

**From:** [Nancy](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Cc:** [Roberta Phillips](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Letter for Nov 30 meeting  
**Date:** Sunday, November 21, 2021 8:26:04 PM

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Dear Members of City Council

I would like to ask that you decline the opportunity to consider a theater on the public land that is now a parking lot downtown. I viewed the video presentation at the last council meeting.

This venue is so very small only accommodating 190 seats for the audience. This is not a community wide public value and will attract very little in the way of foot traffic or revenue. Only a privileged few will get to partake of a theater that is subsidized by public land. The public gives up all the parking spots that thousands use on a rotating basis for a theater that seats less than 200 a few times a year. This is not right. It's not a reasonable ask. In addition, the video claimed a million dollars in new revenue with their theater and that is inaccurate. That figure was something that the Downtown Vision plan estimated based on IF ALL the elements of the plan were implemented, not just the theater.

The video itself is very misleading. For one thing, Kim Cranston is NOT a resident of the city of Los Altos even though the video states in the printed tag line under his image that he is. He lives in Los Altos Hills unless he has moved since the last election. Why are they trying to fool people? He is a business owner in town but that doesn't mean he's a resident.

The presenter did not give a business plan for the the ongoing maintenance costs or even tell the council what the other theaters in the area are costing their respective cities. I think the presentation was incomplete and left out gaping details. This is very unprofessional. They are trying to push through an idea without giving the whole picture.

The main focus of the presentation was the student and youth theater programs. Has the theater group even approached the school district to determine if the Los Altos High theater can be rented out for practices and productions? Clearly this theater is very seasonal and this might be a more appropriate option. I think that council should suggest that the group complete their homework and look at more than one option.

Finally, there are a lot of private and empty spaces in downtown Los Altos. Why can't the theater group approach the owners of these lots and get them to rent or sell their land to them for this venture? On the opening slide of the video, the presenter showed the Los Altos movie Theater of days gone by. This theater was on private land. The theater owner was not asking the city for free land to put a business on. The idea that a small non profit group would make a play for the public's land is very offensive.

Claudia Coleman made comments at the 11/9 meeting. She is a wealthy philanthropist so why can't she help the theater group buy land for their venture and make the whole thing a private endeavor? Anne Wojcicki is a wealthy philanthropist as well and owns a lot of

downtown property. Why can't they approach her to donate land or space for this endeavor? Why is the answer to come to the city and try to get land for free? I am concerned that public land is just viewed as a free good for people to claim for their own purposes to enrich their own groups and cheat the public out of access and use. It seems very unfair. Your job as council members is to protect public assets, not allow them to be re-purposed by private groups. What group is going to "need" the next parking lot for their project?

Finally, I think it is totally unfair of this council to dangle the hint of a promise to let a non profit private group use public land for their small pet project that does not serve the wide community at large. Giving them hope that this project will go forward at this time with such an incomplete presentation that gives no details on ongoing costs is really inappropriate and will cause a lot of frustration and wasted effort. I urge you to pull the plug on this and stop giving energy to a project that is not in the interests of the wider community.

Respectfully,  
Nancy Phillips  
Resident of Los Altos