

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2026 4:26 PM  
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: A&M BBQ

Dear Members of the Sebastopol City Council,

I am a long-term resident of Sebastopol – 54 years to be exact. Over those many years I have seen a lot of change in our town; some good and some bad. One of the cultural changes that I wish had not occurred is the loss of genuine support for our neighbors, both residential and commercial. We used to celebrate the success of the other members of our community as well as the local farmers. We didn't constantly complain about how inconvenienced we were by their efforts. We were enormously grateful for their willingness to take a risk, invest their time and resources in our community and make genuine contributions to our little town.

We have seen a routine occurrence of businesses failing and leaving commercial property vacancies. We are experiencing a constant downturn in the school census at all levels. We limit the type of acceptable businesses based on a rather strict set of guidelines. We are experiencing an erosion of our tax base and are regularly financially challenged as a city.

A&M Barbeque represents everything that our community says it wants. It is a small business run by local families and is joyfully experiencing success. Their hard work has afforded them the opportunity to grow their operations, which has naturally resulted in an increase of smoke from their BBQs. They recognize the issue and are making every effort to ameliorate the situation while they transition to a more accommodating location.

I encourage the City Council to acknowledge the contribution that their business makes to the town, which far outweighs the temporary inconvenience of the increase in smoke, and support them while they relocate. Unlike many folks, they are not asking the City for any type of financial consideration but simply need time to transition in a manner that does not put the business at risk. Sebastopol has funded numerous efforts to identify how to attract businesses to our town. One of the best ways is to be supportive of the existing businesses and reestablish a culture that recognizes their value.

Respectfully,  
Pamela Oakes