

From: Jean Paul Merlaud [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2026 7:38 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Finn Liss [REDACTED]; Kris Austin [REDACTED]
Subject: Letter of Support for A&M BBQ

Dear Mayor McLewis and Members of the City Council,

My name is Jean Paul Merlaud, and I reside at [REDACTED], Sebastopol. Our family have been residents in this community for over 26 years. Over that period of time, we have seen fantastic businesses and eateries come and go for a variety of reasons.

I am writing on behalf of our family to express our wholehearted support for A&M BBQ and to urge the City of Sebastopol to do everything within its power to help this wonderful establishment thrive in our community. A&M BBQ is not simply a restaurant to us, it is a place that has brought our family together time and time again, and usually on memorable occasions, around food that is made with genuine care and skill.

We also want to acknowledge what it means to operate a small business in Sebastopol today. This has never been an easy town for small businesses to survive in as the costs of doing business here are significant, the competition for customers is real, and the margins in the restaurant industry are notoriously thin. Layer on the economic pressures our entire region has faced in recent years rising food costs, labor challenges, shifting customer habits, and a general climate of uncertainty and it becomes clear just how remarkable it is that establishments like A&M BBQ continue to show up every day and serve this community with pride.

Small businesses like A&M BBQ are the fabric of what makes Sebastopol unique. They are the reason our downtown has character, the reason neighbors become regulars, and the reason visitors remember us fondly. Losing a business like this would leave a gap that cannot easily be filled. We therefore respectfully ask that the City consider any and all means of support, either through permitting flexibility, local promotion, or simply a public acknowledgment, to help A&M BBQ continue serving our community for years to come.

Thank you for your time and for your continued commitment to the businesses and residents that make Sebastopol the community we love. We are proud to stand behind A&M BBQ.

Sincerely,
JP