

From: [City Council](#)
To: [Mary Gourley](#)
Cc: [Victoria Henkel](#); [Zulema Higgins](#); [John Jay](#); [Jane Riley](#)
Bcc: [1Elected Officials](#); [Alex Mog](#)
Subject: FW: Public Comment 2/3 agenda item 12
Date: Sunday, February 1, 2026 5:46:00 PM

Please see email submitted to the City of Sebastopol.

BCC:Email BCC to City Council and City Attorney

City staff who have also received this email are included into the CC as shown above.

Thank you

Mary Gourley

Interim City Manager

From: Melissa Hanley [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 1, 2026 2:22 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Public Comment 2/3 agenda item 12

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing to you today regarding your review of the proposed changes to the Formula Business Ordinance. I am in support of staff's recommended changes and respectfully request one additional revision.

I strongly urge the Council to amend Section 17.340.040 to replace the current enumerated list of prohibited business types (offices, restaurants, and hotels) with a blanket prohibition on *all* formula businesses in the downtown core.

Economic Extraction vs. Local Protection The intent of our formula business regulations has always been to protect Sebastopol's local economy and unique character. As it stands, the ordinance is failing that mandate. The premise of these laws is to prevent the extraction of local revenue to distant shareholders. A formula business, regardless of its specific category, exists to funnel profits out of Sebastopol to investors who have no stake in our community. If our current ordinance allows for this simply because a business isn't a "restaurant" or "hotel," then the ordinance is fundamentally flawed and requires correction.

Please add this revision to your Instruction to staff for their final rewrite of the ordinance.

Respectfully,

Melissa Hanley AIA , IIDA , ASID

Partner & Co-Founder

Sebastopol Design Review Board, Vice Chair



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