



CONTRA COSTA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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August 14, 2019 (Agenda)

Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission  
651 Pine Street, Sixth Floor  
Martinez, CA 94553

August 14, 2019  
Agenda Item 9

**Lafayette/Pleasant Hill Sphere of Influence Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report**

Dear Commissioners:

*This is a report from the Lafayette/Pleasant Hill Sphere of Influence (SOI) Ad Hoc Subcommittee.*

In July 2019, the Commission accepted the Final Municipal Services Review (MSR) report covering all 19 cities and four community services districts (Crocket, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Kensington). In conjunction with the MSR, the Commission updated the sphere of influence (SOI) for each subject agency.

During the MSR process, the Commission received public input, including comments from approximately 40 residents of the Reliez Valley area (please refer to the April 17, 2019 and June 12, 2019 LAFCO agenda packets). These residents expressed interest in being removed from the City of Pleasant Hill's SOI and added to the City of Lafayette's SOI. These residents indicate that they feel a community of interest with Lafayette, noting that their children attend Lafayette schools, they attend Lafayette parishes, their families participate in Lafayette sports, they support Lafayette businesses, and they access their neighborhoods via Lafayette streets. However, they are unable to vote for Lafayette City Council and participate in other civic activities.

In addition, these residents also expressed interest in being removed from the Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District boundary noting that they pay taxes to the District but do not utilize the District's services or facilities. This issue will be evaluated in the upcoming parks and recreation MSR scheduled for FY 2019-20.

In response to the SOI request, the City of Pleasant Hill indicated "no position" on removal of this area from Pleasant Hill's SOI. The Lafayette City Council voted 4-1 opposing the addition of this area to Lafayette's SOI. The City of Lafayette cited concerns relating to fiscal impacts and the provision of services, including roads, drainage and law enforcement.

The Commission expressed interest in reviewing this matter further and formed an ad hoc subcommittee to discuss the SOI/boundary issue. Commissioners Blubaugh and Andersen were appointed to the ad hoc subcommittee.

On July 29, the ad hoc subcommittee and LAFCO Executive Officer met with representatives of the City of Lafayette including two councilmembers and the City Manager. The group discussed the following matters: 1) possible SOI amendments and annexation of a portion of the Reliez Valley to City of Lafayette; 2) recent letter from John Cumbers (attached) regarding annexation of a larger portion of Reliez Valley to the City of Lafayette; and 3) the City of Lafayette's upcoming General Plan update.

Regarding the possible SOI amendments and annexation of a portion of the Reliez Valley to City of Lafayette, City representatives reiterated their concerns regarding needed services and improvements to the subject area and associated costs. The consensus was that any future annexation of this area to the City would necessitate a special tax and that costs associated with services and improvements should be borne by residents of the annexing area. It is presently unknown as to whether residents in the subject area would support a special tax to fund services and improvements.

The group also discussed a recent letter from John Cumbers and his request to annex a larger portion of Reliez Valley to the City of Lafayette and to also align school district boundaries. Mr. Cumber acknowledged that these efforts would likely be long term and could coincide with the City/school board's upcoming demographic study and the City's General Plan update.

City of Lafayette representatives reported that in 2020, the City of Lafayette will embark on a General Plan Update and could look at the SOI/annexation matter in conjunction with the General Plan Update. Residents of the City as well as residents of the unincorporated areas will have an opportunity to provide input during the General Plan Update process.

LAFCO staff will keep apprised of the City of Lafayette's General Plan activities and provide updates as needed.

**Recommendation:** Receive the report.

Respectfully submitted,

*Candace Andersen and Don Blubaugh*

Attachment – Letter from John Cumbers

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John Cumbers  
2419 Cherry Hills Dr.  
Lafayette, CA. 94549

25th July 2019

Re: Request to perform a cost / benefit analysis of incorporating the remaining 1062 unincorporated homes into the City of Lafayette.

Dear Lafayette City Council Members,

I'm a Lafayette resident living in unincorporated Lafayette. I have a Lafayette address but am in the Pleasant Hill sphere of influence and Martinez school district. Such disparate zoning creates weak neighborhoods without city services and citizens without democratic representation.

From speaking to members of the Lafayette School Board, I understand that the city and the Lafayette School District are planning to perform a joint demographic study on future city services and school needs. From my analysis, there are 1062 unincorporated homes (See attached and also here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2arumff>). I'm writing to ask that you please include the cost / benefit of incorporating these remaining homes into the city. I am also writing to both school districts to ask that they look at the cost / benefit of including the homes in the school districts as well.

There is no urgency for this to happen right away, but I ask that the City use the results of this demographic study to update the General Plan to include a timeline and resource plan to include these neighborhoods that have yet to be incorporated. I understand that the city will need to look into the costs of services for this and that there would be a payment due upon incorporation.

Although there is little incentive for the City of Lafayette to incorporate these homes, I'm advocating for a long term solution to resolve the boundary issues and avoid a piecemeal approach and one-off requests for future changes. Doing nothing leaves these unincorporated households and neighborhoods as the ugly stepchildren of the City, in a state of limbo, without a plan for the future, without city services and without representation on local issues. It's the right thing to do for stronger neighborhoods, stronger communities, a stronger county, and a stronger democracy. I ask that you please consider including these homes in your upcoming demographic study and creating a long term plan to incorporate them into the City.

Yours sincerely,



John Cumbers

## Location of 1066 unincorporated lafayette homes (to be verified)

