

AB 5977: ZTR21-004 Town Center Retail Requirements
Planning Commission Recommendation

On November 3, 2021, the Planning Commission entered the following findings related to ZTR21-004 Town Center Retail Requirements into the public record:

- A. The Planning Commission (PC) finds that the current Town Center (TC) proposal is unlikely to solve the potential significant loss of retail in the TC for the foreseeable future and will likely not achieve the desired results:
 - 1. Several of the existing retail intensive parcels, given their age and configuration, are likely to redevelop sooner with a significant loss of retail under the Commercial Floor Area Ratio (FAR) approach.
 - 2. The parcels that would “make up” this loss of retail are not likely to redevelop for several decades, if ever, resulting in a significant long-term loss of TC retail space, despite the FAR formula.
- B. The PC finds that the proposal is likely to result in retail that will not be viable in either the short- or long-term, and we are likely to see empty storefronts in future redeveloped parcels:
 - 1. The proposal does not address parking and may actually exacerbate the parking shortage in key areas by driving it underground in redeveloped parcels. As a result of the undergrounding of parking, there will not be readily available parking for the activities we are trying to promote in the FAR-designated space.
 - 2. The proposal does not address the optimal depth and configuration of viable/optimal retail and restaurant space. Optimal design is driven by factors other than a percentage of the parcel footprint. Whether the .26 FAR creates space that is practical to lease and won't create substantial unusable space has not been evaluated by industry professionals and has not been examined for the various parcels.
- C. The PC finds that the City may be forced to revisit this issue in 2-3 years if the concerns bear out, resulting in another long moratorium and more resources again diverted to the TC plan.

Based on these findings, the Planning Commission (PC) recommends the following actions:

- 1. A joint City Council and Planning Commission study session to promote better coordination and thereby facilitate a faster adoption of Town Center (TC) code revisions.
- 2. A 4-month TC wide moratorium to consider more fully these issues and a possible mix of options to mitigate the concerns. Those options should be derived primarily from the prior options considered by the Council, including the following:
 - a. A modified “no net loss” requirement for retail/commercial in a new TC-C (“Commercial”) overlay zone.
 - b. Review and refine the categories of retail/commercial that the City wants to encourage in the overlay zone.
 - c. For Parcels in a new TC-C overlay zone without existing retail/commercial, or which were developed after 2005, require future redevelopment to have an

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amount of commercial space expressed as a FAR of building footprint on the ground floor(s) for growth.

- d. Frontage dedication or similar condition to accommodate angle parking on streets with retail requirements.
- e. Secure professional input for criteria, like optimal frontage depth of commercial space and FAR percentage.
- f. Review MICC 19.11.020(B) Figure 2 Retail Use Required Adjacent to Street Frontages (i.e. the “pink line map”) as part of process.