

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

American Institute of Architects (AIA) San Diego

The AIA San Diego met on November 17, 2004 to discuss and make a recommendation concerning the large retail development ordinance being proposed by City staff. A summary of their recommendation is as follows: AIA San Diego supports City staff's draft ordinance for regulating large retail establishments with the exception of the requirement for buildings over 150,000 square feet to be located in regional commercial areas or the Centre City Planned District. AIA San Diego also recommends that the community plans be analyzed and updated to create a balance among neighborhood, community, and regional commercial centers throughout the city. Economic and transportation analyses shall be included as part of the analysis and update process.

San Diego County Building Industry Association (BIA) Metropolitan Legislative Committee

The BIA is prepared to support the City staff's draft ordinance for regulating large retail establishments with the following two modifications: 1) The requirement for a Neighborhood Development Permit should apply to stores 75,000 square feet in size or larger rather than 50,000 square feet; and 2) The maximum allowable size limit of 150,000 square feet should be removed. The BIA does not support the proposed cap on building sizes.

San Diego Council of Design Professionals

The San Diego Council of Design Professionals (Council) is in support of the proposed large retail development ordinance prepared by City staff with the following two modifications: 1) Large retail establishments should be limited to 75,000 square feet in size instead of 150,000 square feet; and 2) Recommend that the proposed ordinance limit the number of SKUs allowed in the establishment.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

The San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce believes that the City's design review process adequately addresses community compatibility issues for any proposed project. The Chamber recognizes that large retail developments present unique design challenges that can be best addressed through the appropriate planning process. The Chamber does not believe that an outright prohibition against certain retail establishments based on size, products sold or mix of products is necessary or appropriate. For this reason the Chamber states the following position on the proposed large retail establishment ordinance:

- The Chamber does not support the outright prohibition of any large retail establishment and opposes any regulations that would effectively ban, or have the intent to ban, large retail developments.

- The Chamber supports the concept of City staff's proposed ordinance to establish additional design guidelines for large retail establishments and additional discretionary review, but only if they are applied on a case-by-case basis to take into account an individual community's character.
- The Chamber opposes the additional requirements proposed by the Planning Commission as being confusing, difficult to administer, potentially discriminatory against certain types of businesses, and tantamount to a prohibition against large retail establishments.
- The Chamber does not believe that a one-size-fits-all design ordinance, establishing requirements for all proposed large retail establishments is workable considering the many disparate community plans and types of properties that might accommodate a large retail establishment. The Chamber believes that a "tool box" of design options should be provided to help guide the applicant, but each project should be considered in the context of the community in which it is proposed and on its own merits.
- The Chamber does not believe that an economic analysis on a project-by-project basis would provide useful information and would only serve to further politicize the planning process. CEQA Guidelines already provide that when social or economic effects of a proposed project cause a physical change, such change is to be regarded as a significant effect in the same manner as any other physical change resulting from the proposed project. The Chamber recommends that if the City believes an economic analysis is necessary that it be conducted on a city-wide basis and done as a part of the City's update of its general and community plans.

On February 24, 2005, the recommendation was adopted with 25 board members in favor, 5 opposed and 3 abstentions.