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COMPASS

A moment of reflection with new Lafayette mayor Carl Anduri about city priorities

By Lou Fancher

In a conversation during the last week of 2022, newly appointed Lafayette Mayor Carl Anduri moved quickly to deflect attention from his leadership position on the city council.

“Being mayor is more ceremonial than anything else. It’s making sure every member of the public is heard and the council is heard as well. I have no more authority than any of the other council members,” he said. “We set policy and direction, but the City Manager, Niroop Srivasta, really runs the city. She hires and directs the staff and carries out the policies set by council. We really lucked out with having her – and all the

staff that have been here so long and bring depth and expertise.”

Anduri names and celebrates other staff, fellow council members and committee volunteers who have served the city for more than a decade, skipping lightly past his own record. Anduri joined the planning commission in 1996 and served on city council from 2002 to 2012, during which time he was mayor in 2005 and 2011. He stepped off the council in 2012 to concentrate on the high demands of his work as president of Lex Mundi, a position from which he retired in 2019. Back on the council in 2020, Anduri brings to his position experience on the Planning Commission Hillside Task Force,

Open Space Task Force, Environmental Task Force, Senior Housing Task Force, the Park Theater Task Force and the Roads Task Force.

When asked how the city might have changed, or not, since he first came on-board in 2002, Anduri said, “The challenges are greater now. Wildfire is definitely something we didn’t think about in 2002. And the pressure from the state for affordable housing really wasn’t nearly the same. It’s a big challenge to deal with the housing crisis and the housing prices.” The environmental impacts of climate change were on the radar in 2002, but Anduri said people are far more aware and can see real evidence of the problem in

2022, which makes it an important topic, but one with complex solutions.

On the plus side, he said Lafayette’s downtown is more vibrant and far more attractive. “We have the library; dedicated in 2009, and that has had a remarkable impact. There are other new buildings and (aesthetic) upgrades that have vastly improved the city.”

Another big change is that road repair no longer dominates the council meetings and public commentary. “My big priority in 2011 was to solve the roads problem. The revenue measure we placed on the ballot had us taking \$3 million from the reserve surplus to kick-start that. The measure didn’t pass but we applied the \$3

million anyway and made strides that improved the roads. Coming back on the council now, it’s strange because no one says anything about the roads. Then, it was all anyone talked about. But now, we have our payments scheduled on an annual basis so we’re in good shape to maintain the roads.”

Priorities set in 2011 such as more affordable housing for older adults resulted in completion of the Belle Terre project on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. With completion of the 6th cycle of the Housing Element by the end of January 2023, a major priority for all cities and towns, Anduri said attention to that effort has been the council’s priority.

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City plans to celebrate over 175 years of Lafayette history



Photo courtesy Lafayette Historical Society

Under the leadership of Mayor Carl Anduri in partnership with the Lafayette Historical Society, the city of Lafayette will be celebrating over 175 years of Lafayette history during 2023. The goal is to increase awareness and appreciation of the city’s history including recognition and understanding of the indigenous people who were first on the land that is now Lafayette, as well as the Spaniards and Rancheros that preceded American settlers who laid out the built community that we see today.

“I want us to look back farther than just 175 years and look at the indigenous people who were on the

land for thousands of years, well before even the Rancheros and Europeans came,” Anduri said. “The Indigenous people lived in harmony with nature and the history of that time when the Spanish came gives us a first chance to look at the clash of cultures and what that means. And then we can look at what happened when the Europeans came.”

The month of January will feature presentations by Mary McCosker of the Lafayette Historical Society, and a number of “Images of America: Lafayette” books will be available in Little Free Libraries throughout Lafayette.

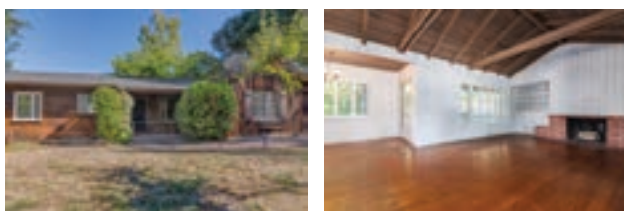
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For information, visit: <https://www.lovelafayette.org/why-lafayette/175plus>

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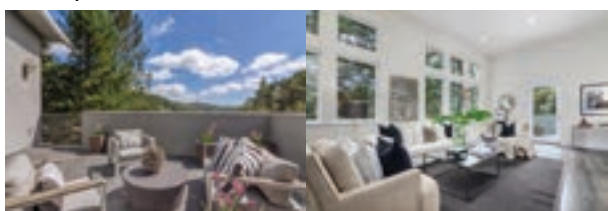
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