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# Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:
For several years I have followed the work of the Lafayette City Council in adding affordable units to the housing stock available in Lafayette. Most recently, I have observed the thorough, thoughtful manner in which the Senior Housing Task Force, led by Carl Anduri and Carol Federighi, has worked to meet the identified need of our seniors for affordable housing. Given my great interest in this issue, I wish to respond to comments related to land use planning made by one of the candidates for the Council (Gabriel Froymovich) in your "Meet the Candidates" feature. Lafayette is inextricably connected to the larger metro area, and so must participate responsibly in solving area wide problems, like affordable housing. However, leaving aside Mr Froymovich's comments about whether Lafayette should comply with ABAG guidelines, I wish to draw attention to an inaccuracy in his quoted statement. Contrary to Mr Froymovich's assertion, affordable housing does not have a negative impact on property values. Extensive research by academics, independent researchers, business groups, and state and federal government agencies has demonstrated that this is not the case. Property values are driven by a complex mix of factors, but well designed and maintained, privately owned affordable housing like that planned for our city have simply not been found to decrease values. In fact, at times values have been seen to increase. In my view, land use planning must consider the needs of all our citizens. And sound decisions must be based on an accurate understanding of the likely impact of those decisions.
Sincerely,
Pat Snyder
Lafayette

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Fellow Moragans, I would like to express my support, in concert with many friends and neighbors, in favor of Measure K and the preservation of the quality of life in Moraga. It's easy to take for granted, but we should all take a minute to ask ourselves just what contributes to the quality of life that we now enjoy and which first attracted us to Moraga. First and foremost is the visual impact of Moraga's open space, the pastoral rolling hills, and the scenic views of sloping hillsides and stunning ridgelines against a clear blue sky. It enhances our lives with a welcome feeling of peacefulness as we rush through our busy schedules. That's the essence of the semi-rural character that we have come to love and cherish. Can a value be placed on that serenity? The next time you drive east on St. Mary's Rd. past the library, gaze ahead at the unspoiled ridgeline on the horizon, up above the Bollinger Bluffs neighborhood. Now picture several dozen enormous houses along that ridgeline, which are currently proposed by a developer. Are 300 more houses covering hillsides and ridgelines consistent with anyone's concept of semi-rural? Much has been said about Moraga traffic through our neighboring cities, especially the torturous commute traffic. According to the Town's official analysis, the houses that could be built in open space areas would generate several thousand additional vehicle trips daily. Is there any way your family's life won't be impacted by this additional traffic? Measure K will spare us 3,000 vehicle trips per day and the daily frustration that comes with them. And what about the value of what is, for most of us, our greatest asset: our homes? As we all know, home value is a function of

desirability of location. How will the desirability of Moraga - the quality of life it offers residents - be impacted by indiscriminate building in scenic view areas and ridgelines, and major increases in traffic? Protect your quality of life and property values.
Please vote Yes on Measure
K. Joan Webb
Moraga

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I have been a resident of Moraga for over 40 years and saw the vision of our founding fathers to have Moraga become a town so that it could control its own destiny. I saw the first MOSO become law because of the concern that developers would destroy ridge lines and open space. It was challenged, and the town won. Unfortunately, two large parcels of land were not included in the original MOSO, which is why we are behind Measure K. Measure K opponents hope to frighten voters away from protecting Moraga's open space with chilling phrases like "condemnation of private property" and multi-million dollar lawsuits". These scare tactics aren't supported by the facts. No property is condemned by Measure K, which clearly allows limited development in open space--just not the big subdivisions developers would prefer. As for lawsuits, Measure K will actually prevent them. Let's face it: in a town like Moraga where developers stand to make millions and the community reveres open space, development breeds litigation. Moraga was sued by the developer when it tried to block Palos Colorados subdivision (the Town lost) and again by Lafayette after it approved Palos Colorados (the Town settled). The Bruzzone developers even sued the Town last year when it revised its non-binding development design guidelines! When it comes to big developments, Moraga gets sued by someone. By taking the last large-scale subdivisions off the table and protecting the remaining ridge-lines, Measure K settles the matter once and for all. Sure, after the election developers can attempt to overturn Measure K, just like they did after voters passed Moraga's first open space initiative in 1986. THEY LOST THEN AND THEY WOULD LOSE AGAIN. And then Moraga does not have to worry about this anymore.
Thank You
Peter Bennett
Moraga

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