

From: Council
Sent: Wednesday, August 05, 2009 9:38 AM
To: 'Mark Pitzner'
Subject: RE: town square

Thank you for writing to the Burien City Council. Your message will be included in the Correspondence for the Record for an upcoming Council meeting.
L. Clausen
City Manager's Office

From: Mark Pitzner [mailto:danemark@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, August 03, 2009 3:33 PM
To: Council
Subject: town square

Dear Sirs

The construction of Burien town square has been finished finally looks wonderful and will definitely be an asset as well as a centerpiece for the city of Burien. It was a unfortunate victim of a economic downturn, forcing it to be left half completed. The city has used some creative ideas in what to do with the unused real-estate in the meantime.

What also has been left since the grand opening is a glut of empty residential and commercial properties. The residences are mostly waiting for sales of homes as a contingency in the purchase of the condominiums and there is also much publicized excess in supply of condos in today's market. As for commercial space the reasons for vacancies is somewhat different. There is obviously a downturn in the economy causing pessimism and caution in beginning new business ventures. Having all this space going unoccupied and unproductive has got to be costly, so I believe some bold and innovative measures may be needed.

First and foremost one has to address the price/cost of the space offered, it begs the question as whether it is competitive when compared to comparable footage. If not that would be problematic, and that would be the first factor that needs addressing

Temporary exemptions from the cost of business licensing, and local sales taxes could be simple incentives that could be tried by the city. Other local charges could be waived in the beginning and even something as mundane things as offering the first month free or no damage deposit could be offered. There are probably more devices that could be tried, and market forces will prevail, and it may be difficult to lower prices and offer "freebees" but it is obviously more painful economically and unappealing to have these spaces sit vacant. So I encourage the city to contemplate these proposals and realize the benefits of promoting a business friendly environment, and realize where it has tried historically with tax and cost benefits have caused businesses to flourish, resulting in increased tax revenue overall making everyone happy.

Thank you and Sincerely

Mark Pitzner

CFTR: 8/17/09

CC: Dick Loman, Tabatha Miller

