

From: m hersh [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 3:34 PM

To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Subject: Support for the Grocery Outlet store proposal in Sebastopol

Hello City Council Members,

I am writing in support of the proposal to bring a Grocery Outlet to Sebastopol. As you well know, the cost of living in our community, while historically high, has skyrocketed in the last year. In order to make ends meet and purchase the best quality food I can afford, I have switched most of my grocery shopping to the Grocery Outlet in Windsor.

The Safeway supermarket is outrageously priced, literally 3x more expensive for many of the same items I can find at the Grocery Outlet including tomato sauce and other canned foods, snack foods, a variety of cheeses, cereal, and frozen foods. The Grocery Outlet also has an array of fresh organic vegetables and fruit at a third of the price, including peppers, cucumbers, lettuces, potatoes, onions, apples, berries, and more. They also have excellent prices on paper goods, detergent, and other items.

There are few if any affordable options for working families in Sebastopol. Safeway, for example is a terrible store that rips off consumers. There are countless stories of overcharging and poor food quality. It has been my experience that the staff are not well-trained and don't show care with customers. The Grocery Outlet outpaces them in both quality and price. West County consumers deserve better.

I also believe there is an unfair stigma attached to Grocery Outlet... that it is "low quality", or has outdated food products, and is "not for" middle or working class people. This could not be further from the truth. If you haven't already, please visit the store in Windsor and see for yourselves. Not only is the quality outstanding; the store is clean and the staff are well-trained and friendly. It is a pleasure shopping there. Driving to Sebastopol rather than Windsor would not only save time, but also gas money and that is something we all deserve in West County.

Thank you for reading this. I hope you are not unduly influenced by the NIMBY culture or corporate lobbyists (Albertsons) and make a decision that supports working and middle class families in Sebastopol and the surrounding towns. Having a Grocery Outlet would not take anything away from Whole Foods or other higher priced stores where some people can afford to shop and give the rest of us better access to affordable food and home products.

Melissa Hersh

