
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2026 4:29 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Sebastopol Commons

One of my favorite things about Sebastopol is its compact downtown and walkability. I simply love popping by the library with my kids on the walk from Ives Park to get ice cream. I love not worrying about getting in the car, finding parking, fighting traffic just to run a simple errand. Moving our city hall, senior center, and library to the O'Reilly building is a step in the wrong direction, that will shift Sebastopol towards a more car-centric, spread out town without a communal core, like so many other towns in America. When my family drives into town, we park one time, and can do our grocery shopping, go to work, go to the park, go to the library, go to a restaurant, go to peacetown, all without getting back into the car. The thought of getting kids into carseats just to go to the library is a non-starter for me. I would much rather retain a smaller, dated library in the heart of downtown than trade them for a beautiful facility that forces people to drive. To me this, the ability to walk, bump into friends, experience our town, is an essential part of our community.

I really appreciate the committee's thoughtfulness and work towards this (truly a labor of love for our town), but I can't help but feel that the proposal treats the library as a financial puzzle piece required to make the O'Reilly campus purchase pencil out. I would much rather retain a smaller, dated library in the heart of downtown than trade them for a beautiful facility that forces people to drive. For residents who prefer to walk or ride a bike instead of getting into a car, moving these daily-use civic hubs to the edge of town fundamentally reduces their accessibility and community value. I can understand the pragmatic argument for relocating City Hall to the O'Reilly site as a "least bad" option if new administrative space is strictly necessary, but we shouldn't pull our most vital public services out of the walkable downtown core just to make the math work. Moreover, once the city loses those parcels right in downtown, there will likely never be any chance to reacquire them and build a truly magnificent commons 20/30/50+ years down the road.

[REDACTED]