



Kriss Worthington

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CONSENT CALENDAR

April 4, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Worthington, Wengraf, and Harrison

Subject: Referral to the Planning Commission to Allow Non-commercial Use on Ground Floor

RECOMMENDATION:

Refer to the Planning Commission an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to create a use permit process to allow non-commercial use on the ground floor in appropriate locations, where commercial might otherwise be required.

BACKGROUND:

On January 20, 2015 the City Council passed a similar item. This item seeks to indicate that this is a time sensitive issue that needs to be addressed this year.

The purpose and intent of the current ground-floor commercial requirement is to preserve, enhance, and ensure establishment of retail commercial use and to support active pedestrian-oriented uses for the street level of buildings that abut a public street. In certain locations, especially on less commercially important side streets, that are midblock and away from commercial nodes, this requirement may result in vacant space that detracts from the original intent of the requirement. An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that allows for broader definitions and flexibility of use on the ground floor, as a condition of approval of a Use Permit, would result in better projects and less empty commercial space.

If the City Staff determine that a full adoption would take a substantial amount of time we suggest a pilot program for the C-T Telegraph commercial district not including telegraph itself.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Minimal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Consistent with Berkeley's Environmental Sustainability Goals and no negative impact.

CONTACT PERSON:

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