

Aptos cityhood application approaches

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APTOS — The Aptos Incorporation Group plans to submit a formal application soon to the county for cityhood.

That application may be made as early as next week when the county Local Agency Formation Commission is scheduled to discuss — for the fifth consecutive month — possible guidelines for incorporation supporters in developing their final feasibility study.

But newly elected Aptos Incorporation Group Chairman Kelly Walker said Tuesday that the group can no longer wait for LAFCO's guidelines. He said a formal incorporation application will be filed either at the April 5 LAFCO meeting or soon after in hopes of prodding LAFCO into action.

At the same time, Walker said, the group's consultant, William Zion of Lafayette, has begun work on the final incorporation feasibility study.

"We want to get it (the incorporation process) going," said Walker, a local attorney and five-time president of the 175-household Rolling Greens Estates Improvement Association in Aptos. "We are in the position now where we want to make a push and force LAFCO to act rather than sit on it."

Former Aptos Incorporation Group Chairman Tom Carmody has charged that both Second (Aptos) District Supervisor Robley Levy and LAFCO are deliberately delaying the process that could ultimately make Aptos the county's third-largest city. Levy, who is a LAFCO director, has denied the charge, saying she only wants to see the issue "fully explored."

However, LAFCO Executive Director Pat McCormick has said he has been "surprised" at discussion by commissioners as to what they would like to see in the final study.

Walker noted, "We're not interested in jamming this thing

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— *Kelly Walker*
Aptos Incorporation Group chairman

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He added that he didn't necessarily feel LAFCO was deliberately stalling. "I just think they're not familiar with what the guidelines should be because they haven't done an incorporation for some time."

Walker officially took over for Carmody last week as chairman of the incorporation group. Carmody had to resign because he accepted a job as president of the Brooks Shoe Co., and will soon be moving to

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Carmody is confident that Walker will do a fine job as his replacement, adding, "I think we're in a situation where we'll gain even more momentum." Fellow Aptos Incorporation Group member Doug McConnell agreed, saying, "Kelly is going to do fine. We recommended him 100 percent."

Walker said he agreed to become more involved in the incorporation drive "because I feel so strongly about it."

He added, "The people who live in the community should de-

cidewhat happens in the way of police protection, road improvements, planning and growth."

Incorporation supporters are advocating townhood to get out from under the thumb of county government and make their own decisions on those issues, such as police protection and planning.

A preliminary feasibility study has concluded that incorporation of an 18,000-population Aptos would be financially feasible.

The Aptos Incorporation Group has already gotten further than any other Aptos incorporation attempt by gathering 3,081 signatures, which allows it to proceed to LAFCO and the final feasibility study stage. Ultimately, an election would be held.

Delays have made it unlikely that supporters will meet their original goal for a November election. The earliest an election can realistically be held is next spring, agreed Walker, Carmody and McCormick.



Kelly Walker
Cityhood group's new leader

Carmody, who still plans to someday retire in Aptos, concluded, "I hope to return to a town of Aptos."

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