

Mayor Bonilla and City Council Members:

My name is Russ Ito, and I live one block north and west of the Donut Delite site. I spoke in favor of changing the zoning to CBD before the Planning Commission, on July 26, and I wish to repeat that support. The zoning should be changed to CBD for this project.

I was seriously disappointed in the Planning Commission's failure to recommend the change, as two of the commissioners stated their reluctance to support any developments in downtown that failed to include housing. While that might be a noble ideal, it simply isn't practical in every case. This site is just 1/3 of an acre, and as such is too small to include housing at the economies of scale necessary to make the units viable. Trying to force residential space into the design risks tanking the entire project. You should not allow that to happen.

The Donut Delite project cannot be all things to all people. With the zoning change to CBD, however, it can be an ideal site for new public spaces that link the B Street corridor to 303 Baldwin, and the pedestrian mall at 1st and B Streets. As designed, the Donut Delite project will pair perfectly with 303 Baldwin, creating a sleek, modern entry to the B St. historic corridor. Contrary to conventional thinking, visual contrast is a GOOD thing! The value and uniqueness of the historic properties on the street is only enhanced through contrast with contemporary designs: both styles of architecture speaking to their own times — not aping the past.

With the zoning change to CBD and the subsequent enabling of the expanded sidewalks and public spaces around the Donut Delite site, the project – with 303 Baldwin – will make for a modern, dynamic, and vibrant entry into the city from the Cal Train station. Please, do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Change the zoning to CBD, and let this project proceed as planned.

Thank you.

Russell Ito

[Redacted signature]

