

From: Norma Jellison [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2026 4:14 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Sebastopol Library

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

I write to you as a patron of the Sebastopol Library.

I live in Bodega Bay and have used the Sebastopol Library for the almost 30 years I have lived in Bodega Bay.

As a former Councilmember and Mayor in El Cerrito (Contra Costa County) for 8 years, I am aware of the financial challenges facing cities today.

I write this in response to comments by Councilmember Zollman about remediation that seem to suggest investing in remediation and rehabilitation of the City's building is ill advised, given the building is unsuitable for a Library long term.

I believe it is incumbent on those serving in elected office to look at the big picture. By that, I suggest it is critical that the place of a structure owned by the City, while operated as a County library, be viewed in its regional asset context.

The Sebastopol Library serves the residents of West Sonoma County between Sebastopol and the coast, well beyond the boundaries of the City of Sebastopol.

Every time I venture inside, I see many many adults and teens using the library's offerings e.g. computers and gathering places. As well, I see parents checking out books for their young ones. Other programs and offerings in the large adjacent room such as "study halls" and displayed art works of locals add to the importance of this place.

I am aware of The Building the Commons proposal for a civic hub to locate City Hall, the Library, Senior Center and a variety local nonprofits. I find this commendable and the kind of effort worthy of a progressive community like Sebastopol.

I respectfully suggest that such a project is a future endeavor and should not be a reason to shy away from responsibilities to invest in the existing City owned structure to allow it to continue to serve its main purpose as a Library and its role in the larger community. Until such time as a new civic hub, to include the Library, can be brought to fruition, all effort should be directed to ensuring the Library is restored and reopened. Hopefully, the terms of the JPA will assist in financing the unexpected repairs.

I believe you are moving forward with remediation and repairs to reopen this important community asset and suggest time is of the essence.

Regards,

Norma Jellison

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Bodega Bay