

# Capitola Mall Looks For Mervyns Replacement

*Capitola man*  
✓ The Capitola Mall is searching for a new retailer to fill the space to be vacated by Mervyns when the company closes its doors for good this winter.

The mall is working with Mervyns to find another tenant to buy the current lease, said Anita Walker, spokeswoman for Capitola Mall's parent company Macerich. Macerich is one of the nation's largest retail space owners with 72 outlets and 76 million square feet.

"We will be working closely with Mervyns to make sure that we get something that is great for the community," said Walker, who declined to say which retailers the mall is talking with. "We're very interested in understanding what shoppers would like to see there."

Mervyns filed for Chapter

11 bankruptcy protection on July 29, and in October it announced that all of its 149 stores will close. The Capitola store is expected to close around Christmas, depending on when its merchandise is finally liquidated. All of the goods are discounted.

Mervyns has been a tenant at the mall since the shopping center opened in 1977. Then, cows still grazed in fields near the county's only indoor mall.

Mervyns spokesman James Golden said the company was "sorry" about the closure. It was the result of an "extremely challenging retail environment," said John Goodman, chief executive of Mervyns, in a statement to reporters on the company's website.

He declined to say how many workers would lose their

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jobs. Local store managers said they were not authorized to comment.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the company has reversed its original decision to withhold accumulated vacation pay from the final checks of people who lost their jobs, as long as the company can pay off its debt to creditors.

In Capitola, if Mervyns fails to find a new tenant for the space before the current lease runs out, the mall will work with the property owners. According to a mall spokesperson, the Mervyns space is owned by Lubert-Adler, a private Philadelphia-based real estate firm.

Mall manager Tim Ricker is taking suggestions for a new retailer at [tim.ricker@Macerich.com](mailto:tim.ricker@Macerich.com). ■