

From: Jessica Rogers [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 1, 2026 4:27 PM

To: info <info@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Jill McLewis <jmclewis@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Sandra Maurer <smaurer@cityofsebastopol.gov>; City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Subject: The food Community

<https://www.sfgate.com/food/article/a-and-m-bbq-smokers-22281462.php>

Attached Letter

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Jessica Lee Rogers

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June 1, 2025

Sebastopol City Council

7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Dear Mayor and Members of the Sebastopol City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for A&M BBQ and its owner, pitmaster Kristopher Austin, as the council considers the future of this beloved local restaurant.

A&M BBQ has been a genuine asset to Sebastopol since opening in June 2024. The restaurant has quickly earned a devoted following for its Texas-style, dry-seasoned brisket and ribs, which have been recognized among the best barbecue in Sonoma County. It has become a place of community and celebration. This is exactly the kind of small business that makes Sebastopol a vibrant, special place to live.

I understand that a handful of residents have raised concerns about smoke and air quality. However, I urge the Council not to make sweeping decisions based on a few complaints alone — particularly without a thorough, independent investigation into whether A&M BBQ's operations genuinely pose a health risk beyond what is typical for a commercial barbecue restaurant.

I urge the Council to consider the significant good-faith efforts Mr. Austin has already made. He voluntarily moved one of his two smokers into storage at the city's request, cutting his operation to half capacity during his busiest season. He has expressed willingness to explore filter systems and has been actively working with the city to find an alternative location — only to be met with one dead end after another.

Forcing A&M BBQ to cease smoker operations entirely — without adequate time or a viable alternative location — would be a devastating blow to a small business that employs local staff, serves the community, and has done nothing but try to cooperate. The financial and logistical burden of operating split between two sites, or shutting down during peak season, could be insurmountable for a young restaurant still finding its footing.

Mr. Austin has said plainly that all he is asking for is fair treatment. That seems like a reasonable request for a business owner who has shown nothing but goodwill and a desire to be part of this community. I hope the Council will respond in kind.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jessica Rogers-Hardwick
Resident of Sebastopol