

From: Richard Leavitt

Sir,

My wife and I own the building containing 215 to 221 F St in the Salida Commercial District. We operate Here's the Scoop Ice Cream Parlor at 215 F. We pay property taxes and have the appropriate licenses(food and sales tax) to operate our business. We are careful to follow all of the rules and regulations put forth by Salida City Government.

The F Street closure last summer created a severe hardship for us. It is clear that many businesses North of 2nd Street feel that the summer street closure benefited them. What is not understood is that it was not neutral for businesses such as mine just outside the closure zone. We were financially harmed. My business last summer was down 53%. Meanwhile, the City of Salida has reported that overall retail sales in Salida were up for the year. I am upside-down compared to nearly everyone else.

As a seasonal business selling ice cream, we are in a uniquely compromised position. We cannot make up a shortfall the rest of the year. May to September is our business. Under the current circumstances, if you insist on closing F St north of us, but leaving our section of F St open, I will be forced to close my shop. Is this what you want- a tax paying business to go away?

Why am I harmed? My assumption is that online mapping apps direct traffic down D street to Sackett, then across the river to parking. Most traffic no longer even drives by my store. Once people are on foot heading south on F St, it must look to them like the Salida Commercial district ends at 2nd Street. We get only a fraction of the foot traffic seen north of 2nd. I have observed many tourists walk up to the intersection, then turn back.

I am not suggesting closing our entire block. I can see this would be a problem for businesses such as Moonlight Pizza and Mike's Garage, which have parking facing F street. But I have not heard any reason why the half block containing my building cannot be included in the closure. If delivery vehicles are an issue, I suggest that the closure could be on a diagonal, from the front of Bluebird Day to the property line between Free The Monkey and Natural Grocers. This could be designated as parking for deliveries only, and would allow trucks to back up to the front door for deliveries to Free The Monkey. UPS, Fedex and other vehicles could also stop in this space as needed for deliveries. The alley next to Free the Monkey would then remain unobstructed.

In my opinion this is an all or nothing issue. You either shut down F street from Sackett to the middle of the block between 2nd and 3rd, or you shut down nothing. Until I hear a rational explanation as to why my suggestion for including my half block in the shutdown is not followed by the City of Salida, my default position will be to have my Attorney file an injunction against any closure of F North of 2nd until the issues have been sorted out. I am hoping we can resolve this without resorting to legal action.

I await your response.