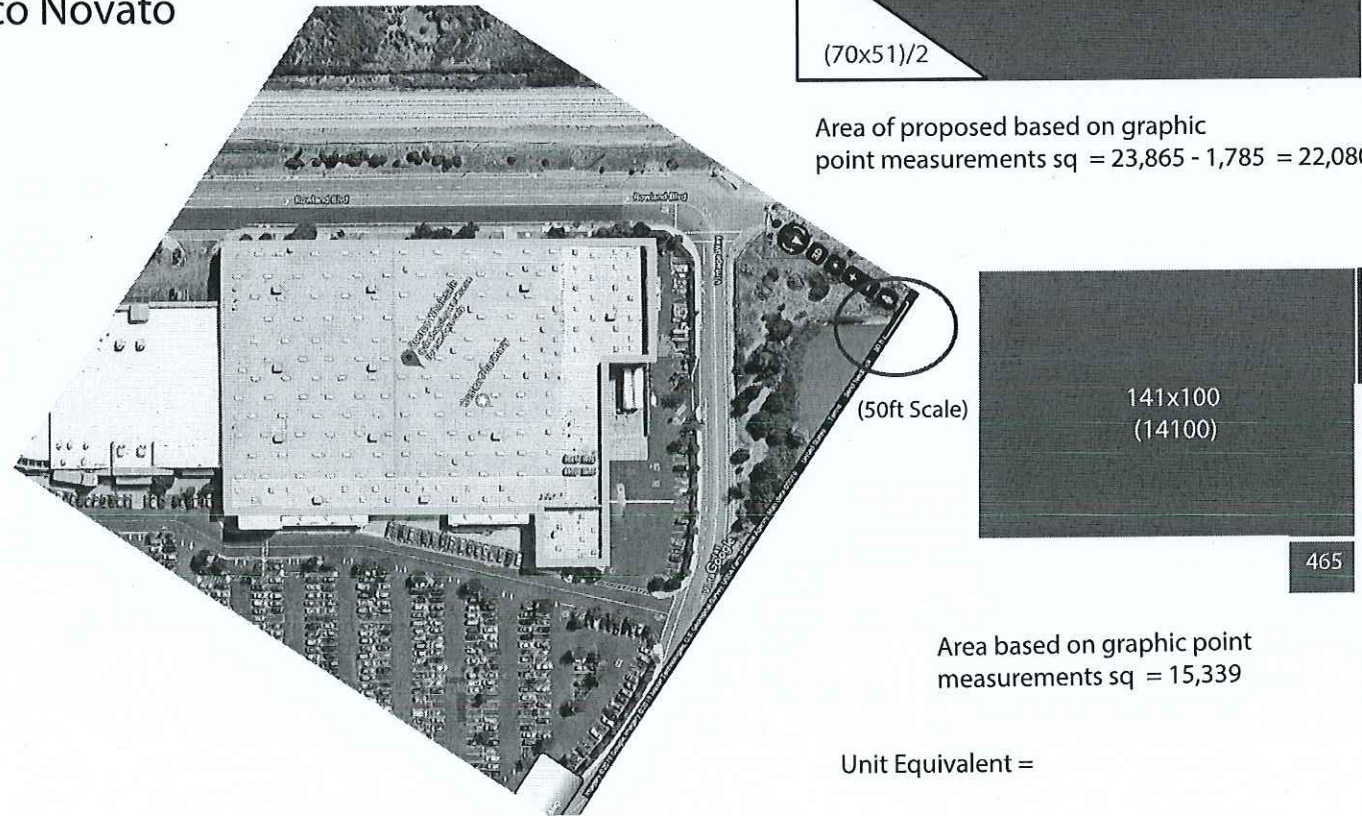
Comparison of Proposed Costco to existing Sears and Novato Costco

Costco San Rafael (Proposed)



Area of proposed based on graphic point measurements sq = 23,865 - 1,785 = 22,080

Costco Novato



Conclusions:
The proposed Northgate Costco is 144% larger in footprint than the Costco in Novato. (15,339 / 22080 = 144%)
The proposed Northgate Costco is 187% larger than the existing Sears buildings combined. (22,080 / 11,772 = 187%)

I am a Terra Linda resident opposed to Costco at Northgate Mall

Diana [REDACTED]

Tue 10/22/2019 5:42 PM

To: Gary Phillips <Gary.Phillips@cityofsanrafael.org>; Andrew McCullough <Andrew.McCullough@cityofsanrafael.org>;
Maribeth Bushey <Maribeth.Bushey@cityofsanrafael.org>; Kate Colin <Kate.Colin@cityofsanrafael.org>;
john.gambling@cityofsanrafael.org <john.gambling@cityofsanrafael.org>; Raffi Boloyan <Raffi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org>

Dear City Council and Planning Department Members,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the proposed addition of Costco at the Northgate Mall. The mall needs to be revitalized into a place that encourages and promotes community interaction and a giant shopping behemoth will not do this. We need activities at the mall that will bring people out to socialize and eat and drink: a roller rink, ice rink, bowling alley, live music venue, trampoline park, bookstore, great dining options, etc. These types of businesses can generate tax revenue for the city and help create a vibrant community in San Rafael.

There is no need for another Costco in Marin. There is one 8 miles away in Novato. Bringing Costco to Terra Linda will hurt the local businesses that make Terra Linda unique, in particular, Scotty's Market, which is a neighborhood treasure. Please see beyond the potential tax revenue Costco will generate and force the developer to come up with a better plan for Northgate that fits into our neighborhood and will enhance and create community.

Buying more things at Costco does not improve our city or help our community and neighborhoods.

Installing a mega gas station in Terra Linda will not improve our neighborhood - we already have 5 gas stations right across from the mall and it is very likely cars will soon have to operate on other fuels anyways to address climate change so putting in an enormous gas station is short sighted. It will become obsolete, probably sooner than we think.

The developer can and should do better. You, the city council and planning members, MUST make them. Thank you.

Diana [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Received 10/22/19
@DRB mtg

20 October 2019

To: Ralfi Boloyan Ralfi.Boloyan
Ralfi.Boloyan@cityofsanrafael.org

Re: Costco Proposal

Mr. Boloyan,

The neighborhood wants Northgate to be successful. It's in our interest for it to be so. However, it's incumbent that the developer consider the effects of this proposal and its potential to seriously erode the neighborhood support and trust. The Costco brand is severely tarnished by its proposal for a big box Goliath, bullying its way into the neighborhood, proffering substantial financial rewards at the cost of the health and quality of life for those who live and work here.

Is Costco oblivious to the neighborhood? The formulaic, 150,000 square feet of big box warehouse, suitable for a site along a highway exchange or major arterial, shoe-horns its way onto the site. It would be cheek-to-jowl with neighborhood homes, community services, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Alma Via, Drake Terrace, and Mt. Olivet Cemetery. It's notable that none of the architect's drawings go beyond the immediate Costco site. It's revealing that none of the drawings in the proposal name or even acknowledge the adjacent neighborhoods or adjacent uses. These neighborhoods are invisible.

The Costco warehouse explodes the footprint of the Sears building by more than twice, shoving the building and fueling stations to the limits of the site, in some cases to 200 feet from a residence. The organization of the plan unabashedly fronts service areas, loading docks, roof-top mechanical units, and the tire center against nearby neighborhoods, homes, and businesses. In the Costco plan, arriving, idling, backing, and accelerating eighteen-wheelers and refrigeration trailers will blast their noises toward the homes of residents to the decibel levels of a rock concert*. According to Costco operations, receiving would start at 2 AM in the morning, every morning. That's audacious. It's wrong. It demeans the people who live here.

Furthermore, pneumatic lug wrenches will rat-tat-tat from the tire changing area. Cars, trucks, and motorcycles will idle, restart, and accelerate through the night at the fueling station. Cars and motorcycles will accelerate up the parking ramps. The plan is dismissive of its neighbors.

With this exploding footprint comes the bulk of the warehouse. The south and west sides of the warehouse and the ramps will confront the neighborhoods with an impenetrable, 52 feet high, almost 600-feet-long barrier – a startling confrontation with the neighborhood.

The fueling station defiles the neighborhood. It's a truck-stop that lost its way. It's a new home for hazardous waste and a new source for toxic spills.

Still, there may be a way this project could work. As a first step to making this or any proposal work, Costco, the developer, and city authorities must acknowledge the neighborhood and its situation. Costco's proposal is devastatingly insensitive to people living, working, shopping, going to school, and visiting the neighborhoods. Daily, it will submit them to unsafe and unhealthy levels of traffic, noise, pollution, and

FOLLOWING A DREAM: THE NORTH SAN RAFAEL VISION

Received from Shirley
Fischer @ DRB mtg
10/22/19

Creating the Vision

In January, 1996, the San Rafael City Council agreed to initiate a visioning process for North San Rafael, similar to the process used to create the Downtown Vision and the Montecito neighborhood plan. A twenty-five member Steering Committee was created, including representatives from eight homeowner groups, eight local businesses including Northgate Mall, environmental and nonprofit organizations, a student from Terra Linda High School and a representative from Dixie School District, a resident in local rental housing, San Rafael's mayor, and representatives from the San Rafael City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Department. This broad-based committee was charged with designing and implementing a one-year process to allow residents and businesses in the northern San Rafael area to identify the essential aspects of their community and develop a vision of how they would like the community to evolve in the following decades. This vision would be incorporated into San Rafael's General Plan and provide a basis for future development and planning decisions.

A major goal of the vision process was to involve as many people as possible who were living, working, shopping, recreating, growing up, or growing old in the area of San Rafael north of Puerto Suello hill. Over 200 people attended the initial vision festival in October, 1996--taking guided tours of parts of the community, browsing through a neighborhood fair with food and exhibits from local organizations and business, and participating in small group discussions to identify essential elements of neighborhood identity and values as well as opportunities for improvement in housing, business and retail development, traffic, pedestrian and bicycle access,, schools, recreation, open spaces and aesthetics. The festival was followed by 13 public meetings, focus sessions with 43 neighborhood groups and school classes, and individual questionnaires which generated over 3,500 comments on likes, dislikes, and desired changes. The Vision Steering Committee integrated these comments into specific themes and goals and presented the results of their work, *Vision North San Rafael 2010*, to the San Rafael City Council in December, 1997.

Implementing the Vision: the Vision In Action (VIA) Committee

Not content to let the North San Rafael Vision document gather dust on a shelf, in 1998 the San Rafael created a 12-member committee of homeowner, business owners, and community representatives to "create an action plan and sponsor projects to implement the North San Rafael Vision."

During the five years of its existence, the VIA Committee shepherded the completion of a number of projects to implement portions of the NSR Vision:

- Beautification of the community entryway at Freitas Parkway, including renovation and redesign of Gateway Gas property
- Upgrading recreation facilities, such as Hoffman field, the water feature at Freitas Park, the baby pool at Terra Linda Community Center, and the skate park at McInnis Park
- Revision of development projects, such as the Vineyards business park (former Fairchild factory), Redwood Village (former PG&E storage site), Alma Via assisted living facility (former Lutheran Church)

In conjunction with commercial property owners and neighborhood representatives, VIA members refined objectives for the NSR Vision goal of developing a “town center” in the Northgate area, including an outdoor plaza with restaurants and performance area, improved pedestrian and cyclist access, upgraded retail options, and improved landscaping and building design.

Creating a safe pedestrian and bicycle route from Terra Linda Shopping Center to the Marin County Civic Center, a linear “spine” that would reunite neighborhoods east and west of the highway, was another goal of the NSR Vision. In 2001 the VIA Committee requested and received funding for consultant services to facilitate community input and develop a detailed plan for this pedestrian and bicycle pathway, the North San Rafael Promenade. In November, 2002, after several workshops attended by over 150 people, the *North San Rafael Vision Promenade Conceptual Plan* was accepted by the San Rafael City Council as the master plan for development of the Promenade as funding became available. In 2008 this conceptual plan was further refined with public input, specifying features such as paving, landscaping, interpretive signs, and benches in the *North San Rafael Promenade Design Features* document.

The Vision Continues

After the VIA Committee ended in 2003, implementation of the North San Rafael Vision continues through the effort of individuals and of community organizations such as the North San Rafael Coalition of Residents and local homeowner associations.

In 2009, when Macerich Company developed plans for a thorough renovation of Northgate Mall, they worked with San Rafael staff and community leaders to incorporate many aspects of the NSR Vision in their project. A pedestrian-friendly plaza surrounding a central “signature” live oak tree now allows for casual gathering as well as community events including live music and community performers. Reconstruction of the enclosed mall using “green” building techniques allows natural lighting and open air circulation during good weather, as well as a greater variety of retail and indoor-outdoor dining options.

A major element of Northgate’s renovation has been the creation of the first half-mile of the North San Rafael Promenade, a dedicated Class One bicycle and pedestrian path winding along Las Gallinas Avenue from Northgate Drive past the Merrydale Overcrossing. The year 2010 has arrived, and May 1st has been chosen as a day for the community to celebrate the actualization of the North San Rafael Promenade and other aspects of Vision *North San Rafael 2010*. It is also acknowledge continuing commitment to continue implementation of the NSR Vision in the decades to come. **Promenade Celebrations** is a nonprofit project of the North San Rafael Coalition of Residents and MarinLink established to continue development of the NSR Promenade. Donations are tax-deductible and 92% of funds raised will go to capital improvements of the Promenade.

Want to help? Questions? Suggestions? Email PromenadeCelebrations@msn.com

Received by Laurie Pirini
@ DRB mtg 10/22



Alma Via will be at the
End of the 72 cars
Waiting and using the
Cheap Costco Gas –
San Rafael's Goals –
a) Reduce Emissions
b) Reduce Noise
c) Improved Air & Water
Quality

Costco does not meet any
Of the above Goals

