

# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 5 Wednesday, April 26, 2023



The Real Estate Quarter in Review ... read on Page D4

## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Spring sojourn

Photos Cynthia Brian



Red tulips in Prague, Czech Republic



Tulips and white pansies in Belgrade, Serbia



Forsythia grows throughout the region.

### By Cynthia Brian

*“Every spring is the only spring, a perpetual astonishment.” ~ Ellis Peters*

My legs feel like jelly and my back is breaking. And the pain is not from gardening. It is from walking an average of 10 miles per day on cobblestone streets, up steep hills, down into the woods of national parks, and climbing medieval stairs to fortresses and castles throughout my springtime journey to the former Eastern Bloc countries of Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, as well as Croatia and Serbia. Besides learning more about the history, culture, customs, people, and food, I was on a quest to identify the botanical specimens that we have

in common.

The original weather reports indicated mild temperatures, but a cold front suddenly appeared broadcasting freezing winds, rain, snowfall, and overcast gray days. Locals blamed the meteorologic conditions on climate change and global warming. Yet Mother Nature earnestly wanted to birth spring in a magical awakening from its winter slumber. The rich soil of these European countries provides a foundation for a variety of plants and trees, many of which are familiar to Californians.

Each country has a special association with a specific flower. During the Ottoman conquest, tulips were brought to these countries and tulips were blooming profusely in every land. Hungary claims the tulip as its national flower.

Home to diverse wildflowers, including the Pasque flower, a harbinger of spring, Croatia calls the Dalmatian iris its own. The national symbol of Serbia is the plum tree, which was in full bloom throughout the country. Their national drink, šljivovica, is made from plums. In Romania a wild climbing rose called Rosa Canina is utilized for both health and drinking and the purple Carpathian crocus is the first sign of spring. Bulgaria is the world’s leading producer of rose oil used in perfumes and cosmetic products. The roses were not yet in bloom, but the bushes were filled with buds. I was compelled to purchase rose oil which is supposedly excellent for skin revitalization.

... continued on Page D8

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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	4	\$1,075,000	\$1,995,000
MORAGA	3	\$750,000	\$1,805,000
ORINDA	8	\$1,050,000	\$3,700,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

### LAFAYETTE

682 Glenside Drive, \$1,075,000, 2 Bdrms, 956 SqFt, 1925 YrBlt, 03-07-23

3497 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,186,500, 3 Bdrms, 1420 SqFt,

1939 YrBlt, 03-17-23, Previous Sale: \$350,000, 05-18-99

3841 Palo Alto Drive, \$1,995,000, 4 Bdrms, 2237 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 03-17-23

1004 Woodbury Road #101, \$1,450,000, 2 Bdrms, 1495 SqFt,

2015 YrBlt, 03-17-23, Previous Sale: \$1,000,000, 12-22-20

### MORAGA

1965 Ascot Drive #7, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1236 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 03-13-23,

Previous Sale: \$570,000, 07-09-21

3912 Campolindo Drive, \$1,805,000, 3 Bdrms, 1808 SqFt,

1972 YrBlt, 03-16-23, Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 08-25-16

166 Cypress Point Way, \$1,549,500, 2 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 03-07-23,

Previous Sale: \$775,000, 10-24-16

### ORINDA

46 Camino Sobrante, \$1,975,000, 4 Bdrms, 3137 SqFt, 1926 YrBlt, 03-16-23

98 Estates Drive, \$3,310,000, 4 Bdrms, 3033 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 03-13-23,

Previous Sale: \$1,506,000, 03-03-17

16 Evergreen Drive, \$1,620,000, 5 Bdrms, 2430 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 03-17-23,

Previous Sale: \$912,500, 04-24-13

24 Jack Tree Knolls, \$1,685,000, 4 Bdrms, 2385 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 03-09-23

2 Orchard Court, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 1623 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 03-06-23

245 Orchard Road, \$1,770,000, 4 Bdrms, 2383 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 03-14-23,

Previous Sale: \$1,218,000, 10-19-16

20 Rabble Road, \$3,495,000, 4 Bdrms, 4096 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 03-17-23,

Previous Sale: \$2,245,000, 05-07-14

118 Sleepy Hollow Lane, \$3,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 4003 SqFt,

2017 YrBlt, 03-17-23, Previous Sale: \$2,800,000, 11-09-17

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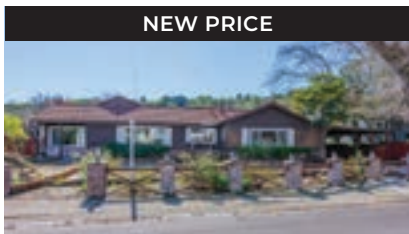


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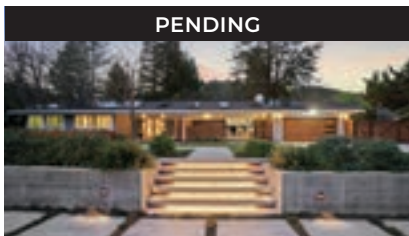
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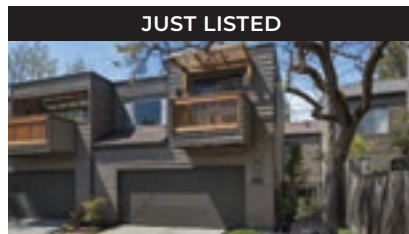
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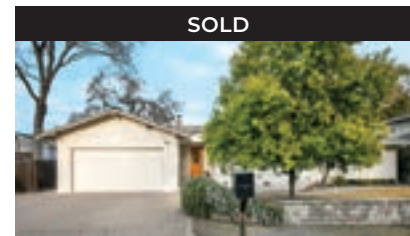
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9 RANCHO DIABLO ROAD, LAFAYETTE  
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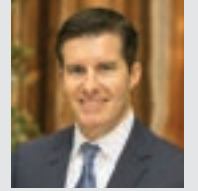
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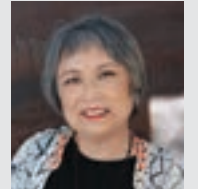
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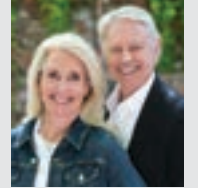
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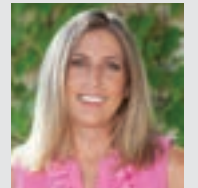
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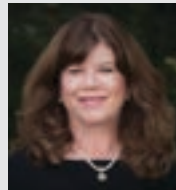
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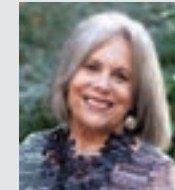
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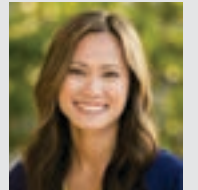
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# The Real Estate Quarter in Review

**By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T; Licensed Real Estate Broker**

The first quarter of 2023 began with a slower pace in activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate than previous years. Demand remains high but the supply has continued to be low. The closings that occurred, for the most part, came from properties that went under contract in late November to late February.

The average sales price has remained strong so far this year in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda despite an increase in mortgage interest rates. The days on market remained short and the homes that had multiple offers were plentiful.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from Jan. 1 through March 31, 2023, only 35 single family homes closed in Lafayette. There were 66 in 2022 and in 2021 there were 76. Sales prices ranged from \$999,000 to \$5.375 million and the average number of days on market was 27. The average sales price was \$2,059,520. A year ago it was \$2,954,570, which was in part due to a couple of homes that sold for prices as high as \$12 million. In the first quarter of 2021 it was \$2,062,932.

In Moraga, there were 13 single-family closings, versus 26 in the year ago first quarter and well below the 39 in 2021. Prices so far this year have ranged from \$1.3 million to \$2.725 million. The average sale price was \$1,964,615, a drop from the record first quarter in 2022 of \$2,350,260. In 1Q2021 it was \$1,800,433. The average marketing time was 34 days – up from six days in 2022 and 15 days in 2021. This change is due to three houses that took over 80 days to sell.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings was 28, versus 54 in 2022. Sales prices ranged from \$1.05 million to \$3.7 million with an average price of \$1,919,205. In the first quarter of 2022 it was \$2,268,258. In 2021 it was \$2,021,192. It took an average of 40 days on the market to sell a home versus 16 days on the market to sell a home in Orinda in 2022 and 28 days on the market in 2021.

In the first quarter of 2023, Lafayette homes sold at an average of \$812.92 per square foot, a drop from \$989.08 per square

foot in 2022. Moraga came in at \$840.12 versus a year ago when it was \$901.87 per square foot. Orinda was at \$773.00. One year ago it was \$858.69.

Again, as the number of closings in the first quarter contain a much smaller sample size, these numbers are different and can be affected by just one or two closings at the high end or the low end.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had six closings reported to the MLS. They ranged from \$705,000 to \$2.405 million. Moraga again had seven ranging from \$410,000 to \$1.585 million. Orinda had two – both on Brookwood Road at \$572,250 and \$580,000.

As of April 14, 2023, there were 38 homes under contract per the MLS in the three combined communities (a year ago it was 94 and in 2021 it was well over 100) with asking prices of \$899,000 to \$4.3 million. This again points to the lack of supply of homes that have hit the market since the middle of February.

Inventory is at 64, comparable to the 60 a year ago and 62 at this same point in 2021.

There are 30 Lafayette properties currently on the market versus 22 properties on the market in April, 2022. Asking prices in Lafayette currently range from \$839,000 to \$8.849 million. In Moraga, buyers have their choice of 13 homes, down from 14 homes at this time in 2022. The price range is \$599,000 to \$2.598 million.

In Orinda there are 21 homes on the market. One year ago there were 23. The list prices range from \$899,000 to \$4.950 million.

There are no distressed (bank-owned or short sale) properties available in Lamorinda.

As is the case nearly every quarter, the most active price range is in the more “affordable” price ranges. At the high end, nine homes sold above \$3 million in the three communities combined. The affordability factor is subject to a lot of interpretation. There are 12 currently available above this amount in Lamorinda.

Interest rates have stayed above historical lows which have pushed some buyers either out of the market or to lower priced homes or out of Lamorinda. Relocation from the corporate side has started to increase as companies now want their employees to

work out of their destination offices versus working remotely from their old locations.

Lamorinda continues to be attractive with BART access and highly rated schools. The real estate markets in Oakland, Berkeley and Piedmont have continued to be active so there has been some spillover effect where buyers are willing to make longer commutes in order to find more “affordable housing.” Of course, Lamorinda and affordable housing is also subject to interpretation.

We also continue to see a lot of buyers in Lamorinda being represented by agents based in San Francisco and the Peninsula. Prices there have been higher for many years so many have sold there and bought more house for less money in Lamorinda.

Lastly, it is important to look at what homes are selling for versus their list prices. On occasion, homes come on the market at unrealistic prices and they do not sell. We also are seeing more homes listed well below true values so that it may encourage bidding wars that sellers hope might generate a higher overall sales price. In the first quarter of this year many homes have had multiple offers and have sold at or above the list price.

Of the 35 single-family home sales that closed in Lafayette in the first quarter of 2023, 22 sold at or above the list price. In Moraga, 10 of the 13 sales sold at or above the asking price and in Orinda, 14 of the 28 sold at or above the final listing price.

This will typically happen when a house goes pending in the first two weeks on the market. Of the 38 currently pending sales in the three Lamorinda communities combined, 26 went pending in 14 days or less. The actual average days on the market would be markedly lower but many agents are setting up marketing plans where they market the home to the public and to brokers and follow with an offer date in a week or so after exposing the property to the market—pointing to a high likelihood of a continued trend in homes selling above the asking price.

In the detached home category in the first quarter of 2023, the average sale price in Lafayette was just under 100% of the asking price. In Moraga it was 103.9% and in Orinda it was 99.2% of the final asking price.

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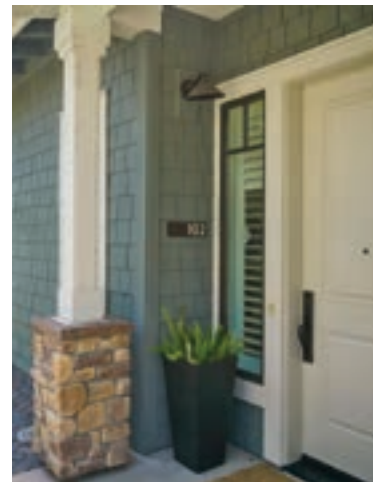


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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Spring sojourn



**Kerria Japanese rose in Croatia**



**Lunaria, also known as Annual Honesty, in Djerdap National Park, Serbia**



**A lawn of dandelions, Snagov, Romania**

Photos Cynthia Brian



**Colorful pansies in metal umbrellas in Vukovar, Croatia**

... continued from Page D1

The Czech Republic is home to a variety of spring-blooming flowers including crocus, tulips, and roses, and is known for its spectacular display of cherry blossom trees which create a stunning pink canopy over the cities and countryside. Blooming tulip magnolia trees were in glorious abundance, adding beauty to the already spectacular architecture.

Bright yellow forsythia, called golden bells, was flowering throughout the region, along roads, in parks, and in forests. Forsythia is stoloniferous, which means when a branch meets the soil it takes root to start another bush. Part of the Brassicaceae mustard and cabbage family, rapeseed/canola farms were ubiquitous as a prosperous and financially lucrative crop. The rapeseed oil is used for diesel fuel and other industrial processes and the edible variety produces canola oil. Many people have allergies to the flowers and don't welcome the blanket of yellow blooms. Living walls of exotic plants, many of which we use as houseplants, were featured in several hotels and restaurants in Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic. Apple, pear, and plum trees were in full blush throughout my sojourn, perfuming the chilly air.

I was surprised to see "lawns" consisting of dandelions, which were very attractive with their edible greens. Pansies in a variety of colors and patterns dotted the landscapes. There were specimens for which I was unfamiliar and intrigued including the butter yellow puff balls of the Kerria Japanese rose in Croatia, the Lunaria dotting the hillsides in the Djerdap National Park in Serbia, and the bright orange Crown Imperial perennial in Croatia.

The Czech Republic enjoyed the most dramatic displays of horticultural bliss. The parks and squares were filled with blossoming European crabapples, tulip magnolias, and colorful tulips, as well as curated window boxes of colorful hyacinths, primroses, forget-me-nots, and other flowering bulbs.

My spring sojourn through Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic has been a time of great beauty, wonder, and education. From delicate wildflowers to bold and bright flowering trees, these countries offered a stunning array of blooms, despite the wintery weather.

It is with appreciation that I return to my gorgeous garden in full bloom albeit overgrown with weeds. May is a busy time in the garden, but with a little effort, we can keep our plants healthy and thriving. Follow these tips for gardening chores, and you'll be well on your way to a beautiful landscape. With all the garden work ahead of me, I anticipate jelly legs and an aching back! Spring is a perpetual astonishment and worth the pain.



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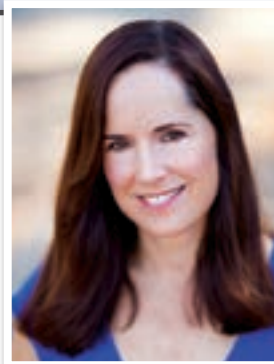
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— THE MARKET IS MOVING! —



**3474 MORAGA BLVD., LAFAYETTE**

My buyers had one of 7 offers and won this beauty in the coveted Trail Neighborhood!

Beautiful home with ADU plus artist's studio/office.

A needle in a haystack!

**REPRESENTED BUYERS**



**1985 ARDITH DRIVE, PLEASANT HILL**

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## Cynthia Brian's Goddess Gardener May Gardening Guide

As the temperatures rise, our plants need more care and attention, so let's get to work.

- **WATER** early in the morning as the weather warms to prevent evaporation.
- **WEED** constantly before weeds take over the garden. Remove the entire root system of weeds before sowing the seeds you want to grow.
- **PLANT** warm-season vegetables including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini, and whatever edibles your family enjoys eating.
- **FERTILIZE** your actively growing plants with a balanced fertilizer and follow the instructions carefully. Over-fertilizing can damage your plants, so don't be tempted to add more than recommended.



Tulip Magnolia, Prague

Photos Cynthia Brian



Crown Imperial Plant, Karanac, Croatia

- **IMPROVE** the biodiversity of your soil ecosystem through mulching and composting. Spring and fall are the ideal times to increase organic matter and humus content. Adding compost to your garden reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, and allows the soil to hold water well which means less watering.
  - **PICK** up the last of the spent camellia blossoms from your garden to protect your plant for next season.
  - **SWEEP** debris from driveways, walkways, steps, and porches to freshen up for spring.
  - **BRIGHTEN** your curb appeal with colorful annuals and perennials including petunias, zinnias, cleome, salvia, dahlias, snapdragons, impatiens, and bachelor buttons.
  - **PREVENT** pests. Keep an eye out for aphids, whiteflies, and other common garden pests. You can use organic pest control methods like neem oil or insecticidal soap to keep them under control.
  - **EMPTY** standing water from pots, tires, neglected ponds, pools, or any place where mosquito larvae will breed. With all the rain we've had this year, mosquitoes could spread the West Nile virus and other diseases.
  - **CLEAR** debris from your home and garden perimeter. Dried limbs, leaves, and weeds need to be removed. Fire season is upon us.
  - **VISIT** the Be the Star You Are!® booth at the Moraga Faire on Saturday, April 29 between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. to pick up a bag of complimentary spring potpourri and have your kids plant seeds in our craft area. Bring your gardening questions and I'll be there to answer them. [www.BetheStarYouAre.org/events](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org/events)
  - **DONATE** your shoes: May 1-June 30: The Be the Star You Are!® charity Shoe Drive continues at these sponsored locations: Mark Hoogs, State Farm Insurance, 629 Moraga Road, Moraga, 925-254-3344, [www.TeamHoogs.com](http://www.TeamHoogs.com)
  - 5 A Rent-A-Space, 455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga, 925-631-7000, <https://5aspace.com/>
- For more information, visit <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/shoedrive>



**Rapeseed/Canola farmland in Romania**

Photo Cynthia Brian



**A European crabapple entices Cynthia Brian at the base of Prague Castle**

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, No Barnyard Bullies, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <http://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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# LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM

## ORINDA



New Price!

### 121 Van Ripper Lane

County's most stunning 1+ acre estate setting! Gorgeous 5+ bd, mid-century showplace artfully

\$3,995,000

## ORINDA



New Listing!

### 35 El Toyonal

Sharp 5 bd/4.5 ba, 3843 sqft craftsman-style home w/ incredible spaces including office, wine cellar & backyard oasis w/ pool!

\$3,295,000

## ORINDA



### 224 Camino Sobrante

Classic 5 bd/3 ba home sits on a .53-acre rare waterfront lot just right for morning & evening strolls around Lake Cascade & OCC!

\$2,695,000

## ORINDA



### 37 La Madronal

Nestled among majestic oaks w/ picturesque views of Mt. Diablo this property includes 3 bd/ 2 ba & 2427 sqft on a .25-acre parcel!

\$1,450,000

## ORINDA



New Lease!

### 649 Ironbark Circle

Beautifully remodeled 3 bd/ 2.5 ba home in sought after Orindawoods features hardwood floors, vaulted ceilings & walls of glass!

\$7,500/mo.

## LAFAYETTE



New Price!

### 3243 Ameno Drive

Spacious 4 bd/ 3 ba home offers spectacular view of light & clouds, with panoramic views of Mt. Diablo!

\$1,725,000

## MORAGA



Pending!

### 12 Merrill Drive

Charming two-story 5 bd/ 3.5 ba traditional home on just over a half-acre in the prestigious Sanders Ranch community!

\$2,099,000

## WALNUT CREEK



New Listing!

### 271 Montecillo Drive

Adorable farmhouse on flat .50 acre features 3 bd/2 ba in main home + a 1 bed/1 ba en-suite guest unit in Tice Valley!

\$1,600,000

## WALNUT CREEK

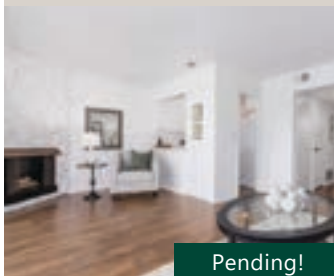


### 1682 Parkside Drive

Beautifully updated townhome in Walnut Creek's Buena Vista neighborhood features 2 bd/2.5 ba, lg living room & 2 amazing patios!

\$780,000

## WALNUT CREEK



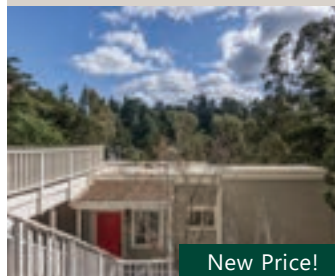
Pending!

### 1881 Cannon Drive

Charming SkyWest dwelling featuring 2 lg primary bedroom suites, fireplace & backyard views of the pool & Mt. Diablo!

\$738,000

## OAKLAND



New Price!

### 8117 Skyline Blvd

Stylish, contemporary, light & bright 3 bd/ 2.5 ba, 2081 sq ft open floor plan. Not to be missed!

\$1,275,000

## OAKLAND



### 438 W Grand Ave, #528

Amazing 2 bd/ 2 ba condo located in the Broadway Grand Building in the Heart of Uptown Oakland!

\$759,000

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