

# Letters to the editor

## Lafayette Sales Tax Measure

Measure H, on our November ballot, is vital to preserving Lafayette's exceptional quality of life and maintaining essential city services that keep our community thriving. Measure H maintains police staffing levels, keeps roads in good shape, preserves senior services, and sustains our high quality of life.

Lafayette has always been in good financial shape, with a balanced budget, no debt, and emergency reserves. However, the city budget has been significantly impacted by inflation, including the increased cost of road maintenance, insurance, and state requirements. The city projects an ongoing budget shortfall starting next year. Without our support for Measure H, the city will be compelled to make substantial cuts:

- FEWER police officers on the street
- LESS preventive maintenance for roads
- REDUCED services for our seniors
- DECREASED traffic safety initiatives

Business and community leaders, such as the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, the Lafayette Homeowners Council, and the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley support Measure H because Lafayette would still remain one of the lowest-taxed cities in the region. A significant portion of the funds would come from visitors who shop and dine here and 100% of the revenue stays in Lafayette under local control.

Measure H will add ½ cent to our sales tax rate in Lafayette. This increase is modest and responsible, with a clear purpose of maintaining city services. For example, it would only add \$.50 to a restaurant bill of \$100. Necessities like groceries and prescriptions are exempt. The tax measure is only in effect for seven years and cannot be extended except by voter approval. A Citizens' Oversight Committee will provide you with transparency and accountability. With robust safeguards in place, Measure H ensures that our funds are spent responsibly.

Lafayette is a beautiful and safe place to live. Let's do our part to ensure Lafayette continues to offer residents a wonderful quality of life. Please vote YES on Measure H!  
Matthew M. Pease  
Lafayette

## Lafayette Valley estates

Thomas James Homes bought 3369 North Lucile lane for 1.5 million, and proposed to build a 3.900 SQ foot 2 story house in Lafayette Valley estates, as they were met with a FULL COURT PRESS of 15 home owners who met at the back yard of 480 Peacock and again at 3371 North Lucile for another meeting.

We wrote 15 letters to the city and I had a petition with 265 signatures out of 268 doors I knocked on.

Thomas James revised their plans to 3500 square feet only to be denied. The average home is 1600 to 2000 square feet and single story.

This proposed 2 story would have blocked ridge views and Mt. Diablo views for the surrounding houses, as well as loss of privacy for 5 houses. This is an example of POWER in numbers, or Strength in Numbers. They sold it to the Martin group for almost a half million-dollar loss.

Thomas James homes were successful in building 3 in Happy Valley and 1 in Tice valley. But NOT in our back yard!! We are all PLEASED with the finished product.  
Myles McGinn  
Lafayette

## Creek Access Issues

Friends of Orinda Creeks works to protect and enhance Orinda's creeks. Our efforts include trash cleanups, trail improvements, restoration projects and native plant revegetation. This is supported by Orinda's volunteer community and performed in partnership with the City, Friends of the Nature Area, the Orinda Garden Club, EBMUD, and so on. Our volunteers keep our creeks clean, improve habitat and provide open space.

Some of this work takes place on property leased by the U.S. Postal Service. That area is now closed by a fence that encroaches onto the Post Office from the old Bank of America building (now Paymun). This encroachment adversely impacts our work and terminates public access.

Permission to access this area was provided decades ago by the manager of BofA and successive Postmasters, who generously provided use of their water supply. This neighborliness has unfolded for 25 years without conflict...until now. Our attempts to discuss this new conflict with Paymun have been fruitless.

FOC envisions the creek and its trail as a rare valuable resource for the Orinda community. Integration of a restored and accessible creek into the Orinda Village corridor will contribute to the revitalization of the Village and benefit the entire community, business owners included.

Sincerely,  
Michael Bowen, President  
Friends of Orinda Creeks

## Vote for Carl Anduri for Lafayette Council

We have a lot of choices on candidates this November. One sure and secure candidate we can all get behind is Carl Anduri. I strongly encourage you to vote for Carl so he can continue his great work in preserving, while enhancing, our beautiful City of Lafayette. Carl has served on numerous City task forces, committees, the Planning Commission, and several terms on the City Council. He truly understands how our City works which allows him to be effective and responsive to our needs and desires.

I've known Carl for years and served as a Planning Commissioner when he served on the Council. He is intelligent, impartial, and willing to listen to and address the concerns of the community. He has shown his dedication to our City through his community service and during his tenure on the Council. Re-electing Carl will allow us to continue to be the benefactors of his dedication and hard work.

Please join me in re-electing Carl.  
Patricia Curtin  
Lafayette

## City Council Could have voiced a Protest, but did not

As we approach a vote for a new City Council member, note that over the last two years, I have written the Council monthly asking that they send an open letter to legislators in Sacramento, where the Council points out the unprecedented time and expense the new housing laws have foisted on the citizens of Lafayette (with questionable ends no less). I suggested that the Council simply go on record as expressing such sentiment via an open letter to officeholders Scott Weiner (San Francisco), Buffy Wicks (Oakland), and Miquel Santiago (downtown Los Angeles). The Council could have and should have expressed that we do not believe these three, among others, know what is best for Lafayette, based on the dystopian conditions of each of these three representatives' respective districts. In fact, it is safe to point out that the three areas Weiner, Wicks, and Santiago oversee in our state, have probably the worst street conditions in the United States. Lafayette's reply to these Sacramento officeholders' advice should have been: "Thanks but no thanks. We've walked your streets and they are horrific. Why would we possibly have faith in your housing guidance."

The Council never acted on my request, or even explained or replied to me why such a letter should not be sent. I don't know the Council's motives, but they should have taken the offense to push back on laws which a majority of Lafayette constituents do not believe in. Perhaps a new Council member would review this approach more closely and push back on the mandates.  
Best,  
Jim Rule  
Lafayette

## Vote for Carl Anduri

I am very pleased to endorse Carl Anduri for re-election to Lafayette's City Council. During my 37 year career with the City of Lafayette, I attended a great number of City Council meetings and was able to observe and interact with many council members (some more memorable than others). One of the stand outs for me was Council Member Carl Anduri.

During his time on the council, there have been numerous controversial topics before him. He consistently comes prepared to each meeting in order to thoughtfully and effectively discuss the matters at hand. His composure and respectful bearing are very much appreciated by his fellow council members, business leaders, the public and staff. The City of Lafayette is very fortunate to have such an accomplished council member who is willing to continue to give his time and expertise as a city council member.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Russell  
Former City Of Lafayette Parks, Trails & Recreation Director

## Vote for Carl Anduri

I invite my fellow Lafayette citizens to join me in voting for Carl Anduri for our City Council.

Carl has served Lafayette in many ways: as a planning commissioner, as a city council member, and as mayor. These volunteer activities have given him a depth of experience, knowledge and understanding so valuable to Lafayette as it faces new challenges in implementing State-mandated housing and zoning rules in a way that complements our retail and commercial businesses while providing additional housing in that district.

Carl will continue to work for additional parks and parking in our downtown. He will continue to keep development off our ridge lines and out of our open spaces. He will continue to support our schools and library. He will continue to make our town more pedestrian

**Election Season SPECIAL POLICY: Letters to the Editor Letters related to a candidate running for office should be a maximum of 200 words so that we will have room to publish as many letters as possible. Letters regarding ballot measures will remain up to 350 words maximum. Deadline is now NOON on Thursday prior to the issue date.**

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence — we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

and bicycle friendly. He will continue to mitigate wildfire risk.

Finally, Carl is a careful listener who shows respect for others and who considers all viewpoints before making a decision.

Learn more about Carl by going to his web page:  
[www.anduriforlafayette.com](http://www.anduriforlafayette.com)

I ask you to vote for Carl Anduri who was once a 5th grade public school teacher.  
Erling Horn  
Lafayette

## Carl Anduri for Lafayette's City Council

Neighbors- I hope you will join me in supporting incumbent Carl Anduri for Lafayette's City Council on Nov. 5. Carl has worked tirelessly on behalf of our community, believing in the importance of creating a vibrant, lively downtown that brings together all the demographics that make up our city. He is passionate about arts and culture and how we, as a city, can promote and provide a wide variety of artistic experiences for all.

Carl is a dedicated and experienced council member, serving from 2002-2012 and from 2020 to the present. I firmly believe that institutional memory is a critical component to sound governance. Because of Carl's length of volunteer service, he has been through several economic cycles, has an understanding and knowledge of the history of Lafayette, and has a record of coming up with ideas that look to our future. He is a consensus builder and works to find solutions.

I have known Carl for over 20 years and for the last four have had the pleasure of working closely with him in his role as council liaison to the Park Theater Renovation effort and the Public Art Committee. Carl is responsive, making himself available for last minute meetings and calls. He is naturally curious, loves to do research on the smallest of topics, and as a result, always comes prepared with questions, suggestions and a listening ear. I value his opinion and advice. Carl is a well-qualified candidate for the city council seat.

Please VOTE on November 5!  
Kathy Bowles  
Lafayette

## Vote for Jim Cervantes

As a 45-year resident of Lafayette, former Planning Commissioner, Council Member and Mayor, I urge our city's voters to elect Jim Cervantes to Lafayette City Council for the two-year position. Jim has experience in working with our community by serving as Vice-Chair and Chair of the General Plan Advisory Committee. In this service, he has showed a willingness to listen to many viewpoints and work collaboratively with all to advance our updated State approved Housing Element of our General Plan.

I believe Jim can help us address some of our pressing issues. He brings decades of experience in city finance, which is a valuable skill set in ensuring Lafayette's long term financial strength. As the organizer of a Firewatch community, Jim worked with Consolidated Fire District on fire safety measures in his neighborhood providing the experience which will help us address our fire issues City wide.

Jim will bring a balanced, thoughtful and inclusive approach to the work of our City Council and he will help keep Lafayette strong. Please Vote for Jim Cervantes -Lafayette City Council.  
Erling Horn  
Lafayette

## Orinda Should Not Re-Adopt The DPP

Residents have won their lawsuit against the City of Orinda, and obtained a writ of mandate from the Court, ordering the City to set aside the certification of the Plan Orinda Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"), and approval of the Downtown Precise Plan ("DPP"). The ruling is based on deficiencies in the Environmental Impact Report regarding emergency evacuation in the event of a wildfire.

For the reasons explained below, the DPP should NOT be re-adopted. The state housing mandate ("RHNA") requires Orinda to zone for an additional 1,359 housing units. The DPP would add approximately 1,000 more housing units than are required to meet Orinda's RHNA. The DPP isn't needed to comply with the state housing mandate.

The DPP also is not needed to "revitalize" downtown. The Housing Element (without the DPP) will add between 421 and 698 new housing units downtown. See Table 5-5A, page 137 of the Housing Element.

The Density Bonus Law could increase those figures by as much as 50% to 100%.

By contrast, in 2017, the ULI-TAP recommended only 240 new housing units.

The ULI-TAP report shows that the 421-698 new housing units under the Housing Element will be sufficient to "revitalize" downtown.

Moreover, when each city was assigned its RHNA, the state's population was expected to continue to rise substantially, it is now expected to remain almost level. "[T]he state Department of Finance recently projected that it will remain virtually unchanged at around 40 million at least until 2060 – a radical change from earlier predictions that it would top 50 million by then.

<https://calmatters.org/commentary/2023/07/after-growth-california-chronic-stagnation/>

Furthermore, the evacuation danger is worse than previously appeared. A proper evacuation analysis would almost certainly support reducing housing downtown, because the evacuation analysis done for Orinda did not include wildfire modeling. A recent evacuation analysis of North Lake Tahoe used such modeling and has alarmed many.  
<https://thenevadaglobe.com/articles/study-lake-tahoe-wildfire-evacuation-times-may-exceed-14-hours/>

Balancing a desire to "revitalize" downtown against the adverse impact excessive new housing will have on emergency evacuation, everyday traffic and parking, and our desire to preserve our "small town" feel, the DPP should not be re-adopted.  
Nick Waranoff  
Orinda

## Lafayette City Council Election:

Operating a business during a pandemic was not for the faint of heart. Some businesses pivoted, found solutions and created new ways of creating income.

Lauren Herpich is one of those small business owners. She quickly and successfully pivoted her in person food tours business to food tour gift boxes & virtual events. Lauren supported other local small businesses including Diablo Foods and Amphora in the process.

Businesses, and the city, are facing many challenges including increased costs and new regulations. Having Lauren on the Lafayette city council, we will all benefit from her passion for small businesses, creativity, fiscal responsibility and common sense. With her background in business ownership, marketing and PR, as well as her fiscally responsible ideals, I believe Lauren will help this city we love thrive. I have known Lauren for seven years. She listens, provides solutions and works to make things happen. Rather than relying on outside paid consultants to find solutions, Lauren Herpich will bring her knowledge and expertise. She understands the challenges small business in Lafayette are facing and will provide solutions that will help our small special community thrive. Vote Lauren Herpich for Lafayette city council.

Laura Magu  
Owner RÊVE  
Lafayette

## Creek Access Issues

People have accessed the creek from the BOA property for as long as I have lived here (32 years). Friends of Orinda Creeks supported Paymun's bid to redevelop the property. Although access was closed on the McCaulou's side, that was acceptable because people could enter between the jointly owned property with the Post Office, until recently. FOC has tried many times to have a dialogue with the developer to find an amicable resolution.

Permission to revegetate after flooding was granted by the manager of BOA and funded through the RWQCB & EBMUD circa 1999. The present Post Master said he had no problem with us continuing to work on their property & water our plants. But FOC cannot access the water nor clean-up that section of creek. The City was fined regularly by the RWQCB until volunteers took over clean-ups with City support.

Obviously, safety at construction sites needs to be addressed. This might be accomplished by fencing along the property boundary instead of encroaching on the Post Office land. This would allow a temporary corridor.

BTW the steps referred to are on County land, not Paymun property. The steps and bench are an Eagle Scout project (not FOC).

At minimum, we hope this historic corridor to the creek trail can be resumed once construction no longer requires fencing.  
Cinda MacKinnon  
Orinda

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