



## **PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE**

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email [PublicComment@losaltosca.gov](mailto:PublicComment@losaltosca.gov)

May 9, 2023

Mayor Meadows and the Los Altos City Council  
Los Altos City Hall  
1 North San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022

Subject: SUPPORT FOR NEW DOWNTOWN PERFORMING ARTS THEATER

I support the findings of the recent “Los Altos Theater Study” and the 2018 “Los Altos Downtown Vision Plan” as it relates to a new Downtown live theater. A Downtown theater would support the Downtown economic viability. It is supported by the merchants, Los Altos Village Association (LAVA), the property owners, Los Altos Property Owners Downtown (LAPOD), and many in Los Altos and the surrounding community.

The Theater Study found, “there is both need and opportunity for replacement of the existing Bus Barn Theater” with a larger theater. The consistent, steady and measured growth of the Los Altos Stage Company indicates solid management, oversight, and programming that is appreciated by the community. The market for a larger live theater is extremely strong in our Los Altos community.

Similar to the Downtown Vision Study, this new Theater Study, said “a majority currently felt that advantages of developing a new theater would be to enhance downtown Los Altos as a hub of economic and cultural activity, and to bring the community a sense of pride – pride of place.”

Of course, there will always be naysayers, who lead with fear and negative fantasies. They opposed the Community Center, and yet it is now a beautiful, functional asset to the City, loved by the Community. There are those afraid of live theater, and the multiple points of view and entertainment that it offers. Fortunately, the success of live theater does not rely upon those who wish to silence it. Yet the theater provides freedom of thought and speech, education, economic vitality, community gathering, and entertainment for the entire community.

A new Downtown Theater would be a wonderful resource, serving the Downtown, and Los Altos, and doing it better. All indicators show the economy of scale of a new theater would not only be embraced by the Community, it will also support the Downtown, and fit in well with neighboring businesses, offices and residential areas.

Imagine shopping Downtown, dining, and attending the theater all in one place. And imagine how wonderful the Stage Company can serve the Community with a proper theater building. I encourage you to continue your leadership to support the process of moving toward the Downtown Vision Plan and a new Downtown live theater.

Respectfully,  
Mark Rogge

**From:** [Frank Martin](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment, Study Session, May 9, 2023"  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 2:18:31 PM

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Dear council members,

I strongly oppose using any of my tax dollars for a downtown theatre. Some of my friends are wondering whether the huge sewer tax fee [tax] increase you are considering is just another way to free up general funds for this purpose instead of using general funds to reduce or eliminate the sewer tax increase. Maybe this is true or maybe it is not.

The theatre is a money losing enterprise that cannot survive without about 50% ongoing donations or subsidies.

It benefits only a tiny number of kids and families in contrast to our community center or library. Some`people say it is another special interest grab on city land like a Bocce Ball court at Grant Park but I am not sure.

Moreover our city government does not belong in the theatre business.

If you want to give away a city parking lot or any city property or provide any city funds for any reason such as a downtown theatre for your interests this should be decided by an election ballot.

Moreover, having such short public notice of this special meeting is hardly a good idea if you believe in transparency and good governance.

Frank Martin

**From:** [Pat Marriot](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT THEATER STUDY SESSION MAY 9, 2023  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 2:43:18 PM

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Council Members:

*“As trustees of the city, elected officials and city managers have special and serious obligations to safeguard the fiscal assets of the public.”* League of California Cities

With that fiscal responsibility in mind, your job is to determine whether a new theater is economically feasible for the city and its residents.

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## **I. LASC PRESENTATION**

The feasibility study presented is based on “likely project costs” (\$23.4M), “likely utilization” (annual attendance of 20,500 from over 725 activities), and a “likely forecast” (expenses covered by earned revenue + equal contributions).

Demographic market data is no guarantee that wealthy people would contribute to or patronize a Los Altos theater over other charitable or entertainment options.

The quoted survey of “445 respondents who self-selected to participate” was distributed by LASC with instructions to “pass the link along to others.” Thus, it’s not scientifically valid and its conclusions should be ignored. In any case, it only asked if people would like a theater, not their willingness to pay for it

LASC has said it wants to give the theater to the city and lease it back. Bearing in mind your legal obligation to “safeguard the fiscal assets of the public,”

- Is it fiscally responsible to accept a “gift” that would drain our budget with added staff and building maintenance for a private interest group?
  - Is it fiscally responsible to take on major expenses at a time of rampant inflation, with a \$120M county budget deficit, a \$30B state budget deficit, while burdening residents with an exorbitant sewer fee increase, while the city can’t maintain existing assets (public safety building, Grant Park senior center, Halsey House among others)?
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## **II. THE MISSING PRESENTATION: OTHER OPTIONS**

LASC’s goal is to “increase the vibrancy of Los Altos’ downtown business district,” using the 2017 Downtown Vision to support its cause.

Its feasibility study does not indicate how increased vibrancy would be measured, but the

2017 economic study estimated a 190-seat theater – with parking – would generate an additional \$1M in downtown sales, increasing restaurant sales by 2.7% and other downtown retail sales by a mere 0.7%. Very small percentages.

**Table 8: Estimated New Downtown Theater Impact on Downtown Sales**

	Existing Theater	New Theater
Seating Capacity	100	190
Estimated Event Days/Evenings	135	200
Estimated Attendance @ 80% of Capacity	10,800	30,400
Estimated Percentage of Attendees Patronizing Downtown	50%	70%
Average Spending for Meals/Drinking/Incidentals	\$50	\$55
Theater Patron Sales Impact on Downtown	\$270,000	\$1,170,400
Add 10% for Performer and Staff Impact	\$297,000	\$1,287,440
<b>Gain in Downtown Sales Due to New Theater Patrons/Performers/Staff</b>		<b>\$990,440</b>

Source: LEG estimates based upon interview with Executive Director of Stage Company

This new 12,000 square foot theater will generate approximately \$1 million in addition downtown sales, almost entirely in restaurants, bars and coffee shops. This \$1 million in new sales represents a 2.7 percent increase in downtown restaurant sales and only a 0.7 percent increase in total downtown retail sales.



That economic study gave three other options for increasing downtown sales by \$1M: 64 apartments or 48 luxury condos or 113 hotel rooms or offices– all of which would be paid for, owned and maintained by private entities, costing the city nothing, but bringing in property and/or hotel tax.

Property tax is the city's largest source of revenue, 9x - 10x sales tax, so why would we opt for a theater as the best way to increase vibrancy/income?

Our Housing Element Update commits us to housing on downtown parking plazas, far more essential than a theater, especially considering the state's housing strike force and builders remedy to contend with if we don't meet our housing mandates.

A downtown theater would require parking to replace what would be lost by a 13,000 sf building and to provide parking for theater patrons. Palo Alto recently built a new above-ground parking garage with 627 spaces for a cost of \$67,838,798 ~ \$108,000/space.

Bearing in mind your legal obligation to “safeguard the fiscal assets of the public,”

- Is it fiscally responsible to use scarce city resources – time, staff, funds – for a theater that offers minimal, if any, ROI and does not have broad support among your constituents?
- Is it fiscally responsible to choose the “vibrancy” option that provides the least revenue to the city?
- Is it fiscally responsible to assume responsibility for building a multi-million parking garage downtown?

I urge you to consider your responses carefully because there’s a lot of money and a lot of credibility at stake.

Respectfully,

Pat Marriott

**From:** [Penny Lave](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Downtown Theater  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 2:46:16 PM

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The Los Altos community deserves the opportunity to explore the feasibility of a downtown theater. We support the City cooperating with the group of residents currently investigating such a project. There is precedent. Our excellent History Museum is a shining example of what dedicated residents can accomplish. Let's find out if it is possible!

Penny and Roy Lave

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Couture, Terri](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PUBLIC COMMENT THEATER STUDY SESSION MAY 9, 2023  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 3:11:42 PM

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Dear City Council

Regarding the theatre proposal, our City Council should safeguard our finances for the core operations to keep our city safe and viable.

The city is in dire need of many capital improvements and repairs, we also have financial obligations that must be paid, and MUST take priority over entertainment.

Page 6 of the feasibility study showed growth in revenues, but this study was done before the economic downturn. Governor Newsom's proposed 2023-2024 budget projects an even deeper decline than 2022.

The overall inflation rate this year was 7.27% and the CPI increase yearly was 5.3%. The economy is shrinking, mortgage rates have tripled, businesses are not projecting revenue increases & are firing workers.

Many newly local residents are fearful of losing their jobs and at least 3 businesses have recently left Los Altos, as they are going out of business.

The study further states that it analyzed 15 local zip codes of which there are already more than 10 community theatres. In a shrinking economy there should be more focus on maintaining the city services, necessary facilities and personnel.

The study does not show how the theater will help the children of the community even though it states that as a attribute. The study doesn't show how it will reach and improve the lives of those in affordable housing or on limited incomes.

Where is the concrete financial analysis for the theatre?

Our City Council should safeguard our finances for the core operations to keep our city safe and viable. Do not consider this proposal at this time.

Thank you

Terri Couture

**\*Wire Fraud is Real\*. Before wiring any money, call the intended recipient at a number you know is valid to confirm the instructions. Additionally, please note that the sender does not have authority to bind a party to a real estate contract via written or verbal communication.**



**From:** [Pat Marriot](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** \*\* SECOND \*\* PUBLIC COMMENT THEATER STUDY SESSION MAY 9, 2023  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 3:12:47 PM

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Council Members:

I wrote to you on Saturday, May 6, saying I had not received email notification of this study session. I have since learned that eight other residents who follow Council and commission agendas did not receive an email.

Bruce Barton, editor of the Town Crier, which publishes information about city meetings, was unaware of the session.

I did receive email notifications for the May 9 council meeting, May 8 environmental commission, May 10 parks and rec meeting.

The first email notice of this theater study session arrived in my mailbox at 9:13 this morning.

I don't know why this study session is the only city meeting for which I've not received an email notice. It's unfortunate that most residents who rely on email were not unaware of this session – dealing with an important and contentious issue -- until this morning.

Pat Marriott

**From:** [Bill Hough](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment, Study Session, May 9, 2023  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 4:34:20 PM

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I continue to oppose the expenditure of public funds on a downtown theater, especially at the same time the city wants to double the sewer tax. I have an idea: why not cancel the theater and use the funds to pay for higher sewer costs?

Two groups, Los Altos Residents (LAR) and the Theater Working Group/AMS conducted surveys on this issue. Respondents from both surveys agree:

- the majority (44%) agree that only private donations should be used to support a new theater (versus 38% that disagreed)

- the majority (47%) do NOT want the city to provide funds towards the construction of a new theater (versus 40% that do)

- the majority (41%) do NOT want the city to financially support the development and ongoing operations of a new theater (versus 37% that do)

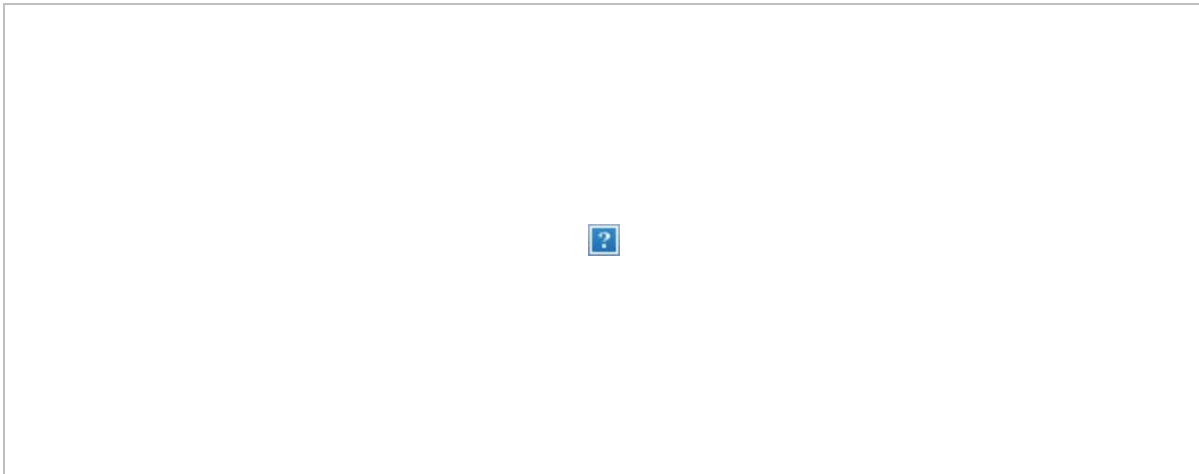
These responses from both the LAR survey and from the AMS survey should be enough to convince you that your constituents do not want you to vote to spend any of their tax dollars for a new downtown theater. Let's let this bad idea die.

**From:** [Reena Kapoor](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender]Public Comment, Study Session, May 9, 2023  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 6:31:32 PM

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Dear Mayor Meadows, Vice Mayor Weinberg, and Council Members Lee Eng, Fligor, and Dailey--

In November, 2021 Los Altos Residents (LAR) conducted a survey asking residents of Los Altos questions about their support for a new theater downtown and whether they were in favor of paying for its construction and/or operations and maintenance. We also asked questions about whether they wanted a theater to replace a parking plaza and whether they wanted to be able to vote on all these expenditures and give aways of city land. We got 444 responses to our survey. Here is an executive summary of what those Los Altans that responded to the LAR survey thought. We also attach the complete data including the survey questions so you can judge for yourself if they were biased or not.



At the Study Session on May 9, 2023, AMS will report on the results of a survey it conducted for the Theater Working Group asking similar questions. AMS got 445 responses to its survey. However, only 81% of the responses AMS got were from Los Altans. So to compare the two surveys fairly, the LAR survey received 444 responses from Los Altans while the AMS survey only received 360 responses from Los Altans. LAR got input from 84 more Los Altans than AMS!

However here's the interesting thing: the respondents from the **Theater Working Group/AMS survey AGREE with the LAR survey** respondents on some very important points!!

Of the Theater Gp/AMS respondents:

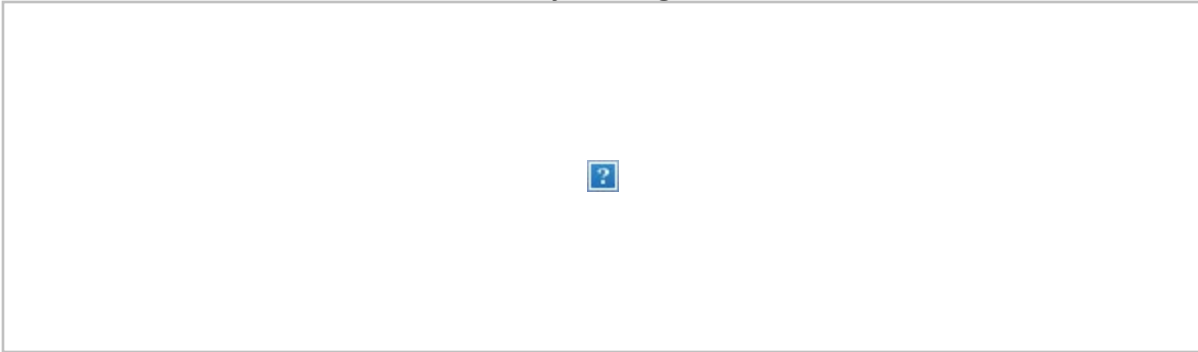
**- the majority (44%) agree that only private donations should be used to support a new theater (versus 38% that disagreed)**

**- the majority (47%) do NOT want the city to provide funds towards the construction of a new theater (versus 40% that do)**

**- the majority (41%) do NOT want the city to financially support the development and ongoing operations of a new theater (versus 37% that do)**

These responses from both the LAR survey and from the AMS survey should be enough to convince you that your constituents do not want you to vote to spend any of their tax dollars for a new downtown theater.

We understand that you place great weight on the Downtown Vision Plan as justification for building a theater downtown. However the Downtown Vision Plan was adopted by a former Council in August 2018 - almost 5 years ago. And the surveys and community engagement that form the basis of the Downtown Vision Plan were all conducted in the first half of 2017 - six years ago.



(see July 13, 2017 date - left side of page)

A great deal has transpired since July 2017. We had a pandemic that resulted in a huge loss of jobs, and a change in the way people work - many people continue to work remotely at least 2 days per week if not all 5 days. Stores have closed and continue to close downtown - Oz Boutique, Runners High, Cook's Junction, Cover Story, to name a few recent closures. Restaurants now occupy much of our street parking spaces on Main and State Streets. California has lost and continues to lose population and the tech sector has been laying off thousands of people in the Bay Area which will likely lead to even more loss of population. More has seemingly changed than not changed since the 2017 surveys that form the basis of the Downtown Vision Plan were taken. Are these survey results/community engagement takeaways still valid? Who can accurately answer that question? Do you have complete confidence the conclusions from the consultant are still correct?

We have several other questions we think need to be addressed:

1. Why was notice of this May 9, 2023 Study Session not sent out to people on the email list for City Council meetings or mentioned in the City Manager Weekly Update? Notice of the May 9, 2023 Regular City Council meeting was sent out to this

email list. It is the practice of City Staff to send out notices of Study Sessions to everyone on this email list - why was this Study Session excluded? It could be interpreted to look like an attempt to keep this Study Session “under the radar” hoping that it wouldn’t come to the attention of interested parties such as LAR.

2. Would Council consider allowing the Theater Working Group to pay for and build a new theater where the Bus Barn Theater is currently located including allowing a larger footprint to accommodate the planned new theater, thus keeping the theater on the Civic Center Campus where it can take advantage of the parking afforded by the new Community Center?
3. Will the Council direct staff to conduct a survey and find out how many of your constituents want to get rid of the parking spaces on Parking Plaza 2 - the parking plaza behind the Main Street Post Office, Chico's, the Discovery Shop, and the Rustic House - in order to build a theater?
4. Will we need to build required RHNA housing on that city-owned Parking Plaza?
5. Could we build a park for all the residents of the new condos downtown on that Parking Plaza?
6. Which of these options, park or theater, would benefit the most citizens and taxpayers of Los Altos?
7. What does funding the theater with “public/private” funds mean?
8. And exactly how much public funding are you willing to commit to?
9. Why are you even considering funding a new theater when the City apparently can't afford a desperately needed new police building?

These are just some of the questions we think you should address before any action is taken on a new downtown theater including funding any more new surveys on whether the Los Altos Stage Company can successfully raise the money to build a theater with "public/private" or even with only private funds. If they can't raise enough money to fund a survey, it would appear unlikely they could raise the tens of millions needed to build a new theater.

While we believe that most of you favor a new downtown theater, both surveys show that the majority of Los Altans do not want you to vote to pay any of our tax dollars towards the construction, development or operations of a new theater. Moreover, we believe the majority of Los Altans would prefer their tax dollars be used instead on resolving our budget deficit and, for example, funding all the deferred maintenance that has left most of the city-owned buildings in sad shape (police building, City Hall, Los Altos Youth Center, Grant Park Community Buildings/Senior Center to name a few). We believe they would prefer that you spend our tax dollars to bring our two fire stations into compliance. We understand our police force needs to hire nine (9) police officers to be fully staffed and we believe that public safety and crime

prevention is at the top of most of your constituents expectations from its City government We also believe we need to hire staff for City departments because we understand that many of the department are significantly understaffed.

It seems to Los Altos Residents that these items are all “must haves” and that a new theater is a “nice to have” but is not required especially when a theater already exists and has been successfully putting on productions.

We would urge you to listen to the viewpoint of all of your constituents - including those who responded to the LAR survey AND those who responded to the Theater Group/AMS survey.

Again, the majority of all respondents from both surveys do NOT want the City to fund the construction, development or the ongoing operations of a new theater.

We hope you will take our concerns into consideration when you take up a new theater for discussion at the May 9, 2023 Study Session.

Sincerely,  
Thanks!

Reena



REENA KAPOOR

1927 ANNETTE LN., LOS ALTOS, CA 94024

[reena1988@gmail.com](mailto:reena1988@gmail.com) | [rkapoor@alumni.northwestern.edu](mailto:rkapoor@alumni.northwestern.edu)

**From:** [Oleg Kiselev](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment, Study Session, May 9, 2023"  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 7:21:48 PM

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Dear City Council,

I have an objection to:

1. Building the new theater on the Downtown Parking Plaza
2. Using city funds to pay for the construction of the new theater
3. Using city funds to pay for the maintenance of the new theater

A new theater is not going to revitalize the downtown or bring new business. Most likely, it will move the patrons who attend Bus Barn theater now 2 blocks over.

I don't object to a private group buying or leasing land from the city and building a theater at their own expense. If the idea behind this theater is sound, the theater should be able to support its ongoing costs from its business. If the theater can not survive on its own revenues and the donations of its supporters, then saddling the city with a permanent lifeline for it (\$1M/year by 2028-2030?!) is extremely irresponsible.

I am a Los Altos resident and property tax payer for the past 23 years.

**From:** [baerjc@earthlink.net](mailto:baerjc@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Cc:** [City Council](#); [Gabriel Engeland](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender]public comments on theater study session may 9  
**Date:** Monday, May 8, 2023 8:30:35 PM

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To: Los Altos City Council

From: Jon Baer

Re: Downtown theater study session

1. Land on the Civic center site is a viable and preferable option for locating a new theater-there is sufficient land, readily available parking and close proximity to the downtown.
2. A downtown location for the theater, while originally envisioned as part of the downtown vision plan, is no longer a good option. Much has changed, including the need to put housing downtown on several of the downtown parking plazas without necessarily providing parking, much less replacing the lost parking spots. The other parking plazas must be kept for parking to meet the demand for parking for existing downtown businesses as well as new residential buildings which have insufficient parking.
3. Building affordable housing in the downtown without providing parking, while within the current State laws, is a policy decision which unduly disadvantages those in affordable housing who have cars and could subject the City to legal challenge. Please read the following article on this subject: <https://missionlocal.org/2023/05/no-parking-at-mission-affordable-housing-means-tenants-pay-the-price/>
4. The proposed downtown theater does not address the issue of parking nor replacement parking. Looking at adding mixed use development to the project only worsens the parking deficit
5. Park in lieu and public art funds should not be used to construct or subsidize operations of a theater. The money was raised to maintain and upgrade our parks and provide public art throughout town. Using those funds for a theater is a misuse and mis-prioritization of money. The city has failed to fund other, time sensitive park projects, including improvement at Grant park which could be funded by park in lieu monies. By funding projects such as the theater with park in lieu money, it will necessitate deferring other projects or require diversion of scarce general funds for those projects.
6. The proforma for the theater assumes that grants, corporate sponsorship and donations will cover the nearly \$900K annual deficit. This deficit, which is likely to grow over time, is as large as the revenues expected from productions, programs and rentals. This is a huge hole which the City would be forced to cover if donations do not meet projections.
7. The cost of construction is estimated at \$1000/ft sq. Given the cost of building the community center, that cost estimate may be low by 30-50%, particularly if it must meet standards for City public facilities.
8. While there is support for a theater from a core group within the community, half the residents are not in favor of funding a theater with public funds. Most of the public is not in favor of donating land for a theater.
9. The survey that was completed by the theater group was ambiguous and misleading, resulting in survey results that do not fully reflect the community's opposition to spending city funds on a new theater.



**From:** [Carla Hickman](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender]Public Comment, Study Session, May 9, 2023--Theatre  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 9, 2023 12:17:42 AM

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I am writing to voice my opposition to the City spending money and converting any City lands for a Theatre in Downtown Los Altos. I have many concerns over this issue.

1. The notifications and information about this entire project have been dismal. I feel like the Council is trying to sneak this in without any true input from the residents.
2. Parking is already at a premium in Los Altos. Between the restaurants taking parking spaces (which I am NOT opposed to), new development adding more users downtown and very little new parking, and the already limited availability for parking in downtown, it is absurd to think of taking spaces for a theatre that would require more parking, and yet taking away parking.
3. The idea of the City paying for any part of the construction of this Theatre, and an even bigger problem, being responsible for the upkeep and staffing for such a venture in the long term, is absurd. We all heard the comment from one of the City Council member after winning election who "promised" a theatre to the best friend. Ridiculous. If a theatre is so well supported, then let those that want it fund it with their own supporters.
4. Los Altos is a small town. The existing live theatre does not appear to be a huge draw, as there are always tickets available, certainly not enough to spend millions to expand, take parking and require years of long term costs. People are NOT coming to Los Altos to go to a play. There are several theaters in other communities nearby that are more than available for Los Altans to participate in if they so desire. Mountain View Theatre sits vacant so much of the year and they have a community more than double the size of ours. There are theaters available at the high schools, and even Foothill where arrangements could be made for shared use.
5. At a time when people are moving away from the area and housing prices are going down, construction costs are skyrocketing (see recent articles on Bay Area City projects in the area with costs far exceeding budgets), and long term budgets in question with less business taxes coming, now is NOT the time to put a huge financial outlay on the budget, with maintenance and staffing costs continuing far into an uncertain future.
6. Your own, very minimally successful survey does not match up with your idea of overwhelming support for this project. People are not interested in this project. At minimum, this should be put to the voters. The idea that the City has spent as much money as it has, even considering this with feasibility studies and the like is ridiculous. After getting a No vote on the Community Center, and pushing it through despite voters saying no, and seeing the empty spaces over there on a regular basis, and lack of available staffing, I am extremely concerned that the Council is trying to proceed with their own agenda with no regard for the thoughts and opinions of the constituents they serve.

Please take into consideration the citizens of this town outside of your immediate friend group. There are still many of us living in this town that do not have unlimited funds to support fiscally irresponsible spending.

The support for a downtown theatre is minimal from the discussions I have had with neighbors and friends in town, and I strongly urge you to be realistic about what you are thinking about, and drop the Theatre project from consideration.

Carla Hickman  
Los Altos Resident

**From:** [Jo Estill](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment Study Session May 9, 2023  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 9, 2023 7:57:21 AM

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Any consideration of spending any city funds on a theater is ludicrous. Our city is facing such liability right now from lack of funding for normal town expenses. For instance, how many people have fallen already while tripping on the upended asphalt in all of our parking plazas? For instance, how many residents have tripped while trying to reach their mailboxes because the city's gutters are impeded due to city installed street tree's roots? For instance, where in our city's budget does it fulfill the future unfunded employee pension plans? For instance where in our city's budget is funding for much needed upgrading to 70 year old buildings?

Even considering any city funds towards a theater at this time is seriously a frivolous idea.

JoAnne Estill  
1972 Deodara Drive  
Phone: 650 967 5086

**From:** [Monica Waldman](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT MAY 9, 2023 THEATER STUDY SESSION  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 9, 2023 8:01:31 AM

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Council Members,

My family benefits from having a local theater in Los Altos and we've attended several performances over the years. After reading the packet for the Theater Study Session I have the following concerns:

1. Why was the survey not sent to all members of the Los Altos community but instead sent to a select few who were selected by an unknown criteria? As Chair of the Public Arts Commission, an art teacher and a working artist with an extensive arts background, I was saddened that I was not "chosen" to participate in the survey. How accurate are the results and how do they reflect the wishes of the community?
2. Slide 40 mentions "Housing, housing, housing!" which should be the top priority with City owned land at this time. We are trying to get our Housing Element passed and how will HCD react when finding out our City will be using City owned land for an entertainment venue in lieu of housing?
3. Why not rebuild LASC's current building and create a Cultural Hub with the Main Library, History Museum, Community Center and new theater? Events could use multiple facilities with ease with this configuration.

Monica

**From:** [Rita Held](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** downtown theater  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 9, 2023 11:03:32 AM

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A new theater downtown is not a good idea.

#1 Using a downtown parking plaza for a new theater is ridiculous. Parking downtown is tight, especially now with outdoor eating taking lots of street parking.

#2 We already have a theater at the community center where there is lots of parking. If needed, renovate the existing theater or build a new one there.

#3 Perhaps it's time to put this issue on the 2024 ballot, and let Los Altos voters decide.

Most sincerely,  
Rita Cartalano