

**From:** [Iwalani Faulkner](#)  
**To:** [scpd@SCPD](mailto:scpd@SCPD); [Holland MacLaurie](#)  
**Subject:** LAFCO Commission Nomination by the Santa Cruz Port District  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 4:41:28 PM

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Dear Ms. MacLaurie and Santa Cruz Port District Board Members:

By now, you should have received my application, along with a brief overview of my interest in serving on LAFCO from Joe Serrano. I would like to take this opportunity to expand on my experience, so you have a clearer understanding of the expertise I would bring to the commission. I have consistently dedicated myself to service in our community and developed a deep understanding of good governance.

My diverse experience in agriculture, medicine, education, transportation, and governance has shaped my ability to assess complex problems, engage in active listening, and collaborate effectively with others. These skills are essential for any commissioner, and I believe they would be particularly valuable in the context of LAFCO's work.

As a research scientist, I have honed my ability to analyze and summarize data as well as design studies, skills directly applicable to LAFCO's work in optimizing efficiencies, consolidating services, protecting agricultural lands, and guiding special districts. Growing up in an agricultural community and actively participating in Future Farmers of America (FFA) through high school, I gained hands-on experience with the issues LAFCO addresses, such as preserving agricultural land and participating in good governance. Additionally, my background in farming, study and research in the sciences, and training in classical opera and performance instilled in me a discipline for hard work, preparation, and public engagement.

I earned both a BS and MS in physiology at UC Davis, focusing on biochemical endocrinology. My research on inducing early reproductive maturity in white sturgeon supported efforts to replenish depleted populations in the Sacramento Delta. This experience deepened my appreciation for issues related to water quality and availability, which are central to California's future, and equipped me with a framework for critical analysis and collaboration necessary as a commissioner on LAFCO.

In my professional career, I've worked with organizations like Johnson & Johnson, Abbott Vascular, and Stryker Neurovascular. These roles required me to collaborate across departments and institutions, engage with regulatory bodies, negotiate contracts, and manage budgets, all while maintaining compliance with industry standards. These skills are directly transferable to the work LAFCO does, especially in navigating complex regulations and ensuring the sustainability of essential services.

Locally, I have dedicated nearly three decades to volunteer work, from serving as president of my road association and volunteering with local youth theater and mountain biking programs to serving as a leader with organizations advocating for equity and the environment. As road association president, I facilitated community

engagement to address both practical issues like road maintenance and legal challenges as well as successfully encouraged a connected and supportive neighborhood environment, coordinating social events like summer BBQs and concerts.

My involvement in governance and environmental initiatives has further sharpened my skills in leadership. I founded Equity Transit to raise awareness of the importance of robust public transit for equitable access to opportunity. I regularly attend meetings of the Regional Transportation Commission, the Board of Supervisors, and local City Councils, where I advocate for better solutions to transit, housing, and environmental issues. I also serve as a volunteer with the Rainbow Defense Coalition, bringing my skills in de-escalation and community support to ensure safe and inclusive spaces, including activities centered around LGBTQ+ and communities of color.

In addition to these roles, I am an active member of the Santa Cruz Central Fire Board and serve on the Executive Committee of the Sierra Club. As an alternate on the Democratic Central Committee and a board member of the Mid County Dems and Democratic Women's Club, I bring a wealth of experience in parsing through complex documents, making informed decisions, and guiding policy initiatives. My appointment as a State Democratic Delegate since 2023, having been elected as a National Democratic Delegate in 2024, and my work on state legislation further demonstrate my commitment to civic engagement and public service.

LAFCO plays a critical role in supporting the efficient, transparent, and sustainable delivery of services across California's special districts. The commission's ability to conduct studies and guide annexations, dissolutions, and consolidations ensures that our communities thrive. As a scientist and woman of color, I believe my breadth of experience, collaborative approach, and dedication to building sustainable, strong communities would bring a unique and positive perspective to LAFCO.

I would be honored to serve as a regular member of the Santa Cruz LAFCO Board, representing the Central Fire District, bringing a fresh perspective to the commission. I am particularly excited about the possibility of serving as a scientist and second female representative on the 7-member board. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions and appreciate the possibility of connecting with board members individually or, if possible, at your next board meeting on February 25th given the nominations are due by March 26th. Thank you for considering my application.

You can view my professional background on my LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aidasings/>. I am available by phone at 831-278-1007 or by email at [EquityTransitSantaCruz@gmail.com](mailto:EquityTransitSantaCruz@gmail.com).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Iwalani (Lani) Faulkner