

Letters to the editor

A vote for Gina Dawson

When my wife of 18 years, Gina Dawson, expressed interest in running for City Council, I knew immediately her skills and energy were the right match for Lafayette and our growing challenges.

I've enjoyed working with Gina saving 272 oak trees along our parks and trails after co-starting Save Lafayette Trees. From that effort, we established the Lafayette Gas Safety Task Force with the CPUC and PG&E to help identify and improve local gas pipeline safety concerns which would be otherwise unidentified and unaddressed. Lafayette is safer because of her efforts.

Gina is a marvel at spending hours studying detailed issues, understanding laws, building relationships on both sides of an issue, and implementing meaningful action plans. Her success is aided by her kindness to all, a deep sense of fairness, and an unwillingness to accept acts of societal and environmental injustice.

I urge you to vote for Gina and the attributes she'll bring to City Council: openness, honesty, tenacity, creativity, consensus-building, transparency, fairness, and a focus on making Lafayette a diverse and welcoming town for all residents. Please vote for Gina Dawson. Michael Dawson co-founder, Save Lafayette Trees Lafayette Gas Safety Task Force

Renata Sos for Moraga Town Council

I grew up in Moraga, graduated from Campolindo High School, and now live in Moraga with Chuck and our four children.

I live down the street from Renata and her family. She often stops to chat on the sidewalk as we're both walking our dogs. I've gotten to know Renata through those conversations and by observing her and listening to her comments at community events and the Council meetings I have attended.

When dealing with Council issues, I trust Renata to make decisions that are in the best interests of the community. She listens attentively when members of the public speak at council meetings, and actually hears what they have to say. She can put herself in others' shoes and sees things from a range of perspectives. She explains her decisions in ways that not only are authentic and understandable, but make clear that she's given them a lot of thought. That gives me comfort that her decisions are sound, now and in the future.

I believe that Renata is as committed as I am to keeping this a safe and inclusive community and leaving it that way for generations to come. Please vote for Renata on November 3rd. Chuck and Kim Anderson Moraga

Do not be fooled by Measure R

Measure R is a road maintenance tax masquerading as a fire prevention tax. The City plan is to ultimately spend 80-90% of this tax's proceeds for the maintenance of Orinda's roads and storm drains. In the first four (4) years, out of

\$10 million in tax revenues, the City plans to only spend \$1.5-3 million on fire prevention. After that, even less!

At this time, in the middle of the worst pandemic in a century, along with the persistent financial disruption, it is not prudent to embark upon a new 20-year, \$60 million tax plan. The existing sales tax is still effective for an additional two (2) years. As some are suggesting, it is NOT expiring immediately. The \$1.2 million per year is twice what the City plans to spend on fire prevention. Additionally, there is another \$2 million available to the City, from other taxes and fees, for critical road and storm drain repairs over the next two years.

Now is not the time to initiate a new 1% sales tax, which will be in effect for 20 years. We need a tax dedicated to fire prevention, which can significantly reduce the fuel load from our hills. A \$150 parcel tax would generate over \$1 million a year; twice what the City was going to spend from the sales tax. Also, the City would legally be required to spend it on fuel reduction.

It is far more judicious to invest in a short-term tax of 3-5 years. At the duration of the tax, we can once again re-evaluate the most crucial needs of the city. Many things change in 20 years, and it is very short sighted to be locked into a long term tax with no flexibility for future needs.

Vote no on Measure R.

Joan Daoro Orinda

Why I oppose Measure R

I oppose Measure R for many reasons but foremost is my distrust of our city government. I have observed our councils for nearly 30 years. I have the following observations.

- The councils always use "spin" to influence voting. A transparent government should not use marketing techniques. Using our fear of wildfire should not be the means to pass a general tax that will be used predominantly on public storm drains.

- The council does not ask the citizen's preference. Although the polling did consider extending the current 1/2 cent tax for only ten years, someone decided to double it to one cent for twenty years with no explanation.

- The council does not hold meetings where dialog is allowed, to hear the citizens desires and explain the issues. Democracy requires all voices to be heard. Instead, the citizens are limited to a 3 minute speech and questions raised are not answered. They thank you and move on.

- There is usually no discussion or objections to flawed or questionable assertions in a staff report. Staff is always commended for their excellent work.

- Even when citizens make reasonable alternative suggestions these are not discussed. They are simply ignored as though never made.

Despite current "assurances" future councils over the next 20 years may choose to spend measure R funds in ways we do not want. Past councils have spent our money on a variety of non-essential

expensive projects. Future ones will too, unless we prevent them. The current 1/2 cent sales tax does not expire till 2023 and the city could use these funds to provide fuel reduction and necessary infrastructure repairs for the next two years. The reserve fund has \$10 million and has increased by \$1 million for the last four years.

I am unwilling to make a twenty year commitment during a pandemic whose economic consequences are not yet known. Had the council proposed shorter taxes that could only be spent for specific purposes I would have supported them. I summarize with "it's the WRONG TAX at the WRONG TIME".

Charles Porges Orinda

No time for a change in the sales tax

The 20-year Measure R Sales Tax is a "general" tax, meaning allocation of the \$60 million dollars accrued over the next 20 years from this tax will be used at the discretion of the City Council. This is a doubling of the previous general tax, which is still good for two more years – so my first question is, why do we need THIS tax THIS year?

Something about this tax does not smell right to me.

While our Orinda City Council has the possibility of a complete changing of the guard every two years, we in fact have a few entrenched members who have to-date allocated almost no significant funds to fire prevention. This, in spite of a "heads up" from the Oakland fire 29 years ago and of the fact that over a decade ago CalFire designated a major portion of Orinda a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. We are breathing the smoke from fires burning in areas not different from ours.

The obvious (and kindest) answer to "why this year" is that money is needed to initiate fire prevention measures. So why didn't the Council start eight years ago when we voted in a General Sales Tax, or 3 years ago when the Tubbs fire killed 22, or two years ago when the Camp fire killed 86, or at the beginning of the summer when MOFD discontinued the chipper program, using the \$100,000 per month the existing sales tax generates? The City can use this tax for whatever feels most important, such as roads, storm drain maintenance, or fire safety measures. In spite of clear warnings and smoke from fires nearby right now, our City Council has spent virtually none of this tax we all pay for fire safety.

There is no guarantee, no transparency of intent, and especially no history showing us that doubling the sales tax will be spent in any particular area, much less fire safety.

I am voting No on the Measure R Sales Tax this year. Rose Anne Critchfield Orinda

Prop 15 is Good for Contra Costa

When people buy a new home, the property is reassessed and the property tax increases. Corporations change ownership all the time, but due to loopholes in

the law, their property does not get reassessed. This gives an unfair advantage to older corporations, letting them pay lower taxes now and into the future.

Prop 15 will close the big business property tax loophole and reassess non-residential properties (worth over \$3 million) on a regular basis. This will increase tax revenue for each local community to help finance our needs such as road and storm drain repairs and emergency services.

Even though the assessed value will go up for older nonresidential properties, the RATE will remain lower than most other states (1% in California, 2.56% in Dallas, 2.57% in Phoenix.)

Protect homeowners and renters while reinvesting in our communities. Vote YES on Prop 15. www.Yes15.org Ashley Coates Moraga

Reelect Jorgens for MOFD

We need Craig Jorgens to remain on the Board of the Moraga Orinda Fire District. Craig understands that MOFD needs to serve the needs of Orinda and Moraga, including emergency medical response, fighting fires, and reducing our exposure to wildfires. Craig has a deep commitment to making our town more resilient to a wildfire. Craig understands the huge potential of new technology and has the right tech skills to understand how high tech can detect a fire and warn us. Craig used similar skills in his previous service on the Orinda Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission, where he identified the potential of a new paving technique – Full Depth Recycling – and led the city to adopt it, achieving both improved durability and reduced costs. Craig also is a businessman who understands the need for clear objectives and financial/managerial reporting to ensure that they are met. On the MOFD Board, he identified major errors in accounting that have now been corrected and has been a force for finding better ways for the District to achieve its goals.

Craig is exactly the representative we need on the MOFD Board. Please join me in voting for Jorgens. Richard Nelson Orinda

Vote for Anduri

It is with immense gratitude that I again see Carl Anduri's name on our City Council ballot. It is obvious that, unlike most of us ordinary folks, Carl thrives on knotty challenges. His ability to arrive at healing compromise is historic and exactly what Lafayette needs as our community faces a unique era impacting our personal health, economy, and our sense of moral wellbeing.

Mei Sun Li Former City of Lafayette Senior Services Manager, originator of the Lafayette Spirit Van program, and 44 year resident of Lafayette

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VOTE FOR GINA DAWSON

Innovative, Collaborative, Proven Results

Gina has been an effective advocate for public safety in Lafayette and I know that her analytical skills and care for our community will be an essential addition to our next City Council.

Mike Anderson, Mayor, City of Lafayette

I think her expertise, integrity and proven excellence of service are just what this City needs.

Avon Wilson, Former Mayor, City of Lafayette



Endorsed by the entire City Council and many elected leaders and prominent residents.

www.GinaDawson2020.com



VOTE GINA DAWSON for Lafayette City Council

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