

Steven Falk

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Councilmembers--

For a small town, Lafayette's land use, housing, and political challenges are surprisingly complex. The City's great schools, quiet streets, easy proximity to San Francisco, and exquisite valley setting amongst the old oak trees make it a perfect place to live and raise a family -- so perfect, in fact, that many, many people seek to move here. As a result, development pressures have always been pervasive in Lafayette. Indeed, the City's very *raison d'être* in 1968 was to preserve its semi-rural character, and Lafayette's animating mission since incorporation has been to use its municipal powers to stave off the Bay Area's inexorable urbanization.

During the same fifty year period, however, scientists have learned more about the earth's atmosphere and concluded that human activity and carbon emissions are responsible for climate change. Seas are rising, oceans are warming, the atmosphere is warming, the land is warming, ice is melting, heat emergencies and wildfires and hurricanes are increasing, rainfall patterns are changing, and the ocean is becoming more acidic. The risks and consequences for humanity cannot be overstated.

All cities – even small ones – have a responsibility to address the most significant challenges of our time: climate change, income inequality, and housing affordability. I believe that adding multifamily housing at the BART station is the best way for Lafayette to do its part, and it has therefore become increasingly difficult for me to support, advocate for, or implement policies that would thwart transit density. My conscience won't allow it.

Meanwhile, in recent years, I helped craft proposals to make Lafayette the very best version of itself. One effort was Measure C, which would have acquired at-risk wild spaces, doubled police patrols, created a downtown park, added new public parking, and restored the historic Park Theater. Another was Measure L, which would have reasonably allowed middle-income development along Deer Hill Road while delivering significant new recreation facilities to the community and avoiding expensive litigation. Local voters rejected both of those measures by wide margins.

Elections have consequences, and one is that Lafayette residents deserve a city manager who is better aligned with their priorities.

It has been the great privilege of my professional career to serve Lafayette for twenty-eight years, and I am proud of our many accomplishments on behalf of this splendid city. Our residents are engaged; the city council is a model of civility; and the professional staff is brilliant in every way. The time has come, however, for Lafayette to hear a new voice from the city manager's office and for me to discover my unexplored potential.

I hereby resign the position of Lafayette City Manager, effective at the new year. In the meantime I will assist the organization in every way as it makes the transition to a new city manager. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve this extraordinary community for so many years. I will always Love Lafayette!

