City of St. Helena
Special City Council Closed Session Meeting
Tuesday, June 10, 2025 @ 4:30 PM
Vintage Hall - 465 Main Street, First Floor, Cafeteria

Remote Participation: Marriott Marquis San Diego, 333 W. Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101

PLEASE NOTE: Any person who wishes to speak regarding an item on the agenda or make a comment under the "Oral Communication" portion of the agenda may do so, but please observe the time limit of four minutes.

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL
   Mayor: Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Members: Aaron Barak, Kate Spadarotto, Billy Summers

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERTAINING TO CLOSED SESSION
   Each person's comments shall be limited to 4 minutes.

5. CLOSED SESSION:

   5.1. Conference with City Labor Negotiators (Anil Comelo, Mandy Kellogg, Joe Leach, Aaron Slater)
   Negotiations with St. Helena Employees Association (SHEA), St. Helena Police Officers Association (POA), St. Helena Professional Firefighters Association (SHPFA) and the Unrepresented Program.
   Brown Act Section: 54957.6

   5.2. Conference with Legal Counsel - Anticipated Litigation
   Initiation of litigation pursuant to Sec. 54956.9(c)
   (one case)

   5.3. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Sec. 54956.8) 3 - 42
   Property: 1480 Main Street and 1572 Railroad Avenue
   Agency Negotiators: City Manager, Community Development Director and City Attorney
   Negotiating Parties: TBD
   Under Negotiation: Price and terms of payment
   Public Comment.Jeff Farmer
   Public Comment.John Hawkins
   Public Comment.Mary Wilson
   Public Comment.Thomas Allen
   Public Comment.Tim Jacobs
   Public Comment.Tom Scripps

Public Comment.Wayne Leong
Public Comment.David Duncan
Public Comment.Pat Friday
Public Comment.Elaine de Man
Public Comment.Scott Andersen
Public Comment.Oliver Caldwell
Public Comment.Stanley Knight
Public Comment.Dianne and Jim Przbylinski
Public Comment.Stephanie Robotham
Public Comment.Susan Duryea
Public Comment.Alison Sloga
Public Comment.Rick Kaufman
Public Comment.Anne Carr

6. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular City Council meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

This agenda was posted at City Hall, 1088 College Avenue, and at Vintage Hall, 465 Main Street, St. Helena, California on June 6, 2025.

Erika Opp, Administrative Analyst

In Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please call the City Clerk's Office (707) 967-2792. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

From: Jeff Farmer
To: City Clerk
Subject: [External] Comment for Closed City Council Session, June 10th, Item 5.3
Date: Sunday, June 8, 2025 6:41:31 AM

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members:

Before you consider selling the old City Hall site by itself please pause. Instead of a hotel there, it can be made part of Lyman Park, doubling its size and creating space for a community center. The Park's history goes back over 100 years and is woven in the fabric of our community. So many things happen there for all of us to enjoy, be it the quiet chirping of birds in the morning, a family picnic, tai chi classes, or concerts in the afternoon. Lyman Park is the jewel in our City's crown.

On the other hand, Adams street has been ours for less than 30 years. Past efforts to transform it have fallen flat because there was no consensus or money. Aside from the trails, it remains what it was. But it's financial potential remains. Adams can give us the financial engine to enhance our real jewel - Lyman Park - and also significantly help with our constant financial problems. Oliver Caldwell's detailed proposal to transform the Adams street property into a high end resort is one solution. If Mr. Caldwell's numbers are correct it will give us a huge cash infusion immediately and generate much higher TOT in the future.

Ten years ago I was one of those "no hotel" folks on Adams but we have come to the point where this is a very viable use of the property. Transforming the Adams street property into a constant source of revenue will significantly help our long term financial situation and enhance the jewel we already love - Lyman Park.

Please pause and consider the long term term benefits of this approach.

Jeff Farmer
Tainter Street
St. Helena

From: hawkins-john@comcast.net
To: City Clerk; Paul Dohring; Michelle Deasy; Aaron Barak; Kate Spadarotto; Billy Summers
Subject: RE: [External] Sale of old City Hall site to hotel developer - please don"t until you fully consider some alternatives!
Date: Monday, June 9, 2025 11:48:20 AM

I'd like to amend my previous letter to correct a mistake – I now understand the contemplated sale is of the old City Hall site next to Lyman Park, not Lyman Park itself.
The same objections apply – if you sell the City Hall parcel, you make a few bucks but you eliminate the possibility of a larger solution that makes much more money and takes greater advantage of the City's other resources.
Please take your time with this, and please don't do anything until the community has had a chance to better understand the other options.
Thank you.
John Hawkins

From: hawkins-john@comcast.net <hawkins-john@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 7, 2025 8:54 PM
To: 'cityclerk@cityofsthelena.gov' <cityclerk@cityofsthelena.gov>; 'pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov' <pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov>; 'mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov' <mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov>; 'abarak@cityofsthelena.gov' <abarak@cityofsthelena.gov>; 'kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov' <kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov>; 'bsummers@cityofsthelena.gov' <bsummers@cityofsthelena.gov>
Subject: Sale of Lyman Park to hotel developer - please don't until you fully consider some alternatives!

I am a St. Helena resident since 1986 and have seen a lot of changes in our town, not all of which have been well considered. I understand you are currently considering the sale of Lyman Park to a hotel developer as a way to generate much needed funds.
There's an old saying that I think characterizes this idea/approach – you are **"stepping over the dollars to pick up the dimes."**

That is, you would be jumping at a short term opportunity where there are other approaches that may generate much more money and better deploy the assets St. Helena has. Selling Lyman Park now closes the door on these alternatives - there is no going back.

You know the arguments for the alternatives. Give all of us a few months to explore them. You owe it to the community to be cautious on such an important subject, with such an important asset, when there are legitimate options on the table.

John Hawkins
1234 Hudson Avenue

Saint Helena, CA 94574

From: Mary Wilson
To: City Clerk
Subject: [External] Lyman Park neighbor
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025 5:19:00 PM

Lyman Park is the anchor of St. Helena. From the summer concerts , the many local celebrations and protests to the families who picnic and the people like me, who like to walk thru and maybe sit for a bit under those wonderful big trees.
The thought of a hotel development as a direct neighbor of this local jewel is abhorrent .
Will you please pause for a moment to re- examine this issue?
I add my voice to the many who are opposed to this development.

Thanks for listening.

Sent from my iPad

Mary Wilson
1426 Kearney St.
St. Helena, Ca. 94574

707-529-4406

From: Thomas
To: City Clerk
Subject: FW: [External] Need for Community Input on Potential Sale of Old City Hall Parcel
Date: Sunday, June 8, 2025 2:27:04 PM

The below letter was sent individually to each Councilmember.

From: Thomas <tallen@northbaymgt.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 2:22 PM
To: 'pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov' <pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov>
Subject: Need for Community Input on Potential Sale of Old City Hall Parcel

Dear Paul -

I have become aware – mostly through neighborhood grapevine discussions, not through City-led community meetings – that the Council is meeting on Tuesday to further discuss a proposal to sell the old City Hall property to a hotel developer, for the development of a small hotel adjacent to Lyman Park.

I urge the Council to consider and discuss, but if a decision need be made, the only decision that is strategically smart and ethical is to open up this option for a full analysis and consideration of alternative options with robust community involvement.

It appears to me that the RFQ, and then presumably a follow-on RFP, were issued without any substantive community involvement. This approach is simply wrong, and it must be rectified.

Moreover, there is a competing strategic vision for the use of that property for a community center that a large and growing group of residents believe is a much better option for the long term viability and vibrancy of our town.

Please come out of this meeting with a commitment to engage the community in strategic deliberations that will lead to a long-term vision and plan for the highest and best use of that property and other City-owned real estate assets – and set the stage for the renewal and revitalization of St. Helena for decades to come.

Tom

Thomas W. Allen
1703 Madrona Avenue
St. Helena, CA 94574
Mobile 415-990-0240
tallen@northbaymgt.com

From: Tim Jacobs
To: City Clerk; Paul Dohring; Michelle Deasy; Aaron Barak; Kate Spadarotto; Cbsummers@cityofsthelena.gov
Cc: oliver@caldwellsnyder.com
Subject: [External] city hall
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025 3:57:32 PM

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i urge you not to sell city hall as currently contemplated. i believe that oliver caldwell's creative approach to that property and lyman park is a winning strategy for our city.
tim jacobs

From: Tom Scripps
To: Paul Dohring; City Clerk
Subject: [External] Lyman vs Adams Opportunities
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025 8:40:03 PM

Dear Council Members (Clerk plz forward):

I am writing to express my strong opinions regarding two critical properties in our city: the **old City Hall property** and the **Adams property**. Decisions made about these sites will have a lasting impact on our community's character and financial health.

Old City Hall Property & Lyman Park: A Vision for Community

I urge you to **reject any proposals to sell the old City Hall property to a hotel developer**. This historic site, centrally located, holds immense potential for public good, not private profit.

Instead, I propose that the **old City Hall property be combined with Lyman Park**. This integrated space should be dedicated solely to **community development**. Imagine an expanded public park, a vibrant community center, or cultural spaces that truly serve the needs of our residents. This approach would enhance our downtown core, provide much-needed green space, and foster a stronger sense of community.

Adams Property: Luxury Resort with Workforce Housing & Fiscal Solution

Regarding the **Adams property**, I advocate for its development into a **luxury resort that includes substantial workforce housing**. This is a unique opportunity to address multiple city challenges simultaneously.

A high-end resort on the Adams property has the potential to generate **substantial and much-needed long term revenue**. This projected income can be strategically used to tackle the City's deep deficits and existing liabilities, providing a crucial pathway to fiscal stability without burdening taxpayers further. By incorporating workforce housing, we can also begin to address our pressing housing affordability issues, ensuring that those who work in our city can also afford to live here.

I believe these proposals offer a balanced approach, prioritizing community well-being while also addressing the City's financial challenges. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss these critical matters further and work together towards a prosperous future for our city.

Sincerely,

Tom Scripps

1858 Granger Way,

St Helena, CA 94574

From: Wayne Leong
Subject: [External] Do Not Sell City Hall Main Street property
Date: Sunday, June 8, 2025 12:03:14 PM

Dear Mayor and Members of the St. Helena City Council,

I am writing to strongly urge the Council not to proceed with the sale of the St. Helena City Hall Main St. property to a hotel developer without first establishing a comprehensive, community-driven vision for the future of our downtown.

City Hall is not just a parcel of land—it is a historically significant civic landmark, centrally located and deeply tied to St. Helena's identity. To sell this vital public asset without a clearly defined, long-term urban planning framework would be a serious and irreversible misstep. A piecemeal sale driven by short-term financial gain risks undermining the character, functionality, and long-term public value of our downtown.

Decisions of this magnitude demand foresight, transparency, and meaningful public input. Rather than sell City Hall in isolation, I encourage the Council to consider an integrated vision that unites City Hall and Lyman Park into a vibrant town square and mixed-use civic hub—one that strengthens community life, supports local needs, supports local needs, and preserves the public realm at the heart of St. Helena.

Specifically, I urge you to give thoughtful consideration to the community center concept developed by Oliver Caldwell and other members of the community. This work represents the kind of creative, locally rooted planning that should inform any future use of this site.

Once this property is sold, it is lost to the public forever. The long-term consequences far outweigh any short-term financial benefit. I respectfully ask the Council to pause this process and commit to an open, collaborative effort to shape a vision that truly reflects St. Helena's values and aspirations.

Thank you for your attention and for your continued service to our city.

Sincerely,
Wayne Leong

leong architects

www.leongarch.com + www.leong-leong.com
Napa Valley + New York
P.O. Box 2, St. Helena, CA 94574

t: (707) 963-5461

Erika Opp

From: David Duncan <david@silveroak.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 1:47 PM
To: City Clerk; Paul Dohring; Michelle Deasy; Aaron Barak; Kate Spadarotto; Billy Summers; Anil Comelo
Subject: [External] Endorsement
Attachments: Please Do Not Sell City Hall Main Street property[82].eml

All,
I am in receipt of the attached letter asking to delay this decision until further work on options can be completed and fully vetted. \\

I am a 23-year homeowner, an active part of our community and own the building at 1126 Adams Street. Please consider this email my full enforcement of Tracy's well thought out email to you, attached.

I hope you will consider these other options tomorrow and let the public process run its course. It would be unconscionable to build a three-story structure shoehorned in between Lyman Park and the fire station. Especially when other options are available.

Thank you for your consideration.

David R. Duncan
Proprietor & Executive Chairman
Silver Oak | Twomey | OVID | Timeless | Prince Hill

Erika Opp

From: Tracy Sweeney <tracy@tomorrowcellars.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 4, 2025 7:13 PM
To: pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov
Subject: Please Do Not Sell City Hall Main Street property

Hi Paul,

I understand that you and the City Council are in final discussions to sell the former City Hall property on Main Street to a hotel developer. Although I realize the City is grappling with complex financial challenges, I do not believe selling the Main Street property is the best course of action for the following reasons:

- I know you have seen Oliver Caldwell's latest ideation of what could be built for the Community. I have seen several renditions over the years, and I believe the idea has merit and should be considered before a decision is made to sell Main Street. The proposal to combine the Main Street property with Lyman Park and create a truly community-focused center for all to enjoy, which would forever be lost once the former City Hall site is sold. Many benefits would accrue to both the citizens and the business community of a Community Center. A center to gather and have community-based events, music, and exhibits; a better location for a modern, state-of-the-art Library that serves today's needs, and a possible new revenue stream for the City from rentals and site fees.

- In addition to believing that the highest use for the Main Street property is a Community Center, a multi-story hotel building on that site would be detrimental to Lyman Park. It will forever alter the sight lines and public enjoyment of Lyman Park due to its proximity to the lot line and the hotel's vertical, multi-story design. Guests at the park will have hotel guests literally on top of them, destroying the sanctity and open space feel of Lyman Park.

- A hotel developed on the City's Main Street property will be smaller than would be ideal to generate the level of TOT required to make a dent in budget issues. A better location for a hotel development is the Adams Street property due to its size – it could be developed into a much more desirable resort that could rival other Napa Valley 5-star locations and command significantly higher room rates and resulting TOT income for the City. This sale would also generate far more money in the short run, as the property will pencil out better for the purchaser and drive a higher purchase price. Developing a hotel on Adams Street also keeps traffic and noise off Main Street and farther from downtown, while still allowing hotel guests to walk to the area. The Adams Street property could also be divided in a way to accommodate workforce housing, and the cost could be passed on to the hotel developer – a win-win for the City and the hotel in attracting workers.

Please slow down the decision until all alternatives can be fully vetted and you and the Council are sure there is no better solution to shore up City budgets.

Thank you,

Tracy Sweeney
1407 Kearney Street
St. Helena, CA 94574
M (707) 287-8651

From: Pat Friday
To: Public Comment; City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: [External] Main Street hotel
Date: Monday, June 9, 2025 4:08:01 PM

From: Pat Friday <patfriday@comcast.net>
Subject: Main Street hotel
Date: June 7, 2025 at 4:16:09 PM PDT
To: pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov, Michelle Deasy <michellecdeasy@gmail.com>, Aaron Barak <abarak@cityofsthelena.gov>, kspadorotto@cityofsthelena.gov, bsummers@cityofsthelena.gov

Please do not make a decision this Tuesday to sell the city property to hotel development. But wait a few months to consider building a public pavilion in the city hall/Lyman Park area.

I encourage you to have a long term vision of our town planning, and not just respond to a developer's idea to build a hotel there.
Thank you for considering this,
Pat Friday
St. Helena

From: Elaine de Man
To: Erika Opp
Subject: [External] Agenda Item 5.3
Date: Monday, June 9, 2025 6:27:30 PM

Corrected:

Good morning Erika,

Just making sure you received this in regards to item 5.3 on the closed session agenda:

> I am asking the city council to please take a pause on the negotiations with "Real Property Developers" for the sale of the Main Street property.
>
> I understand the city needs money and this looks like the easiest way to get it. But I think it would very short-sighted to sell off this piece of property without looking at the bigger picture. What will it mean to the future of the community to lose—forever—the opportunity to turn the old city hall site into something meaningful for *everyone*, instead of just another ho-hum hotel?
>
> The recent (very successful) effort to fund the 4th of July fireworks through community donations shows that the community cares and is willing to put their money where their mouth is when given the opportunity. This opens up a new world of possibilities to do something more ambitious with Main Street. But that opportunity will be lost forever, along with the ambiance of beloved Lyman Park, if it is sold to a hotel developer.
>
> Yes, the city needs money. But let's be smart about it. Let's not do this piecemeal. Let's take a look at the bigger picture and have a realistic plan going forward so we can make smart decisions regarding the city budget *and* the future of this town.
>
> And we don't need to hire a consultant to figure this out for us. Nor does this need to drag on forever.
>
> Please, just take a pause, and take the opportunity to consider some alternatives that may be broader in scope and more beneficial to the city and the community in the long run.
>
> Elaine de Man

Jordan Coonrad

Dear Mr. Mayor, and esteemed Council members,

I understand the Council is in final discussions to sell the former City Hall property on Main Street to the same hotel developer that offered to buy the Adams Street property nine years ago. While I recognize the City faces immediate financial challenges, I urge you to **pause this decision** and take the time to fully explore the alternatives.

A Better, Long Term Strategic, Community-Centered Vision Exists
A plan to combine the former City Hall property and Lyman Park into a town square where the community and visitors alike can gather, deserves thoughtful consideration. Not only would this plan generate long-term revenue for the City through rentals and site fees, but the plan would also significantly improve community facilities by providing a new modern library and learning center.

Both Calistoga and Yountville have funded comparable Community Centers through private donations, why not St Helena? One benefactor has already expressed an interest in providing funding for a pavilion at Lyman Park. Did you know there used to be a community center on the Lyman property a hundred years ago? Did you know you could fit Healdsburg's town square AND a pavilion within the proposed Lyman Park plan?
Let's embrace the same forward thinking as our forefathers.

A Hotel Would Diminish and Damage Lyman Park
A three-story hotel on Main Street would permanently alter the character of Lyman Park, overshadowing the public green space, disrupting sightlines, and reducing its peaceful, open feel. The mature trees that define the park would not survive the construction of an underground parking area so close to the lot line. And, the proposed hotel would be in direct competition with the existing hotels, reducing their collective TOT, resulting in a net zero gain in revenue.

Adams Street is the Smarter Location
The Adams Street property is best suited for a luxury resort development for many reasons:

- Larger site size—ideal for a single-story luxury, 5 Star Resort

- Significantly Higher room rates generating five times (5X) more TOT revenues than the proposed hotel.
- Lower traffic and noise impacts downtown
- Opportunity to provide workforce housing, funded by the developer.

Calistoga generates $12,000,000 in TOT primarily from two luxury resorts, Solage and the Four Seasons. Yountville generates $9,000,000 in TOT from their luxury hotels. Both have an annual surplus of funds whereas St. Helena generates $4,000,000 in TOT and is operating with a significant deficit.

The community does not want or deserve higher taxes. We want to incorporate a successful model that is working in nearby cities.

Lastly, selling the former City Hall property may generate a quick $5 million dollars, but it does not solve the long term issue of paying median wages to City employees or addressing the estimated $40M to repair our decaying water and sewer lines or repairing the Bell Canyon Dam which has contributed to St. Helena's drinking water supply for years. Selling the Adams Street property, however, could fetch $25 million dollars and generate $125 Million dollars in TOT over the next twenty years.

You are about to make a decision with long-term consequences. I urge you to be courageous and trust this community to help you find the best solution. Please delay the sale of the former City Hall property to ensure we have time to evaluate ALL the options that build community, preserve public space, generate the highest revenue, and reflect the long-term interests of St. Helena residents.

Building a vibrant community space while finally solving St Helena's dire financial situation could become one of the most enduring and celebrated outcomes of your time in office.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Scott Andersen (4th Generation of the Napa Valley)
St. Helena Resident and local business owner for 36 years

From: Oliver Caldwell
To: Public Comment; City Clerk
Subject: [External] Letter to the Council
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 9:05:21 AM

Special Council Hearing June 10, 2025
Agenda Item 5.3

To the Council,

Please take a moment to imagine the possibilities for the Community— and for future generations—if we were to remove the abandoned civic buildings on Main Street and merge that property with our beloved Lyman Park. Now doubled in size, Lyman Park, which could easily fit Healdsburg Plaza, would become the social and cultural hub for our community.

Imagine further a landmark Pavilion at the front of this grand community park—one that could host events and experiences for all our citizens and visitors to enjoy. A place worthy of a town that prides itself as "The Heart of the Napa Valley."

Now imagine that you sold half of it away before you—or the community—had the opportunity to consider this possibility….or others. Imagine that this opportunity to create something significant for our community and for future generations was lost forever in an attempt to be expedient, but not particularly forward-thinking or even efficient.

For this reason, please apply the balance of the DSP funds to clear out old City Hall and open up the two adjacent properties for all to see. Let the citizens have the opportunity to walk and explore the two acres of open space on Main Street and imagine their grand community park and cultural center.

Best,
Oliver Caldwell

From: Stanley Knight
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: [External] Former city hall property proposal(s)
Date: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:52:07 PM

Forwarded copy to the City Clerk below:

Begin forwarded message:

From: Stanley Knight <stanknight70@gmail.com>
Subject: Former city hall property proposal(s)
Date: June 7, 2025 at 7:27:55 PM PDT
To: pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov
Cc: mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov, bsummers@cityofsthelena.gov, abarak@cityofsthelena.gov, kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov

Dear Mayor Dohring and Council Members,

I am opposed to a hotel development to replace the old city hall property on Main Street.

Instead, I support the creation of a Community Center building and town park/events venue on the combined former City Hall & Lyman Park properties. (There are other potential hotel locations near Main Street, for example, Adams St & the Bank of America property.)

Saint Helena needs a community center and event space/park as a multi-purpose gathering place and centerpiece on Main Street, and should not miss this opportunity.

Further to considering this decision, I strongly recommend that Council members review of several excellent Community Center proposals that came out of the SHAPE Committee report on uses of City-owned real estate.

Thank-you,
Stanley Knight
PO Box 1151
Saint Helena
707-738-4500

From: James Przybylinski
To: Paul Dohring
Cc: Michelle Deasy; Aaron Barak; Kate Spadarotto; Billy Summers; City Clerk
Subject: [External]
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 9:29:12 AM

Dear Mayor Dohring and City Council members,

Like some of our neighbors, we are finding out about the City Council's consideration of a small hotel on the site of the old City Hall on Main Street. And, like many of the neighbors and friends we talk with concerning this hotel, we believe that this site is not a good alternative for a hotel in St. Helena. We have seen Oliver Caldwell's suggestion for the city's property on Main Street, and we feel strongly that Oliver's vision is a preferred idea for this site. We are asking that you and the Council give consideration to alternative ideas for the new hotel before making your decision.

In addition to the location of a new hotel, there is the question of revenue resulting from your decision. It seems to us that the city's financial condition forces us to look with a larger, longer vision at revenue requirements. It is very difficult for us to see how the smaller hotel is going to provide the TOT revenue that the city needs. A larger resort-style hotel would provide a considerably stronger revenue stream for the city. In summary, we prefer a larger resort hotel with the resulting greater TOT revenue to help propel the city into an improved financial future.

Thank you,

Dianne and Jim Przybylinski
1554 Voorhees Circle
St. Helena, CA 94574
Mobile: (704) 904-7470

From: Stephanie Robotham
To: City Clerk; Public Comment
Subject: [External] Please Pause the Sale of the Main Street Property
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 9:30:21 AM

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

I understand the Council is in final discussions to sell the former City Hall property on Main Street to the same developer who once offered to purchase Adams Street. While I recognize the financial pressures facing the City, I urge you to pause this decision and fully explore alternative solutions.

A Better, Community-Centered Vision Exists
There is a compelling plan to turn the Main Street property and Lyman Park into a vibrant town square — featuring a modern library, event space, and gathering areas.

- This plan would generate long-term revenue through rentals and site fees
- There is already interest in private donations, including for a Lyman Park pavilion
- Healdsburg's entire town square and a pavilion could fit within this proposed space

Let's build something that serves our community for generations.

A Hotel on Main Street Would Harm Lyman Park
A three-story hotel would:

- Overshadow public green space and disrupt the park's open feel
- Likely lead to the loss of mature trees due to underground construction
- Compete with existing hotels, delivering little to no net TOT revenue gain

This would be a permanent tradeoff for marginal return.

Adams Street Is the Smarter Hotel Location
The Adams Street property is better suited for hotel development:

- Larger site can support a luxury 5-star resort
- Generates 5x more TOT than the current Main Street proposal
- Less impact on downtown traffic and noise
- Space for workforce housing, funded by the developer

Calistoga and Yountville generate $12M and $9M in TOT, respectively. St. Helena generates $4M and faces a deficit. We need a proven model — not higher taxes.

This Is a Legacy Decision
Selling the Main Street property might yield $5M today, but it won't address:

- The $40M needed for aging water and sewer infrastructure
- Retention and compensation of city staff
- Long-term community needs

By contrast, Adams Street could bring $25M upfront and $125M in TOT over 20 years.

Please delay the sale and give the community time to help find a stronger solution. This is an opportunity to create a legacy — to protect public space, drive real revenue, and invest in something lasting.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,
Stephanie Robotham

2021 Olive Avenue, St Helena

From: SUSAN DURYEA
To: City Clerk; Paul Dohring; Michelle Deasy; Aaron Barak; Kate Spadarotto; Billy Summers
Cc: SUSAN DURYEA
Subject: [External] Save Lyman Park and old City Hall property for Community Development!
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:03:09 AM

To City Council- Regarding-Special City Council Closed Session Meeting today~
Do not sell the old City Hall property to a hotel developer.
Combine the old City Hall property with Lyman Park for community development which will serve both locals and visitors.
There are other- better- options for another hotel in St Helena which we absolutely do need.
Thank you for your kind consideration of this request.
Susan M Duryea

Susan M Duryea
Event Design & Project Management
C-707-287-5176
St. Helena, Ca

Dear Mr. Mayor, and esteemed Council members,

I understand the Council is in final discussions to sell the former City Hall property on Main Street to the same hotel developer that offered to buy the Adams Street property nine years ago. While I recognize the City faces immediate financial challenges, I urge you to **pause this decision** and take the time to fully explore the alternatives.

A Better, Long Term Strategic, Community-Centered Vision Exists
A plan to combine the former City Hall property and Lyman Park into a town square where the community and visitors alike can gather, deserves thoughtful consideration. Not only could this plan generate long-term revenue for the City through rentals and site fees, but the plan would also significantly improve community facilities by providing a new modern library and learning center. It also offers diversification to the portfolio of revenue streams, reducing too much reliance on hotel revenues.

Calistoga and Yountville have funded comparable Community Centers through private donations, providing successful models for St Helena to consider adopting. One benefactor has already expressed an interest in providing funding for a pavilion at Lyman Park. Did you know there used to be a community center on the Lyman property a hundred years ago? Did you know you could fit Healdsburg's town square AND a pavilion within the proposed Lyman Park plan?

Let's embrace the same forward thinking as our forefathers.

A Hotel Would Diminish and Damage Lyman Park
A three-story hotel on Main Street would permanently alter the character of Lyman Park, overshadowing the public green space.The mature trees that define the park would not survive the construction of an underground parking area so close to the lot line. And, the proposed hotel would be in direct

competition with the existing hotels, reducing their collective TOT, resulting in a net zero gain in revenue.

Adams Street is the Smarter Location

The Adams Street property is best suited for a luxury resort development for many reasons:

- Larger site size—ideal for a single-story luxury, 5 Star Resort
- Significantly Higher room rates generating five times (5X) more TOT revenues than the proposed hotel.
- Lower traffic and noise impacts downtown
- Opportunity to provide workforce housing, funded by the developer.

Calistoga generates $12,000,000 in TOT primarily from two luxury resorts, Solage and the Four Seasons. Yountville generates $9,000,000 in TOT from their luxury hotels. Both have an annual surplus of funds whereas St. Helena generates $4,000,000 in TOT and is operating with a significant deficit.

The community does not want or deserve higher taxes. We want to incorporate a successful model that is working in nearby cities.

Lastly, selling the former City Hall property may generate a quick $5 million dollars, but it does not solve the long term issue of paying median wages to City employees or addressing the estimated $40M to repair our decaying water and sewer lines or repairing the Bell Canyon Dam which has contributed to St. Helena's drinking water supply for years. Selling the Adams Street property, however, could fetch $25 million dollars and generate $125 Million dollars in TOT over the next twenty years.

You are about to make a decision with long-term consequences. I urge you to be courageous and trust this community to help you find the best solution. Please delay the sale of the former City Hall property to ensure we have time to evaluate ALL the options that build community, preserve public space, generate the highest revenue, and reflect the long-term interests of St. Helena residents.

Building a vibrant community space while finally solving St Helena's dire financial situation could become one of the most enduring and celebrated outcomes of your time in office.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Alison Sloga,

Sylvaner Avenue (St. Helena Resident for over 10 years)

June 10, 2025 79˚& Clear

VIA EMAIL ONLY

The City Council of St. Helena
1088 College Ave.
St. Helena, Ca 94574
RE: The Support for Tourism is Great; Make a Prudent Decision

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

This letter follows my correspondence from May 2025 regarding the use of City tax dollars and the Chamber's request for public funds to subsidize its operations. While my company remains a member of the Chamber, we continue to hope its leadership will prioritize representing the interests of businesses that are invested in St. Helena—those who are licensed, pay taxes, and contribute directly to the local economy—rather than monetizing its platform in ways that dilute that mission.

As a business owner in St. Helena and someone with some experience in strategic management and public-private partnerships, I'm compelled to share my perspective on the Chamber of Commerce's recent funding request and the broader question it raises: how should we be investing our limited public dollars to most effectively support St. Helena's long-term economic vitality?

While the Chamber has played a role in promoting tourism and operating the Welcome Center, their latest letter suggests a troubling assumption—that past financial arrangements should be preserved without serious scrutiny, strategic alignment, or broader stakeholder input. As a taxpayer and investor in this town, I believe we can and must do better.

1. City Funds Must Be Allocated Based on ROI and Public Benefit
Public resources are not owed to any private entity—regardless of history or sentiment. They must be allocated based on data, return on investment, and alignment with municipal priorities. That's especially true now, when cities like ours face complex fiscal challenges and competing needs.

The Chamber's assertion that the City should continue to fund them at $160,000–$175,000 annually, largely to subsidize costs they independently agreed to take on (including the Welcome Center lease), reflects a lack of financial discipline. It's also disconnected from performance metrics. Nowhere in their letter is there a quantitative accounting of impact: no visitor data trends, no cost-per-acquisition figures, no TOT uplift analysis, no brand conversion rates—just appeals to tradition and sentiment. Sadly, the Chamber's tradition of promoting businesses-regardless of their actual presence or contribution to St. Helena- is morally bankrupt; further funding that kind of performance with tax dollars is wrong.

2. Tourism Strategy Must Be Collaborative—Not Controlled by One Entity
What's missing from this conversation is what most business leaders would consider fundamental: strategic alignment. We need an integrated plan—one that includes the City, Visit Napa Valley, the Tourism Improvement District (TID), and yes, the Chamber. But that plan must be transparent, metrics-driven, and jointly executed.
What we cannot afford is a fragmented model where the Chamber determines how to spend City funds based on internal board priorities, many of which reflect interests that do not align with the City's fiscal base. Several of the Chamber's most vocal advocates represent businesses outside City limits—businesses that do not contribute TOT, sales tax, or property tax to St. Helena. Their inclusion in destination marketing efforts effectively asks in-town businesses to subsidize their competitors. That is not a sound investment model.

3. The City Has the Right—And Obligation—To Set Funding Priorities

The Chamber's suggestion that the City "honor" a verbal agreement from a prior administration disregards the basic principles of governance. Elected officials are responsible for reassessing priorities based on current needs, conditions, and available resources. The notion that a nonprofit board—not the City Council—should dictate how tax dollars are allocated contradicts good fiscal management. Chamber board members are not accountable to voters. Many represent organizations that have made little or no capital investment in the City, and some operate without contributing to our local tax base at all. The City Council, by contrast, is accountable to the residents and taxpayers of St. Helena—and it is their responsibility to decide how City dollars are spent.

4. Tradition Shouldn't Override Strategy
The Welcome Center lease and the Wine Barrel Tree are, by all accounts, initiatives the Chamber willingly pursued. To now present them as municipal obligations—especially without clear performance benchmarks—reflects a shift from partnership to entitlement. Community traditions matter, but in a time of fiscal constraint, discretionary spending must be carefully prioritized. We need to return to first principles: What is the goal? What's the ROI? What's the most effective channel? What are the opportunity costs? How do we make St. Helena stronger?

5. Let's Reset the Conversation—With Strategy at the Center
I would urge the Council to hold firm on its current proposal, and instead invite a structured, collaborative review of St. Helena's destination marketing strategy—one that includes all the relevant players. Let's ensure we are not duplicating efforts, cannibalizing one another's markets, or investing in low-yield initiatives simply because they've always been done. As someone who has invested significantly in this town—and who is committed to seeing it flourish—I believe St. Helena deserves a smarter, more coordinated model. One that reflects real-world business logic. One that aligns incentives. One that treats public dollars not as a subsidy, but as capital to be deployed for measurable outcomes.

Respectfully,
Rick Kaufman, Harvest Inn

From: acarriver@gmail.com
To: City Clerk
Subject: Letter to the City Council
Date: Thursday, July 3, 2025 2:48:11 PM

Dear City Clerk

Would you please add this letter to the agenda for the closed session City Council meeting on June 10.

Thank you ,
Anne R Carr
1730 Dean York lane
Saint Helena, CA 94574
707-695-9489
acarriver@gmail.com

June 8, 2025

Mayor Dohring
Members of the Saint Helena City Council,

The agenda for the Closed Session on June 10 seems to indicate the City is in negotiations with a developer for the old City Hall property adjacent to Lyman Park. Although to my knowledge there has been no official announcement, it appears the negotiation is for a hotel on the property.
Before making a decision on the disposition of this property, I urge the City to do two things:

1. Consider the value of this property in conjunction with that of the Adams Street property in order to find the "highest and best use" of both and make a plan that includes both properties.
2. Hold a town hall meeting with citizens to discuss that plan and listen to feedback.

At this point, citizens feel there is a plan to sell the old City Hall property without our input. I think you may be surprised by what a forthright discussion of including Adams Street in your planning might produce in terms of options.

Thank you for listening and for your service,

Anne Carr
1730 Dean York Lane
Saint Helena

Sent from Outlook