



## **Northside Business Association**

*Since 1907 Working To Improve Northside*

Hello <Owner\_Name>,

The Northside Business Association (NBA) is considering working to get a formula business ordinance enacted for the Northside Historic Business District (NBD). A formula business is defined as a business with more than a set number of franchises or what we would typically refer to as a 'chain store'. Formula business restrictions can take many forms from outright bans to limits on the number of formula businesses and anything in between. What we are currently discussing is working towards an ordinance which would make any new formula business in the NBD a conditional use, meaning it would need to be approved by the Director of Buildings and Inspections before it could be opened. In this scenario a public hearing would be held and the community would have an opportunity to have its opinion heard before a decision would be granted.

The conditional use restriction would still allow formula businesses to open, subject to conditions set by the Director of Buildings and Inspections. We would work to establish criteria upon which applications for the conditional use would be evaluated. Other cities have used such criteria as whether similar goods or services are already available, compatibility with the character of the neighborhood, retail vacancy rates, the balance of neighborhood-serving versus citywide or regional-serving businesses, and contribution to the "nationwide trend of standardized downtown offerings" in their formula business ordinances.

It is important to note that this ordinance would only affect properties within the Northside Historic Business District and formula businesses would remain free to locate in other areas of Northside and that the ordinance would have no effect on currently operating formula businesses.

The exact language and method for application of the ordinance would remain to be determined; the critical goal of this meeting will be to determine whether or not this is something we would like to pursue. If we decide to move forward, our next step would be to go to community council to get their input. If they are in support we will work with City Council to craft the ordinance with regular updates to, and input from, the NBA's membership.

The reason that we are considering pursuing a formula business ordinance is that it would allow our Historic Business District to retain the unique character that helps make this the neighborhood that we all know and love. One thing that makes our NBD so great is the number of neighborhood residents and entrepreneurs that operate businesses within the NBD. Other cities and neighborhoods have found that formula businesses can crowd out these businesses, robbing their business districts of their vitality.

The disadvantage to formula business restrictions typically raised by opponents is that such an ordinance would limit the potential market of renters for commercial buildings.

You are being contacted since you own property within the NBD and would be directly impacted by any legislation. We will be discussing whether to move forward with this at our January meeting, Monday, January 4th, 6pm at Happen Inc., 4201 Hamilton Avenue. I hope to see you there. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to email me your comments at [bdemske@ella.net](mailto:bdemske@ella.net).

Yours truly,

Bruce Demske  
President