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Notice of Availability Environmental Impact Report City of San Rafael

Date: January 5, 2024

To: State Clearinghouse State Responsible Agencies State Trustee Agencies Other Public Agencies Interested Organizations and Individuals Property Owners in the Vicinity	From: Heather Hines Consulting Planner City of San Rafael 1400 Fifth Street San Rafael, CA 94901
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Subject: Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Northgate Mall Redevelopment Project

Lead Agency: City of San Rafael Community Development Department

Project Title: Northgate Mall Redevelopment Project
(ZC21-001, UP21-007, ED21-024, TS21-002, IS21-002, DA21-001
APNs: 175-060-12,-40,-59,-61,-66 & -67)

Project Area: North San Rafael Town Center, City of San Rafael

Notice is hereby given that the City of San Rafael (City), as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Northgate Mall Redevelopment Project (proposed project). In accordance with Section 15087 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this Notice of Availability (NOA) to invite agencies, organizations, and interested parties to provide comments on the Draft EIR.

PUBLIC REVIEW: Comments on the Draft EIR will be accepted for a period of 45 days, beginning on January 5, 2024 and ending on February 19, 2024. **Comments must be received before 5:00 p.m. on February 19, 2024 in order to be considered.** However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Heather Hines at the address shown above or by email to hhines@m-group.us with "Northgate Mall Redevelopment Project Draft EIR" as the subject. Public agencies that provide comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

Written and verbal comments on the draft EIR will be also accepted during the Planning Commission meeting to be held at **7:00 p.m. on February 13, 2024**. The meeting will be held in person at San Rafael City Council Chambers, 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael. Please refer to the meeting agenda for details on virtual participation options: <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/planning-commission-meetings/>.

PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS: The project site is located west of US Highway 101 (US 101), in the City of San Rafael, Marin County. The approximately 44.76-acre project site consists of

the Northgate Mall, which is located within the San Rafael Town Center in the northern portion of the city. The project site is generally surrounded by a mix of uses, including commercial, residential, open space, and institutional. The project site is bordered by Las Gallinas Avenue to the north and east and Northgate Drive to the south and west.

The project site is designated as Community Commercial Mixed Use on the City's General Plan Land Use Map and is within the General Commercial zoning district. The mall, which originally opened in 1965, is generally oriented on a north-south axis, with the main building located in the center of the project site surrounded by surface parking and standalone buildings and structures. Current major tenants within the mall include Century Theatre, Macy's, Kohl's, Rite Aid, and HomeGoods. A total of 2,899 parking spaces are provided on the project site. Vegetation on the project site consists of ornamental landscaping, including landscaped strips along the boundaries of the site that contain street trees and shrubs, planters with trees within the surface parking lot, and some mature trees located adjacent to the existing buildings.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project would result in the redevelopment of the existing mall through demolition, renovation, and new construction with a mix of commercial and residential land uses. The proposed project would be developed in two phases. Phase 1 (also referred to as the 2025 Master Plan) would generally include the demolition of the RH Outlet building, the HomeGoods building, and the Mall Shops East, which is approximately 144,432 square feet of the main building, and construction of approximately 44,380 square feet of new commercial space and up to 922 residential units. Phase 2 (also referred to as the 2040 Vision Plan) would generally include the demolition of the 254,015-square foot Macy's building and 79,051-square-foot Kohl's building, and the construction of up to 55,440 square feet of new commercial space and up to 500 additional residential units.

At full build out, the project would include a total of up to approximately 217,520 square feet of commercial space and up to 1,422 residential units in six areas of the project site (1,746,936 square feet of residential area), 147 of which would be affordable units. A total of 648,807 square feet of existing building space would be demolished, and the total commercial area would be reduced by a total of 548,987 square feet. Building heights across the project site would vary, with a maximum of approximately 78 feet. The first phase of the proposed project would include the construction of a Town Square near the center of the project site; additional common open space and landscaped areas would be provided in both the first and second phases. New internal roadways would be built within the project site that would provide access to each of the new buildings and surface parking lots.

Discretionary actions by the City that would be necessary for development of the proposed project include environmental review, rezoning, an Environmental and Design Review Permit, a Development Agreement, a tentative subdivision map, and a Master Sign Program. The project sponsor is also requesting to use the density bonus to modify the development standards for height on the project site.

SIGNIFIGANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:The following environmental resource areas are addressed in the EIR: Land Use and Planning, Population and Housing, Visual Resources, Cultural Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Transportation, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Public Services and Recreation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Energy. All potential impacts to these resource areas are either less than significant or less than significant through the implementation of identified mitigation measures except for Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Noise, impacts for which would be significant and unavoidable.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES: The project site is not located on any list of hazardous materials waste sites compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

EIR PROCESS: In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the Draft EIR will be available for public review and comment for a 45-day review period. Following the close of the public review period on Monday, February 19 at 5:00 p.m., the City will prepare a Final EIR, which will include responses to all substantive comments received on the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR and Final EIR will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the project.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The Draft EIR, all documents incorporated by reference, and additional information regarding the proposed project can be accessed at the following website:

<https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/northgate-town-square>.

A paper copy and the proposed project's environmental file is available for public review during regular business hours at the Planning Division, 1400 Fifth Street, San Rafael. A paper copy is also available for review during regular hours at the San Rafael Downtown Public Library at 1100 E Street, San Rafael and the Northgate Library at 5800 Northgate Drive, Suite 083, San Rafael.

If you require additional information, please contact Heather Hines at: Hhines@m-group.us


Laura Simpson (Jan 4, 2024 14:45 PST)

January 5, 2024