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TOWN OF LOS GATOS

Q & A regarding 201-225 Los Gatos-Saratoga Road

Project Description: Requesting approval to demolish four existing buildings and merge two lots into one lot for the purposes of constructing two new commercial buildings with below grade and at grade parking on properties zoned C-2. APNs 510-14-008 and 510-14-009.

Q: Where is the development project?

A: The proposed development project is located at the southwest corner of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road (California State Route 9) and North Santa Cruz Avenue.

Q: What is the current use?

A: The properties currently feature existing buildings on the project site consisting of 3,250 square feet of retail space and 8,222 square feet of office space (11,472 square feet total).

Q: What is the proposed use?

A: One of the new buildings would be 4,200 square feet in size, intended for use as either a restaurant or as retail use. The second new building would be 15,500 square feet in size, intended for use as general office, medical office, bank, or some other combination of these uses. The overall square footage would total 19,700 square feet.

Q: How much larger in size are the proposed buildings than the existing buildings?

A: There would be an increase in retail space of 950 square feet, and an increase in office of 2,722 square feet, resulting in a total net increase of 8,228 square feet in building size.

Q: Would there be any increase in traffic due to the proposed development project?

A: Yes, there will be additional vehicle trips associated with the increased square footage; however, the increase in traffic would not result in a "significant" traffic impact based on the traffic analysis conducted according to the Town's Traffic Impact Policy and General Plan (GP).

Q: How many additional vehicle trips created by a new development triggers the Town's requirement for a traffic impact analysis?

A: In accordance with Town's Traffic Impact Policy, a traffic impact analysis (TIA) is required for any private development projects that are expected to add 20 or more vehicle trips in the AM or PM peak hours.

Q: Does the proposed project trigger the Town's requirement for a traffic impact analysis?

A: Yes. A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared and can be found at the following link: <http://www.losgatosca.gov/2216/Pending-Planning-Projects>. The TIA is available online via that link as well. The TIA found that the proposal would generate more vehicle



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trips that what currently occurs with the existing retail and office spaces, resulting in an additional 90 vehicle trips during the AM peak hour, and 48 vehicle trips during the PM peak hour.

Q: How are AM and PM peak hours selected for any given development?

A: Pursuant to the Town's Traffic Impact Policy, the AM and PM peak hours are determined during weekdays when schools are in session for studied intersections, with the AM peak hour occurring between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM and, similarly, the PM peak period between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM. The 60-minute durations with the highest number of vehicle trips during each of these morning and evening periods are selected as the respective peak hour traffic times. These peak hour traffic times are used for the traffic analysis.

Q: Is any increase in traffic from a new development considered a significant impact to the nearby traffic intersections and surrounding area?

A: No. The Town's General Plan (GP) and Traffic Impact Policy define a significant traffic impact based on changes to the intersection's Level of Service (LOS).

Q: What is LOS and how does it determine the impacts of project traffic on the Town?

A: Traffic engineering standards use LOS (Level of Service) to determine project traffic impacts. LOS represents traffic intersection congestion by a letter scale that ranges from LOS A to LOS F, with LOS A representing the least or no congestion. The Town's Traffic Impact Policy and General Plan (GP) do not allow for developments to drop the LOS at an intersection by more than one level or below LOS D without requiring the development to mitigate or provide a "fix" for the increased traffic delay. A project TIA analyzes LOS at impacted intersections as a function of the average vehicle delay and determines the impact significance and any required mitigation. *The impacts are only considered significant if the LOS drops more than one level or below a LOS D.*

Q: What are the TIA's findings of the LOS impact for this project?

A: For the currently proposed project, the TIA concluded that the intersections would not drop more than one level or below a LOS D. Therefore, the project would not create a significant impact on traffic. The intersections that were included in the analysis are: Massol Avenue and Los Gatos-Saratoga Road, North Santa Cruz Avenue and Los Gatos-Saratoga Road, and University Avenue and Los Gatos-Saratoga Road.

Q: Did the TIA recommend a traffic signal at the intersection of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road and Massol Avenue?

A: The TIA analyzed this intersection for information purposes and did not recommend a traffic signal. It found the traffic volumes and pedestrian volumes on Massol Avenue are not sufficient to meet the traffic volumes needed for a traffic signal based on traffic signal guidelines.



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Q: Would there be any likely consequences if a traffic signal were to be installed at the intersection of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road and Massol Avenue?

A: Yes, there would be two likely consequences if a traffic signal were to be installed at this intersection. The TIA noted that adding a signal at this location would create intersection blockage issues during times of high traffic volumes. Additionally, a new traffic signal at this location would encourage cut-through traffic and would increase non-local traffic on Massol Avenue, Tait Avenue, and other adjacent residential streets.

Q: Did the TIA evaluate the project impact to the adjacent neighborhood streets?

A: Yes. The TIA found that, due to the median on Los Gatos-Saratoga Road and U-turn restrictions at the intersection of Massol Avenue, vehicles on westbound Los Gatos-Saratoga Road and southbound North Santa Cruz Avenue would need to go around the block along Almendra and Tait Avenues in order to access the project driveway. This is an existing condition for driveways along the south side of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road between Massol and Santa Cruz Avenues.

Q: Did the TIA estimate the number of vehicle trips that would use the adjacent neighborhood streets to access the proposed project driveway?

A: Yes. With the proposed development, the TIA estimated approximately 425 additional vehicle trips per day would utilize the residential neighborhood streets in order to access the project site. Alternatively, if a U-turn were to be installed at Massol Avenue, the TIA estimated the traffic into residential neighborhood would go down from existing levels by around 140 vehicle trips. If a U-turn were to be provided at Massol Avenue, it would additionally reduce the number of existing vehicles using the residential neighborhood streets to enter other driveways along Los Gatos-Saratoga Road. The currently proposed Conditions of Approval require a U-turn at this location.

Q: Did the TIA evaluate if the project access points would be adequate and safe?

A: There is one proposed project driveway on Los Gatos-Saratoga Road for the development. The TIA found that this driveway would provide adequate access and can operate safely.

Q: What can be done to reduce the number of vehicle trips generated by the project?

A: The currently proposed Conditions of Approval require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for the development. The TDM plan will include a list of measures for reducing single-occupant vehicle trips and encourage alternative transportation modes such as riding bicycles, carpooling, and riding transit.

Q: Would the proposed project construct any off-site improvements?

A: The currently proposed Conditions of Approval require the following off-site improvements:



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- Removal of the existing pork-chop island at the southwest corner of North Santa Cruz Avenue and Los Gatos Saratoga-Road and construction of a standard intersection corner return with a right turn lane to allow for safer pedestrian crossing. These improvements would eliminate the un-controlled conflict between right turn vehicles and crossing pedestrians, and force vehicles turning right at the intersection to stop for pedestrians beforehand, thereby enhancing pedestrian safety.
- Construction of separated sidewalk along the project frontage, which introduces a landscape area to serve as a buffer between vehicular traffic and the sidewalk, further increasing pedestrian safety.
- Removal and reconstruction of a modified pork-chop island at the southeast corner of the intersection of Massol Avenue and Los Gatos-Saratoga Road to allow westbound U-turns.
- Improve the existing pedestrian crossing at Massol Avenue and Los Gatos-Saratoga Road by narrowing the crossing distance to the relocated pork chop island, eliminating the un-controlled conflict between right turn vehicles and crossing pedestrians with a stop sign for traffic turning right from northbound Massol Avenue to eastbound Los Gatos-Saratoga Road, and the installation of high-visibility crosswalk striping.
- Minimize neighborhood cut-through traffic by allowing westbound U-turns at the intersection of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road and Massol Avenue. This modification will allow southbound and westbound traffic to access the site without driving through the adjacent residential neighborhood.