

# Downtown Fresno's Cosmopolitan Restaurant Headed To Selland Parking Lot

BY JOE MOORE



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The Selland Arena parking lot could become the new home of one of Fresno's oldest restaurants if the city council approves the sale of the property to Cosmopolitan owner Gary Lanfranco.

*Joe Moore Valley Public Radio*

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The Cosmopolitan Bar & Grill has been at the corner of Fresno and G Streets since the Prohibition era.

*Credit Joe Moore / Valley Public Radio*

One of Fresno's oldest restaurants could soon have a new home, in what is now a parking lot at the Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center.

On Thursday the Fresno City Council is set to vote on a proposal to sell a portion of the city-owned lot at the corner of Ventura and O streets to Gary Lanfranco, owner of the Cosmopolitan Bar & Grill.

As Valley Public Radio [first reported](#) last September, the longtime Fresno business is being forced from its home of over seven decades due to California's high speed rail project. The proposed purchase price of the property is not yet known. If approved by council, Lanfranco would acquire around 36,000 square feet of the existing parking. The sale is just [one of several](#) the city is exploring as it looks to unload a number of pieces of city-owned real estate.

Last September Lanfranco told Valley Public Radio that he had specific criteria in mind for a new location for the restaurant:

*"I'm afraid by being closed for a certain period of time I am going to lose some really great help and that's difficult," Lanfranco says. "The High Speed Rail people I just don't think they understand the situation for some people especially with a history like we have. We're doing well in an area we're not supposed to do well in."*

*He fears that his customers may not come back - not because of a lack of loyalty - but rather lack of parking.*

*"I need a building approximately the same that I have, 5,000 square feet, a parking lot that parks 40 cars and I need no debt - that's exactly what I have now," Lanfranco says.*

*But despite all Lanfranco's fears about the coming change, he says he's not going to fight the bullet train.*

*"But you know I am a big boy," Lanfranco says. "I am resigned to the fact and I am willing to make it work as long as the state helps me make it work. I'm not trying to make any money of this thing. I just want to stay whole."*