

From: ginger rowe <ginger@timeoutclothing.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 10:57 AM
To: Marico Sayoc <MSayoc@losgatosca.gov>; Marcia Jensen <MJensen@losgatosca.gov>; BSpector <BSpector@losgatosca.gov>; Rob Rennie <RRennie@losgatosca.gov>; Monica Renn <mrenn@losgatosca.gov>
Cc: Catherine Somers <catherine@losgatoschamber.com>; Randi Chen <randi@losgatoschamber.com>
Subject: Formula Retail Ordinance Revisit

I have had many years to watch, but more importantly be very impacted by what is happening in downtown Los Gatos. I do not feel that now is the time to make the ordinance permanent to change the formula retail. This town is in flux with change and watching not just small stores, but large formula stores continuing to pull out. I understand that the maximum "number" has not been reached. We all know that the face of retail is changing again, and we need to calm down and let things shake out before permanently changing codes. I appreciate that you have "loosed up" requirements, and I think an extension on that could be ok for a period of time, but I think the worse thing to do is over react, and make permanent changes.

Formula retail is also vital in our downtown, but I feel very concerned when you make it so easy that they will continually push out small independent retailers, which is what this town was built upon. If you follow all the retail journals and trends, the businesses that are going to survive will be the ones that offer "experience shopping" along with excellent customer service and selection, those retailers are independents. No one wants to chase any more formulas out of town, but I do know when it is so easy for them to "acquire" or "take over" a small location they will push up the already high rent prices. I understand that landlords want long term leases with large corporations, that will pay high rent continually, but that is not even what is happening with them. There are too many stakeholders invested in large corporations, and they too are looking for shorter term leases, but no matter what, the lure of them to the landowners will naturally push out independent retail opportunities.

This could also be an opportunity for landowners to divide the large spaces, that have and are currently occupied by formulas, and lease out smaller spaces to those formulas. We have to be very careful about pushing out independent retailers at this time. It is a tough decision, one not to be taken lightly, and I don't think making such a big step permanent is the right way to go now. We want to find the right mix, I'm not sure what that is yet, but I think we need more time for that decision.

There are many other small communities that continue to thrive. The communities have many things to offer, interesting mix, beautiful surrounding towns, outdoor dining, events, experiences that we too can offer! Now is the time for our town to focus on creating those experiences. I am happy to see the opportunities for restaurants to have more outdoor seating soon! The town now needs to market this on a very large scale, and join together with the chamber to fund more of the events that bring people down into our beautiful town. Make them more frequent and regular. Create habit forming routines that get people downtown. Make it easy for them to make it their pattern of travel. The town needs to work hand in hand in support of the chamber both with permits, but also economically. We do not as I see it need to make this ordinance permanent now, especially in changing times of turmoil.

We are soon to face the North 40 coming down the pipe, and I think we need to calm down, don't over react, help and support what we have currently. Continue to enhance our mix, not just retail, but also restaurants, and promote what we have. Be mindful of the future impact of this very important decision tonight, and pause for a bit.

Please feel free to contact me anytime, and thank you for your time and service.

Ginger Rowe

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From: Susan Testa <romantiqueslingerie@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 9:59 AM

To: Marico Sayoc <MSayoc@losgatosca.gov>; Marcia Jensen <MJensen@losgatosca.gov>; BSpector <BSpector@losgatosca.gov>; Rob Rennie <RRennie@losgatosca.gov>

Cc: Monica Renn <mrenn@losgatosca.gov>; Catherine Somers <catherine@losgatoschamber.com>; Randi Chen <randi@losgatoschamber.com>; Ginger@TimeOut <ginger@timeoutclothing.com>; Jennifer McRay <jmcray@sbcglobal.net>

Subject: My opinion regarding making the Downtown ordinance regarding formula retailers permanent

Dear Council Members,

I've been thinking quite a bit about the ordinance regarding formula retailers. First, I do not think that the temporary ordinance allowing formula retailers with more than 7 locations to obtain over the counter permits should be made permanent at this time.

If AT&T and the Shade Shop are indicative of the formula retail stores that are going to open and occupy space for years to come, I think we need to decide what kind of Downtown we want for the future.

I thought about downtown Carmel when thinking about this ordinance. They have many more spaces to fill, but are able to do so without bringing in formula retailers. Doves of people visit downtown Carmel, not just for their beautiful beach, but for their **unique** and **charming** town.

In Los Gatos, by comparison, just on North Santa Cruz Avenue we have an AT&T, The Walking Store, Apple, Restoration Hardware, Benefit, Blue Mercury, Title Nine, Lululemon, Athleta, and J. McLaughlin. Because most of the spaces in Los Gatos are under 6,000 sq. Feet, formula retailers will be able to occupy most of Los Gatos with an over the counter permit under the proposed permanent ordinance. This will artificially drive rents beyond their already high levels, placing downtown Los Gatos out of reach for most local businesses. The unique and charming character of our Downtown will be permanently diminished.

I urge the council not to approve making the ordinance permanent. I think the council, the Chamber of Commerce, the local businesses, the landlords, and the residents need to decide what kind of Downtown we want for the future before allowing any more formula retailers to move into the Downtown district. I am very aware that we are concerned about how the North 40 will impact our downtown. Rushing in formula stores to fill the limited spaces is not the answer in my opinion.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Best regards,
Susan Testa

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