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Chamber Conducts Survey on Future of Rheem Center

By Sophie Braccini

For years, there have been town-organized workshops and planning efforts to support the transformation of the aging Rheem Shopping Center. Every time, nothing seemed to come from these efforts.

This time might be different.

Jay Kerner and U.S. Realty Partners, the new owners of the Rheem center, are surveying the community for their opinion. The survey, designed by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce with Kerner's input, can be accessed at Moragachamber.org.

Chamber vice president Bob Fritzky said he was very hopeful when he saw Kerner at the economic symposium the chamber had organized because the center owner was so receptive to residents' input. That is when the idea of the survey was born. Fritzky set up a small committee with chamber director Kathe Nelson, town council member Phil Arth, local business owners Tom Schnayer and Tony De Venuta, and Saint Mary's College director of student life Jennifer Herzog.

Fritzky explains that the 28-question survey is different for the student population than for the rest of Moraga, but the objective is the same: trying to pinpoint the type of experience people want and would really support at the Rheem center. Questions address types of shopping and dining people would want, as well as additional events they would like to see there.

The survey is run through Fritzky's Survey Monkey's account, so there is no cost to the city or chamber. Fritzky reports that Kerner said that he was very excited that the residents were engaged in the process and looking forward to seeing the results.

The survey will be opened until May 31, and Kerner will get the results on June 15. This newspaper will follow up with him and get his reaction to what the people want.

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