

From: Kate Haug [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 4:42 PM

To: Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>; City Council
<citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Subject: Two Public Comments for Tonight

Hi Mary,

Here are my two public comments for tonight.

Thank you!

Kate

Dear Council Members and Staff,

I urge you to prioritize simple upgrades to Ives Park and to support the Rotary plan to upgrade the area around the Little League Field, which was fully funded.

Once again, it is summer, and Ives is in terrible shape. The walkways are bad, the fence is terrible, there are bits of extra fencing, and the grass is uneven. Why???

Fix the walkways. Fix the fence. Re-sod the lawns in the spring. Replace the trash cans. Work with the Rotary.

While the Creek naturalization plan is compelling it is also controversial as many community members, including myself, do not support it as it would reduce public use and reduce lawn space for public events. Why is Council pursuing a plan that has limited support?

The people of Sebastopol and West County love Ives. It is heavily used every summer by camps, festivals and concerts. Why is there so little effort made to do basic upgrades? Why so much time and effort spent on a plan that reduces public use?

Please focus on what will best serve the public and average park users. Replace the fence, fix the walkways, keep the lawns fresh and work with the Rotary.

Thank you,
Kate Haug

Dear Council and City Staff,

I urge you to work with Barney Aldridge on a TOT rebate to allow him to pursue financing for a hotel in the Barlow.

While not ideal, a hotel with guests who come to Sebastopol and contribute to our local economy is significantly better for the City's revenue, local businesses and future opportunity than no hotel, no guests and no revenue.

Currently, Sebastopol has zero hotel rooms downtown. This has a negative impact on our local businesses and discourages other hotels from investing in downtown.

The current economic outlook is uncertain for a variety of reasons making significant investments risky. Sebastopol is an untested market, which increases risks to investors. This is what Council and Staff heard when Piazza spoke to the Council and outlined why they were not moving forward with their hotel.

It would be a significant boon to downtown to have a hotel and to show that Sebastopol can support a downtown hotel.

My only comment is that I would insert a clause that the arrangement be reviewed at year 7 to see if there has been any significant reduction in interest rates at that time. If the financing conditions have changed significantly, it might warrant that the TOT rebate also be adjusted.

I would also ask that the TOT rebate be reduced from 50% to 40% so that tax from the hotel could support more City services to help ensure that hotel guests have a positive experience in Sebastopol.

Conditions change quickly. Sebastopol had a downtown hotel which generated TOT, property tax and sales tax. Now that hotel is Permanent Supportive Housing for formerly homeless people and generates zero revenue for the City while also increasing costs to the City. The revenue gap from that loss of Sebastopol's downtown hotel and the increase of costs from Elderberry Commons needs to be bridged. In addition, when Gravenstein Commons is occupied, the City will be in a similar situation with new residents who are not contributing revenue and increase the City's expenses.

More tourists will support our local small businesses. The TOT rebate only works if the hotel has guests who pay the TOT so it encourages Mr. Aldridge to build the hotel and fill rooms, which is a win/ win for local businesses and the City's revenue.

At this point, any hotel is better than no hotel. I urge you to work with Mr. Aldridge on this matter to promote fiscal viability and long-term revenue sustainability.

Thank you,

Kate Haug