

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2026 9:34 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Support for A&M BBQ

To the Sebastopol City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for A&M BBQ and to encourage the City to provide the business with reasonable time and flexibility to find a long-term solution.

A&M BBQ is not just another restaurant. It is a destination business that has earned a reputation for producing some of the finest barbecue in California. The owners have invested tremendous effort into building something that benefits Sebastopol through local employment, economic activity, and a product that brings people into the community.

At the heart of this issue is a reality that seems worth stating plainly: barbecue smokers produce smoke. That is not a defect or a failure on the part of the business—it is an unavoidable part of the cooking process. The same process that creates the food customers line up to buy is the process now being scrutinized.

While I understand that not every business is a perfect fit for every neighbor, I believe there needs to be a reasonable balance between individual complaints and the ability of small business owners to earn a living. A&M BBQ is not operating recklessly or creating smoke for the sake of creating smoke. They are practicing a traditional craft and providing a service that many members of the community deeply value.

Too often, successful local businesses face increasing pressure from a small number of individuals who simply do not like the realities that come with living near an active commercial district. If every business were expected to operate in a way that never inconvenienced anyone, many of the very establishments that give a community its character would cease to exist.

I respectfully urge the Council to support A&M BBQ and work toward a practical solution that allows them to continue operating. Businesses like this are hard to build, easy to lose, and once they are gone, they are rarely replaced. Sebastopol should be looking for ways to keep valued local businesses thriving, not pushing them out over concerns that are inherent to the very product they create.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ariel Merhav