COMPASS

The Home Brief

WITH YVONNE MINK

Real estate news. Thoughtful perspective.



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

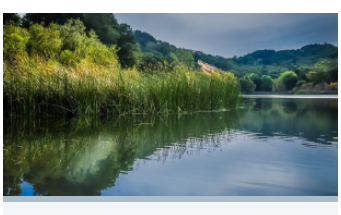
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01 MARKET FOCUS

Three towns. Different signals.

A closer look at prices in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda.

Lamorinda does not move as one market. For the three months ending September 2026, Redfin reports that median sale prices rose from a year earlier in Lafayette and Moraga, while Orinda's median declined.

My reading for Lamorinda

My takeaway is to start with the town, then narrow the comparison to the home. A town-wide median reflects the mix of properties that sold; it does not tell us how much any particular home gained or lost.

For buyers, that means checking the recent sales of homes they would actually consider. For sellers, it means looking at comparable sales before using a broad percentage change to set expectations.

LAMORINDA SNAPSHOT

Median sale price
All home types

LAFAYETTE
$1.93M
+1.9% year over year

MORAGA
$1.51M
+4.4% year over year

ORINDA
$1.75M
-3.4% year over year

Source: Redfin - Lafayette / Moraga / Orinda. Three months ending September 2026, compared with the same period in 2025. Prices rounded; all home types. Accessed October 15, 2026.

02 HOME NOTES

SEASONAL HOME CARE

Before the winter rains

Fall is a useful time to understand how water moves across your property. Lafayette's storm-preparation guidance calls for keeping private drainage ditches, creeks and culverts free of debris.

Clear the path.

Remove fallen leaves and debris from accessible drainage areas before rain arrives.

Know what you own.

A culvert under a Lafayette driveway is the property owner's responsibility; the City does not clear it.

Look beyond a cleanup.

Crushed or rusted culvert sections may need professional attention. Lafayette says replacement requires a contractor and an encroachment permit.

If you are considering a home, ask where runoff goes and request records of drainage repairs. The answers can reveal maintenance responsibilities that listing photos do not show.

Read the City's preparation guidance

READING THE MARKET

Compare like with like

A nearby sale is a useful reference only if the homes compete for similar buyers. Fannie Mae's appraisal guidance emphasizes location, site, size, layout and condition when selecting comparable sales.

FOUR CHECKS FOR A BETTER COMP

SETTING
Street, lot & access

HOME
Type, size & layout

CONDITION
Updates & repairs

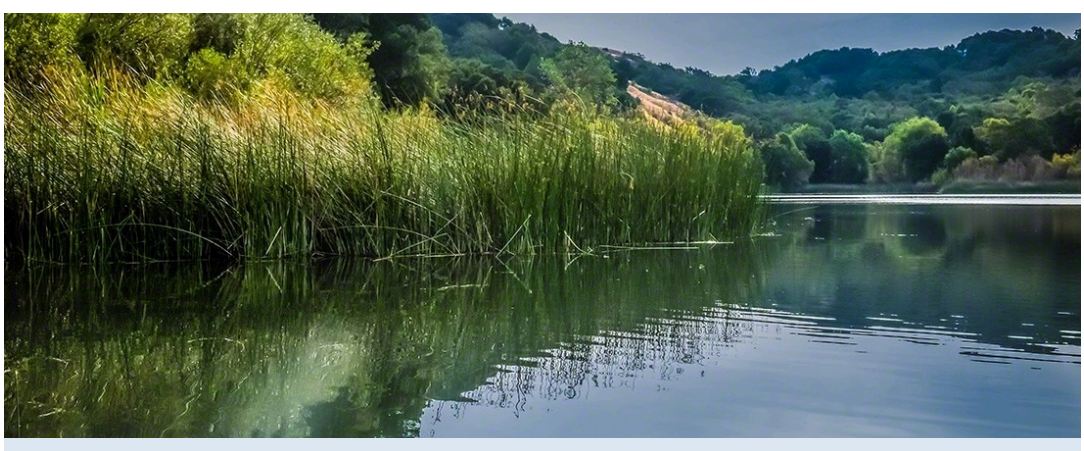
TIMING
When the sale closed

For example, a renovated home on a usable lot may not be a direct comparison for a similar-size home with major repairs or a steep site. Identify those differences before drawing a conclusion from the price.

Use closed sales to see what buyers paid. Active listings help show the alternatives available today, but an asking price is not a completed transaction.

Source: Fannie Mae comparable-sales guidance

03 LOCAL LIFE



LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR / FROM THE LAMORINDA GUIDE

Life around your home.

A listing tells you about a house. Time in the neighborhood helps you picture daily life. The Lamorinda guide explores the towns through local traditions, everyday routines and the details that shape a move.



ON YOUR READING LIST

Lamorinda Home Buyer's Guide

The towns, daily life and property questions behind a move.

Explore the guide

I hope these stories help you put the broader news in context and look more closely at the home or neighborhood that matters to you.

Warmly,
Elena



Elena Marlowe | Compass
925.555.0148
elena.marlowe@example.com

3595 Mount Diablo Blvd, Suite 200, Lafayette, CA 94549

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