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Civic News Lafayette, Moraga

Measure G Falls – Now What?

By Cathy Tyson



Despite a valiant effort by proponents, only 3,683 Lafayette residents voted "Yes on G," not enough to pass the \$89 parcel tax. Photo C. Tyson

On November 8, Lafayette voters decided the fate of Measure G, the \$89 parcel tax for a maximum of ten years that would have funded road and storm drain repairs. Proponents were hopeful that it would pass due to an extensive outreach campaign and because there was little organized opposition.

Although the measure received a majority of votes, 57% in favor, it needed 66% + 1 to pass. This is the third strike for road repairs; voters also missed the two-thirds threshold

in 2004 and 2007. Measure G Co-Chair Guy Atwood considered the options, "There are alternatives, but none of them are particularly viable. One thing the City needs to consider is whether to let the good roads go and put all their available funds into fixing the failed roads. People living on failed roads have had to endure their roads not being fixed for many years, and they should not have to do so forever. I am not recommending this approach, as it has a greater long term financial cost to the community, but it needs to be thoroughly considered. Other options could include cutting City services."

At a recent City Council Meeting Mayor Carl Anduri discussed next steps. As part of the proposed tax, the City Council agreed to contribute \$3 million from General Reserve Funds to help address the asphalt infrastructure problem, but the funds were contingent on the measure passing. Although nothing was decided, the Council agreed it needs to look at the issue broadly. As reported in the June 8, 2011

issue of the *Lamorinda Weekly*, the city has a whopping \$9.8 million in the General Reserve account, the equivalent to 86% of General Fund expenditures, substantially over the City Council's target of 50%. Whether they choose to spend it on roads is unknown at this time.

The Mayor asked City Engineer Tony Coe to give a quick snapshot of where the city stands today on the road repair problem. "For 2012, \$2.95 million has already been approved for road repair," said Coe. He explained that Lafayette received more gas tax than originally anticipated, but despite the additional funds it will still have 81 failed roads remaining at the end of 2012.

Looking forward to the five year Capital Improvement Plan – he estimates known road funding to be \$9 million, that's enough to fix 18 roads and take on 15 more with stop gap measures – a less expensive rubberized seal to be used exclusively on the end of cul de sacs. That would still leave scores of residents living on failed roads. "It's just not fair," said Anduri.



Pathway Project Dead on Arrival at Council Meeting

... continued from page A3

Consultants from Alta Planning segmented the proposed project into three phases to be completed over time and suggested most of the total \$6 million construction cost could be paid by grants. However, because grants generally do not pay for on-going maintenance, the City of Lafayette would have to find a way to come up with approximately \$1 million per year for upkeep. Potential options for funding maintenance of the path were outlined, but the City Council felt none were viable.

Discussion about the feasibility study was short and to the point. "It's a lot of money to get something that's not going to get a lot of

benefit," said Council Member Mike Anderson, who also was concerned that the east-west trail wouldn't serve many Lafayette residents who are usually heading north and south from the BART station.

Council Member Brandt Anderson noted how valuable it is to have the study complete, "but it still comes down to cost/benefit analysis." To get an ADA accessible pathway, Council Member Don Tatzin pointed out, you only have to go a block down from the proposed path to the lovely wide, relatively flat sidewalks along Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Beyond the State of the Town Address

... continued from page A4

The Town's new web site was one of the highlights of Mendonca's comments regarding improved communication between the Town and its residents, along with the successful 'Ask the Mayor and Town Manager' monthly open meetings that she initiated last May.

Finally, the venue itself, at Saint Mary's College, illustrated Mendonca's goal of enhancing partnerships.

The mayor also rejoiced that Council meetings had, by and large, remained civil even when animated.

Mendonca added an image-filled list of the events that bring residents together, and showed a short movie by Grant Stubble-

field, of Neighborhood Computers, which he entered in the Chamber of Commerce's video contest – Why I Love my Town. His message was simple, "Why we love Moraga? It's the people!"

The movie served as a natural transition to the volunteer recognition ceremony. "The last time this was done was in March of 2009 during a separate event," said McInturf, "so it was time we recognize the past service of our volunteers." Council members took turns calling up the volunteers who served on the Town's committees, commissions, task forces, and teams. Each of them received a certificate provided by the office of Supervisor Gayle Uilkema.

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