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City of Sebastopol

April 8, 2020

To: Commercial Property Managers and Owners

RE: Leniency for Tenants

Dear City of Sebastopol Commercial Property Managers and Owners:

The City of Sebastopol wishes to extend our heartfelt concern to all of our community during this pandemic and want to work together as we navigate the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We are contacting the owners and managers of commercial properties in the City of Sebastopol to ask your help in addressing concerns of commercial establishment tenants.

As you may be aware, on March 24, 2020, the County of Sonoma adopted an Urgency Ordinance, the COVID-19 Eviction Defense Urgency Ordinance. The County's ordinance is designed to prevent residential evictions that might otherwise occur due to a tenant's substantial loss of income or medical expense resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The County's ordinance is focused on those individuals and families impacted by the pandemic and is intended to avoid residential displacements that might otherwise push people into homelessness or overcrowded living conditions and thereby increase the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Since then, the State of California Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-37-20 which also prohibits landlords from evicting tenants for nonpayment of rent and prohibits enforcement of evictions by law.

Similarly, the City is asking you, our business community, to consider what you can do to voluntarily ease burdens for tenants who may have difficulty paying rent for their businesses because of the shelter in place, illness or financial hardship related to ongoing business disruptions and closures. The City and the Chamber of Commerce have been coordinating with the Small Business Administration to obtain as much information as possible regarding business loans and other resources. We would appreciate your help in ensuring that our small businesses are here to serve the public and support our local economy when we emerge from this crisis. Sebastopol is a community known for neighbors helping neighbors and this is a significant way you can help our community.

Some suggestions to help the tenants would be; extending the prohibition of evictions for six months after the lifting of the shelter in place, waiving any sewer, water or utility bills which may be a part of the tenant's lease, and provide a minimum monthly repayment plan for rent owed. These are just a few suggestions as to how you, an owner or property manager, can help the business community recover from the crisis.

We appreciate your understanding and urge you to take any actions that you can to help your tenants, which, in turn, helps this community thrive.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Patrick Slayter in black ink, consisting of the letters 'P', 'S', 'L', 'A', 'Y', 'T', 'E' in a stylized, cursive font.

Patrick Slayter
Mayor
City of Sebastopol

Copies Furnished: Sebastopol City Council