

LATE PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

Dear Zoning Administrator,

I am writing to submit my public comments regarding the "Santa Rosa Mall- Drive Lane" agenda item for the February 12th meeting.

As a frequent customer and supporter of the small businesses located at the front of the Santa Rosa Mall, I am deeply concerned about the proposed drive lane project. This initiative will significantly disrupt these establishments at a time when small business owners are already facing considerable challenges.

Furthermore, the removal of trees will negatively impact the environment and aesthetic of the area. The project appears unnecessary given the ample parking already available in the Mall Garage; adding a few spaces does not justify the hardship this will cause local businesses and their clientele. Such disruptions would dissuade me and others from frequenting the Santa Rosa Mall in the future.

I respectfully ask that you deny this project to protect our local small businesses.

Sincerely,

Katrin Ciaffa

RECEIVED ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2026

Dear Ms. Hartman,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed driveway and parking in front of Santa Rosa Plaza. My small business was located in downtown Santa Rosa for over twenty five years and I have been involved in planning efforts the City has undertaken for over thirty years. Every Downtown Plan and every City led discussion about downtown has always included the desire to reconnect Courthouse Square to Railroad Square and make Downtown safer and more pedestrian friendly. The proposed vehicular-oriented design flies in the face of everything the City's official documents say downtown needs. The City's stated goals are to improve Downtown as pedestrian friendly, safe place and to reconnect Courthouse Square to Railroad Square through Santa Rosa Plaza. These goals are clearly stated in the City's General Plan and the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan.

The proposed design adds mid-block vehicular curb cuts that allow cars to cross the sidewalk putting pedestrians in danger. The proposed parking lot adds yet another unneeded barrier to reconnecting the East and West sides of downtown and it makes the front of Santa Rosa Plaza a vehicular space instead of a pedestrian one.

To approve this, the City will have to set aside the stated goals of our guiding documents and sacrifice pedestrian safety, urban design and the connection to and through the mall. That seems like too much to give away for one restaurant tenant, especially given the high tenant failure and turnover rates and recent tenant losses (Apple etc.) at the mall. If the success of the applicant's restaurant hinges on easy access for food delivery services and eight parking spaces, their failure is highly likely. After that, downtown will forever be left with an ugly parking lot and another barrier to reconnecting downtown.

The bottom line is that we want a more beautiful connection into and through the mall, not an uglier one. I hope you will revisit the City's guiding documents and deny this application.

Best Regards,

Ted Luthin

RECEIVED ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026

Suzanne,

I do not do zoom, so here is my opinion.

Terry Alexander

I am writing to voice my opinion on the proposed changes to the B Street entrance to the Santa Rosa Plaza. I am AGAINST it. That area IS for people to walk in from B Street. NOT for cars. It was bad enough when the 'hand' was removed and the city has narrowed a lot of streets to accommodate bicyclists. FYI most bicycles ride on the sidewalks.

I live in the downtown area and walk it a lot. It is semi safe at this moment, but if this 'drive lane with parking' goes in front of the mall...to accommodate PF Changs, it will NOT be safe for people to cross B Street and enter the mall. Which will make it so less people go to the mall. There are a lot of people that walk to and in the mall.

PLEASE DO NOT approve this change. I feel it will make downtown a place that will have less people. There are already way too many businesses in the mall and downtown.

RECEIVED ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026

Hello, Ms. Hartman,

I am writing to voice my concern over the proposed construction along B Street at the Santa Rosa Mall to create a new drive lane and parking at the front of the mall (DR23-019).

As someone who owns a business on that side of town and utilizes small businesses in and around the mall, I frequently walk, drive, or ride through the neighborhood, access parking, use the adjoining sidewalks and crosswalks, and am not convinced that another drive lane or more parking would be of greatest benefit to the businesses or patrons in that corridor.

The mall already has a surfeit of parking at the back and sides (for which they have notably had to abandon a poorly conceived pay-for-parking policy).

If any changes should be made to the front, I would think it should be made safer and more attractive to pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The mall's position as it is, sandwiched between Old Courthouse and Railroad Squares, should incentivize the city to make sure pedestrians and cyclists have clear, safe, and pleasant access connecting them to the many businesses to either side of the mall and within the mall itself.

I am also thinking of how the extensive public works needed for this project will affect small businesses in this corridor. I am particularly concerned about the relatively newly opened Sweet Spot Bodega and Sola Salons, both of which I and many of my friends patronize.

It might be worth it to consider the kind of negative impacts that the reunification of Old Courthouse Square had on businesses during the construction phase. I was and remain pro that reunification, as I think it creates a great place downtown for non-automobile traffic, providing an important community gathering place and foot traffic for many local small businesses. However, does our current economic climate not mean that such a disruption might be hard for small businesses to weather?

Additionally, further up 4th Street, traffic calming measures have been taken and bike lanes provided. I think that expanding access for motor vehicles rather than continuing to make strides forward for foot traffic and bike access feels like a misstep and not in keeping with all the good work that has been done toward making Downtown Santa Rosa, Courthouse Square, Railroad Square and yes, even the mall, a more pleasant place for both patrons and small business owners.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Anne Convery

RECEIVED ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Dear Ms. Hartman,

I am writing to you with grave concerns about a project that has been noticed and referenced [in this article](#) in the Press Democrat re: permitting for a new Drive Lane in front of the Santa Rosa Plaza.

I am absolutely appalled at the possibility of reconfiguring the mall frontage and adding both parking and a driving lane. As a resident of the SRJC neighborhood, with an office at 7th & Humboldt Street, I frequently walk downtown and to Railroad Square. The most direct route between 4th Street downtown and 4th Street in Railroad Square is through the mall. Going around the mall is both inconvenient and sketchy most of the time, involving walking under the freeway, passing by homeless people, etc.

Adding a drive lane to the front of the mall would result in a LESS pedestrian/bike friendly experience, and for what? To add unneeded parking spaces when there is a huge underutilized lot behind the mall? To make it easier to load/unload for business inside the mall? There are other options for loading/unloading - the old Sears parking lot is barely steps away. Please don't tell me that you need to create ADA access to the mall. We haven't had ADA access in that location for the entire life of the mall. The benefit to PF Changs & the mall in having 4 closer ADA spaces is FAR outweighed by the cost to the entire downtown in creating yet another barrier to connection in our city.

The City of Santa Rosa should be doing everything possible to make downtown MORE friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists, and to connect downtown with Railroad square. If anything, we should be spending that money to create a secure and accessible 24/7 pedestrian/bicycle pathway through the mall to facilitate that connection and reverse the consequences.

Please, I implore you, do not approve this permit. The success of PF Changs is not dependent upon a drive lane. Find other ways to facilitate success of all the businesses in downtown and to bring more people to downtown. The more pedestrian and bike friendly the city of Santa Rosa and the downtown becomes, the more likely that is to happen.

Thank you for passing my thoughts onto the zoning commission.

Christina Panza

RECEIVED ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Hello,

I'm writing to voice my opposition to the planned project in front of Santa Rosa Mall that would create some sort of drive lane or parking for cars.

I work on 4th street next to Courthouse Square and I live next to Railroad Square. I walk or drive past this location of the planned project multiple times a week. It's already challenging to be a pedestrian and cyclist on downtown because of the many cars. Why create a situation that will bring even more cars into this area? It doesn't make any sense and I oppose the project.

Thank you for taking my comment into consideration.

Best,

Leilani Clark

RECEIVED ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Dear Ms. Hartman,

It has come to my attention that there is a proposed drive lane with motor vehicle parking to be constructed directly at the main front entrance of the Santa Rosa mall and I want to voice my opposition.

I would think the city would want to improve people flow into and out of the mall and to promote the improvement of the look of the mall. Putting a parking lot in front of the mall will not make it look better. It will also not make it attractive for people to walk towards as the parking lot will be a barrier in front of the mall entrance. The addition of moving vehicles in this area will also make it more dangerous to navigate.

If there were improvements to be made to the mall I think it would be to add services and functionality that are not already there such as:

1. Better, more attractive sidewalks and crossings for pedestrians. Currently the front of the mall facing B street is an eyesore and is not friendly to pedestrians coming from the downtown center.
2. Better bicycling facilities such as separated bike lanes and parking. B street is currently a 4 lane super-highway which is barely occupied by traffic, it doesn't need to be that wide.
3. Connection from downtown to Railroad Square. If an investment in infrastructure is going to be made consider above all making the throughway from B street to Morgan/Davis

Street permanent so there is pedestrian access through this part of town at all times and revitalize this area of town.

In recent years Santa Rosa City has made some good strides in improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. I walk around the city a great deal and really appreciate how much better 4th Street from College to Bryden Lane feels in terms of safety and aesthetics. Also, Santa Rosa Ave from 1st to Hwy 12 looks and feels safer and nicer. The proposed Driveway/Parking lot in front of the mall feels like a step backwards especially as the downtown area already has too much parking capacity with a lot of empty garage space, especially around the mall.

Thank you for your consideration,

Neil Pinkerton

RECEIVED ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Dear Zoning Administrator McKay:

On behalf of the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, I'm writing to oppose the Santa Rosa Plaza's request to add parking spaces in front of the B Street entrance. I cannot fathom how adding parking in this location is necessary or desirable, much less an "improvement"! The City's own studies have already provided evidence that there is plenty of parking downtown, and the Plaza itself already has ample parking. This project completely contradicts the City's stated goals of improved infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, increased safety on our streets, reduction in vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, and beautifying/activating the downtown area.

I walk or bicycle on B Street every work day. If you want to improve that area, add bike lanes, better landscaping, and public art – make this a beautiful space for human beings to pass through or hang out, NOT another storage area for vehicles!

Eris Weaver, Executive Director

Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition

RECEIVED ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026
