

From: [D. Muirhead](#)
To: [CC Public Comment](#)
Subject: Morgan Hill City Council May 20 comment: Agenda Item #6: Business Recovery Plan
Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 9:48:51 PM

Dear Morgan Hill City Council,

Morgan Hill City Council Meeting May 20 comment
Agenda Item #6: Business Recovery Plan

It appears to me that your vision of the future for Business is to just restore the past.

So here are a few contrarian inputs for your consideration.

1) The Economic Development Team has been reporting for several years that retail consultants tell us that Morgan Hill is "over-retailed".

2) Downtowns are dense and utilize pre-built assets such as roads and water pipes, meaning they require less infrastructure spending per capita. [Note 1]

3) In addition to economic vibrancy, business districts [and shopping centers] also provide civic vibrancy and social interaction. [Note 1]

4) We have lost civic spaces in Downtown with the departure of Booksmart and the conversion of the GMA music hall. And the proposed City budget removes plans for preparation of the Monterey Corridor Specific Plan preparation and related EIR where we might have advocated for more civic spaces.

5) One way to provide housing in close proximity to essential services is to replace big box stores with multi-unit affordable housing. This also leverages pre-built infrastructure and eliminates costs of pre-construction ground surveys and utility access. [Note 2]

6) Another way to reduce pre-construction costs is to replace or add to existing buildings. One example from a recent paper on construction approaches was to add living units as upper floors to an existing fire station.

[Note 1] From a Brookings article by Adie Tomer and Lara Fishbane on Big City Downtowns are Booming

[Note 2] KQED Forum May 19 Hour 2
How the Coronavirus Pandemic Has Reshaped the Future of Retail

Thank you for your consideration, Doug Muirhead, Morgan Hill

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