

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: Please see below for LA Fashion DIstrict Stakeholder comment

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I am a second-generation property owner in DTLA at: 817-825 S. San Pedro, and 822 -828 San Julian, Los Angeles, for over 70 years.

My family has been part of the downtown Los Angeles core since the 40's. As owners and operators of a manufacturing company called American Sample Company, Inc., which employed over 200 hundred people by producing sample books for the drapery, upholstery, and apparel industry. The company flourished from the 40's up until the late 70's; at that time, we started seeing our core customer base in Los Angeles moving to other parts of the country and other countries in pursuit of lower production costs. This was due in part not only to increased overhead production costs, but also, to local restrictions and regulations.

We struggled to persevere with our family business model during the 90's with a continued industry exodus. We had no choice at that time but to consider shifting ourselves to save the family legacy business. Unfortunately, we had to shut down our manufacturing operations in 1994 as it was no longer viable to strive with the departing market. We had no choice but shift from the manufacturing business to a wholesale warehouse, effectively reducing the employment from 200 to 10 people. Throughout the years we continued to explore other options for our legacy properties which were over 100 yrs. old. Since we were adjacent to the DTLA flower market, by the mid 2000's we were able to transform our property into a wholesale flower market called California Flower Mall (CFM), which now resides in the largest Flower District in the country. Once again, CFM is flourishing which is creating hundreds of jobs for people within the Fashion District/Flower District.

Our buildings are now over 120 years old and they have more than outlived their useful service life. With continued city growth, high demand for housing and creative flex spaces it is imperative that we maintain flexibility to be able to develop for the future of downtown Los Angeles that we all could be very proud of.

As a longtime stakeholder in our downtown community, we share the City's vision, as articulated in the draft Plan, to **"...promote a dynamic, healthy, and sustainable Downtown core that is well connected to and supports the City of Los Angeles and the region."**

I urge the City Council to adopt a far less restrictive zoning of the General Plan for the LA Fashion BID area so that our legacy investments may continue to thrive rather than to be suppressed.

Mark Chatoff
California Flower Mall