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Linda Gardens Apartments in El Cajon sells for \$4.95M

Daily Transcript Staff Report

Linda Gardens Apartments, a 21-unit multifamily property in El Cajon, has been sold for \$4.95 million, the commercial real estate brokerage Marcus & Millichap announced July 30.

It marks the third-largest multifamily transaction in East County so far this year, according to the brokerage.

"In today's dynamic market, the enduring appeal of quality and stability continues to attract investors to wellperforming assets like Linda Gardens Apartments," said Christopher Zorbas, executive managing director with the Zorbas Huffman Group at Marcus & Millichap. "This transaction highlights the enduring strength and investor confidence in East County's multifamily market."

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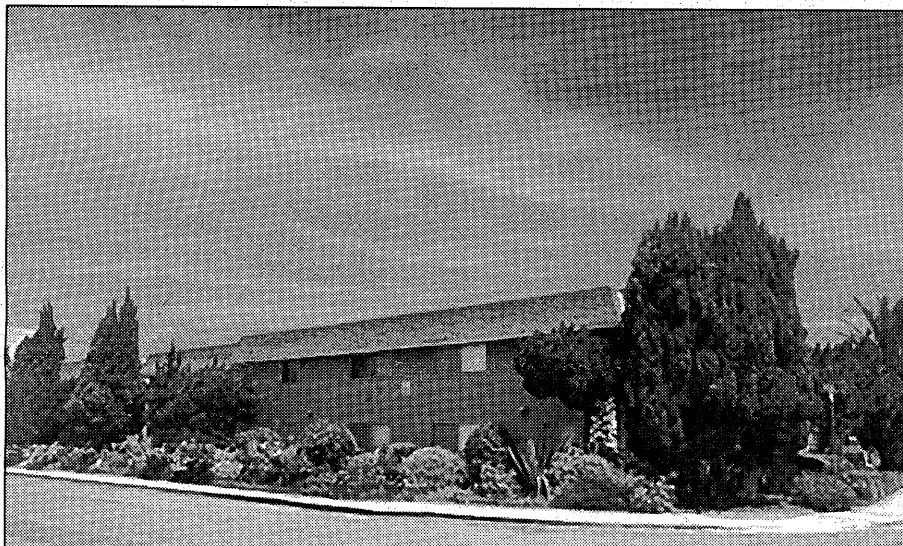


Photo courtesy of Marcus & Millichap

Linda Gardens Apartments at 310 Linda Way in El Cajon has been sold for \$4.95 million to Mendridge LLC.

Group provides blueprint for transit development

By Thor Kamban Biberman

Daily Transcript Staff Writer

In California, building mass transit is slow and expensive.

In a recent report, the nonprofit transportation-focused organization Circulate San Diego attempts to explain why.

"The transit we need to meet our climate and mobility goals too often remains aspirational,"

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Pep Boys adds 3 local Navy bases to its network

By Thor Kamban Biberman

Daily Transcript Staff Writer

Pep Boys, an automotive service provider, announced Tuesday a contract with the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM).

Under the contract, Pep Boys plans to operate 14 of NEXCOM's automotive service centers located on U.S. Navy bases across the nation, including three in San Diego County.

The local automotive and tire service centers will be located at Naval Air Station North Island, Naval Base San Diego, and Naval Base Point Loma.

The newly converted locations will be re-branded under the Pep Boys name, continuing

a legacy that dates to the company's founding by Navy veterans Emanuel "Manny" Rosenfeld, Maurice "Moe" Strauss, Moe Radavitz, and W. Graham "Jack" Jackson. They each chipped in \$200 to start the business.

The transition from NEXCOM centers to Pep Boys will be implemented on a rolling basis.

"This expansion reinforces Pep Boys' ongoing commitment to supporting those who serve, providing convenient, reliable automotive services directly on base," the company stated.

"We are honored to work with NEXCOM to bring Pep Boys' best-in-class automotive and tire services to Navy personnel and their

families," Pep Boys CEO Joe Auriemma said in a statement. "Our company was founded by three Navy veterans, and we take immense pride in continuing that tradition by serving the military community with the same dedication and excellence that has defined us for more than 100 years."

NEXCOM, which operates Navy Exchange retail stores and services on U.S. Navy bases around the globe, awarded Pep Boys as its new automotive service provider for its authorized customers, which includes active-duty service members, retirees, and their families on the 14 selected U.S. Navy base locations.

"This contract with Pep Boys reflects NEX-

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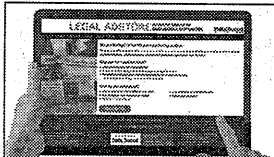
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Transit

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Circulate San Diego stated. “Even when public transit projects are approved by elected officials or through ballot measures by the voters themselves, transit authorities do not have the power to construct them. Before they can build, they must seek third-party permits from local governments, special districts, state agencies, and public and private utilities.”

Circulate recently published a paper titled, “Powerless Brokers, Why We can’t Build Transit.”

The group’s CEO, Colin Parent, said the report focuses on the many third-party permitting challenges facing transit that are “arbitrary, excessive, and avoidable.”

The report includes case studies from across California, documenting permit issues that add significant costs and delays for what Parent said are needed transit projects.

“They range from the largest project in California – high-speed rail – to a small busway on the central coast,” he said.

The big problem, according to Parent, is there are so many jurisdictions involved in many of these projects that they get bogged down, so they are either delayed at great cost, or are threatened with extinction, such as the high-speed rail due to delays and ballooning cost projections.

Parent said San Diego, with its Metropolitan Transit System and the North County Transit District, isn’t overwhelmed with adjacent transportation agencies the way Los Angeles and San Francisco are.

“L.A. and San Francisco each have 27 transit agencies,” he said, adding that having just the main two here coupled with strong oversight by the San Diego Association of Government (SANDAG) have made a strong partnership that

cuts through the bureaucracy.

Parent said SANDAG’s oversight working with the Metropolitan Transit System was a major factor in the success of the Mid-Coast Trolley line, which starts at the Santa Fe Depot downtown and extends to University Towne Centre and UC San Diego.

Still, Parent said mass transportation planning could be better in San Diego.

“Even those who beat the odds and secure environmental approval and enough funding to build a project are not in the clear,” Circulate stated. “They can still face a gauntlet of additional permitting requirements from third parties, including local governments, special districts, and public and private utilities – especially when projects involve multiple jurisdictions.”

For California to secure abundant public transit, Circulate said the state must empower transit authorities to build. The report contains a variety of recommendations, including:

- Reassigning permitting responsibility from third parties to transit authorities themselves;
- Incentivizing local governments to prioritize transit, adopting transparent standards, and streamlining permitting;
- Extending CEQA exemptions for sustainable transportation; and
- Encouraging more transit leadership from Caltrans.

“The sooner that projects are built, the sooner we can realize the social, economic, and environmental benefits of those investments,” the report stated. “When projects cost too much and take too long, we get fewer of them, and public support for public transit wanes. A growing body of research has documented the drivers of costs and delays for public transit capital projects in the United States.”

Circulate said the reasons for delays are many, including political interference, a lack

of upfront funding for project development, inadequate cost controls, decisions that are outsourced to the private sector, legal systems that privilege the individual over the collective, and regulatory challenges.

The organization also said there are other factors that can influence a project, depending on where in the world it is being built. For example, transit stations tend to be significantly larger in the U.S. than they are in many other countries.

“They don’t need to be large,” Parent said. Additionally, environmental review, especially under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, can create more costs along with substantial risks of litigation.

Circulate said another issue is transit authorities may not be authorized to unilaterally build the projects they approve. They must seek permits and agreements to build from third parties, including local governments, special districts, and public and private utilities. Transit authorities can plan and fund projects as they see fit, but third parties decide whether those projects receive permission to build.

While transit authorities have been tasked with building transit, to a significant degree they are powerless to do so, according to Circulate San Diego.

“Third parties in the area where the project is to be built have regulatory power delegated by the state to require approvals and permits for a broad array of activities,” the report stated. “This means transit authorities must secure approvals for many aspects of a project, sometimes amounting to hundreds of permits including for street closures, noise impacts, tree removal, trench dewatering licenses, utility sign offs, and lane closure calendars.”

Construction contracts routinely provide contingency budgets. Circulate said the

problem with these, is they tend to inflate the costs.

“Moving utilities is the classic example, because underground electrical lines and sewer pipes are not always where the maps say they should be,” the report stated. “Archaeological issues are also a relatively common and blameless surprise. While some reforms might help minimize the costs associated with these ordinary difficulties, there is a degree to which they are inevitable and must be accommodated.”

Failure to address a potential problem before it becomes a problem can have its own issues. Parent said one example is the result of the landslides that have periodically dumped dirt and rocks on the train tracks near San Clemente – closing this part of the LOSSAN corridor that takes Amtrak passengers between San Diego and San Luis Obispo.

Parent said the fact this has happened repeatedly was an unforced error that could have been prevented had jurisdictions worked together and taken appropriate measures long before the dirt began to move.

“It’s a scandal that the trains have been so inconsistent,” he said. “This is the second busiest train corridor in the country.”

While the level of ridership of San Diego’s trolley versus its cost has long been debated, Parent said if just a fraction of commuters decided not to use their cars, it could make a huge difference in terms of air pollution and traffic. He will often take the trolley from a park & ride near his home in La Mesa to downtown San Diego.

On another note, Parent said while there have been many improvements to the airport as a result of the Terminal 1 reconstruction, he is disappointed that mass transit hasn’t found a quick route to the airport yet.

thor_biberman@sdtranscript.com

Pep Boys

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COM’s mission to deliver trusted, high-quality services to sailors and their families — right where they live and work,” NEXCOM senior vice president Jason Rosenberg said in a statement.

Pep Boys said generations of drivers have counted on Pep Boys ASE-certified pros to care for their cars. With a national network of service and tire centers, millions of consumer and fleet vehicles pass through Pep Boys bays each year.

thor_biberman@sdtranscript.com

Dreamers

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rule from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services applies to all states.

DACA recipients are the first group of a large number of immigrants who are expected to lose or drop marketplace coverage soon. The federal budget President Donald Trump approved last month eliminates marketplace

financial assistance for some lawfully present immigrant groups, including refugees and asylees, starting in 2027. Without financial assistance many of these enrollees will likely not afford their coverage.

Meanwhile, everyone else enrolled in a Covered California plan could see their monthly premiums go up by \$101 a month starting next year.

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