



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: August 5, 2025

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To: Honorable City Councilmembers
Requestor: Mayor Zollman, Council Liaison to Senior Center
Responsible Department: Public Works/Engineering
Subject: Consideration of Funding Request from Sebastopol Area Senior Center for Appraisal of Senior Center Building

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council consider the request from the Sebastopol Senior Center for an official appraisal of the city-owned building located at 167 North High Street to assess its current market value.

BACKGROUND

The Sebastopol Area Senior Center currently operates out of this city owned facility. In response to increasing demand for senior services, the Center has identified a need to evaluate long-term facility options, including the current use of city-owned property such as the Senior Center.

DISCUSSION

The Senior Center Executive Director has requested a formal appraisal be conducted on the building. As recently heard by the Senior Center, they are outgrowing their space and are looking at options. Some options that could be considered (but would require funding for a building analysis as well as appraisal) could be:

- The current building's potential to continue to serve as a senior center with necessary renovations and possible additions.
- Opportunities for funding or partnerships (e.g. Sebastopol Commons; see below) based on the asset's valuation.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

If there are no realistic or identified alternative locations available for the Senior Center to pursue, the benefits of conducting a standalone appraisal may be limited. Specific concerns include:

- **Lack of Comparative Options:** Without other properties in consideration, an isolated appraisal may not support meaningful decision-making or cost comparisons as appraisals can change with the economy. The market value established now may be outdated by the time any decisions are ready to be made, potentially requiring a second appraisal later.
- **Use of City Funds:** Commissioning an appraisal when no actionable relocation plan exists could be seen as premature and may not be the most prudent use of City funds.
- **Validity Period:** Professionally, most commercial appraisals are treated as current for six to twelve months, though lenders may have shorter requirements based on risk and market volatility.
- **Lender Policies:** Some lenders may require a new or updated appraisal if the original is older than three to six months, especially in rapidly changing markets.
- **Zoning:** Appraisals are based on the highest and best use of the property. The property is currently zoned Community Facilities (CF), which allows a very limited range of uses, which is likely to limit the value of the property. The Council may wish to consider whether it would potentially allow other uses at the property if the desire is to increase the value of the property.



While an appraisal of the identified city-owned building could be a valuable first step toward addressing long-term space needs, it may be more strategic to wait until a broader range of options is available for consideration. The Senior Center as well as City staff is committed to collaborating to determine the best timing and process for exploring future facility options.

Recently, the former Sebastopol Library Staffing and Facilities Ad Hoc Committee reported out at the July 15, 2025, City Council Meeting. Over the course of the past year, the Ad Hoc Committee engaged in research, stakeholder engagement, and visioning work that led to a broader proposal: the development of the *Sebastopol Commons*—a multi-use civic space envisioned as a dynamic hub for education, arts, health, senior services, and community engagement. It is prudent to postpone any action on the Senior Center facility until composition and appointment to this newly formed committee (to be named the Committee for Building the Commons) is considered by the City Council. This proposed partnership is intended to include non profits such as the Senior Center and a possible outcome could include a future facility that serves their needs in addition to other organizations.

Furthermore, The Sonoma County Mayors' and Councilmembers' Association (SCMCA) has proposed forming an ad hoc committee with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to strengthen collaboration on key countywide issues. In a letter sent June 24, 2025, SCMCA Chair Gerard Giudice, Mayor of Rohnert Park, and Vice-Chair Mark Stapp, Mayor of Santa Rosa, outlined recommendations developed through recent meetings of city leaders. The proposal emphasizes the need for coordinated strategies to address challenges impacting communities across the County.

Three priorities were identified:

- Mental Health and Homelessness Services—Recognized as inseparable issues requiring a unified approach for lasting solutions.
- Emergency Preparedness—To improve planning, readiness, and response to increasingly frequent disasters.
- Shared Facilities and Resources—To expand services and improve efficiency through collaboration. This committee would provide a focused forum to explore shared goals in greater depth, enhance mutual understanding, and identify actionable strategies to address the priorities outlined above.

Given that these issues have been identified as regional priorities, the committee could also open the door to broader partnerships and funding opportunities beyond the city level.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated cost of an appraisal could be as low as \$1000 but as high as \$5000. If the appraisal is postponed, no immediate cost would be incurred.

The Budget Committee discussed the senior center building appraisal during their meeting on April 28th. After reviewing the topic, both Budget Committees expressed that pursuing an appraisal at this stage is premature. As a result, they recommended removing the \$5,000 allocation for the appraisal from the senior center budget; therefore, there is no funding allocated in the FY 25 26 City Budget for an appraisal.

City Council Goals/Priorities; and/or General Plan Consistency:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:



Goal 3 – Maintaining High Quality Infrastructure, Facilities and Services includes repairing/replacing outdated city facilities, improving streets, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.

This agenda item represents consistency with the General Plan as follows:

Policy LU 7-3: Provide and maintain opportunities for community gathering and social interaction through cultural and art centers, park facilities, the Laguna, and community centers.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date. The City has also used social media to promote and advertise the City Council Meeting Agenda Items.

As of the writing of this agenda item report, the City has not received public comment. If staff receives public comments following the publication and distribution of this agenda item report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting and will be posted to the city website.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council consider the request from the Sebastopol Senior Center for an official appraisal of the city-owned building located at 167 North High Street to assess its current market value.

Per staff analysis above, staff would recommend denial of the request at this time, and reconsider the request when additional options or alternative locations are identified or a relocation strategy is more fully developed.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONS:

Council could recommend approval of the appraisal with an amount not to exceed \$5000.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:	Approval Date: 7-21-2025
CEQA Determination (Planning):	Approval Date: 7-21-2025
The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)	
Administrative Services (Financial):	Approval Date: 7-21-2025
Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <u>XX No</u> N/A
Account Code (f applicable)	_____
City Attorney Approval:	Approval Date: 7-21-2025
City Manager Approval:	Approval Date: 7-21-2025