

## Lemos, June

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**From:** Jamie Peters <jamielp13@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 25, 2019 9:26 AM  
**To:** Lemos, June  
**Subject:** AutoZone Comments

Dear Joan,

Please add these to tonight's packet:

Our community is at a critical point. We need to make smart choices regarding what we want the future of Fort Bragg to look like and to become.

Based on the Mission Statement of the City's General Plan to "*preserve and enhance the small town character and natural beauty that make the City a place where people want to live and visit, and to improve the economic diversity of the City to ensure that it has a strong and resilient economy which supports its residents,*" it is clear that AutoZone doesn't align with the City of Fort Bragg's Mission Statement.

They are NOT helping to economically diversify our community – they're only adding to an existing industry that is wholly unnecessary and has no economic value to our community; rather, they would cause great harm to existing, locally owned businesses – not just Napa Auto Parts, but other locally owned businesses who also have a footprint in the after sales auto supplies business such as Coast Hardware, Rossi Building Materials, Mendo Mill, Matson Building Materials, Fort Bragg Outlet, Harvest Market's Hardware Supply Store, and certainly they'd have an adverse impact on existing auto repair business since they're business plan is based in large part of DIY auto maintenance. Businesses like Sport Chrysler, North Coast Tire Pros, The Shop, E&B Auto, Fort Bragg Transmission, and many others.

Every time you bring in a big box, chain, or formula store into a community that is already covered in that industry, you harm existing businesses that support that community.

*On average, 48% of each purchase at local, independent businesses is recirculated locally – compared to less than 14% of purchases at chain stores.*

Along with the City of Fort Bragg's Mission Statement, there are several statements meant to affirm said mission, and these statements written out by the Development Department have been pointed out as *relevant* to our time here today. **AutoZone doesn't fit within our mission nor with the affirmed statements, which is another reason why their permit should be denied, and should never have come before the Planning Commission in the first place.**

- A friendly city with a small-town character and a strong sense of community.

- How does a corporation like AutoZone fit with either a small town character or provide a strong sense of community? The answer is, they don't. With over 5,500 stores in the United States alone, they are far from small town. They are based in Tennessee – *that* is their community. They don't offer franchises, and are boastful of it, aggressively pursuing places to open more stores. If you want to talk about a strong sense of community – all you need to do is look at our existing, locally owned businesses (like those previously mentioned) They have supported this community through numerous fundraisers, etc. They epitomize a strong sense of community.
- A city which strives to create an environment where business and commerce would grow and flourish.
  - What do you think is going to happen with the addition of another auto parts store in this community? We already lost one locally owned independent auto store (in part) when O'Reilly's came to town; are we willing to lose another one? Certainly the other auto parts stores and those that sell auto parts wouldn't flourish or grow. How many businesses are you willing to impact for the sake of a corporation that has no ties to and no interest in our community?
- A city that embraces its role as the primary commercial and service center of the Mendocino Coast
  - That's great – we already have businesses that take care of auto parts needs, so another is not needed and will only cannibalize existing businesses.
- A city that promotes itself as a tourist destination and which provides the necessary infrastructure and services to support a growing population of transient visitors.
  - There will never been a large enough population in Fort Bragg, or even along the Coast to warrant a third auto parts store. The current population is under 7,500 people. With a very obvious housing problem; even with new housing, it still won't be enough to warrant another auto parts store.
- A city that supports efforts to preserve and strengthen the vitality of commerce in its central business district.
  - Rhoads Auto Parts falls within the CBD. By allowing another corporate auto parts store to set up shop, you directly oppose the mission's effort to preserve this locally owned business. The reality is with another auto parts store, one may go out of business, leaving an empty building, thus creating more blight. This does not strengthen the vitality of commerce – it diminishes it.
- A city that fosters a business climate which sustains and nourishes the growth and expansion of local businesses and cottage industries.

- **Again, AutoZone is not a local business or cottage industry. AutoZone isn't here to become a part of our community, at least not in the manner intended per our General Plan. We're just another notch in their bloated, corporate belt.**

And while this isn't under the "Findings" for AutoZone (tho' I'm sure I don't know why), AutoZone has a terrible track record for environmental hazards – they are polluters – just recall the \$11 million dollar settlement they agreed to in June with the State of California. This was for illegally disposing of toxic materials as well as consumers personal data.

Now they said they will be better stewards by putting measures in place to avoid the same issues; however, it is naïve to think that AutoZone can be trusted to "ensure adequate measures in the handling and disposal of hazardous waste materials and their containers" considering that they're settlement wasn't due to one or two or even ten mistakes, they have a culture of non-compliance as it relates to handling and disposing of toxic materials over a 2+ year period of time – with over 5,000 violations. While they may be prudent for the first few years, but what about in 10 years, or 20 years? Do you think they'll take the same care?

Please do not turn Fort Bragg into a Corporate Candyland – saying no to AutoZone is the first step.

Thank you!  
Jamie Peters-Connolly

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10