

Petaluma Lowe's center EIR released

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The long-delayed draft environmental impact report for the controversial Deer Creek Village shopping center proposal in Petaluma is available online.

Merlone Geier Partners of San Francisco is proposing a project that includes 282,048 square feet of retail space, 44,450 square feet in a fitness center and 17,500 square feet of office uses on a 36.5-acre site at the southwest corner of North McDowell Boulevard and Rainier Avenue.

The proposal includes a Lowe's home improvement store as one of four anchor tenants.

The release of the report opens a 45-day public comment period during which interested parties may submit comments to the city. The period closes April 18.

On March 22, the Petaluma Planning Commission is scheduled to review the draft EIR and make recommendations to the City Council. The council is set to review it on April 18.

The final EIR, which is to include responses to comments, is set for completion in May. The final EIR will then go before the Planning Commission and council, tentatively set for June and July.

If the council certifies the document, the project would proceed to the city's site plan and architectural review hearing in August.

The project, years in the making, has long been the target of opposition from opponents of so-called big-box development.

Leaders of a neighborhood group that opposed a now-approved Target shopping center in Petaluma have been discussing their concerns with the Deer Creek proposal. The developer's description of the project is also available online.

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