

The Village at Laguna Hills

Attachment I

Public Comments Received



	A	B	C	D	E
1	Village at Laguna Hills - Letters of Support				
2	Name	Business	City, State	email address	Method
3	Sheri Feinberg	Printex	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
4	Patricia Thee	Beach Hardwood Floors Inc.	San Clemente, CA 92673		Letter #1
5	Stephanie Solomon	Orange Coast Orthodontics	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
6	Steve Seifert	Weston Automotive	Irvine, CA 92612		Letter #1
7	Bill Faithluvhope	Alpha Omega Constructors Inc.	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
8	Amy St. Hilaire		Aliso Viejo, CA 92656		Letter #1
9	Martha Haecherl	Keller Williams Realty	Laguna Niguel, CA 92677		Letter #1
10	Trisha Yee	The Inside Coup	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
11	Jerry Clarke	Alpha Omega Constructors Inc.	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
12	Nanciann Horvath	Improv for Health	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
13	Mike Mattson	One Source Realty Solutions	Mission Viejo, CA		Letter #1
14	Yasser Soliman	Chipotle	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
15	Sabrina Phillips	Designing Women of Orange County	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
16	Alex Presley	Smartflyer	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
17	Lyndon Brown	Alpha Omega Constructors Inc.	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
18	Jeff Zaret	PayProTec West Coast	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
19	Rich Rappa	Waverider Security	Escondido, CA 92025		Letter #1
20	Jay Lukes	The Lukes Network	Aliso Viejo, CA 92656		Letter #1
21	Jeff Halloran	Primerica	Las Vegas, NV		Letter #1
22	Alison B. Cox				Letter #1
23	Bob Tagupa		Aliso Viejo, CA 92656		Letter #1
24	Diane Katz			katzd23@gmail.com	Letter #1
25	Jasmine Bogwell				Letter #1
26	Ronny Johnson				Letter #1
27	Nathan Malone				Letter #1
28	Chris Boswell				Letter #1
29	Carrie Gardner				Letter #1
30	Danielle Mount				Letter #1
31	Donald Anderson				Letter #1
32	Nancy Ratkowski		Lake Forest, CA		Letter #1

	A	B	C	D	E
2	Name	Business	City, State	email address	Method
33	Peggysue Mowry		Lake Forest, CA		Letter #1
34	Tracy Morales		Lake Forest, CA		Letter #1
35	Fatima Amin		Irvine, CA		Letter #1
36	Sarah Hackett		Foothill Ranch, CA		Letter #1
37	Barbara Forsse				Letter #1
38	S. Trevett		Rancho Santa Margarita, CA		Letter #1
39	Steve Mendoza				Letter #1
40	Tom Holman				Letter #1
41	Gloria Mendoza				Letter #1
42	Nilesh Kanse				Letter #1
43	Lindsey Gilbert		Lake Forest, CA		Letter #1
44	Gerald Hester				Letter #1
45	J. Malitonis (?)		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
46	Manuel Rodriguez		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
47	Khalil Sarwari				Letter #1
48	Patricia Pollac				Letter #1
49	Thy Pham				Letter #1
50	William Barnett				Letter #1
51	Phyllis Bristow				Letter #1
52	Leslie Bird				Letter #1
53	Sheila Lind				Letter #1
54	Laura Ontiveros				Letter #1
55	Larin Barnett				Letter #1
56	Jennifer Tolifson		Mission Viejo, CA		Letter #1
57	Linda Back		Mission Viejo, CA		Letter #1
58	Rachel Stephenson		Mission Viejo, CA		Letter #1
59	Florene Barr				Letter #1
60	Lisa Tagupa		Aliso Viejo, CA		Letter #1
61	Roxanne Summers		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
62	Cindy Shoffeitt	Christ Community Preschool	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
63	Chad Jensen		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter #1
64	Joel Lautenschleger		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter
65	Megan Jensen		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter
66	Rachel Pourcho		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter

	A	B	C	D	E
2	Name	Business	City, State	email address	Method
67	Ben Pourcho, Esq.		Laguna Hills, CA 92653		Letter
68	Jill & Todd Lewis		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	jill-lewis@outlook.com	Letter
69	Marian Grace		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	mariangrace@cox.net	Email
70	Jennine Daniels	Homes By Jennine Inc.		info@homesbyjennine.com	Email
71	Alexa Goldblatt		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	alexa.goldblatt@capspharmacy.com	Letter
72	Carly Owens		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	2carlyowens@gmail.com	Email
73	Rachel Gillooly		Temecula, CA	Rachelgillooly83@gmail.com	Letter #2
74	Josh Provance		San Clemente, CA 92673	pacoprovance@gmail.com	Letter #2
75	Kylee Brown	Sun Pac Storage Containers	Laguna Hills, CA 92653	kyleeb78@gmail.com	Letter #2
76	Chanel Juzaitis		San Clemente, CA 92673	lmchanel12@hotmail.com	Letter #2
77	John Jovanovski		Lake Forest, CA	jjovance@gmail.com	Letter #2
78	Jeffrey S. Provance, Jr.		San Clemente, CA 92673	jprovance1@gmail.com	Letter #2
79	Geoff Kint		San Clemente, CA 92673	geoff@bruvs.org	Letter #2
80	Pam McGarry	Saddleback Valley Insurance	Ladera Ranch, CA	pamalamcgarry@gmail.com	Letter #2
81	Jessica Kavanagh		San Juan Capistrano, CA	jessicakavanagh234@yahoo.com	Letter #2
82	Clement Pepe		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	clement@clementpepe.com	Letter #2
83	Marcia Manker	Saddleback Medical Center	Laguna Hills, CA 92653		
84	Robert/Denise Pardue			pardue@cox.net	Email

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

February 18, 2021

Dear Mayor Pezold,

The residents and businesses of Laguna Hills have long awaited a revitalization of the Laguna Hills Mall. Now we have it with the proposed Village at Laguna Hills. It re-envisioned this space for the 21st century and includes not only retail, but entertainment and dining, office space, a boutique hotel, open space and even a residential community.

Because it is freeway adjacent, the residents and visitors to this new South County destination will be able to travel to and from the Village at Laguna Hills with minimal impact on our quality of life. But the benefits to the City and its taxpaying residents are significant!

- A 2.5-acre park in the heart of the Village, which can be used for community gatherings, non-profit fundraisers, concerts in the park and other city events.
- More than \$22 million to the City to upgrade existing city parks and other community features.
- A new revenue stream for sales tax and TOT tax to the city to enhance public safety, parks and other public city services.
- Thousands of jobs at a time when unemployment in California is near an all-time high.
- A self-sustaining walkable village where residents will be able to live, work and shop all within this community ecosystem.

I encourage you to vote YES when this project comes before you later this spring. Thank you for your consideration of this needed community enhancement.

Sincerely,



cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

March 11, 2021

The Hon. Erica Pezold, Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Re: Support for the Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Mayor Pezold,

Like you, I have had a strong passion for public service, which is why I served on the Laguna Hills City Council from the City's incorporation in 1991 through 2012. My primary goal – along with defeating the proposed airport at El Toro – was to ensure fiscally conservative policies to protect our residents. We found ways to encourage economic development so that we could continue to enjoy quality parks, a new community center and sports complex, and pay for the public safety we need, all while protecting the Laguna Hills taxpayers.

The Laguna Hills Mall was critical to our city's financial success for years. Residents from throughout the region would visit, spend money there and provide our city a reliable and significant source of sales tax revenue to the City. As online shopping cut into those sales, it became clear that a new way to look at the mall had to be considered.

After researching the issue and viewing the video presentations provided, I firmly believe The Village at Laguna Hills project is that new vision for success that will propel our City for a new generation. We'll see more robust retail, entertainment and even hotel TOT revenue from this project. The City will get a multi-million-dollar infusion at the beginning of construction and millions more over the years in a steady stream of tax dollars that can go to the programs and services Laguna Hills residents have come to expect.

I encourage you to vote yes on this important project and I thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,



Joel Lautenschleger
Former Laguna Hills Mayor and Council Member

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

March 23, 2021

RE: APPROVE the Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Mayor Pezold,

I'm asking you and your council colleagues to APPROVE the Village at Laguna Hills. If you deny this project, you are denying Laguna Hills its economic future. Further, nearly 1,000 homes will be built on this site whether you vote to approve this project or not. The difference is that an approval means the assurance of a destination location for Laguna Hills residents and South Orange County shoppers.

An approval means that the taxpayers will be protected as the developer pays millions of dollars to the city to enhance police protection, fire protection and improving our parks.

An approval means a location where nurses at the local hospital or workers from the local offices can live, work, shop and dine – all within one 67-acre community.

An approval means additional office space as the market dictates.

An approval means a new hotel, which will generate Transit Occupancy Tax from visitors – not residents – to benefit our beautiful city.

Elected officials often say how "business friendly" they are when they are running for office. This vote will give you the opportunity to put those words into action.

For our city's future, please vote yes.

Sincerely,



Megan Jensen
25082 Champlain Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

March 26, 2021

RE: APPROVE the Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Mayor Pezold,

Laguna Hills residents have been waiting for years for the revitalization of Laguna Hills Mall. For decades we've seen the popularity of malls slide as more and more people bought items online and socialization with friends and family migrated to social media platforms. I think we can all agree that without a major investment from the property owner at the mall, this potential tax generator for Laguna Hills will remain just that – potential.

Now, with COVID19, we've seen the struggles of our local businesses amplified. But in every challenge, I see an opportunity. With the Village at Laguna Hills, we have an opportunity if our council has the foresight to approve this project.

The property owner is willing to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to revitalize this great community asset. This will include new restaurants, new retail and a dedication of more than 20% of the property as open space.

Yes, there will be additional housing, but this is housing that Laguna Hills needs to allow for. Even with approval of this project, Laguna Hills will still have a housing shortfall according to the Southern California Association of Government's Regional Housing Needs Assessment. But it is critical that the city move in the right direction to develop needed housing alternatives.

Thank you for considering my comments and I ask you to APPROVE this project at your public hearing later this spring.

Sincerely,



Rachel Pourcho
25092 Champlain Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

March 23, 2021

Dear Mayor Pezold,

When the Laguna Hills Mall opened in 1973, it was on the vanguard of a new movement in retail shopping. Through the late 70's, the 80's and even the early 90's, "the mall" was where we'd meet – friends, family and neighbors. We called it "retail therapy" and it was a big part of our lives.

But soon online shopping began to take over and friends would just as soon hang out on social media platforms than at the mall. One by one stores began closing and it became clear that in order to survive, the Laguna Hills Mall would need a revitalization, a rebrand and – most importantly – a re-envisioning as to what it could be.

The proposed Village at Laguna Hills is what our community needs as we once again lead the way into the next 20-30 years. A destination location where we can not only shop, but dine, relax and enjoy ourselves. For too long, Laguna Hills residents have had to look north to the Spectrum, south to the Outlets or east to the Kaleidoscope. We want and need a quality hometown entertainment location to keep our tax revenue here in Laguna Hills.

Certainly I can empathize with those concerned about the additional housing being requested. But remember, the state has set housing requirements for Laguna Hills and adding apartment homes near the freeway and near places of employment and near the Laguna Hills Transportation Center seems to be the best location. For new residents, they can work nearby, shop nearby, dine nearby and use the freeway and transportation center for mobility. This new self-contained community ecosystem is good for the revitalization of the shopping center and good for the Laguna Hills community at large.

Please vote to approve this project.

Sincerely,



Ben Pourcho, Esq.
25092 Champlain Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

Cindy Sands

From: Jill Lewis <jill-lewis@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 2:44 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills Development
Attachments: letter to city supporting Village at LH.docx

The Hon. Erica Pezold, Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Dear Mayor Pezold,

My husband and I are 26-year residents of Laguna Hills. During this time, we have seen many positive changes and developments in our community. Something that has concerned us for the last few years is the eye sore that is the current Laguna Hills Mall property. We, as a community, have been waiting for years for the revitalization of the Laguna Hills Mall and now finally have a solution with the proposed Village at Laguna Hills. The project will offer not only retail, but entertainment and dining, office space, a boutique hotel, open space and even a residential community.

This mixed-use development will be a benefit to all in the community with the addition of a 2.5-acre park, dining and entertainment options, office space which attracts new employment to the area, additional taxes for both local and state programs and a walkable environment where residents can live, work and shop.

I encourage you to vote YES when this project comes before you later this spring. Thank you for your consideration of this needed community enhancement.

Sincerely,

Jill and Todd Lewis

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Marian <mariangrace@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 8:48 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Laguna Hills Mall

Dear Laguna Hills City Council Members,

I don't know where you are in the process of reviewing the plans for the Village at Laguna Hills, but I hope for the sake of this community you are giving it serious consideration. After attending the Town Hall Zoom meeting that was held with the developers, I cannot think of a single reason not to move forward with this. They presented an extremely progressive and sustainably conscientious plan that would give our city the face lift it so desperately needs to compete in today's market. You know we need to keep up with the times to draw more business and families to this area. The scale and quality of this project would definitely keep us competitive and hopefully inspire other centers and businesses in Laguna Hills to update in ways that add even more value to our community. I spent 12 years supporting our public schools and can tell you they need this project to succeed. Homeowners, small LH businesses, employees of small LH businesses all need this to happen.

I respect your willingness to step up and be a civic leader.
Please approve the Village at Laguna Hills to show your commitment is earnest.

Thank you,
Marian Grace
Laguna Hills Resident since 2006

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Jennine Daniels <info@homesbyjennine.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 9:30 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Revitalization of the Laguna Hills Mall.
Attachments: VLH Letter_SUPPORT.docx

I support the proposed Village at Laguna Hills.

Jennine



Homes By Jennine Inc.

Jennine Daniels

REALTOR® | Lic# 02033033
(949) 636-1152
info@homesbyjennine.com
jenninedaniels.firstteam.com



FIRSTTEAM®

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

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[External E-mail]

March 17, 2021

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Dear Mayor Pezold,

I'm a longtime Laguna Hills resident and I fully support the Village at Laguna Hills. This is a project that will not only create a new vibrant hub for our community, but it will also bring in millions of dollars in tax revenue that can be used to improve our parks, pave our streets and pay for police officers and public safety services.

I do my best to support our local businesses and restaurants in Laguna Hills and prefer if my purchases go towards the tax revenue in the city, I live in. I really think something needs to be done to revitalize the area of the old Laguna Hills Mall, and to have a mix of retail space, office space and homes would mean I could stop going to the Irvine Spectrum, which is a hodgepodge layout of a mall, but is the only outdoor shopping mall in the area. With almost all businesses struggling right now, having someone to build and revitalize the area is crucial, while also employing local businesses and people...

Let's support local business that will make our community stronger and I ask you to vote yes on the Village at Laguna Hills.

Sincerely,



Alexa Goldblatt
25661 Indian Hill Lane, Unit E
Laguna Hills, CA

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

Cindy Sands

From: Carly Owens <2carlyowens@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 9:31 PM
To: City Council
Subject: APPROVE the Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Mayor Pezold,

As a Laguna Hills resident, I am asking that you vote to approve the proposed revitalization of the Laguna Hills Mall. The impact on me and my neighbors will be small, but the benefits will be significant. Most importantly, we'll finally have a new retail destination location we'll look forward to frequenting! It'll have a new movie theatre, a central park area and lots of new shops and restaurants. The Village at Laguna Hills will breathe life into our community and I am excited about this prospect!

Buying online is admittedly convenient, but it isn't as fun as meeting friends to go shopping and dine together. As we emerge from this pandemic, I'm really looking forward to visiting a place like the Village at Laguna Hills and I hope you will vote to support this important project that will bring jobs, tax revenue, and vibrancy into Laguna Hills.

Sincerely,
Carly

Carly Owens
24391 Avenida de la Carlota
Apt 529
Laguna Hills, CA, 92653

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

[External E-mail]

The Hon. Erica Pezold
Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

March 15, 2021

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2021

CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS

Dear Mayor Pezold,

I support the Village at Laguna hills because:

- This project will protect the taxpayers and bring millions of dollars in new tax revenue to the City.
- The City can use the tax revenue generated by this project to add police and fire protection as well as improve our parks.
- The project will help the City comply with state housing regulations.
- The project is freeway adjacent.
- The Laguna Hills Mall is in need of revitalization.

Please vote YES when this project comes before you for a vote.

Sincerely,

Chanel Juzaitis
San Clemente
lmchanel12@hotmail.com

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member



February 18, 2021

The Hon. Erica Pezold, Mayor
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Rd.
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Dear Mayor Pezold,

As a neighbor of the proposed Village at Laguna Hills, I'm writing to ask the Laguna Hills City Council to approve this project at your meeting this spring. This project not only offers renewed opportunities for retail, entertainment and dining for our staff and patients' families, but it also offers an opportunity for much needed housing for our nurses and resident doctors. The proximity of the Village at Laguna Hills makes it walkable, which will not only reduce the environmental footprint of those who live, work, shop and play in this area, but it creates a self-sustaining community ecosystem – a true village here in Laguna Hills.

The hotel also offers opportunities for our patients' families to stay nearby while their loved ones are receiving our excellent medical treatment. And the parks and open space will provide a sense of calm and relaxation for guests and residents alike.

For too long we've seen the mall struggle as online shopping chips away at traditional retail. Any concept that the popularity of a 1980's-type mall needs to be put to bed. The Village at Laguna Hills is a forward-thinking concept proposed by a company that is committed to seeing it through.

While this revitalization has a regional benefits, the millions in tax revenue will stay right here in Laguna Hills. I encourage you to vote yes when this project comes before you for consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m. manker".

Marcia Manker, Chief Executive Officer, Orange County Region

cc: The Hon. Don Sedgwick, Mayor Pro Tem
The Hon. Janine Heft, Council Member
The Hon. Bill Hunt, Council Member
The Hon. Dave Wheeler, Council Member

Cindy Sands

From: Robert Pardue <pardue@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 7:48 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Merlone Geier project at Laguna Hills Mall site

Dear Laguna Hills Mayor & City Council

I have been following the proposal for the new mixed use concept at the Laguna Hills mall. I attended the in-person briefing some months ago, and have reviewed the plans submitted by the owner / developer, Merlone Geier.

Recently, I received information from the FLAG group, in which they proposed a smaller series of projects and multiple approvals along the way.

Contrary to the FLAG recommendation, I am in **SUPPORT of the original plan submitted by the developer**, subject to the City Council's review for zoning, density and other such factors and/or variances.

I personally believe the project sounded like an appropriate update for the site, and I would like to see the re-make begin as soon as possible.

By way of background, my wife and I are Laguna Hills residents for over 30 years, and enjoy the city very much.

Thanks for the opportunity to give input on this project.

Sincerely,

Robert Pardue
Denise Pardue

Laguna Hills, CA

[External E-mail]

	A	B	C	D
1	Village at Laguna Hills - Letters of Concern			
2	Name	Business	City, State	email address
3	Eva Lydick		Laguna Woods, CA	eval01@msn.com
4	Raquel T. Bruno			rocky2@cox.net
5	Rita Rabinowitz	Concerned Citizens	Laguna Hills, CA 92654	
6	Carl Christiansen			christiansenlh@hotmail.com
7	Stella Escario-Doiron	Saddleback Valley Unified School District	Mission Viejo, CA 92691	
8	Cesar Covarrubias	Kennedy Commission		
9	Barry Ross	Providence Community Health Investment	Fullerton, CA 92834	barry.ross@stjoe.org
10	Rosemary Busta			rosebusta@gmail.com
11	Ann Owens			annowens@cox.net
12	Mario Vasquez			mr.n.mrs.vasquez@gmail.com
13	Claudia Mohler			justpeachy922@hotmail.com
14	Bob/Genie Martin		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	fiteon@pacbell.net
15	Clint Refsnyder			penn34@cox.net
16	David Harrington			dh@davidharrington.com
17	Kenneth Benson		Laguna Woods, CA 92637	alpha91307@hotmail.com
18	Sidney Harrington		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	sidneyharrington@gmail.com
19	Connie George			conniegeorge@cox.net
20	Faye Checkoway			fayetc75@gmail.com
21	Marsha Westropp		Laguna Hills, CA 92653	mwestropp@gmail.com
22	Garry Hierman			gkhierman@gmail.com
23	John Loper	University of Southern California	Irvine, CA 92603	jloper@usc.edu
24	Kathy & Mark Collier			mkcoller@cox.net
25	Anne Taylor-Loughran, RN			aetaylor1@yahoo.com

Cindy Sands

From: E Lyd <EVAL01@msn.com>
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 11:46 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Laguna Hills Mall Redevelopment (Village at Laguna Hills)

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to require that at least 15% of the new living units in the Village at Laguna Hills development be designated for low and very low earners. It is time we moved past the NIMBY attitudes and decisions based on increasing future tax base and think about a more equitable future. We have seen the devastation that the lack of affordable housing can play in people's lives and also the very negative image that this gives us and our cities. I urge Laguna Hills to take a step forward with this opportunity for re-development and make new housing opportunities for low wage earners. It has been shown that when families can move to better neighborhoods, they do better and more successful families and individuals benefit all of us.

Thank you for your consideration,

Eva Lydick
Laguna Woods

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Ken Rosenfield
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 7:47 PM
To: Melissa Au-Yeung
Cc: David Chantarangsu; Cindy Sands
Subject: FW: Village at Laguna Hills

Public comment for future use.

Ken

From: Cox <rocky2@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:44 PM
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

1. That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
2. I am requesting the City Council to postpone or reschedule the public hearings to a later time when the community can achieve full active participation in public hearings, since present restrictions due to COVID-19 prohibit being able to assemble & meet so the public can participate effectively.

Sincerely,
Raquel T. Bruno

Sent from my iPhone

[External E-mail]

RECEIVED

MAR 22 2021

CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



OF LAGUNA WOODS VILLAGE

Concerned Citizens
PO Box 2898
Laguna Hills, Ca 92654

March 15, 2021

Dear Council Member,

I am writing as a resident of Laguna Woods to let you know that I am concerned about the lack of affordable senior citizen and workforce housing in our communities. The proposed project at the Village at Laguna Hills will be creating many low-income jobs. However, there is no plan to build sufficient housing for this demographic. I feel that every city is responsible for meeting the needs of its community, including current residents who are struggling financially. This is particularly important in light of the economic impact of Covid 19, which has been devastating for many families.

The new Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers will require the city of Laguna Hills to build over 900 units for low- and very low-income families. Now is the perfect time to meet some of this quota, especially since this is one of the last available sites for new building in the city.

I hope that the council will see the need for low-income housing and require that the developer include it in his plan. It is not only the right but the necessary thing to do.

Sincerely,

Rita Rabinowitz

Corresponding Secretary

Concerned Citizens

March 3, 2021

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The Village at Laguna Hills is the most important project that the City of Laguna Hills has ever had to tackle. The success or failure of the project will affect the City for decades. The current plan has several issues that need to be addressed. The retail component which is the heart of the project for the residents of Laguna Hills has serious flaws.

ISSUES:

- 1) **SIZE OF RETAIL:** One of the most important issues about the Village at Laguna Hills is that the amount of land devoted to retail is significantly less than desired by the community. I would encourage the City to enlarge the amount of land devoted to retail to allow for future expansion of the retail component.
- 2) **PARKING:** Only half of the retail parking is surface parking adjacent to the retail. The other half of the required parking is in structures or on private streets away from the retail buildings. I feel this project is so under parked in terms of convenient parking that it will make parking issues at Irvine Spectrum look good. The current parking design could kill the success of the retail component.
- 3) **STRUCTURED PARKING:** The current site plan places approximately 400 parking spaces for the retail in the office parking structures and 110 parking spaces in the residential parking structure yet has a large surface parking lot for the office building. Kaleidoscope in Mission Viejo is an example of a retail center that has had a troubled history – and most people think is that the structured parking is one of its biggest problems. Most successful retail projects in South Orange County have abundant surface parking. I am worried that having the retail component rely on using the office building parking structure is going to negatively affect the success of the project.
- 4) **STREET PARKING:** One of the hidden secrets of the project is that over 240 of the parking spaces for the retail is on the private streets. While some of the street parking is next to retail, much of it is a significant distance away, including the parking in front of the hospital on Calle de La Louisa and the street parking on Calle de Los Caballeros next to Oakbrook Village. These are a long walk to the retail so no one is going to use them for retail parking.
- 5) **OVERALL PARKING:** About half, (750 spaces), of the 1,500 required parking spaces for retail are not convenient surface parking located close to the retail which I feel is going to make the retail component less successful than their competitors that have easy to access parking. The City does not need a bad parking design to kill the success of the retail and ruin the revenue potential of the project.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

I would suggest that the office component between the mall entrance and Calle de la Magdalena be moved to the surface parking lot located between Health Center Drive and Calle de Los Caballeros and a surface parking lot be constructed on the lot at the mall entrance to provide parking spaces for the retail center adjacent to the Village Green. (See attached plan). This plan has the following advantages:

- Moves 360 retail parking spaces from the office parking structure to surface parking that is adjacent to the Village Green retail uses.
- The plan increases the land devoted to retail by 20% by adding 4.3 acres.
- Provides room for future growth of retail as demand increases such as more restaurants or another anchor retailer on the 4.3 acres.
- Allows for the Special Events space to be located in the retail zone to provide synergies with the retail uses.
- Many of the Special Event and Farmers Market visitors will want to visit restaurant and retailers so moving the event space next to the Village Green brings these customers adjacent to the retail uses.
- Allows the retail and hotel component to be visible from the northbound and southbound 5 freeway which retailers want.
- Removes the view of the 5-story parking structure from the Village Green which was less than desirable visually.
- The current EIR analysis would not need to be changed since the intensity is the same.

I believe this simple modification to the site plan would significantly improve the success of the retail component by changing from structured parking to surface parking and would provide more land dedicated to retail to allow for future expansion of the retail component as demand increases.

ARCHITECTURE:

Another issue is the architecture of the retail component of the Village at Laguna hills. I do not think the proposed architecture is elegant enough for Laguna Hills. The materials and colors have an Agrarian look similar to Lake Forest and don't fit with the character of Laguna Hills which prides itself with refined architecture. It would be better if it looked less like a barn and more like a high-end Village Main Street. I would suggest more refined materials - Nordstrom's level finishes not a Fresno barn.

The following materials are currently proposed for the retail component and don't fit an upscale Village Center:

- Board Form Concrete
- Metal Wall Panels
- Metal Roofing
- Perforated Metal Panels
- Concrete Panels
- Simulated Plaster Finish

The office and residential components have similar trendy industrial design that I am not a fan of but the critical part of the project is the Retail Component so it needs to reflect the tastes of the residents of Laguna Hills. Fashion Island, Crystal Cove Shopping Center, Los Olivos Center, Spectrum Center, Oakbrook Village and City Hall all have a refined, sophisticated and timeless look. These should be inspirations for the Village since it will be the heart of Laguna Hills. Not a barn one would see on the 5 Freeway on the drive to San Francisco. Please help us make the Village at Laguna Hills a place we will be proud to show our friends instead of an embarrassment.

TRAFFIC – PRIVATE ROAD SYSTEM:

The current plan has narrow two lane private roads at all of the intersections to Avenida de la Carlota. These roads should be widened at the intersection with Avenida de la Carlota so that they are at least one lane in and two lanes out with a left turn lane and right turn lane. Health Center Drive and Calle de los Caballeros should both have signals on Avenida de la Carlota since they connect through to Paseo de la Valencia. Avenida de La Carlota should have a landscaped median to provide a green entrance to the project and frame the view from the freeway.

CONCLUSION:

The vision of the Specific Plan was to create a place to become the heart of the City. The current plan does not fill that role. I believe the plan could be easily modified to greatly increase the potential for success. The redesign would not delay the approval process significantly since the intensity is the same – just rearranged on the site to make it function better and make the retail more successful. More work needs to be done to create a Village Center that will be comfortable, user friendly and have successful retail. I believe that increasing the retail land area, providing more retail surface parking and changing the architecture will solve many of the current issues. The City Council needs to insist that the Village at Laguna Hills be designed with the residents of Laguna Hills in mind.

Sincerely,

Carl Christiansen

New Retail Parking (360 spaces)

Move Office to New Location

Location for Special Events

LEGEND

- Retail / Restaurant / Health Club / Cinema
- Residential
- Office
- Hotel
- Structured Parking

PHASE SUMMARY

Overall Site Area	±2,935,730 SF / ±67.8 Acres
District Area	±756,175 SF / ±17.4 Acres
Retail / Restaurant / Health Club / Cinema	250,000 SF
District Area	±97,300 SF / ±2.2 Acres
Hotel	100-150 Rooms
District Area	±796,175 SF / ±18.2 Acres
Office	485,000 SF
District Area	±1,288,080 SF / ±30.0 Acres
Residential / Mixed-Use	1,500 Units
Parking Required	5,824 Stalls
Parking Provided	5,939 Stalls

* See full breakdown on Project & Parking Summaries, Sheets SD1.01 & SD1.02.



THE VILLAGE AT LAGUNA HILLS

MerloneGeier Partners

Saddleback Valley
Unified School District



25631 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo, California 92691
(949) 586-1234
www.svUSD.org

Board of Education

Suzie R. Swartz, President • Amanda Morrell, Vice President •
Barbara Schulman, Clerk • Dr. Edward Wong, Member • Greg Kunath, Member

Crystal Turner, Ed.D.
Superintendent

February 8, 2021

Jay S. Wu, AICP, Senior Planner
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Via Email: jwu@lagunahillca.gov

Subject: Response to the Proposed Tentative Tract Map No. 19123 for Residential and Commercial Purposes,
The Village at Laguna Hills Project (USE-001-2019)

Dear Mr. Wu:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on The Village at Laguna Hills project (Tentative Tract Map No. 19123). The 65.93-acre project site is at 24155 Laguna Hills Mall, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 (APNs 621-051-038, 39, and 41; 621-141-58; 621-221-02 through 14). The project will redevelop the Laguna Hills Mall, which opened in 1973 but is now nearly vacant; the food court closed in 2011 due to declining visitors.

The project will demolish 449,611 square feet of mall space—the department stores, anchor stores, and automobile service centers—and construct new commercial/retail buildings and a cinema, a 125-room boutique hotel, office buildings, two parking structures, and up to 1,500 multifamily residential units in five 5- and 6-story buildings.

The project site is in the Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP) and designated Village Commercial by the City's general plan and the zoning map. The 240-acre UVSP is intended as a community core with commercial, civic, and high-density residential, with enhanced pedestrian areas that link the uses. It is our understanding that the UVSP was first adopted in November 2002 and was amended in 2011 to include an additional 300,000 square feet of retail, a 250-room hotel, 200 dwelling units, and 380,000 square feet of general office uses.

The project's description says that the land use mixes and intensities described in the 2011 amendment to the UVSP are neither prescriptive nor limiting, and that the UVSP provides for flexibility so that a mixture of various new land uses can be developed at different intensities, provided that the overall AM and PM peak hour vehicle trip budgets established by the UVSP are not exceeded.

The project's description says that the City's general plan update (GPU) and its program EIR assumed 300,000 square feet of new retail, a 250-room hotel, 200 dwelling units, and 380,000 square feet of office in the UVSP, and that the 2011 amendment to the UVSP was approved with an addendum to the GPU EIR.

The project description also states that in 2016 the city approved a series of entitlements to redevelop the Laguna Hills Mall into a mixed-use development known as Five Lagunas, with about 880,000 square feet of new and renovated commercial retail, a cinema, restaurants, health club, flex retail/office space, and 988 residential units. Though the project description does not say so explicitly, it implies that this 2016 amendment to the UVSP was also approved through an addendum to GPU EIR.

The project site is in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District but is not currently assigned to any school. Based on current student generation factors, at buildout, the project would generate about 323 elementary school students, 96

intermediate school students, and 170 high school students, for a combined total of 587 students.¹ Schools close to the project site that serve Laguna Hills are listed in the following table with their capacities. As shown, District schools have sufficient capacities to serve the intermediate and high school students that would be generated by the project. However, the elementary schools lack capacity to accommodate all the students generated by the project, falling short by 245 seats.

SVUSD Schools Serving The Village at Laguna Hills Enrollment and Capacity					
	Capacity	2019/20 School Year Enrollment	Surplus/(Shortage) of Seats	Students Generated by the Project	Surplus/(Shortage) of Seats
San Joaquin ES	449	317	132	n/a	n/a
Lomarena ES	525	618	(93)	n/a	n/a
Valencia ES	626	587	39	n/a	n/a
ES Total	1,600	1,522	78	323	(245)
Los Alisos IS	1,215	776	439	n/a	n/a
IS Total	1,215	776	439	96	343
Laguna Hills HS	2,403	1,500	903	n/a	n/a
HS Total	2,403	1,500	903	170	733
Student Total				589	n/a

Source: Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study, SVUSD, March 18, 2020.

The project description states that the amendments to the UVSP were approved with addenda to the GPU EIR but does not identify the UVSP's original CEQA documentation when it was approved in 2002. The GPU EIR assumed 457 new dwelling units (7 detached units and 450 multifamily units) in the city's planning area at buildout, which would generate 47.4 elementary school students, 21.8 intermediate school students, and 46.1 high school students. The GPU EIR found school impacts less than significant with payment of the required school fees. We understand that the less than significant finding for the school impact would not have changed in the previous addenda, but we request a school impact discussion for the currently approved project be included in the new addendum for comparison purposes.

Multifamily units under the proposed project would increase from 988 of the 2016 amendment to 1,500 units, an increase of 512 units. The city plans to prepare a fourth addendum to the GPU EIR for the project, and we anticipate that the new residential units will pay the school facility developer fee when building permits are issued. But because there is not enough capacity at the current elementary schools to accommodate the proposed project, the District may have to construct more facilities. We request that the proposed addendum evaluate whether the proposed increase in students and the need for more elementary school facilities would result in additional environmental impacts compared to the certified GPU EIR. We also request that the time frame for the three phases of residential development be provided in the environmental documentation.

The Saddleback Valley USD requests that the City continue to notify the District of all actions on this project and give the District an opportunity to review future environmental documentation.

Our mission is to provide all students with a high-quality education in a safe and nurturing environment so they can reach their full potential and become contributing and compassionate citizens in the world community. It is critical that the District remain involved in the planning process.

We look forward to working cooperatively with the City to create the best environment for our students and staff and the larger community. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Stella Escario-Doiron

Chief of Facilities, Maintenance, Operations, Construction and Transportation

¹ Multifamily attached units: 0.215 for elementary school, 0.0634 for intermediate school, and 0.1127 for high school (Table 5, Adjusted Student Generation Factors, Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development School Fee Justification Study, Saddleback Valley Unified School District, March 18, 2020, Cooperative Strategies).

Cindy Sands

From: Cesar C <cesarc@kennedycommission.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Erica Pezold; Donald M. Sedgwick; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; City Council
Cc: Rona Henry; Mildred Perez; Michelle Murphy; Kent Doss; Elizabeth Hansburg P4H; mseyler@cluejustice.org; Chris Collins; pastor@ncclaguna.org; diane nied; Brenda J. Rodriguez; tristanreth@gmail.com; sararadecki1@gmail.com; bjs54321@gmail.com; Ken Rosenfield; David Chantarangsu; dgeiser@merlonegeier.com; Stephen Logan; jgastelum@placeworks.com; nwest@placeworks.com
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills - Laguna Hills Mall Redevelopment
Attachments: Laguna Hills Village Public Comment Letter_FINAL_2020-02-09 (1).pdf

Dear Mayor Pezold, Mayor Pro Tem Sedgwick, and Councilmembers Heft, Hunt and Wheeler,

A group of concerned organizations have joined to sign the attached public comment letter regarding the *Village at Laguna Hills*. Our purpose is to raise awareness and to present recommendations that we believe can increase the quality and quantity of attainable housing for those who live and work in Laguna Hills. We are particularly concerned about workforce housing for those earning under \$50,000 per year – which makes up 23% of the residents in Laguna Hills.

Out of the estimated 1350 to 1500 homes planned, only a total of 200 affordable units have been presented by the developer, divided as 100 for low-income residents and 100 for moderate income residents. **We believe this does not adequately address the great need for extremely low and very low-income housing units.**

The entitlement benefits achieved by your approval should generate a better community benefit to a broader range of city residents than presented to date. This site and proposed development will be key to helping the City meet its RHNA and Housing Element goals in the balance way. Given the proposed density and generous development concessions, it will be especially important that affordable housing for Extremely Low, Very Low and Low be a priority in this development. If balanced housing development is not maximized, the city will have little choice but to increase its commitment by providing more very low and extremely low-income units elsewhere in the city.

There is ample research and direct experience of California cities, that certain approaches have been effective in producing quality, attainable very low and extremely low-income housing. The practice that is broadly recommended uses a required percentage of units for extremely low and very low-income housing mixed in with other housing, known as an inclusionary policy. This has worked in large scale developments like this one and has successfully generated community benefits in exchange for large scale entitlements and development incentives provided to the developer.

The following organizations have signed the letter: Kennedy Commission, United Way, People for Housing – YIMBY OC, Christ Community Church Laguna Hills, Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice, Interfaith Council of Greater Rancho Santa Margarita, Neighborhood Congregational Church, Welcoming Neighbors Home, Affordable Housing Clearinghouse, and League of Women Voters Homelessness Advocacy Team.

We look forward to working with you to expand affordable housing opportunities. We welcome a dialog with you about the opportunities that exist in the redevelopment of the Laguna Hills Mall. I am serving as primary contact for this group. I can be reached at (949) 250-0909 or cesarc@kennedycommission.org.

Cesar Covarrubias
Executive Director
Kennedy Commission

2 Attachments

[External E-mail]

February 9, 2020

RE: Public Comment regarding *The Village at Laguna Hills*

Dear Mayor Pezold, Mayor Pro Tem Sedgwick and Councilmembers Heft, Hunt and Wheeler,

We have come together as a group of concerned organizations to offer input on the development and planning of the Village at Laguna Hills. Our purpose is to raise awareness and to present recommendations that we believe can increase the quality and quantity of attainable housing for those who live and work in Laguna Hills.

The housing burden in Laguna Hills is very high for many of its residents. Many families are either stretched too thin or on the verge of homelessness. Many must travel a distance to and from work and that causes a burden to their households as well as excessive street traffic.

We are particularly concerned about ensuring that there is adequate housing for the 23% of residents of Laguna Hills who earn less than \$50,000 per year¹ – which is classified by HUD as extremely low and very low-income.² More than 80% of very low-income households pay more than 50% of their income toward housing costs³ while only 3% of those above the median income spend more than 50%. Also, 36% of Laguna Hills residents who are renting are spending over 50% of their income on housing costs.⁴

Lack of attainable, workforce housing for those earning under \$50,000 a year is a continuing crisis in Orange County. Cities here in South Orange County, including Laguna Hills, are not an exception to this. Rising housing costs increasingly make housing out of reach for many who live and work here.

Recommendations

1- Increase total extremely low-income and very low-income affordable units.

- a. **We recommend that the city require this large housing project to include 15% of its total units (225 out of 1,500) for extremely low (5% or 75 units), very low (5% or 75 units), and low-income (5% or 75 units) residents.** This is especially important here since Laguna Hills has little land available for other building elsewhere. We also ask that consideration be given for a set-aside of Permanent Supportive Housing units.
- b. This recommendation would mean that the developer is asked to re-focus their efforts on the much greater need for very low and extremely low-income housing. The current plan

¹ Southern California Association of Governments, (SCAG) Laguna Hills Profile 2019, 2017 data

² Extremely low-income is defined by HUD as 30% or less of average median income (AMI) which is \$103,000 in Orange County, and Very Low-Income is defined as 50% of AMI. Source: HUD FY 2020 Income Limits, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2020/2020summary.odn>

³ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile 2020, 2020 data (see also Appendix to this letter, LAGUNA HILLS HOUSING DATA, 2020)

⁴ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile 2020, 2020 data

calls for 100 units to be “moderate affordable” – in reality the rental rate for this level of housing is \$2,500 and above. We feel that this means that moderate income housing is close to or at market-rate housing.

2- **Prioritize building all 225 units between 2021 and 2029.**

Building these units by 2029 means that the committed affordable housing is not left to the end of the phasing, which would not qualify for the 6th Cycle Housing Element.

3- **Increase the total amount of affordable housing on site by adding an additional building on site, on land donated by the developer.**

- a. We recommend the developer be allowed to designate/entitle a part of the mall property for building 150 additional housing units using mall land on the site.
- b. The land be accommodated at high enough density to build the 150 units.
- c. The land be donated by the Developer to a non-profit affordable housing developer, who is then required to build 150 very low and extremely low-income units.
- d. Such a partnership could yield millions of dollars in matching funds from state and federal housing funds.

4- **Update the EIR documents with information on jobs/housing balance for this development.**

The Villages will generate additional low wage jobs in the hotel, retail shops, restaurants, and office buildings. The environmental impact of adding these extremely low and very low-income jobs should be addressed by including affordable housing in closer proximity to the worksite for these workers.

Background

We learned recently that The Village at Laguna Hills project is now nearing the entitlement phase and that the city is actively completing a Development Agreement. It is exciting to see such creative and dynamic re-vitalization of this area. We believe that this site is vital for the city to attain very low-income housing goals as there are up to 1,500 new homes planned to co-exist in a village setting with retail, hotel and other commercial space.

The Village creates the potential for new, positive growth for the city. As a result, the developers and the city have indicated they expect an increase in jobs and a boost to city and developer revenues.

The Housing Element and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

The State of California requires each City to update the Housing Element of the General Plan to identify adequate building sites for ALL economic segments. Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) identifies the number of units necessary to provide needed housing for each community. Each city or county must accommodate its fair share of meeting these needs.

During the current 5th cycle planning period the City had a total RHNA of two, one at very low-income, one at low-income, zero at moderate, and zero at above moderate. To date, the City has approved 296 housing units at moderate and above moderate. None of the identified RHNA needs have been met in the low, very low and extremely low-income categories.⁵

Given the lack of progress and the lack of feasible and available sites for meeting the lower income RHNA housing needs in Laguna Hills, it is urgent that the City be strategic in how it will address its current and future affordable housing needs. We believe that the mall site, given its size and nature, must be an important contributor to the city's response to this housing need.

Laguna Hills will need a total of 1,979 new housing units for the 6th RHNA cycle. Below are the 6th Cycle RHNA requirements currently communicated to the city:

Laguna Hills RHNA Requirement 2021-2029

Very low-income: 565 (includes extremely low)

Low-income: 352

Moderate income: 353

Above Moderate: 709

TOTAL: 1979

Note: Laguna Hills has appealed for a total reduction of 350 units

About 46% (917) of the homes identified by RHNA in the Housing Element 6th Cycle, are specified to be allocated to very low and low-income earners over the next 8-year period.

Impact of demographics, income and housing needs

The reality is that many workers and their families, including teachers, other education employees, healthcare workers, and other low wage essential workers (hotel, restaurants, groundskeepers, etc.) are at a significant disadvantage in affording or in seeking attainable housing in Laguna Hills.

- Saddleback Hospital, located across from the Village at Laguna Hills, is a large employer whose professional salaries average \$58,000 a year.
- The building site will be generating many other additional jobs including
 - The retail sector with salaries averaging \$35,000 per year, and
 - Leisure/hospitality jobs that earn \$21,000 per year.

This means that that The Village will generate many new jobs in Laguna Hills that will qualify employees for extremely low or very low-income housing. The fact that this development creates numerous jobs that qualify as extremely low and very low-income, without providing adequate housing affordable at these income levels, means that the development will have a significant environmental impact on the community by creating an even greater strain on the limited supply of

⁵ City of Laguna Hills, Housing Element Annual Progress Report, April 2020

housing available in Laguna Hills at these income levels. We believe that without mitigating these impacts and requiring an inclusion of extremely low and very low-income units, a negative declaration would be inappropriate for this project.

The redevelopment of the mall site is a unique opportunity for the city, as well as for those who will live and work in Laguna Hills. However, once the current Village site plan is approved, it will not qualify as "available land" for inclusion in the site inventory for the 6th Cycle Housing Element. Without that large site available for inclusion, it will likely put even more pressure on the City to find enough suitable land to satisfy the new, higher RHNA requirements in the new 6th Cycle Housing Element.

Since Laguna Hills is largely built-out, it may mean that the city will need to up-zone or otherwise create a burden on other areas of the city to create adequate sites for extremely low and very low-income units. It is probable that extensive re-zoning will be needed on existing potential building sites. Often, this is challenging to do without concern from existing neighborhoods, due to the amount and density of zoning that would be required. The Laguna Hills Village site offers a good opportunity now for accommodating these expanded RHNA needs for very low and low-income units, without affecting already existing neighborhoods. Will this be seen as a lost opportunity by residents, if there are later, more noticeable impacts on the city neighborhoods that could have been avoided?

Conclusion

The current proposal by the developer includes a rollout of 5 multifamily buildings, spread out from 2023 to 2033. We understand there will be 550+ units completed by April 2026, another 550+ units completed by January 2029 and 250+ units are expected by January 2033.

However, out of the estimated 1350 to 1500 homes planned, only a total of 200 affordable units have been presented by the developer, divided as 100 for low-income residents and 100 for moderate income residents. We believe this does not adequately address the great need for extremely low and very low-income units. **The entitlement benefits achieved by your approval should generate a better community benefit to a broader range of city residents than presented to date.** Once this site is entitled, the city will have little choice but to increase its commitment by providing more very low and extremely low-income units elsewhere.

There is ample research and direct experience of California cities, that certain approaches have been effective in producing quality, attainable very low and extremely low-income housing. The practice that is broadly recommended, uses a required percentage of units for extremely low and very low-income housing, mixed in with other housing, known as an inclusionary policy. This has worked in large scale developments like this one and has successfully generated community benefits in exchange for large scale entitlements. The City of Irvine and the City of San Clemente are examples of cities using these practices right here in Orange County.

The Village at Laguna Hills presents a wonderful opportunity to make meaningful progress in providing attainable workforce housing in Laguna Hills. We welcome a dialogue with the City about our concerns for making sure that there is a sufficient supply of housing for our essential workers.

Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director of the Kennedy Commission, will be the key contact for our group. He can be reached at (949) 250-0909 or cesarc@kennedycommission.org.

Sincerely,

Cesar Covarrubias
Executive Director



Reverend Kent Doss
Minister



Susan B. Parks
President & CEO



Elizabeth Hansburg
Co-Founder & Executive
Director



Michelle Seyler
Executive Director



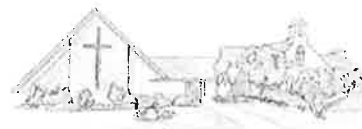
Chris Collins and Diane Nied
Co-Chairs



Rona Smyth Henry
Chair



Rev. Rodrick Echols, Pastor
Neighborhood Church
Laguna Beach



Brenda J. Rodriguez
Executive Director

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



Clearinghouse

Sara Radecki
President



cc: Kenneth H. Rosenfield, Laguna Hills City Manager
David Chantarangsu, Laguna Hills Community Development Director
Dave E. Geiser, Managing Director, Merlone Geier Partners
Stephen Logan, Vice President, Development, Merlone Geier Partners
Jennifer Gastelum, Principal, Placeworks, Inc
Nicole West, Senior Associate, Placeworks, Inc

APPENDIX

Impact of demographics, income and housing costs:

The reality is that many workers and their families, including teachers, other school employees, healthcare workers, restaurant, hotel and other low wage essential workers are at a significant disadvantage in affording or in seeking attainable housing in Laguna Hills. Increased workforce housing is needed to address income limitations against the rising cost of housing.

1 Household Income

- a. There over 10,800 households in Laguna Hills ⁶
 - i. 23% earn less than \$50k (extremely low and very low-income)
 - ii. 14% earn 50k to 75k, (very low and low-income)
 - iii. 13% earn \$75k-\$99k (low and moderate income)
 - iv. 50% earn 100k or more (moderate income and market rate buyers)

2. Occupations, salaries⁷

- a. Total jobs in Laguna Hills: 18,367, decrease of 8.7% since 2007 ⁸
- b. Laguna Hills annual salaries (2017)
 - i. Average salary \$57k
 - ii. Lowest salaries: Leisure/hospitality \$21k, Public Administration \$27k, Retail \$35k, Other services \$37k, Education/Health \$58k
 - iii. Education sector was largest job sector, accounting for 40% of total employment in the city
 - iv. Highest salary sector is professional jobs at \$77k

3. Housing Cost Burden by Income⁹

- a. 1690 of all households are spending 50% or more of their income on housing.
- b. 1,080 of renter households in Laguna Hills (36.1%) spend fifty percent or more of gross income on housing.

⁶ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile, 2019, 2019 data

⁷ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile 2019, 2017 data

⁸ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile 2019, 2017 data

⁹ SCAG, Laguna Hills Profile 2020, 2020 data

LAGUNA HILLS HOUSING DATA, 2020¹⁰

Households by Share of Income Spent on Housing Cost:			
Income	< 30%	30-50%	> 50%
< 30% HAMFI*	58	100	705
30-50% HAMFI	124	265	680
50-80% HAMFI	490	845	305
80-100% HAMFI	685	410	33
> 100% HAMFI	4,635	669	145
Total Households	5,992	2,289	1,868

**HAMFI refers to Housing Urban Development Area Median Family Income*

4 Rental housing affordability

2020 HUD Housing Affordability Calculator for Orange County: maximum recommended monthly for those with low to moderate incomes, by number of bedrooms¹¹

# Bedrooms	0	1	2	3	4
Very Low	\$0-753	\$0-876	\$0-998	\$0-1120	\$0-1218
Low	\$754-1558	\$877-1796	\$999-2033	\$1121-2270	\$1219-2460
Moderate	\$1559-1953	\$1797-2247	\$2034-2540	\$2271-2834	\$2461-3069

¹⁰ SCAG, Laguna Hills City Profile, August 2020

¹¹ HUD 2020 Fair Market Rate Documentation,

https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2019_code/2019summary.odn?&year=2019&fmrtype=Final&selection_type=county&fips=0605999999



February 3, 2021

Laguna Hills City Council
24035 El Toro Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

RE: Affordable Housing in Laguna Hills

Dear Mayor Pezold, Mayor Pro Tem Sedgwick and Council Members Heft, Hunt and Wheeler:

On behalf of Providence, I am writing to encourage the City Council to enact bold measures to increase the quality and quantity of affordable housing for those who live and work in the City of Laguna Hills. Providence in Orange County includes St. Jude Medical Center, St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, Mission Hospital, and St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare.

At Providence, we believe health is a human right. Everyone deserves the chance to live the healthiest life possible, especially those who are poor and vulnerable. But it's not easy to take care of your health when you don't have a safe place to call home.

Our local community health needs assessments consistently validate the impact stable housing has on health – and the unfortunate health outcomes for persons without proper housing. Providence has a long-standing commitment to bettering the communities we serve by providing resources and advocating for improved affordable housing options across Orange County for economically challenged populations.

According to the Southern California Association of Governments, 23 percent of the residents of Laguna Hills earn less than \$50,000 per year – which is classified by HUD as extremely low and very low-income. At least 80 percent of very low-income households in Laguna Hills are paying more than 50 percent of their income toward housing costs while tenants spend over 50 percent of their income on rent. Rising housing costs and lack of transportation in our region increasingly makes it difficult for many who want to live and work in the same area.

As an organization committed to the health and well-being of our community, we respectfully encourage the City Council to increase affordable housing and leverage existing development opportunities to meet these goals. Thank you for your time and should you have any questions, please feel to contact me at barry.ross@stjoe.org or at (714) 656-5274.

Sincerely,

Barry Ross
Regional Director, Providence Community Health Investment

Cindy Sands

From: Rose Buszta <rosebusta@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 11:37 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills - proposal

I would like to begin by noting that I was part of the original concerned and caring citizens group who met for numerous community workshops during 2008 to review the Laguna Hills General Plan.

The citizens of Laguna Hills are not complacent when it comes to the quality of life we expect. Many of us are long term residents who would like to see a revitalization of our city but not at the expense of us or future residents. Many other communities are dealing with the same problems that we are and seem to be addressing them with much more prudence, as I believe our city should. Without the ability for the city to gauge the intent of its citizens (due to covid restrictions) I believe that the message below encapsulates our feelings. Please act slowly, with caution and in a measured manner that protects us all here in Laguna Hills. We are all invested in Laguna Hills present and future!

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

1. That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. Merlone Geier has stated that the project is market driven and it appears that several factors are uncertain and ever-changing based on the recent impact of COVID-19. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
2. COVID-19 currently places restrictions on the ability to assemble, gather or meet in large numbers, thus affecting the ability to conduct a productive public hearing where the community can effectively participate. I am requesting the City Council to postpone or reschedule the public hearings to a later time when the community can achieve full active participation in public hearings.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Busta

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Ann Owens <annowens@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 11:40 AM
To: Cindy Sands
Subject: Re: question from a concerned citizen

Now that the Laguna Hills Mall project is being developed, I was wondering if there was going to be any input for citizens to express their views and ask questions. Will you be forming any kind of committee for this type of conversation as other cities have done? This is the time for a variety of ideas to be expressed before things are set in stone. I know that there is a large increase in RHNA numbers for all cities which you are appealing. However, since this is state law and non-compliance can mean negative funding for the city, I would hope that you would be open to all ideas that could help alleviate this issue. Hope to hear from you soon. Ann Owens

From: Cindy Sands
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 1:34 PM
To: annowens@cox.net
Subject: question from a concerned citizen

Given the current pandemic, I suggest we defer the conversation you are requesting to a later date. While RHNA is a very important subject that all cities will be dealing with over the next several years, it is not the priority today.

Thanks for your understanding.

Don White

From: Ann Owens <annowens@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 12:30 PM
To: Cindy Sands <csands@lagunahillsca.gov>
Subject: question from a concerned citizen

Dear Mr. White,

I am writing to you as an interested citizen of the local community. I am a retired teacher from the Saddleback Unified School District having taught over 25 years at Serrano Intermediate. In my retirement I have become interested in helping the low income and homeless people of our local communities. As a teacher I did many service projects with my CJSF club, and upon retirement, I started a Junior Optimist Club at Serrano that was solely based on community service that cost the participant nothing but time and energy. I had 110 kids in the after school club when I finally had to "really" retire a few years ago.

I have been active with the OC United Way and have personally helped with food banks, sponsored a United Way Homeless 101 class, and helped senior homeless citizens living in their car, one of whom is from Laguna Hills. I know there will be new state requirements for each town coming up that need to be met next year that stipulate very low and low cost housing needs. I am interested in talking to you about what Laguna Hills

plans to do about this issue. Recently Lake Forest approved an affordable housing site called Mountain View which is moving along and will be a huge plus to the community. With housing reaching astronomical prices, it seems incumbent on all communities to provide affordable housing to attract younger couples as well as help struggling families. Two new teachers could apply to most affordable housing projects in southern Orange County since we have such a high cost of living.

I am working with another retired teacher friend of mine, Joan Segal, to contact local cities to see where they are in this process, and if we can help you in any way. Our goal is your goal, to meet the upcoming RHNA requirements so that more low income families can find a place to live and rejuvenate our communities. I know the RHNA numbers will be jumping greatly in this new assessment and that a solution will have to be found. This situation will show the character of a city, and I know that Laguna Hills would want to treat its struggling families with respect. I would love to know what the city's strategy will be in attacking this issue from a city manager's point of view.

I don't know if you have office hours, especially during covid-19, but I would love to visit with you about this issue. My cell is 949-922-7485 and my email is annowens@cox.net. Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,
Ann Owens

[External E-mail]

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Mario and Daniela Vásquez <mr.n.mrs.vasquez@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 1, 2020 11:32 AM
To: Dave Wheeler; Donald M. Sedgwick; Dore J. Gilbert; Erica Pezold; Janine Heft; City Council
Cc: LagunaHillsFLAG@gmail.com
Subject: The Village of Laguna Hills

Hello Council Members,

I'm a concerned resident of Laguna Hills who has resided here for the last 8 year with all 3 of my children being born here in those last 8 yrs. I've also purchased a home here and intend to stay long term. My concern with the new proposal from Merlone Geire Partners is the increase in apartments. The new proposal would increase apartments from the last proposal by 34%. I believe this causes more congestion to our already overwhelmed streets and freeway exits. Additionally this brings more transit people to our community which may increase our current crime rate of tagging and vandalism in our parks. I picked Laguna Hills to live because it was a small tight knit town that valued not over developing it's community. I would urge the council to not allow this increase and to continue to ask for entertainment areas (retail/restaurant/etc.)for the better of our community and children.

Thanks for your time and attention to this matter.

Mario Vasquez (Vasquez Family)
Laguna Hills Resident

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Claudia Mohler <justpeachy922@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 8:09 PM
To: Laguna Hills FLAG; City Council; dgilbert@lagunahills.gov; epezold@lagunahills.gov; jheft@lagunahills.gov; dsedgwick@lagunahills.gov; dwheeler@lagunahills.gov
Subject: The Village at Laguna Hills

My name is Claudia Mohler & I have lived in Laguna Hills for 32 years.

I have some concerns about the proposals for The Village at Laguna Hills.

1. We need retail that will attract a variety of shoppers. Plain and simple.
2. Where does the City plan on getting tax revenue from sales tax? Certainly not from raising taxes, adding some fee or surcharge to what little I purchase in Laguna Hills. Currently, I do approximately 80% of my shopping at Stater Bros in Aliso Viejo & Target in Mission Viejo-notice not in Laguna Hills because I won't shop at Ralphs & my other choices are very very limited. For other shopping needs, I go to Mission Viejo and San Clemente. So as you can see surrounding areas are getting my business because Laguna Hills is lacking.
3. Why isn't Merlone Geier honoring the City's initial approval? Is it greed? I understand dynamics have changed, but having less density would maybe look more appealing.
4. Where will the school age children attend? San Joaquin is too far & no bus transportation; Valencia has been known to have not in my backyard attitude so that leaves Lomarena. (more congestion in the area in the morning & mid afternoon)
5. With the proposed buildings/business & residential, where does that place Laguna Hills with satisfying the States need for affordable or additional housing?
6. With all the Amazon/online deliveries that will occur in the Village, will there be specific secure delivery areas/boxes for residents to pick up their ordered items.? Otherwise add the numerous delivery trucks to the congestion factor.

Thank you for your consideration, but if I haven't made my self clear-WE NEED MORE RETAIL.

Stay Safe.
Respectfully,
Claudia Mohler

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Robt Martin <fiteon@pacbell.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 11:42 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: Merlone Geier

Dear Laguna Hills Mayor and City Council,

As members of the community for over 40 years, we are deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do **NOT** support the proposed project. The mall property should be reconfigured according to the *original* concept floated upon the closing of the old mall. To wit: It should be a place of attraction and commerce for our citizens, one that will generate a decent flow of tax revenues for the city rather than one that will increase the strain on public services and infrastructure. That means restaurants, shops and a common area where our people can celebrate life together. If you have difficulty envisioning this concept, a small scale version, though also currently constrained by this virus economy we are all enduring, might be Woodbridge Village Center.

I am writing to request two things:

1. That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. Merlone Geier has stated that the project is market driven and it appears that several factors are uncertain and ever-changing based on the recent impact of COVID-19. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
2. COVID-19 currently places restrictions on the ability to assemble, gather or meet in large numbers, thus affecting the ability to conduct a productive public hearing where the community can effectively participate. I am requesting the City Council to postpone or reschedule the public hearings to a later time when the community can achieve full active participation in public hearings.

Respectfully,

Bob and Genie Martin
Stratford Ridge

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Mario and Daniela Vásquez <mr.n.mrs.vasquez@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:36 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: Merlone Geier Development

Hello,

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the

presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

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Sincerely,

Mario Vasquez

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: CLINTON REFSNYDER <penn34@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 2:06 PM
To: Erica Pezold; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu; Donald M. Sedgwick
Subject: Merlone Geier Project

Dear Council members,

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

- That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. Merlone Geier has stated that the project is market driven and it appears that several factors are uncertain and ever-changing based on the recent impact of COVID-19. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
- COVID-19 currently places restrictions on the ability to assemble, gather or meet in large numbers, thus affecting the ability to conduct a productive public hearing where the community can effectively participate. I am requesting the City Council to postpone or reschedule the public hearings to a later time when the community can achieve full active participation in public hearings.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Clint Refsnyder

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Rose Buszta <rosebusta@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 11:25 AM
To: dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu; Erica Pezold
Cc: Laguna Hills FLAG
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills - proposal

I would like to begin by noting that I was part of the original concerned and caring citizens group who met for numerous community workshops during 2008 to review the Laguna Hills General Plan.

The citizens of Laguna Hills are not complacent when it comes to the quality of life we expect. Many of us are long term residents who would like to see a revitalization of our city but not at the expense of us or future residents. Many other communities are dealing with the same problems that we are and seem to be addressing them with much more prudence, as I believe our city should. Without the ability for the city to gauge the intent of its citizens (due to covid restrictions) I believe that the message below encapsulates our feelings. Please act slowly, with caution and in a measured manner that protects us all here in Laguna Hills. We are all invested in Laguna Hills present and future!

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Sincerely,

Rosemary Busta

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: dh davidharrington.com <dh@davidharrington.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: Laguna Hills FLAG
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Council Members, Mr. Rosenfield and Mr. Wu,

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

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Sincerely,

David Harrington

25011 Katie Ave.

Laguna Hills, CA

949-770-8775

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: ken benson <alpha91307@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:58 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: VILLAGE AT LAGUNA HILLS

To whom it may concern,

Although not a Laguna Hills resident I do live next door in the retirement community of Laguna Woods and have had concerns for some time about that property between us and the freeway.

Will it continue to be a blight, will it be developed to something that increases crime in the area, noise, or traffic just to name a few of my concerns.

From what I can see the developers are struggling with what to do with it all. They keep making proposals that don't seem to have a whole lot of thought put into them other than "let's build apartments". One only needs to look at Lake Forest to see what happens to those neighborhoods.

The project currently proposed seems to be more of the same. Based on what I have seen of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I must say I am not impressed and could in no way support such a development.

At the very least the project needs to be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and then approve or deny each package separately. Whatever research they have supporting such a project should be made clear and I have seen nothing of the sort so far.

By having the council review each package on its own merits the benefit to city and the community can be better established.

Also, it is impossible for the community to express themselves concerning this project due to the restrictions in place due to COVID-19. Without that any attempt to explain the project as being "market driven" would be complete sham.

Respectfully,

Kenneth E. Benson
306 Avenida Sevilla, unit A
Laguna Woods, Ca. 92637

Cindy Sands

From: Sidney Harrington <sidneyharrington@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:55 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillscsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Subject: Village at Laguna Hills

Dear Council Members, Mr. Rosenfield and Mr. Wu,

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

1. That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. Merlone Geier has stated that the project is market driven and it appears that several factors are uncertain and ever-changing based on the recent impact of COVID-19. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
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Sincerely,

Sidney Harrington

25011 Katie Ave.

Laguna Hills, CA 92653

949-633-0711

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: connie george <conniegeorge@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 1:33 PM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillscsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

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Sincerely,

Connie George
Member of the Laguna Hills Community since August of 1973

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Faye Checkoway <fayetc75@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 11:23 AM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

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Please work for the citizens of Laguna Hills, we do not want this developed as the plans as presented.

Sincerely,

Faye Checkoway



Virus-free. www.avg.com

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Marsha Westropp <mwestropp@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 1:39 PM
To: Erica Pezold; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu; dsedgwick@lagunahills.ca.gov
Cc: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com
Subject: Laguna Hills mall development

I support the position expressed by Laguna Hills FLAG and request that the proposed development be considered in phases rather than as one project and that the time table for city council consideration of the proposed development be delayed in consideration of the limitations of public participation due to the coronavirus epidemic.

This development has great significance for the future of the city and, as such, public involvement and public input should be seriously considered in the decision making.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marsha Westropp
25251 Tasman Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

[External E-mail]

Cindy Sands

From: Keith Hierman <gkhierman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 1:01 PM
To: Erica Pezold; dsedgewick@lagunahillsca.gov; Janine Heft; Dave Wheeler; Bill Hunt; Ken Rosenfield; Jay Wu
Subject: lagunahillsflag@gmail.com

Dear City Leader,

As a member of the community, I am deeply concerned about the impact of the project currently proposed by Merlone Geier known as Village at Laguna Hills. Based on the review of the project documents available on the city website and from attending the presentations hosted by Merlone Geier, I do not fully support the proposed project.

I am writing to request two things:

1. That the project be broken into smaller packages for the city to review and that approval is not given at this time for the entire proposed project. Merlone Geier has stated that the project is market driven and it appears that several factors are uncertain and ever-changing based on the recent impact of COVID-19. I feel that it would be prudent for City Council to review and approve smaller portions of the project to ensure that the safety and security of the city and the community are protected.
2. COVID-19 currently places restrictions on the ability to assemble, gather or meet in large numbers, thus affecting the ability to conduct a productive public hearing where the community can effectively participate. I am requesting the City Council to postpone or reschedule the public hearings to a later time when the community can achieve full active participation in public hearings.

Sincerely

Garry Hierman, Laguna Hills Resident

[External E-mail]

6789 Quail Hill Pkwy Suite #212
Irvine, CA 92603
jloper@usc.edu
November 11, 2019

Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

RE: Village at Laguna Hills

Mayor and Members of the City Council,

As someone who has had the pleasure of providing input on the Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP) since its inception 18 years ago and previously working on one of the first projects in the Urban Village (Oakbrook Village) I am excited to see plan for the mall property to advance to this stage with a revised plan. Overall, I believe this project, with additional revisions, could be successful and a great asset to the City of Laguna Hills. I believe the 500,000 SF of office space and the 1,500 residential units is an appropriate size for this neighborhood. However, with its current design, I have a serious concern on the economic viability of the retail portion off the project.

The retail site is divided into a big box retail center facing El Toro with parking in front and pads along the street (which should be successful with the correct mix of tenants) and a "Main Street retail area surrounding the Village Park with an upstairs movie theater which I have significant concerns about the design. The approximate 77,000 SF of ground floor retail surrounds the Village Park, which is the signature feature of the entire project, has several issues that make me worried about the viability of this part of the project. I feel it's imperative that this Village Main Street Retail be designed so that its successful so that it can become the heart of the Village at Laguna Hills. My concerns are below:

1) PARKING ISSUES: The Kaleidoscope in Mission Viejo has not been successful because of difficult parking and people avoid Irvine Spectrum because of the difficulty of parking. All of these are examples of retail that is impacted by flawed parking design. For retail to be successful it needs to have both enough and convenient parking. I have serious concerns on the parking for the retail portion of the project:

1.1) The proposed master site plan for retail has a parking ratio of 4.0/1000 SF but the UVSP requires 4.5/1000 if less than 20% of the square footage is restaurants and entertainment. Applying the code parking ratio of 4.5/1000 SF parking ratio on 300,000 SF, 1,350 spaces are required but only 1,200 are provided thus 150 additional spaces are needed. In addition, 153 of the parking spaces are on "perimeter streets" (I think Calle de Louisa and Calle de los Caballeros which is a long walk from any retail. If you don't count these 153 parking spaces, the actual parking ratio of parking convenient to the retail uses is 3.5/1000 which is 22% less than the UVSP requirements of 4.5/1000 SF. Thus, the retail site needs about 300 additional parking spaces convenient to the retail portion of the site.

1.2) The UVSP parking ratio of 4.5/1000 is based on a ratio of 20% of the total space is restaurants/entertainment/cinema uses. If all the 57,000 SF of pads are restaurants and the theater is 50,000 SF, a total of 107,000 SF is restaurant and entertainment uses would produce a ratio of 35% which exceeds the 20% parking assumption and assumes no other shop or retail space is occupied by restaurants (which hopefully the project will have additional restaurants and cafes surrounding the Village Park).

1.3) I am concerned that even the Specific Plan parking ratio of 4.5/1000 is significantly less than the local competition. The Irvine Spectrum, has a parking ratio of 5.5/1000 (not including two of the office building parking garages which increases the parking ratio to over 7.5/1000 available on nights and weekends). Kaleidoscope in Mission Viejo has a parking ratio of 5.3/1000. A lack of convenient parking could significantly hurt the viability and success of The Village at Laguna Hills. Everyone complains about parking at Irvine Spectrum and it has 37% more parking devoted to retail than the Village at Laguna Hills.

1.4) There is very limited street parking within the Village Park area and the almost all of the parking is devoted to the Big Box retail center portion of the site. With approximately 77,000 SF of ground floor retail around the Village Park, 346 parking spaces are required under the Specific Plan. If the theater is 50,000 SF (900 seats), an additional 225 parking spaces are needed for theater patrons (4.5/1000 or 1 per 4 seats) for a total of 571 parking spaces yet only about 100 spaces are provided surrounding the Village Park.

1.5) The closest office parking is Parking Structure A which contains 390 parking spaces. Office Building 1 is 157,720 which at a ratio of 3.3/1000 SF would require 520 parking spaces. Thus, this block has a deficit of 130 parking spaces or 25%, so this parking structure is not going to be able to provide extra parking for peak lunch demand and most likely the office tenants will poach the retail parking rather than walk all the way over to the surface parking over 700 feet away on the other side of Health Center Drive. In addition, the office parking structure will charge for parking and thus may not be used by retail patrons who demand free parking in Orange County.

2) RETAIL DESIGN:

2.1) The Village Park is over shadowed on the East side by a 3-story parking structure. A parking structure will detract from the ambience of the Village Park and is a waste of a beautiful view of the Village Park. I believe all edge buildings around the Village Park should to be active upper floor uses with ground floor retail facing the street.

2.2) The Village Drive and Calle de la Magdalena along the Village Park should be considered "Main Streets". Under the current plan these drives are a mix of parallel parking, 90-degree parking and no parking many with small narrow sidewalks which feels more like a parking lot than main street retail. The UVSP envisions "Main Streets" with angled parking, 8' planting strips and 12' sidewalks with retail pedestrian-oriented streets (Main Street Section E-5 of the UVSP).

2.3) The two new Shops 1 and Shops 2 buildings on the Village Park have large expanses of blank walls facing Village Drive and Calle Zocalo. The idea of a Main Street Urban Village includes

active street fronts yet the current plans show blank walls on the street. This is inconsistent with the Urban Village Specific plan (UVSP).

2.4) The Existing Signalized Main Entry from Avenida de la Carlota (between King Seafood and Parking Structure A) will be one of two primary entrances to the center for retail patrons and its current design provides an ugly view of the side of a parking garage and then a straight shot view of the loading dock metal roll-up door for the two-story retail building. In addition, a 65' truck backing into the loading dock will effectively block the main entrance to the center as its maneuvering in and out of the loading dock. This is a recipe for gridlock.

3) **HOTEL:** I feel that a hotel of 105-125 rooms seems a little too small. The City needs to maximize the tax revenue and increasing the size of the hotel to 150-160 rooms would increase the bed tax revenues. Changing the shape of the hotel to a "C" shape building 300' long and 90' deep could increase the room count to over 150 rooms, maintain the 2nd floor deck overlooking the Village Park and rearrange the parking to add 40 parking spaces. The Bed tax is important to the City and the more guests at the hotel, the more patrons for the retail uses.

4) **OFFICE:** The Avenida de la Carlota frontage of the office buildings is the main view of the project from the 5 freeway. The UVSP requires a landscaped 20' building setback. The plans appear to have a weak landscape design with a small setback. This needs to have a strong landscape statement with significant trees and planting to provide a first impression of the project from the 5 Freeway and the road. The idea of the Urban Village was to have landscaping be a significant feature and the current drawings make this edge look very stark and urban rather than a Village feel.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:

The following changes would maintain the existing square footage of the project yet would solve all of the above issues. A sketch of these proposals is attached.

A) **FLIP SURFACE PARKING LOT AT OFFICE BUILDING 1/PARKING STRUCTURE A:** Move the surface parking located at Health Center Drive /Calle de Caballeros to the location of Office Building 1 and Parking Structure A and move the Office Building 1 and Parking Structure A to the surface parking location. This would place approximately 350 surface parking spaces directly adjacent to the Village Park Retail. Having parking that is a convenient walking distance to this 77,000 SF of Main Street/Village Park Retail and 50,000 SF cinema will go a long way to help insure that the Village Park Retail is successful. This will provide the 4.5/1000 spaces required per the UVSP. The new office site can accommodate a larger parking garage to provide the additional parking to replace the surface parking that was devoted to the office uses so that the parking structures provide 100% of the required parking for the office uses.

This also removes the parking structure overlooking the Village Park. Moving the office building and parking structure also opens a view of the retail center from the 5 freeway which will give the retail portion of the site exposure to the thousands of cars on the 5 freeway while still providing the same number of office buildings with signage along the freeway.

At some time in the future (if people use autonomous driven vehicles that don't need parking spaces), this surface parking lot could be developed with a future phase that could contain a combination of retail, office or residential uses depending on market conditions.

C) BUILD MAIN STREET DESIGN AROUND VILLAGE PARK: Redesign the Village Drive from Calle de la Plata to Calle de la Magdalena and Calle de la Magdalena from Calle Zocalo to Calle de Louisa to follow the Main Street design with angled parking, 8' planters and 12' sidewalks per the requirements of the UVSP. This would place significantly more parking spaces directly in front of the "Main Street Retail" surrounding the Village Park. I would suggest extending the Main Street design all the way through the project to the south for consistency and to provide convenient visitor parking for the residential units. Currently there is a mishmash of various widths of sidewalks with and without planters which does not give the proposed Main Street ambiance as envisioned in the UVSP. This would enhance the pedestrian focus of the streets, provide additional parking and follow the spirit of the UVSP.

D) REDESIGN MAIN RETAIL ENTRY FROM AVENIDA DE LA CARLOTA: Redesign the signalized entry from Avenida de la Carlota to provide a direct view of the Village park and move it away from the loading dock which will create an improved first view of the project for retail patrons. A solution would be to continue the road towards the south at a 90-degree angle from Avenida de la Carlota then bend it so it intersects Calle Zocalo around 60- 80 feet to the south so you can see the Village Park when you drive in and it is at least 120' from the loading dock doors and away from maneuvering 65' delivery trucks to eliminate trucks backing into the loading dock from blocking this entry.

E) FIX SHOPS ON MAIN STREET: Redesign Shops 1 and 2 to add windows on the street fronts to create a street pedestrian orientation. I am hoping these buildings will be leased for restaurant/cafe uses that overlook both the Main Street and the Village Park.

F) OFFICE LANDSCAPING EDGE ON FREEWAY SIDE: Enlarge the landscaping along Avenida de la Carlota to a minimum of 20' and enhance the landscaping with layers of trees and shrubs to soften the edge and create more of a "Village Feel".

SIGNAGE: The proposed sign plan is missing several key elements of the Urban Village Specific Plan. The UVSP requires the "Secondary Entry Signs" at the two signalized entries on Avenida de la Carlota. These stone monuments were installed at the signalized entry of Oakbrook Village and are a significant part of the unifying elements that connect all of the individual properties in the UVSP. They are smaller versions of the existing Main Entry Feature at El Toro and The Village drive. They should be required in the sign program.

ARCHITECTURE: I am not a fan of the architecture of the proposed retail and office buildings. The design seems rather stark, industrial and too bold for my tastes. Many of the proposed materials such as the Boardform Concrete, Metal Siding, Box Rib Metal Siding and Rustwall seem very cold and not welcoming. The UVSP proposed architectural design that would be warm, welcoming, and give a comfortable feeling to create a space that becomes the "Living Room for Laguna Hills" and was a village feel to keep within the character of Laguna Hills. A contemporary look can still be achieved using softer, more inviting materials that would be more typical of

Laguna Hills design and less like a converted industrial complex. Irvine Spectrum achieves some of the highest rents in the area by building clean, inviting, simple designed buildings, not by building trendy architecture with wild materials. I realize architecture is a matter of taste and I hope a consensus among the city council can make recommendations on the architectural design palette.

CONCLUSION

I believe that creating a stronger retail edge on all sides of the streets fronting the Village Park and creating the "Main Street" street design will enhance the retail viability of the Village Park portion of the site. Providing enough and convenient parking will be critical to the success of the Village at Laguna Hills since its competitors provide significantly more parking. Opening a view of the retail buildings from the 5 freeway will enhance the viability of the retail portion of the project. Increasing the size of the hotel will increase tax revenues. I believe with the above changes to the plan this could be a successful urban village that provides a village center for the City of Laguna Hills.

I want this project to be successful since this neighborhood is close to my heart. As a weekly shopper at Trader Joes and a frequent diner at CPK and BJ's Brewery, I am looking forward to seeing a mixed-use project be built on the mall site that provides a unique Laguna Hills style Village center for the City. This is the most important project for this generation of leaders at City Hall and it is important that it's done correctly. I feel it is important that The Village at Laguna Hills fits the needs, desires and style of the residents of Laguna Hills while providing revenues needed to keep the City in excellent fiscal shape. We need a warm, cozy, comfortable and inviting retail area that becomes the "Living Room" of Laguna Hills and has convenient and plenty of parking to make it easy for residents and visitors to patronize our retailers.

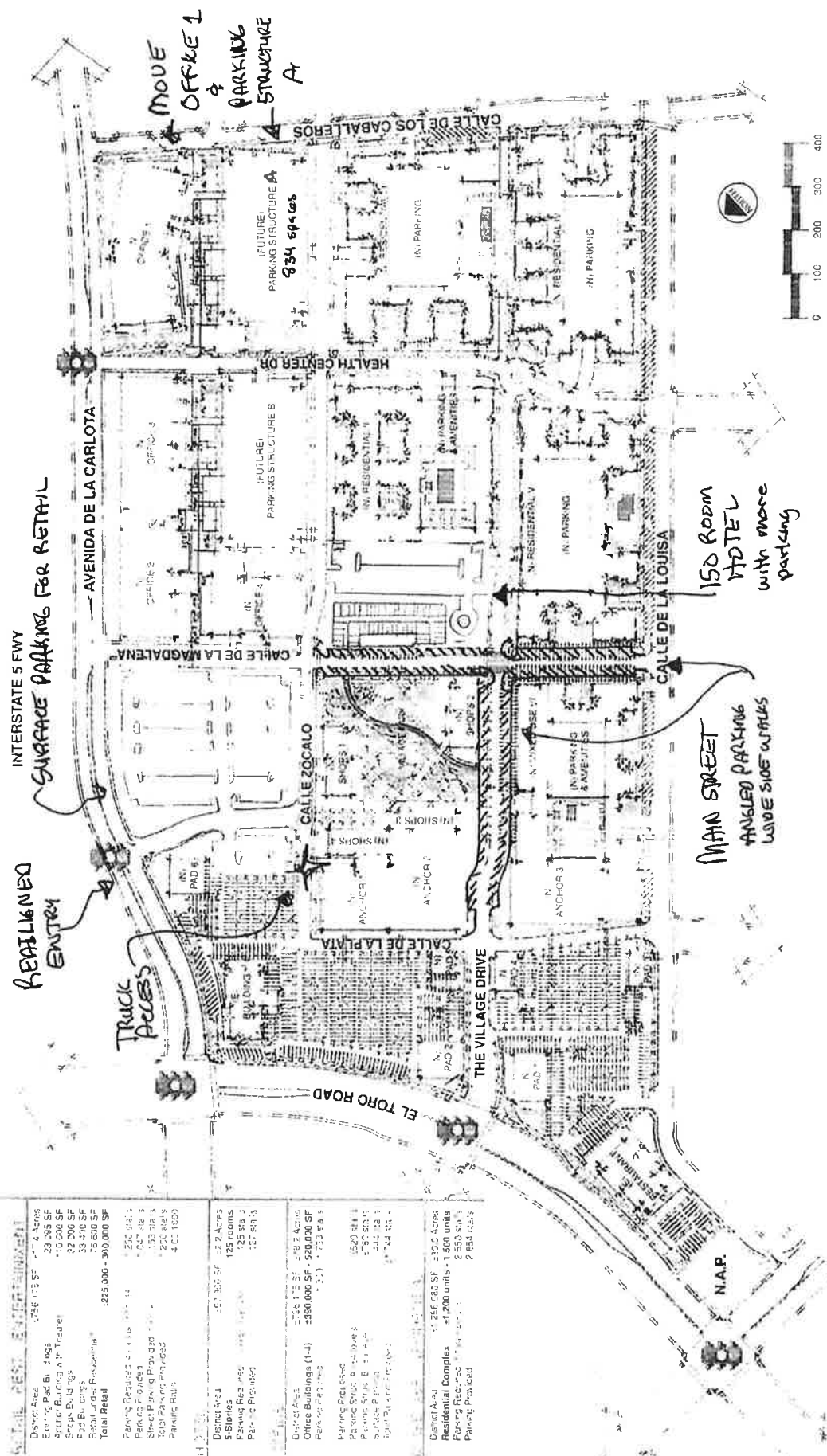
Sincerely

John W. Loper
Associate Professor of Real Estate
University of Southern California

PROJECT SUMMARY

Comments	11/11/19

Dist. of Res.	156 175 SF	23 Acres
Existing Bldg.	23,085 SF	
Existing Bldg. in Tract	11,000 SF	
Acres Building	32,000 SF	
22 Bldg. Units	32-40 SF	
22 Bldg. Units	32-40 SF	
Total Retail	225,000 - 300,000 SF	
Parking Required	225,000 SF	
Parking Provided	153,318 SF	
Street Parking Provided	153,318 SF	
Total Parking Provided	225,000 SF	
Parking Ratio	4:1-10:1	
Dist. of Res.	157,300 SF	22 Acres
5-Stories	125 rooms	
Existing Bldg.	125,000 SF	
Parking Provided	127,800 SF	
Dist. of Res.	226,100 SF	22 Acres
Office Buildings (1-4)	250,000 SF - 500,000 SF	
Parking Provided	227,750 SF	
Parking Required	250,000 SF	
Existing Bldg. in Tract	150,000 SF	
Existing Bldg. E. 1/4	75,000 SF	
Existing Bldg. E. 1/4	44,000 SF	
Existing Bldg. E. 1/4	44,000 SF	
Dist. of Res.	256,600 SF	25 Acres
Residential Complex	1,200 units - 1,500 units	
Parking Required	2,350,000 SF	
Parking Provided	2,350,000 SF	



THE VILLAGE AT LAGUNA HILLS

Merlane
1800-333-3333MASTER PLAN
SD 1971-1975

From: Kathy and Mark Coller <mkcoller@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:56 AM
To: Jay Wu
Subject: The Village at Laguna Hills (Formerly Five Lagunas)

My wife and I have been residents of Laguna Hills since 1989. As a family of 4 we used to enjoy shopping, dining and going to the movies at the Laguna Hills mall. The mall was one of the benefits of living within the city.

I know that traditional malls are no longer as successful as they used to be. I'm reminded about that every time I'm looking for a parking spot at the Irvine Spectrum, the Mission Viejo Mall or South Coast Plaza.

With the new plans for the "village" at laguna hills I see no reason at all for us to ever even go to the... I'm not even sure what to call it.

It's no wonder that in the current Issue of City Views the article on "the village" your map of the new plan only measures 1 1/4" x 2 1/8". The picture of the cancelled 5 Lagunas plan is significantly larger. Why even bother showing us what we are not getting?

It really took some looking on the city's website to find a map of the new plan that was big enough to read.

It's as if you don't want people to realize that the majority of the land use of the old mall site has no benefit for current Laguna Hill residents.

So basically nothing really changes for us. We will continue to do the majority of our shopping, dining and going to the movies outside of Laguna Hills.

From: Anne Taylor-Loughran <aetaylor1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 4:32 PM
To: Jay Wu; Erica Pezold; Dore J. Gilbert; Donald M. Sedgwick; Dave Wheeler; Cindy Sands; Melissa Au-Yeung; David Chantarangsu
Subject: The 'Village'

City Council and staff,

Time continues to pass and the citizens of Laguna Hills continue to see a blighted abandoned eyesore where there used to be a mall. I see no updates on the official Laguna Hills website. Is there any progress? It was very clear at the meetings I attended that the community is not in favor of high density housing and hotels. In fact, as time as passed by, we see several new hotels in Lake Forest and the surrounding areas. It seems unfathomable that another hotel could be supported, especially since there is very little to do in Laguna Hills.

In Irvine, we have the Great Park but the summer drive in concerts are for Irvine residents only. Why can't our city use the abandoned mall parking lots to host drive-in movies? Irvine Spectrum is hosting some movies and comedy on their parking structure but they are charging a lot per car. Seems like the city could use some money that use to come from the mall and charge \$10 or so per car - can someone look into making a deal with the developers who are doing nothing?

Most of the cities around us have regional parks, great parks, wilderness parks, etc. We have practically nothing. We have the community center but it has been locked down since March. The kids have figured out how to climb the fence to skate but us adults would prefer that the pickleball courts (hockey rink that never gets used) get opened up for play. It's the fastest growing sport in America. We have the courts. It's safe. Open them up! In fact, build more! Use the money from the drive in movies at the mall to pay for it!

Regarding the whole Village plans: I propose we make it a wellness village. It's next to a great hospital. It's next to a senior community that has healthcare needs. It can be a venue to teach the younger citizens about health. Build running tracks, climbing walls, yoga venues, a skate rink for older folks and include health related retail, a Tai Chi park, etc. If we have any hope of recouping the revenue lost when the mall died, we need to reconsider medical and recreational marijuana, just like Yorba Linda and Fullerton are considering. It doesn't have to be a lot - it can be a few shops and not the focus of the village. But then all the seniors currently taking buses to Santa Ana every month can just jump in their golf carts and spend their money in Laguna Hills.

As a nurse for the past 40 years, I have worked with a lot of patients who have benefited from cannabis during various treatments and for pain. I was in a chemo infusion room the day California passed the proposition to allow it in the state and every patient, nurse and doctor were cheering and clapping and shouting out with joy - because they knew for some folks, it was the only thing that got them through chemo. UCI has an institute to study it. [UCI Center for the Study of Cannabis - UCI Center for the Study of Cannabis](#) We can partner with them for research activities and can use them for guidance.

UCI Center for the Study of Cannabis - UCI Center for the Study of Cannabis

We are a multi-disciplinary research center at UCI, whose mission is to address the medical, legal and cultural

This pandemic has taught us a lot. One thing is certain: we have much needed improvements to make in public health. Laguna Hills can be a part of that. Let's create a healthy venue that serves all ages and is financially sustainable.

Please put me on the list to get updates on the project. Thanks.

Anne Taylor-Loughran, RN, MSN
aetaylor1@yahoo.com

[External E-mail]