
Public Comment: Opposition to the Proposed Grocery Outlet at the Former Rite Aid Site

From Diana Badger [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/20/2026 8:28 PM
To John Jay <jjay@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc Victoria Henkel <vhenkel@cityofsebastopol.gov>; City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Dear Planning Commissioners, City Staff, and Members of the City Council,

As a 26-year Sebastopol resident, who worked on Main Street for 9 years prior to that - commuting from further north, I am writing to respectfully but strongly oppose the proposed Grocery Outlet at the former Rite Aid property in downtown Sebastopol.

This decision is about much more than filling a vacant building, or whether 'harm' would be done to local existing grocers in the town (Grocery Outlet claims in its propaganda mailed to residents that it would not, but I disagree). It is about whether the City will uphold the policies and vision established in Sebastopol's General Plan and apply them consistently when reviewing development proposals.

The proposed Grocery Outlet is a new formula business proposed for the heart of downtown Sebastopol. The General Plan establishes policies regarding formula businesses in the downtown core to preserve Sebastopol's unique identity, protect its locally focused commercial district, and maintain the character that makes our community distinctive. The central question before the City is whether approving this proposal is consistent with those adopted policies and the long-term vision established in the General Plan. I suggest it is not.

The former Rite Aid property is one of the most visible and important commercial sites in downtown Sebastopol. Decisions about its future should absolutely reflect the community's adopted planning goals, strengthen the downtown core, and support the qualities that residents, business owners, and visitors value most.

The General Plan represents years of community input and establishes the framework for how Sebastopol should grow while preserving its character. It provides predictability for residents, businesses, and property owners by ensuring that land use decisions are guided by adopted policy rather than individual projects. Those policies should be applied consistently.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the City to deny the proposed Grocery Outlet project and instead encourage a future use for the property that is consistent with Sebastopol's General Plan and the community's long-term vision for downtown.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your careful consideration of this vitally important decision.

Sincerely,

Diana Badger



Sebastopol