

From: [Danielle Nelson](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment 6/16/26 Agenda Item 13.16
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026 11:17:31 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[Macys - Santa Rosa Plaza.pdf](#)
[Sola Salons - Santa Rosa Plaza.pdf](#)
[It's A Grind - Santa Rosa Plaza.pdf](#)
[Kara Mendez - Concerned Parent.pdf](#)
[SRPD DET SUPPORT LETTER - MALL EMPLOYEE.pdf](#)
[Vanessa Noles - Former Employee.pdf](#)

Please see the attached public comment for council meeting 6/16/26 agenda item #13.16. These letters were received at my office and I am forwarding them to the clerk at the request of those parties attached.

Thank you!

Danielle Nelson
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Santa Rosa City Staff and Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for reinstating the two Santa Rosa Police Department Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions as part of the City's FY 2026/2027 budget.

I want to begin by saying that I fully recognize the importance of the community services located near 6th and Morgan, including the work being done by Catholic Charities Caritas Center. These services play a critical role in supporting vulnerable members of our community, and I am grateful that Santa Rosa continues to invest in resources for those in need.

At the same time, I believe we must be honest about the impact the current environment is having on downtown businesses, employees, customers, and visitors. Just the other day I had a customer ask me if I would step outside and watch her walk to her car because there was a man acting suspiciously around our entrance and she didn't feel safe. This was on an ordinary Tuesday afternoon.

That moment reflects a broader pattern we are seeing more often at Macy's. We are experiencing an increase in incidents involving individuals loitering near our entrances, gathering around the surrounding property, disrupting business, making shoppers uncomfortable, and creating safety concerns for both customers and colleagues. We have also dealt with people urinating near our loading bay and entrances, along with other behavior that directly affects the customer experience and our ability to provide a safe, welcoming retail environment. My concern comes from a place of responsibility, not judgment. When a customer feels unsafe enough to ask a store manager to watch her walk to her car, we are no longer talking only about perception. We are talking about a real safety and business-impact issue.

While expanding drop-in hours at Caritas Center may be helpful, I believe reinstating the two Downtown Enforcement Team officers would have a greater and more immediate impact on the downtown core. The DET officers provide a specialized and necessary balance of outreach, de-escalation, crime prevention, and accountability. Their consistent presence helps deter disruptive behavior, reassures employees and customers, supports faster response, and strengthens confidence in downtown as a place to visit, work, shop, and invest.

I respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize reinstating the two Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions in the FY 2026/2027 budget. Thank you for your leadership, your continued commitment to the community, and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Danny Carter
Senior Director, Store Manager
Macy's Santa Rosa Plaza



Paradise Partners LLC

2265 Paradise Drive
Tiburon, CA 94920

June 10, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council

Re: Support for funding Santa Rosa DET

I am the owner of Sola Salons located in the Santa Rosa Plaza Mall. We operate an entrepreneurial hub for independent beauty, health, and wellness professionals who in turn, provide services for thousands of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County residents.

I am writing to express my strong support for reinstating the two Santa Rosa Police Department Downtown Enforcement Team (DET) officer positions as part of the FY 2026/2027 budget.

While I appreciate the City's continued commitment to addressing homelessness—including the proposed expansion of drop-in hours at Catholic Charities Caritas Center—I believe that restoring the two DET officers will have a significantly greater and more immediate impact on improving safety, stability, and economic vitality in downtown Santa Rosa.

In August 2023, the City Council made the important decision to expand the Downtown Enforcement Team by two officers in response to increasing disturbances affecting the downtown core. That investment delivered measurable and meaningful results:

- DET coverage was expanded to 7 days per week
- Incidents in and around Courthouse Square and the mall were reduced
- Public perception of downtown safety improved
- Response times were faster
- Businesses experienced fewer disruptions and property damage
- The environment became more welcoming for visitors, residents, and employees

Importantly, these improvements helped catalyze renewed economic activity and confidence in downtown Santa Rosa. National and regional businesses—including P.F. Chang's, Dave & Buster's, Miniso, and others—chose to invest in our community. These commitments reflect not only market opportunity, but confidence in the City's ability to maintain a safe and vibrant downtown environment.

Conversely, the July 2025 decision to eliminate these two officer positions has resulted in an immediate and noticeable reversal of progress:

- DET coverage has been reduced to 5 days per week
- Decreased visibility has led to increased loitering near mall entrances, parking garages, and adjacent neighborhoods
- Incidents along the Prince Memorial Greenway have increased
- Response times have slowed
- Property damage and business disruptions have risen
- Employees and visitors report feeling less safe



Paradise Partners LLC

2265 Paradise Drive
Tiburon, CA 94920

This shift has negatively impacted both public perception and the day-to-day experience of those who live, work, and visit downtown. Simply put, we have taken a step backward and are at risk of losing the gains achieved between 2023 and 2025.

The Downtown Enforcement Team plays a critical and specialized role. Their proactive engagement with unhoused individuals—connecting them to services while also addressing disruptive behavior—strikes the necessary balance between compassion and accountability. Their consistent presence is essential to maintaining order, deterring crime, and supporting individuals toward better outcomes.

A safe and welcoming downtown is foundational to Santa Rosa's economic health. Reinstating the two DET officers will:

- Restore 7-day coverage and visible presence
- Support local businesses and employees
- Improve quality of life for residents
- Strengthen investor and developer confidence
- Help shift public perception and encourage increased visitation

While expanding Caritas Center hours is a worthwhile goal, the scale of impact is limited compared to the broad, systemic benefits of fully staffing the DET. These strategies should not be viewed as mutually exclusive; however, when prioritizing limited resources, restoring DET staffing provides a more comprehensive and immediate return for the community.

Additionally, I encourage the Council to continue advocating for equitable allocation of Sonoma County's Measure O funds toward homelessness and behavioral health services. The burden of addressing what is fundamentally a countywide issue should not fall disproportionately on the City of Santa Rosa.

In closing, I respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize reinstating the two Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions in the upcoming budget. This investment is essential to ensuring a safe, thriving, and economically resilient downtown for all.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and continued commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Greg Sieck", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Greg Sieck

Owner, Sola Salons Santa Rosa Plaza



Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council,

I am writing on behalf of It's A Grind Coffee House, which has recently opened a new location in downtown Santa Rosa Mall. As new tenants in this community, we are writing to express our strong support for reinstating the two Santa Rosa Police Department Downtown Enforcement Team (DET) officer positions as part of the FY 2026/2027 budget.

When we made the decision to open in downtown Santa Rosa, we did so with confidence in the direction the city was heading. Between 2023 and 2025, the Downtown Enforcement Team helped transform the downtown core into a safer, more welcoming environment — one that attracted investment from national and regional brands alongside locally rooted businesses like ours. That track record of progress was a meaningful factor in our decision to plant roots here.

We understand that the City remains committed to addressing homelessness, including the proposed expansion of drop-in hours at Catholic Charities Caritas Center, and we appreciate those efforts. However, we believe that restoring the two DET officer positions would have a significantly greater and more immediate impact on the safety, stability, and economic vitality that both existing and incoming businesses depend on.

The results achieved during the DET's expanded period speak for themselves:

- DET coverage was expanded to 7 days per week
- Incidents in and around Courthouse Square and the mall were reduced
- Public perception of downtown safety improved
- Response times were faster
- Businesses experienced fewer disruptions and property damage
- The environment became more welcoming for visitors, residents, and employees

As new tenants, we are now experiencing firsthand the impact of the July 2025 decision to eliminate these two positions. Coverage has dropped to 5 days per week, and we have already noticed increased loitering near mall entrances and parking areas, slower response times, and a general decline in the sense of security that our staff and customers expect. These are not abstract concerns — they affect our ability to operate, to attract customers, and to build the kind of welcoming neighborhood café experience that It's A Grind is known for.

We chose to invest in downtown Santa Rosa because we believed in this community's potential. We still do. But sustaining that confidence — and encouraging others to follow — requires consistent, visible public safety support. The Downtown Enforcement Team's approach, balancing proactive outreach to unhoused individuals with accountability for disruptive behavior, is exactly the kind of specialized presence that makes a downtown thrive.



Reinstating the two DET officers would:

- Restore 7-day coverage and visible presence
- Support local businesses and their employees
- Improve the daily experience for residents, visitors, and workers
- Strengthen confidence among existing and prospective tenants
- Help protect the economic momentum downtown Santa Rosa has worked hard to build

We also encourage the Council to continue advocating for equitable distribution of Sonoma County's Measure O funds toward homelessness and behavioral health services. As a city-based small business, we recognize that downtown Santa Rosa should not bear a disproportionate share of a countywide challenge.

We respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize reinstating the two Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions in the upcoming budget. As a new member of this business community, we are committed to being a positive, contributing presence in downtown Santa Rosa — and we ask that the City make the same commitment to the conditions that allow businesses like ours to succeed.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your continued dedication to our community.

Sincerely,

Harshdeep Walia
CEO - Its a Grind Coffee House
Harshdeep.walia@itsagrind.com
(508) 740-9378 - Cell

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council,

I respectfully ask the City Council to prioritize the reinstatement of the two Santa Rosa Police Department Downtown Enforcement Team (DET) officer positions in the FY 2026/2027 budget to help ensure a safer, cleaner, and more welcoming downtown for residents, businesses, employees, and visitors alike.

As both a parent and someone who works downtown, this issue is deeply personal to me. I am the mother of a teenager and I often think about the freedom I had growing up: meeting friends downtown, going to the mall, trips to the movie theatre, spending time with classmates, and enjoying a level of independence that helped shape who I am today. I would love for my son to have those same opportunities, but I do not currently feel comfortable allowing him that freedom because I do not believe downtown Santa Rosa is as safe as it should be. Increased police presence is critical to restoring the sense of security that families, residents, employees, and visitors deserve.

As someone who works downtown every day, I have seen firsthand the difference a visible police presence can make. A safe downtown benefits everyone: from local businesses and employees to families considering whether to spend time, shop, dine, or attend community events in the area.

I urge the City Council to prioritize reinstating the two Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions in the upcoming budget. As a parent, I want my son and other young people in our community to be able to enjoy downtown Santa Rosa with the same sense of freedom and safety that previous generations experienced. As someone who works downtown, I want to see our businesses, employees, and visitors feel confident and secure in the heart of our city. Reinstating these positions is an investment in public safety, community confidence, and the future of downtown Santa Rosa.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kara Mendez

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council,

I support restoring two officer positions to the Santa Rosa Police Department's Downtown Enforcement Team in the FY 2026–2027 budget.

The team has been instrumental in maintaining a safe, welcoming, and vibrant downtown. Its visible presence and proactive approach have improved quality of life for residents, employees, visitors, and businesses while strengthening confidence in downtown Santa Rosa as a center for commerce and community activity.

Recent staffing reductions have limited coverage and responsiveness, increasing concerns about public safety, disruptive behavior, and the perception of the downtown area. Restoring a consistent presence is essential to preserving progress and supporting downtown's continued success.

The Downtown Enforcement Team combines enforcement, outreach, and problem-solving. By working with community members and individuals experiencing homelessness, the team helps connect people with services while addressing behaviors that affect public spaces, businesses, and neighborhoods. This coordinated approach promotes both compassion and accountability.

Restoring these positions would enhance public safety, support economic vitality, and improve the experience of those who live, work, and visit downtown. Continued investment in homelessness and behavioral health services remains important, but these efforts are most effective when paired with adequate public safety resources.

I respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize restoring the two Downtown Enforcement Team officer positions in the upcoming budget. A strong downtown presence will help ensure Santa Rosa remains a safe, vibrant, and economically resilient city.

Thank you for your service, leadership, and continued commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Cristina Carter

Dear City Council,

I live downtown and I am writing to express my concerns about the lack of police. Having lived in Santa Rosa most of my life, I have experienced ongoing safety issues, and I was encouraged when additional officers were assigned to downtown a few years ago. Unfortunately, that has changed over the last year.

As a teenager attending Santa Rosa High School, I regularly walked to and from Chop's Teen Club after school. During those walks, my friends and I always encountered people who were unhoused or under the influence of drugs, and many were aggressive or chased us. We often had to run to reach Chop's safely.

When more officers were assigned to the downtown area, I noticed a real improvement. It became safer not only to travel between school and Chop's, but also to access the SMART station, the mall, and Courthouse Square without constantly fearing our safety.

After graduating, I began working at the mall because it is close to my house. I loved my job and was moving up, but I decided to leave because I did not feel safe walking to and from work. Every day I encountered people on drugs, saw needles, bottles with pee, and encampments along the sidewalks. I would change my route to avoid certain sidewalks. I began to carry a knife and pepper spray to protect myself.

At work, the store manager provided employees with contact cards to call in response or the police department. I called these numbers frequently, but response was delayed or never arrived. This was discouraging.

I want to be able to work and live in downtown Santa Rosa without fearing for my safety. I wish I did not have to purchase a car and get a job outside of downtown to simply feel safe. I hope the City Council will consider increasing the number of police downtown so I can feel safe.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Vanessa Noles