

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

Cedros Crossing project earns a rave

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By: TOM GOLICH - Commentary:

As you think about the Cedros Crossing Project, here are some of my thoughts on the project as a result of serving as a member of the Solana Beach City Council. I fully support the plan for the Cedros Crossing site. There may need to be some fine-tuning related to parking and traffic, but I have confidence our City Council will find solutions to the concerns related to these issues.

I believe the impact of the Cedros Crossing project will be positive in the long term. The project will provide a funding source for the redevelopment agency and additional sales tax revenue for the city. The project will provide rental units, which are very much needed in our city. Not everyone who works in the area, such as teachers and firefighters, can afford a million dollars for a home.

Having sat through the traffic study presentation, I trust the City Council will look carefully at the information presented in the environmental impact report. Projected Coaster passenger growth is low because the study uses only San Diego Association of Governments population projections for Solana Beach. As gas prices rise and traffic gets heavier, people from other areas will come to Solana Beach to ride the Coaster.

As for the sand issue raised by Scott Jenkins, this is a very serious matter. When I sat on the River Valley JPA board when we reviewed the EIR for the Wetlands Restoration Project, Scott was part of the team reviewing the project. He is well-respected in his field. His comments on the issue should be considered in the final analysis of the EIR. When sand was put on our beach a number of years ago, it did not stay for very long, because the grains were too fine.

We should ask the council to review the EIR data and perform their analysis based on reality, not on modeling from SANDAG studies. Modeling is a good start, but they know our community and how it views things. For example, I would support overflow parking into the neighborhoods on a few occasions in lieu of overbuilding parking areas that remain vacant much of the time. The tradeoff here is the neighboring residents can walk, not drive, to the facilities located in the Cedros Crossing complex. During race season, we walk to the train station to catch the bus to the track. If we are willing to compromise, life goes smoother.

If I were on the council today, I would support the Cedros Crossing project. It will expand the city's heart with the North Coast Repertory Theater, new commercial and housing components and provide the vibrancy associated with a beach community. The City Council needs to be visionary tempered with a dose of reality. With your guidance, the council can make Cedros Crossing a wonderful addition to our city.

-- Tom Golich is a former member of the Solana Beach City Council.