

Torran Korman

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2026 11:06 AM
To: Mary Gourley
Cc: Oriana Hart; Erik Billing; Elissa Overton; Torran Korman; Victoria Henkel; Zulema Higgins; John Jay; Jane Riley
Subject: FW: Downtown Community Soccer Venue

Please see public comment as it relates to an agenda item on the upcoming city council meeting.

BCC: Email BCC to City Council, City Attorney

City staff that received this email are listed in the CC distribution line as noted above.

City Staff: Please Post to City Website

Thank you

Mary Gourley

Interim City Manager

From: Brian Heacock <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2026 8:13 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Downtown Community Soccer Venue

Hello Sebastopol City Council Members,

My name is Brian Heacock. I am a longtime resident of Sebastopol, having proudly called this wonderful small town home since 1975. Sebastopol has so much to offer — its apples, wine, schools, climate, culture, and natural beauty are truly special, and I am grateful to have been raised here and to continue to be part of this community.

Since 1975, I have been deeply involved in the local sports scene, particularly soccer, beginning with the inception of the Sebastopol Soccer League — now known as Wesco Soccer Club and League. Having been both a youth athlete and a youth coach in this community for nearly five decades, I can say with confidence that a large and active portion of the broader Sebastopol community is connected to local soccer in some meaningful way.

Over the years, however, I have witnessed firsthand the significant limitations of soccer field space within our city. Our primary home location has long been Ragle Park, which, despite its charm, presents ongoing challenges. The persistent gopher infestation makes the playing surface unpredictable and prone to causing injuries. Additionally, its location on the outskirts of town requires the majority of our soccer community to drive, reducing accessibility for many families.

In search of alternatives, our community has explored other options over the years — Ives Park, Community Park, and the Analy outfield — only to be displaced by baseball leagues. We attempted to use the tennis courts, but were asked to leave by tennis and pickleball players. Each time, we found ourselves returning to Ragle, on a compromised surface with few viable alternatives.

The Sebastopol soccer community is large, passionate, and in genuine need of quality space to play. I

respectfully urge the Council to consider the development of a small soccer venue in or near downtown Sebastopol. Such a facility would not only serve the needs of our growing soccer community, but would also enrich the city in countless ways — fostering youth activity, strengthening community bonds, and adding vibrancy to the downtown area.

Equally important, a centrally located facility would naturally encourage walking and biking to and from the venue. Sebastopol has long embraced a culture of active transportation, and a downtown soccer space would beautifully complement the city's existing pathways and trails, reducing car trips, easing parking demands, and making the sport more accessible to families of all backgrounds. It would be a meaningful step toward the kind of connected, walkable, bikeable community that defines Sebastopol at its best.

Thank you sincerely for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further at your convenience.

Respectfully,
Brian Heacock
Sebastopol Resident since 1975