

## Top administrative officer to leave East Palo Alto job

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EAST PALO ALTO — East Palo Alto's top administrative officer plans to resign in early February and will probably not be permanently replaced until an incorporation election is held this June.

Victor V. James, who for the past two years has served as the chief administrative officer for the unincorporated community of 18,000, says he is resigning to work as a private consultant as well as to seek another job. James said he is under consideration for both a college presidency and city manager's post, but declined to name either the

college or the city.

James, who earned \$46,000 a year in the post he is resigning, said he plans to do consulting work for the Ravenswood Recreation and Parks District, which is responsible for administrating recreation programs in East Palo Alto. He said he also may return to a job at Merritt College in Oakland, where he has taught courses in legal research and writing.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors indicated Tuesday it would not seek a permanent replacement for James until a cityhood election is held in June.

The supervisors have not yet approved the incorporation measure for

the ballot. However, they are widely expected to do so, despite a recommendation against incorporation by the staff director of the county's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

In discussions Tuesday with the advisory East Palo Alto Municipal Council, the supervisors indicated they would seek a temporary replacement for James. They mentioned the possibility of recruiting retired Redwood City city manager James Fales or a county employee for the temporary post.

The supervisors noted it might be difficult to find a permanent replacement for James, since the job is likely to end abruptly if cityhood is approved in June and a new East Palo Alto City

Council selects its own city manager.

James, who holds a doctorate in public administration from the University of California at Berkeley, managed East Palo Alto through a turbulent period when the community was divided over incorporation and other issues.

"I feel really good (about resigning)," James said Tuesday. "I think the work of the Ravenswood Recreation and Parks District is one entity in East Palo Alto that has the potential for really doing something in a short period of time.

"It's the one entity in East Palo Alto that can be used to bring together the community. I'm taking a pay cut to do this, but I'm willing to do it."