

**From:** [Sheikhali, Monet](#)  
**To:** ["Mindy Shambaugh"](#)  
**Cc:** [Stan Shambaugh](#)  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Concerns about Lago Fresca Project  
**Date:** Monday, December 15, 2025 10:47:00 AM

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Good morning, Mindy,

Thank you for your email and for your comments.

The Planning Commission reviewed the project and approved it on Thursday. The video is available on YouTube; here is the link: [Planning Commission 12-11-25](#). The Planning Commission decision is appealable, and anyone can appeal it. Similar comments and questions were raised during the meeting, and City staff and the applicant answered them.

Also, you can visit the project website at this link: <https://www.srcity.org/3774/Lago-Fresca-Apartments>. Some questions and comments have been answered on this webpage as well.

This Thursday, the project will be presented to the Design Review and Preservation Board for design review. I will include a copy of this email conversation in the public record and provide it to the board along with other emails we have received. Here is the link for this meeting: <https://www.srcity.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=2356>

Regards,

**Monet Sheikhali | Supervising Planner**

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Friday: 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Tel. (707) 543- 4698| Fax (707) 543-3269 | [msheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhali@srcity.org)



**Coming soon in 2025, the Planning, Building, and Engineering Divisions of the City of Santa Rosa's Planning and Economic Development Department will fully transition to an online application submittal process through the Accela Citizen Access platform. Learn more about the Online Permitting System [here](#), and more information will be coming soon!**

**From:** Mindy Shambaugh [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2025 9:52 AM  
**To:** Sheikhal, Monet <msheikhali@srcity.org>  
**Cc:** Stan Shambaugh [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Concerns about Lago Fresca Project

Dear Monet,

I hope this message finds you well.

Attached is a letter outlining several safety-related concerns I have regarding the proposed Lago Fresca project on Hoen Avenue. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission consider these points as part of the project review.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. Please don't hesitate to contact me if any clarification is needed.

Sincerely,  
Mindy Shambaugh, PMP  
Santa Rosa Resident

**Mindy Shambaugh, PMP**  
4835 Hoen Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
[shambaugh21@gmail.com](mailto:shambaugh21@gmail.com)  
707-627-6223

**Date:** December 12, 2025

**City of Santa Rosa – Planning & Economic Development**

Attention: Planning Commission  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

**Subject: Safety Concerns Regarding the Proposed Lago Fresca Development**

Good morning,

My name is Mindy Shambaugh, and I am a resident of Bennett Valley. I appreciate the City's review of the Lago Fresca project, and I would like to raise several safety-related concerns that I hope the Planning Commission will carefully consider.

**1. Parking and Traffic Safety**

The last focused parking study for this project was conducted in November 2021, during pandemic conditions when traffic and parking levels were significantly lower than they are today. Current conditions are not represented in that analysis. I am concerned that on-street and on-site parking may be insufficient for today's usage, potentially leading to unsafe congestion or obstructed access for residents, service vehicles, and emergency responders.

In addition, the project's requested waivers—including reduced parking supply, narrower stall widths, and setback reductions along Hoen Avenue and Summerfield Road—may further contribute to safety risks. Reduced parking and narrower stalls can increase spillover parking on surrounding streets, impacting sight lines and access. Reduced setbacks may affect pedestrian and cyclist visibility near driveways, intersections, and the new mid-block crossing.

Given these factors, I respectfully request an updated parking and traffic study that reflects current conditions, evaluates the effect of design concessions on circulation safety, and includes evenings and weekends.

**2. Pedestrian Safety**

While the planned mid-block crosswalk is a positive improvement, its close proximity to the Summerfield Road intersection and existing traffic signal raises concerns. Mid-block crossings depend heavily on driver compliance and visibility. As traffic increases due to the project, pedestrian exposure and conflict risk may rise.

I encourage the City to evaluate whether the crossing location, beacon visibility, and curb sight lines are sufficient, especially given reduced setbacks and roadway geometry.

**3. Emergency Evacuation and Communication Reliability**

During a recent Planning Commission meeting, the firefighter addressing evacuation risks stated that residents should rely on cellular networks and Comcast service to stay informed about evacuation zones. I would like to

highlight that during previous wildfire emergencies in our area, both cellular and Comcast services were down for many residents.

When communication systems fail, individuals often evacuate based on instinct rather than official guidance. This can lead to bottlenecks, uncoordinated traffic surges, slowed evacuation times, and greater risk to residents. Increasing housing density without addressing the known reliability challenges of communication infrastructure during wildfire conditions could exacerbate these evacuation issues.

Additionally, although the site is not currently mapped within a designated Wildland Urban Interface area, wildfire behavior and emergency patterns are changing regionally. Evacuation planning should reflect realistic, worst-case scenarios rather than assumptions based on average conditions.

I respectfully ask that the City evaluate emergency evacuation feasibility using models that incorporate communication outages, surge-traffic flows, and previous real-world performance during local wildfire events.

#### **4. Construction Safety**

While temporary, construction activity can significantly impact traffic, pedestrian movement, and visibility within the neighborhood. This is particularly concerning given the high number of children who walk to and from the nearby schools each day. Construction vehicles entering and exiting the site, reduced sidewalk access, and shifting traffic patterns create conditions that may pose serious risks to young pedestrians.

I respectfully ask the City to ensure that a detailed construction pedestrian safety plan is in place prior to groundbreaking. This should include clearly marked detours for children walking to school, temporary protected walkways, and measures to limit construction truck movements during peak school commute hours. These steps are essential to prevent hazardous interactions between construction operations and school children.


Additionally, construction activity may create temporary choke points that could impede emergency vehicle access. This risk is amplified by the area's wildfire evacuation history. A clear emergency access plan, particularly during peak construction phases, should be an explicit requirement.

#### **5. Limitations of the Categorical CEQA Exemption**

I understand the project is proceeding under a categorical CEQA exemption as urban infill. However, categorical exemptions do not require detailed analysis of emergency access, evacuation timing, or cumulative safety effects. Given the project's density, the requested waivers, and the known communication vulnerabilities during disaster events, I encourage the City to take a closer look at safety impacts even within this streamlined process.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns. I respectfully request that the City require updated traffic, parking, and safety analyses and consider additional mitigation measures to ensure the Lago Fresca project does not compromise resident safety now or during future emergencies.

Sincerely,  
Mindy Shambaugh, PMP  
Santa Rosa Resident

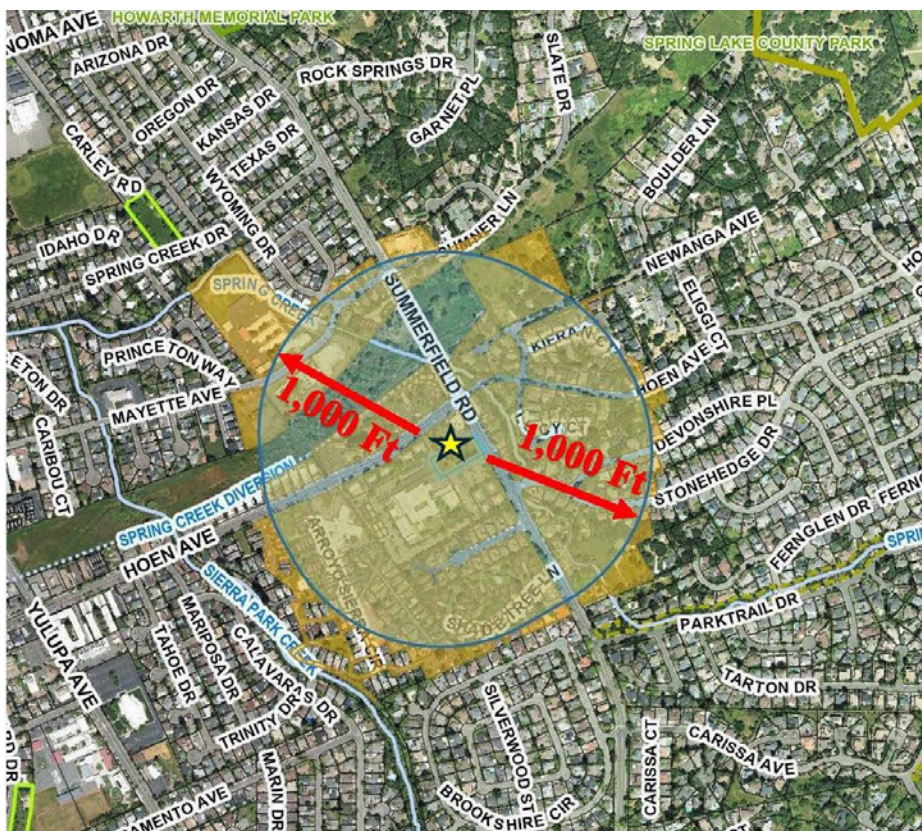
**From:** [Sheikhali, Monet](#)  
**To:**   
**Cc:** [Jones, Jessica](#); [Guasco, Cher](#)  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Lago Fresca Apartment Concerns...just became aware of developments today  
**Date:** Thursday, December 18, 2025 9:57:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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Good morning, Nancy and Reed,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Lago Fresca Apartments project and for taking the time to share your concerns. I confirm that we have received your email and will be shared with the Design Review Board and the Preservation Board.

I can explain the reason you did not receive the public notice. Public hearing notices were mailed based on geographic distance from the project site. Under California Government Code [Section 65091](#), notice of the hearing shall be mailed or delivered at least 10 days before the hearing to all owners of real property as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll within **300 feet** of the real property that is the subject of the hearing. Santa Rosa Zoning Code [Section 20-66.020\(C\)](#) requires that notices be mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 600-foot radius of a project site. However, in response to community requests, the City of Santa Rosa expanded the notification area to 1,000 feet, which exceeds both the State and City requirements. The City of Santa Rosa generates mailing lists using its GIS (Geographic Information System), which identifies occupants and property owners. Property address and ownership information used for this process come from Sonoma County's assessor records. Your property at 4762 Devonshire is outside the 1,000-foot buffer (as shown below); as such, you did not receive a notice because it falls beyond the notification boundary.



The State Density Bonus Law, established under California [Government Code Section 65915](#), is a law intended to promote the development of affordable housing. It allows developers to build more residential units than what is otherwise permitted under local zoning laws if they include affordable units. The goal is to increase the overall housing supply while ensuring that affordable housing options are available within communities. Under this law, a project providing 10 percent very low-income units can qualify for a 32.5 percent density bonus (See the table below). Also, under this law, developers who include affordable housing may request the following:

- Increased residential density beyond local zoning and General Plan limits;
- Concessions from development standards that help reduce the cost of development; and
- Waivers from development standards that would otherwise preclude the additional units (including height limits)

Percentage Very Low Income Units	Percentage Density Bonus
5	20
6	22.5
7	25
8	27.5
9	30
<u>10</u>	<u>32.5</u>
11	35
12	38.75
13	42.5
14	46.25
15	50

A Focused Traffic Study was prepared by W-Trans, for this project which found that; Nearby streets can accommodate the expected traffic, 53 on-street parking spaces exist within walking distance, and adequate site access from Hoen Avenue only (not Summerfield Rd). The Focused Traffic Study, which was also reviewed and accepted by the City's Traffic Engineer, concludes that the project would not result in significant traffic impacts. The project includes bicycle parking and is near transit stops, further reducing dependence on personal vehicles. A crosswalk with enhanced warning devices (rectangular rapid flashing beacons, or RRFBs) will be installed approximately 300 feet west of Summerfield Road to facilitate additional crossings that will occur between the signal at Summerfield and the RRFB at Sierra Creek. You can access this report by clicking on this link: [Traffic Study](#).

For more information about this project, you can review the project website at this link: <https://www.srcity.org/3774/Lago-Fresca-Apartments>

We appreciate your long-standing involvement in the Bennett Valley community and your thoughtful input on this matter.

Have a great day,

**Monet Sheikhalil | Supervising Planner**

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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**“PED Holiday Counter and Phone Hours: Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, and closed all day Friday, December 26<sup>th</sup>.**



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December 17, 2025

Dear Mayor Stapp and Members of the City Council,

I am writing to express serious concerns regarding the proposed Lago Fresca Apartments project. My husband and I have lived in the Bennett Valley neighborhood for over 30 years. It is where we raised our children and where my husband's dental practice was located until he retired. We have always been deeply invested in our community, have long supported lower-income families and have served on various boards and committees with the goal of strengthening our community as a whole.

While I recognize the need for additional housing in our city, the Lago Fresca project, as currently proposed, appears more likely to create new problems than provide meaningful benefits. Most concerning is the lack of adequate communication with the neighborhood most directly affected. My husband and I did not receive the notification postcard, which I only saw for the first time today. Others have expressed the same sentiment. Since the project seemed to be paused several years ago—when the fencing was removed—there has been little to no significant outreach or transparency regarding its progress.

The project proposes 50 units, with only four designated as very low-income affordable housing. Given this minimal ratio, it is troubling to see the number of concessions and waivers being granted. Even with a higher proportion of affordable units, the extent of these concessions would be concerning.

The proposed building height is particularly incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood. A maximum height of 35 feet would already exceed anything currently built in the area; a 45-foot concession for one of the buildings is wholly out of character and disruptive to the established scale of the community.

Traffic impacts are another major concern. The installation of the bike lane on Hoen several years ago significantly reduced traffic flow and already strains the roadway. Adding 50 apartment units—with the likelihood of multiple vehicles per household, certainly more than anticipated in the plan—will further exacerbate congestion, particularly during peak school and work hours. From my home on Devonshire Place, since the bike lane addition, it can take up to 20 minutes to reach the freeway during these times. I do not understand how it was determined that this project would not negatively affect existing traffic conditions.

Hoen has also been the site of serious accidents, including the tragic death of Atticus, whose family I had the opportunity to meet before he passed away. This area needs safety improvements—not additional strain that could increase risk.

We respectfully ask the Council to pause and reconsider this project. A smaller-scale development with a greater number of affordable housing units would be more appropriate



and beneficial. Most importantly, the neighborhood deserves meaningful notice and the opportunity to present our concerns and ideas. We were unaware that the previous meeting had occurred and only learned today of the meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Due to a prior commitment, we are unable to attend.

This project is too significant, and its impacts too widespread, to rush through final decisions without genuine community input. Please allow your constituents the opportunity to engage in a thoughtful, collaborative process to ensure any development is viable and beneficial for everyone involved.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Nancy and Reed Ferrick  
[REDACTED]  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Becky Hopper](#)  
**To:** [Sheikhali, Monet](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Planning Commission Meeting 12/11/2025 Re; Lago Fresca Apartments  
**Date:** Thursday, December 11, 2025 3:57:59 PM

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Monet,

Thank you for getting back to me so promptly.

After a quick reading of the staff report, I am quite concerned by the scope of the setback and height waivers attached to this development. Probably the most alarming aspects are the traffic and parking impacts of so many additional vehicles. The public responses delineated in the report reflect my overall reaction to this development. I recognize the need for affordable housing in our city. However, cramming 50 apartments in 4 story buildings on 1.3 acres with limited parking will only create hazardous conditions in the surrounding neighborhood.

Rebecca Hopper

On Thu, Dec 11, 2025 at 1:57 PM Sheikhali, Monet <[msheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhali@srcity.org)> wrote:

Hi Rebecca,

Here is the link for the meeting: <https://www.srcity.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=2306>

And here is the link for the documents for the meeting: [City of Santa Rosa - File #: 25-115PC](#)

The Planning Commission meeting starts at 4:30 today. I have attached the agenda for today's meeting.

Let me know if you have any further questions.

Regards,

**Monet Sheikhali | Supervising Planner**

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**From:** Becky Hopper [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 11, 2025 1:26 PM  
**To:** Sheikhal, Monet <[msheikhal@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhal@srcity.org)>; Bill Hopper [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Planning Commission Meeting 12/11/2025 Re; Lago Fresca Apartments

My husband and I received a notice about the above referenced meeting. I was unable to find a link to meeting instructions and documents. Is this meeting still occurring today? If so, please send me pertinent information.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Hopper

[REDACTED], Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**From:** [Sheikhali, Monet](#)  
**To:** ["Robert Bradle"](#)  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Summerfield at Hoen  
**Date:** Monday, December 15, 2025 12:49:00 PM

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Hello Robert,

Thank you for your email and for your comments.

The Planning Commission reviewed the project and approved it on Thursday. The video is available on YouTube; here is the link: [Planning Commission 12-11-25](#).

The Planning Commission decision is appealable, and anyone can appeal it.

For more information about this project and to review the FAQ, please visit the project website at <https://www.srcity.org/3774/Lago-Fresca-Apartments>.

This Thursday, the project will be presented to the Design Review and Preservation Board for design review. I will include a copy of this email conversation in the public record and provide it to the board along with other emails we have received. Here is the link for this meeting: <https://www.srcity.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=2356>.

Regards,

**Monet Sheikhali | Supervising Planner**

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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**From:** Robert Bradle [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 11, 2025 4:53 PM  
**To:** Sheikhali, Monet <[msheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhali@srcity.org)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Summerfield at Hoen

Ms.Sheikhali,

I understand that the city of Santa Rosa is under heavy state pressure to add more housing, but there is a right way and a wrong way.

Lago Fresca Apartments to the corner of Hoen and Summerfield is the wrong way. I have lived in the area for fifty years and I understand why people want to move here. The problem we all face is that every time we expand, we degrade the reason we moved here. Sounds like another incidence of NOMBY syndrome.

Maybe, but as a Sonoma County “non-native” I am willing to compromise.

The problem, as I see it, is with the infrastructure. If you are going to add more apartments you are going to need to provide adequate parking, adequate transportation and make that expansion fit the area you want to squeeze it into. Adding an apartment complex of this size to the area you are debating does not address any of these issues.

I am strongly opposed to this proposal.

Thank you for your time,

Robert Bradle

**From:** [Robert Ostling](#)  
**To:** [Sheikhali, Monet](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Lago Fresco or Lago Fresco?  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 17, 2025 4:50:39 PM

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Monet, I have canvassed Bennett Valley apartments and the near universal norm or acceptable design is for 2 stories not 3. The property size is 1.3 acres, same as a football field. Density is the common element or concern with this design. Two stories reduces units, reduces parking, enhances safety.

Thank you.

Robert Ostling

On Tue, Dec 9, 2025 at 4:38 PM Sheikhali, Monet <[msheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhali@srcity.org)> wrote:

Thank you, Robert, for sending me this email.

I will make sure this email is included in the public record and shared with the Planning Commission.

Have a great night,

**Monet Sheikhali | Supervising Planner**

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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**From:** Robert Ostling <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 8, 2025 10:07 PM  
**To:** Sheikhali, Monet <[msheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:msheikhali@srcity.org)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Lago FrescA or Lago Fresco?

Hello Monet,

I sent this email Monday tot an incorrect address for you. It really has the essence of the phone voicemail left that day, but I forward after seeing the error. I hope to see you to say hello at the Thursday town hall.

Best regards,

Robert Ostling

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Robert Ostling [REDACTED]  
**Date:** December 8, 2025 at 10:36:08 AM PST  
**To:** [monetsheikhali@srcity.org](mailto:monetsheikhali@srcity.org)  
**Subject:** Lago FrescA or Lago Fresco?

Good morning, Monet ...

This note duplicates a recent voicemail to your workphone.

Robert and Iris Ostling relocated to 4705 Stonehedge Drive in late 2023. This places us in very close to the scheduled construction adjacent to Hoen Ave and



Summerfield Road.

Putting aside concerns about traffic and parking, I remain confused by the naming of the 50 units as Lago Fresca. My second language to English is intermediate Spanish, and that leads to my confusion for appending the feminine adjective "Fresca" with the masculine noun ( EL Lago ). My request is that the naming gets vetted for correct grammar by qualified Native Spanish speakers or bilingual educators. Current postings for this project confound the matter by usage of both Fresco and Fresca in the related documents.

Incidentally, I see no lake located on this small property. ???.

If you choose to respond by email or text:



Sent from my iPad