

From: [Danielle Nelson](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Council Meeting 6/16/2026
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026 2:44:28 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I would like to thank our interim City Manager and City Staff for the diligent work on the FY 2026–27 budget. I appreciate the thoughtful consideration that has gone into balancing priorities during a challenging fiscal period.

However, I am concerned that the budget does not include reinstating funding for the two additional Downtown Enforcement Team (DET) officer positions that were approved in 2023 and subsequently eliminated in 2025.

As the City advances initiatives such as establishing an entertainment zone, repurposing existing failing city infrastructure and surplus property, strengthening connectivity between Courthouse Square and Railroad Square, and attracting new business there appears to be a critical gap in ensuring that these areas remain safe and welcoming. There is little discussion about addressing gang activity, the disproportionate concentration of Sonoma County's unhoused population in the downtown core, or the increasing number of individuals under the influence of drugs and alcohol who are actively disrupting public spaces and harassing businesses, residents, employees, and visitors.

Beat 9, which covers downtown, accounted for approximately 27% of all calls to service dispatch in 2025. These figures represent a significant share of city overall calls for service and underscore the demand for law enforcement resources in the downtown core. Downtown businesses, residents, employees, and visitors deserve to feel safe. They deserve a clean and welcoming environment where they can walk free of harassment, obscenities, or unsafe behavior. When people feel safe, they stay longer, spend more, and return more often. This directly supports our local businesses and increases sales tax revenue. Without safety, efforts to attract new businesses, and increase tourism will fall short.

While I recognize the budget deficit, these positions represent a strategic investment that will have a positive impact on the General Fund. Increased safety leads to greater foot traffic, improved business activity, increased tourism, and ultimately more sales tax revenue. This strategy aligns with the City Council's strategic goals for reducing homelessness impacts, promoting economic vibrancy, and a healthy community.

I strongly urge the Council to have staff revisit FY 2026–27 budget and find funding to reinstate the two Downtown Enforcement Team positions or respectfully request that council approve the use of existing reserves to fund the two positions. Doing so will demonstrate a meaningful commitment to both public safety and economic vitality in our downtown core.

Sincerely,

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