

# Aptos 'mayor' Lucile Aldrich swears off cityhood

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Sentinel staff writer

**APTOS** — One of the prime pushers for Aptos incorporation more than a decade ago, Lucile Aldrich has now taken an about-face and is staunchly against cityhood.

Known as Aptos' unofficial "mayor," Aldrich has lived in Aptos 27 years, organized the Fourth of July World's Shortest Parade and was named the Chamber of Commerce's "Woman of the Year" last year. She points to what she claims to be "pro-growth backers" as being behind the cur-

rent incorporation effort.

While refusing to name names on the record, the feisty 70-year-old says simply that Aptos Village would become a "big shopping center," and "hundreds of homes" would be built should Aptos incorporate.

Aldrich steadfastly maintains she is "totally anti-growth." This is ironic, in part, because she still works in the real-estate business. Yet, she points to Aptos Village, her fight against a cement-batching plant there and how it has continued to look much the same for more than two decades.

Aldrich also is against cityhood — she refuses to call it a "town" as incorporation supporters continue to call it — because of the future revenue situation.

"Watsonville can't do it, neither can Scotts Valley and Santa Cruz is having a hell of a time (operating as cities). If Capitola didn't have 41st Avenue, they would be as bankrupt as any other city in the county."

Incorporation supporters vehemently deny Aldrich's charges. Aptos Incorporation Group Chairman Kelly Walker says they have "broad-based community support," with no "big developers" backing the effort.

Group member Doug McConnell adds jokingly, "I wish we did have

some (support from big developers)."

Yet, county supervisors Robley Levy and Gary Patton — both of whom also serve on the county Local Agency Formation Commission — have also questioned who is financially backing the incorporation effort. McConnell told them in April that the group would abide by state law, which requires identifying those contributing more than \$100.

Tom Carmody, immediate past chairman of the Aptos Incorporation Group, says that Aldrich is "uninformed" and "hasn't taken the time to find out the facts" about the current incorporation drive.

He also maintains that because Aldrich is not in the "leadership position" in the current effort that "she feels she has to attack us."

While the future revenue picture for the new town isn't "paradise," Carmody adds, it also isn't "hell."

"We're not going to be in the rosier position, but an unincorporated Aptos is even worse," he says. "Remaining unincorporated, we're going to have less and less money."

According to the group's preliminary study, incorporating Aptos would result in a first-year revenue surplus of \$1.4 million. A final report is currently being

undertaken.

"Our prime objective is preserving the character of Aptos, and making sure it doesn't turn into another Live Oak," Carmody says.

Aldrich says her about-face in opinion shouldn't be surprising, considering the main reason she led the incorporation effort back in 1978-79 was the threat by Capitola to annex the Porter-Sesnon property.

Then serving as president of the Aptos Chamber of Commerce, Aldrich said Capitola's annexation of the 66-acre property — located between Capitola and Aptos, adjacent Highway 1 — "would have meant a great city right at our border."

Back in December 1978, when the chamber endorsed the concept of incorporating Aptos, Aldrich told chamber members that the decision "depends on whether we want to be a stepsister to Capitola."

The chamber's effort fell 200 signatures short of qualifying the incorporation issue for the ballot.

The Aptos Incorporation Group has already gotten farther than any other attempt to incorporate Aptos by gathering 3,081 signatures, which allowed them to proceed to the LAFCO stage.

LAFCO is gearing up for what is expected to be a long public hearing process, said Executive Direc-



**Lucile Aldrich**  
'Mayor' of Aptos

tor Pat McCormick. A 1991 election is being targeted.

If Aptos cityhood is successful, Aldrich the unofficial "mayor," intends to become the first "official" mayor.

"Ever since the incorporation issue came up again, people have been calling me to ask if I was going to be mayor," she says. "I think I'm qualified for it and I think I deserve it."

1985-1995  
ORATION

WATSONVILLE  
Register-PAJAR  
May 6, 1989

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