Before We Start…

Audience will be **muted** throughout the session.



This webinar is being recorded and will be sent to you following the session.



Closed Captioning is available for this session.



Use the **Q&A** function to submit your questions. Use the “like” button to upvote questions.



Panel Co-Chairs

Rick Dishnica, President, Dishnica Company

Danielle Surdin O'Leary, Vice President of Municipal Engagement & Economic Development, Prologis



Panelists

Cecily Barclay, Partner, Perkins Coie

Dena Belzer, President, Strategic Economics

Alan Chamorro, Executive VP, Lowe

Christine Firstenberg, President, MERR

Leslie Parks, Director of Economic Development, Good City Company

Yann Taylor, Principal Architect, Field Paoli

San Fran



Revitalizing NewPark Mall

Newark, California

FEBRUARY 25-26, 2026

Thank you City of Newark

NEWARK
california



THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

MISSION COMMITMENTS

CONNECT active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals

INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

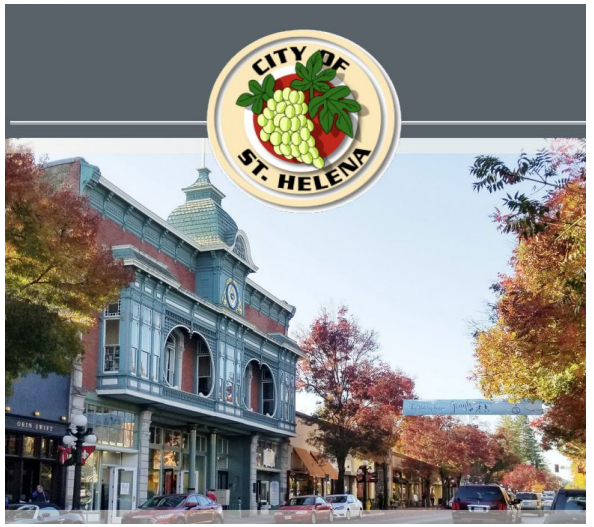
Provides independent, objective, candid advice on important land use and real estate issues

Highly focused and intensive process

- Months of prep by City staff
- Engagement by panelists for at least one month prior
- Two-day on-site engagement

40+ TAPs conducted throughout the Bay Area since 2006





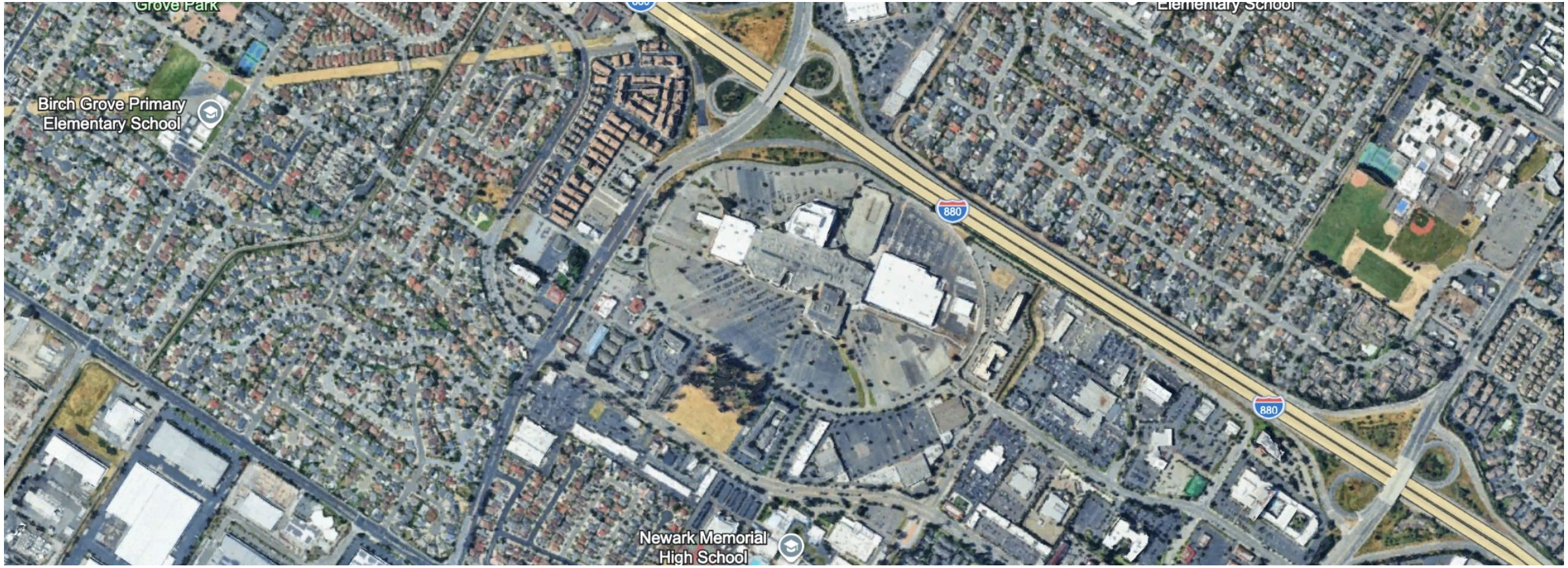




Problem Statement & Study Area

The City's goal is to transform the NewPark Mall into a premier, vibrant urban place.

Using the TAP process, the City seeks assistance reimagining the Greater NewPark Mall Area through input and recommendations regarding land use, economic development, and community compatibility.



TAP Scope

- Key strengths and weaknesses of the site and area and leverage existing assets
- Articulate a vision statement for the Greater NewPark Mall area
- Highest and best uses for the area optimizing land use, economic development, and community compatibility (e.g., quality shopping, dining, entertainment, office, distribution, R&D, or housing)
- Key market trends influencing success (or not) for this project
- Role of the Specific Plan to incentivize multifamily and mixed-use development
- Key policy and regulatory barriers to implementation
- Leadership needed to achieve the above vision
- Recommended next steps (short, intermediate, long-term) for moving forward



What We Learned

City Briefing

- The City is proud of its ability to adapt
- Committed and enthusiastic elected and staff leadership
- The demographics are changing and the city is becoming even more diverse
- Vision for the community is “Retail, Residential, and Recreational”
- Commercial at Old Town is locally-oriented
- Four Corners commercial is for “big” shopping
- The mall has potential to be a community draw
- Specific plan for the site supported a vision that stalled in 2021
- City would like to see a mix of uses at the site



Who We Heard From: Stakeholder Interviews

- Mayor and City Council Members
- Newark Residents
- City staff
- Planning Commissioner
- Local employees
- Property Owners
- Retail Brokers
- Business Owners
- Housing and Retail Developers


NEWPARK
OPEN
DURING CONSTRUCTION
Hooray! Kids
INDOOR PLAY CENTER
amc
24 FITNESS
JACK'S
RESTAURANT & BAR
YUGO
RAMEN


USION
BAR VINUM
G6a nation


SUNDAY 9AM - 1PM
NEWARK
FARMER'S MARKET
FARMER'S MARKET
ENJOY THE FUN
NEWPARK


YUGO

Site Tour


COSTCO


EXIT
DINING TERRACE
COSTCO
RESTROOMS
ESCALATOR

What We Heard: Stakeholder Interviews

- The days of 60k sq ft retailers are over
- The City is becoming more inclusive
- Rents in a big mall can be challenging
- Very family-focused community; vacationing in place
- People are hungry for cultural events and experience options
- There is a lack of recurring events, esp low-barrier events for teens
- Mall's zoning and specific plan are holding back new ideas
- City has high expectations that may be hard to achieve
- Conversion to outdoor mall may be cost prohibitive
- Retail needs adjusting in the immediate mall area
- Retail rule of thumb: avoid competitors w/in 3 miles
- Demographics, density, and spendable income drive retail success

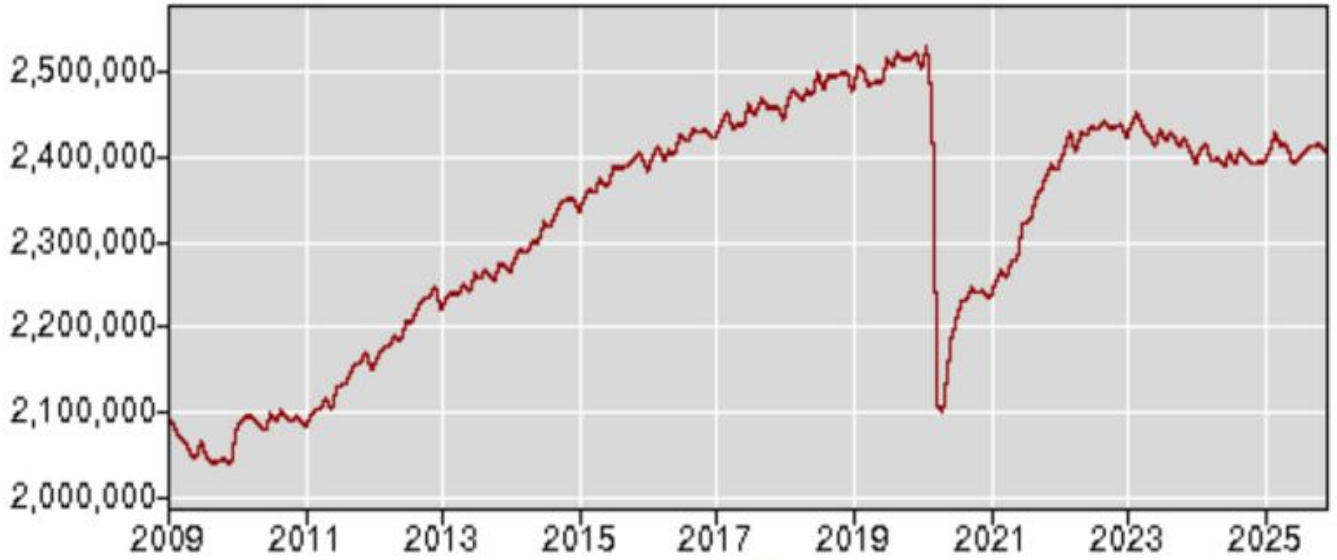


ECONOMIC & MARKET OUTLOOK

Market and Economic Trends

- Market trends have changed rapidly, creating tremendous uncertainty
- Brookfield, the mall's owner, is also in transition
- While high-density housing seemed like a key market driver in 2018, when the specific plan was first adapted, this use is not feasible today
- These conditions indicate that the City needs to rethink its approach to catalyzing the mall

San Francisco – Oakland – Fremont MSA Job Growth 2009-2025





THE CHALLENGE OF THE MALL MODEL

Retail Realities

- Retail has changed over the last 12 years
- Structural disruptions 2013-2019
- Brick and mortar struggling
- Change after Covid
- National retail anchors downsized
- Other retailers closed stores and reduced their footprints
- Retail has moved to be EXPERIENTIAL
  - Tenants like salons, restaurants, recreation (bowling, pickleball)
  - Family entertainment and food of all kinds



Regarding NewPark Mall

Constraints to redevelopment

- Numerous owners – not all interfacing with each other
- Financial constraints
- Serious competition with traditional tenants already in the trade area
  - Pacific Commons, Fremont – 10 minutes South
  - Union Landing, Union City – 10 minutes North
  - Demographic changes – more ethnic diversity
  - Smaller trade area – Tri-cities

Current demand in trade area for ethnic grocer, recreation tenants, food oriented tenants



Regarding NewPark Mall

- Newpark's OPPORTUNITY = celebrate ethnic diversity
- DIFFERENTIATE from the competition
- Create a sense of PLACE
  - a PLACE to hang out
  - a PLACE for family entertainment
  - a PLACE to feel connected to the community

What we heard yesterday from property owners and key tenants:

- Taking advantage of available anchor space
- Excited about opportunities
- Successful movie theater
- EXPERIENTIAL TENANTS!!!!







SITE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Market Challenges

Residential Market

- Higher interest rates
- Years of inflation
- Pushing up the cost of everything
- Increased yield requirements from investors

Result – frozen capital markets with a focus on distressed properties, not new construction

Residential ground-up rental properties (with structured parking) will not happen until market rents increase significantly

Additional Challenges

- High fees
- Off-site requirements
- Affordable housing requirements
- Onerous design standards
- Other community benefits

Result – Raises the cost of housing, difficult to capitalize and develop

Opportunity – Consider relaxing some requirements

Retail Challenges

Attracting additional small businesses

- Local entrepreneurial (non-chain), service, and small businesses can't pay the high rents
- Structured parking for small retail is not feasible - Too costly
- Conflicts with the dense development in the Specific Plan

Local, smaller tenants need convenient, surface parking, which is plentiful in traditional strip and neighborhood centers



Opportunities for NewPark Place

City leaders invest in the community:

- Infrastructure
- Parks
- Retail
- Commuter parking structures
- Lighting
- Signage
- Sidewalks
- Neighborhood connectivity, etc.

Placemaking, community building, community-focused, neighborhood serving = community benefit

Invest in your community – asking the developer to deliver this infrastructure makes projects less feasible. If you want to create a special environment – it requires community investment

Site Recommendations

Framework and principles are sound, but **retail vision must adapt** to represent today's tri-city demographics – will help differentiate, fill voids, and build on strengths

- Ethnically based grocery store with local, hyper-local, and national retailers
- Local services for small business and entrepreneurs
- Significant entertainment component – could include a small-scale music venue, comedy club, performance venue, dancing, banquet hall, etc.
- Experiential retail – bowling or bocce – a place for family, fun and community
- Outdoor, programmable and playful community area programmed with community events, fair's, etc. as a catalyst for this development that can flex into a larger venue for bigger community events.

Site Recommendations

Inner Ring:

- Retail, entertainment, placemaking, higher density housing with structured parking

Outer Ring:

- Lower density housing (e.g. townhomes); advanced manufacturing, office and/or hotel uses (symbiotic with retail/service and mixed-use environments)





VISION & PLACEMAKING


OPPORTUNITY SITE
PARKING GARAGE
CINEMA
COSTCO
OPPORTUNITY SITE
OPPORTUNITY SITE
OPPORTUNITY SITES
FITNESS
MACYS
EVENT SPACE
OPPORTUNITY SITE
SHIRLEY SISK GROVE

Identifying Opportunities

- Connecting and leveraging existing assets to create a place for events
- Inviting community participation both as customers and as retail tenants
- Flexibility of uses and approaches





FOSTER SUCCESS

What Success Needs

The mall is an opportunity to build community but…

- Old approach: driven by process and regulation that doesn't align with today's market forces
- The collective "we" (elected officials, staff, administration, and community) need a different approach to development that includes the following guiding principles:
  - Be flexible
  - Think out-of-the-box
  - Be open minded
  - Lead
  - Take risk
  - Be **bold**





Near-Term Actions

Focus on people and proactive implementation for positive near-term successes

- Pop-up retail and events at the center
- Basic park and access improvements *(I walked from the Homewood Suites to Jack's: it's scary)*







IMPLEMENTATION & TOOLS

Land Use Regulatory Amendments

I. Opportunities for the City to implement a New Vision for NewPark Mall in its Land Use Regulations

II. Overview of the City's Land Use Regulations
   - General Plan
   - NewPark Place Specific Plan
   - Municipal Code
   - Other plans (parks, bike/pedestrian, circulation)

III. Scope of Specific Plan amendments to achieve flexibility and market adaptability at NewPark Mall

Land Use Regulatory Amendments

- **Convert**
  - Specific Plan to a “Master Plan”
- **Retain**
  - Conceptual plans
  - Visionary policies
  - “Caps” on allowable development
  - Allowable uses within and outside ring road
- **Allow**
  - Housing outside ring road with a 20/du acre min.
- **Invest in**
  - Public infrastructure
    - Shirley Sisk Park, pedestrian paths, signage, sidewalks, and trees

Land Use Regulatory Amendments

- **Do Not Retain**
  - Land use plan (figure 2-4)
  - Density plan (figure 2-6)
  - Detailed street/mobility plans
  - Infrastructure plans
  - Design guidelines that inhibit innovative, market-driven uses allowed by the General Plan
- **Consider**
  - Amending General Plan to incorporate foregoing policies
  - Amending Zoning Code to prohibit certain uses

Key Findings

- The mall is not dead – it is already in transition
- It is too soon to tell what the in-line shop area can be, but the building itself is valuable
- Placemaking will be critical
- The City must be open to a new approach to its land use policies
- In the short run, the City needs to lead, not wait for other parties to act

Summary of TAP Recommendations

1. Pursue incremental placemaking that includes Shirley Sisk Grove
2. Look for public sector or institutional partners who might be investors or tenants in the mall
3. Consider providing money and/or other support to increase programing at the mall and the Grove so that there are regular events and activities in the area
4. Look at other mall developments for lessons learned, e.g., Bayfair Mall in San Leandro
5. Adapt your land use regulatory policies to allow for greater flexibility
6. Broadcast your successes
7. Stick to your community vision – it is a key differentiator


Q&A
Thank You!