

## STATE KILLS REDEVELOPMENT *Lafayette to Unwind Economic Development Effort*

A law eliminating redevelopment agencies was upheld by the California Supreme Court in December and will, over the next fifteen years, redirect about \$50M from Lafayette to the State of California. The money would have been used to further revitalize Mt. Diablo Boulevard and provide affordable housing.

The ruling comes after Gov. Jerry Brown signed a pair of bills passed by state legislators over the summer. The first called for the elimination of redevelopment agencies, while the second allowed individual agencies to stay open so long as they made “ransom” payments to the state.

The Court found that the second bill was illegal because last year’s voter-approved Proposition 22 “expressly forbids” the legislature from requiring such payments. But the court ruled that the first bill was legal because the legislature has “the authority to create entities, such as redevelopment agencies, to carry out the state’s ends and the corollary power to dissolve those same entities when the Legislature deems it necessary and proper.”

As a result, the funds, assets, and liabilities of the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency (LRDA) will be turned over to the successor agency charged with winding up the affairs of the former RDA. The successor agency will pay off existing debts and manage the dissolution.

### Post Mortem: What Did Redevelopment Accomplish in Lafayette?

Over its short fifteen year life, the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency funded the following projects:

■ **LAFAYETTE TOWN CENTER:** The LRDA worked with the developers of Lafayette Town Center to get that project, featuring Pizza Antica and Panda Express, off the ground. By investing \$800,000 (\$400,000 for public improvements; \$400,000 for housing for people with disabilities) in public funds, the LRDA leveraged more than \$20M in private development.

■ **LA FIESTA SQUARE:** The LRDA partnered with the Cortese Development Co. for the rehabilitation of LaFiesta Square, relieving the developer’s burden by paying more than \$100,000 for the rebuilding of Lafayette Circle.

■ **LAFAYETTE PLAZA:** To preserve the City’s history and beautify the City’s busiest intersection, the LRDA spent \$800,000 to rebuild Lafayette Plaza. Now the site

### LA FIESTA SQUARE



Before



After

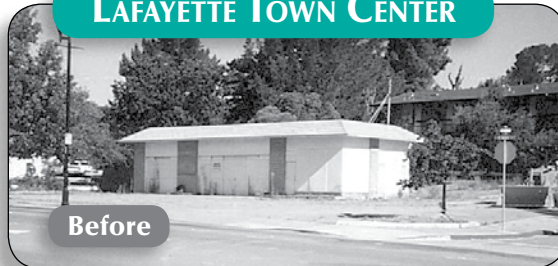
of the City’s annual Rock the Plaza music festival, the project has also become the City’s most important public gathering place. It is a favored site for political rallies, and was the site of the September 11th Candlelight Vigil, where more than 2,000 people gathered to remember the victims of those terrorist attacks.

■ **VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING:** The LRDA spent \$8M to build the new Veterans Memorial Building at the west end of Mt. Diablo Blvd. This project has been universally hailed by the community, and recognized as an important tribute to America’s war veterans.

■ **LAFAYETTE MERCANTILE:** The LRDA stimulated the construction of this mixed use project, now featuring Yankee Pier restaurant and Powell’s Sweet Shoppe, by contributing \$1.2M which equaled the financial gap needed to make the project feasible.

■ **LAFAYETTE LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER:** The Lafayette Redevelopment Agency managed the financing, design, and construction of the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center. This spectacular \$50M facility serves as the region’s intellectual heart, hosting speakers from the Commonwealth Club, the Oakland Zoo, the California Shakespeare Festival, and many members of the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium.

### LAFAYETTE TOWN CENTER



Before



After

(continued inside)



## STATE KILLS REDEVELOPMENT *(continued)*

### Will the Demise of the RDA Impact the City?

The most immediate impact – one that was entirely unanticipated – is that, in their voracious move to balance the State’s books, the Governor and legislators prohibited the dissolving RDAs from repaying start-up loans made by their host cities. Instead, that money goes to the State. This hurts Lafayette because, in order to get redevelopment started back in the 1990’s the City loaned the Agency \$2.5M and since then another \$2.5M in interest has accrued. This debt will now – thanks to the State of California – never be fully repaid.

Over the longer term, the impacts fall more in the “what if” category. Staff’s projections suggest that, over the next fifteen years, the LRDA would have generated about \$15M for downtown projects and \$35M for affordable housing. While those funds hadn’t yet been programmed (such programming was one of the main reasons for embarking on the preparation of a Downtown Specific Plan, but that’s another story), we can confidently speculate that they would have been used to build landscaped median islands along the east end of Mt. Diablo Boulevard, to construct an active park facility near the new Library, and to deliver more than a 100 units of affordable housing.

### LAFAYETTE MERCANTILE



Are there other impacts to Lafayette? The answer, fortunately, is “not many”. Since the activities of the LRDA were limited to eradicating blight and providing affordable housing in the downtown area, Lafayette’s outlying neighborhoods should experience little or no impact as a result of its dissolution.

Furthermore, the LRDA was established as an entity wholly independent from the City of Lafayette. It has its own books, bank accounts, and Board of Directors and, as a result, the City is not responsible for any of the LRDA’s outstanding debts and obligations. With the exception of the City’s loan, all the debts will be paid off over time including debts owed to the bondholders and the Lafayette Library & Learning Center Foundation.

### LAFAYETTE PLAZA



The City of Lafayette’s financial position thus remains very sound. We project a balanced \$12M general fund budget for this fiscal year, and the City continues to hold about \$10M in reserves. Lafayette’s low debt, large reserve, and conservative budgeting practices even

earned the City a coveted “AAA” bond rating from Standard & Poors. Indeed, only 25 of California’s 480 cities have been awarded this highest-possible S&P rating.

While we are disappointed with the state’s decision, we remain grateful for what Redevelopment funds have done to revitalize Lafayette in the past 15 years. To quote an old English proverb (and probably your mom, too): Half a loaf is better than none.

### LAFAYETTE LIBRARY & LEARNING CENTER





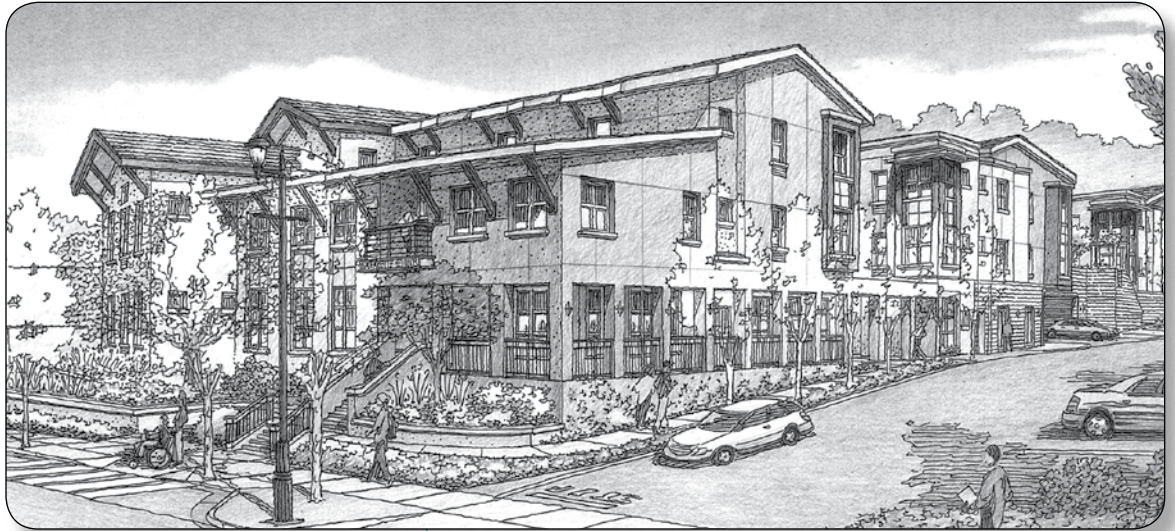
# GOOD NEWS FOR SENIOR HOUSING

We're thrilled to announce that, in a recent round of competitive grant funding and after five years of trying, Eden Housing has finally been awarded funding from the State of California to build an affordable housing project in Lafayette.

When combined with \$3.5M from the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency (committed several years ago and thus protected from the State's redevelopment dissolution), the State grant will make it feasible for Eden to build an all-affordable senior housing project. The 46-unit project will sit on the parcel between Bo's Barbeque and the old Butler-Conti Dodge dealer. Construction is slated to begin in August 2012.

The new apartment rental community will provide affordable homes for senior adults, a large community room, an exercise room, and a library/computer learning center. Seventeen units will be set aside for seniors with disabilities.

The environmentally-sensitive property will use sustainable building methods and incorporate green features to ensure its long-term energy-efficiency and sustainability.



The new project will be downtown Lafayette's fourth affordable housing effort, following the all-affordable Chateau Lafayette (on Moraga Boulevard), the Town Center Apartments (15 of the 75 units are reserved for people with low incomes and disabilities) and the Lafayette East Apartments (2 of 10 units are reserved for people of low and moderate incomes).

Eden Housing's senior communities offer a safe and supportive environment that will help them live independently in a dignified, healthy and productive way for as long as possible. For more information on Lafayette Senior Housing or Eden Housing, contact: 510-582-1460 or visit [www.edenhousing.org](http://www.edenhousing.org).

## COUNCIL SETS GOALS FOR 2012

The City Council meets each year in January to set its goals for the upcoming year. These are the items that, in addition to all of the many things we do and services we provide, the City will concentrate on in 2012:

- Adopt a Downtown Specific Plan.
- Draft a Wireless Telecommunications Ordinance.
- Begin revitalization of the Plaza Way business district.
- Initiate a strategy to repair roads given the City's fiscal constraints.
- Consider the efficacy of building a multi-use path on the EBMUD right-of-way along Highway 24.
- Design and launch an updated website.
- Initiate a five-year program to replace all street name signs throughout Lafayette.
- Evaluate 941 Moraga Road and the old library for use as public facilities.
- Upgrade parking meter technology to accept credit card payments.
- Consider methods to finance open space acquisitions.

## CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

Lafayette residents, like most people these days, depend heavily on their cell phones for many everyday tasks. Given the hilly terrain, however, service can be spotty. In an effort to increase their coverage, a number of carriers recently sought to upgrade and expand their wireless communications facilities within the City. In recent months, a number of residents expressed concerns about the aesthetics of the proposed facilities and the potential health risks associated with them.

In January, the City Council adopted a 45-day moratorium on the issuance of permits for wireless communication facilities in order to study the issue in more depth. A subcommittee of delegates from the Planning Commission and Council will hold public meetings over the coming months. Residents as well as representatives from the wireless industry are welcome to attend. These meetings will help the City more fully understand the wireless communications industry including current technologies and applicable legal rulings. The goal is to establish clear and concise regulations that balance community and industry expectations and develop an ordinance that governs the location, design, and appearance of wireless communications facilities in Lafayette.

For more information, please contact Michael Cass, Assistant Planner, at 925-299-3219 or [MCass@ci.lafayette.ca.us](mailto:MCass@ci.lafayette.ca.us) or visit the City's website, [www.lovelafayette.org](http://www.lovelafayette.org).



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### THINGS TO DO

#### Breast Cancer Awareness

All through the 2011-12 School Year, the Lafayette Youth Commission (LYC) has gone **PINK** to support Breast Cancer Awareness (BCA). The LYC is made up of high school and junior high school students appointed by the Lafayette City Council to create volunteer opportunities and conduct safe and fun events for teens. Proceeds from LYC events are donated to various youth and community causes. As part of their PINK efforts the teens are putting on a Bounce for BCA Dance on March 23rd. – a pink themed Lamorinda 7th and 8th grade tri-city dance with bounce houses. 100% of the proceeds from the dance and shirt sales will go to the American Cancer Society. T-shirts can be picked up at the Lafayette Community Center offices at 500 St. Mary's Rd. and dance tickets may be purchased at [www.LafayetteRec.org](http://www.LafayetteRec.org).



#### Hiking Group

Back in the mid-80's, the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission wanted to introduce Lafayette residents to our beautiful hiking trails. Individual commissioners volunteered to lead hikes and the Lafayette Hiking Group was born. 27 years later, volunteers are still leading hikes within the city borders and throughout the Bay Area.



There is no prerequisite to join the Lafayette Hiking Group. Hikers meet at Lafayette BART's main parking lot at 8:30a.m. Bring lunch or snacks, water, layered clothing, good walking shoes, sun protection and cash to contribute toward gas (for longer distance trips). Hikes are posted on the City of Lafayette website [www.ci.lafayette.ca.us](http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us). If you have questions about a specific hike, you can email [LafayetteHiking@comcast.net](mailto:LafayetteHiking@comcast.net)

The next hike is scheduled for Saint Patrick's Day (March 17) and will cover part of the Lafayette Reservoir Rim Trail and one of the adjoining trails that leads down into a valley and back up to the Rim. This is a strenuous, 5-6 mile hike and hiking sticks are recommended.

#### May 19: Kitchen Tours

Lafayette Juniors 13th Annual Lafayette Kitchen Tour, May 19: 10am-3pm. Guests will have the opportunity to visit six exquisite kitchens located in Lafayette. Tickets: \$40 (\$30 of which is tax deductible). A boxed lunch is available for an additional \$12. Purchase in advance from a Lafayette Juniors member, online at [www.lafayettejuniors.org](http://www.lafayettejuniors.org), or at one of the following Lafayette locations: Douglass Designs, 3586 Mt. Diablo Blvd., 925-284-4560, Premier Kitchens, 3373 Mt. Diablo Blvd., 925-283-6500. Proceeds benefit Shelter, Inc., CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), SEED (Special Education Enrichment Development Foundation), New Day for Children, and the Lafayette Library and Learning Foundation.

### CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 284-1968

#### Council Members

Carol Federighi	<b>Mayor</b>
Mike Anderson	<b>Vice Mayor</b>
Brandt Andersson	<b>Council Member</b>
Carl Anduri	<b>Council Member</b>
Don Tatzin	<b>Council Member</b>

Messages to all Council Members:  
[cityhall@lovelafayette.org](mailto:cityhall@lovelafayette.org)

#### Administration

<b>General Reception and</b>	<b>284-1968</b>
<b>Steven Falk, City Manager</b>	<b>Fax: 284-3169</b>
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	<b>299-3227</b>
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	<b>299-3213</b>
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	<b>299-3210</b>

#### Community Development

Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	<b>284-1951</b>
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	<b>284-1976</b>
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	<b>299-3214</b>
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	<b>299-3259</b>

**If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.**

#### Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Hansen, Program Mgr.	<b>299-3216</b>
	<b>Or 299-3215</b>

#### Parks, Trails and Recreation 284-2232

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Senior Services	<b>284-5050</b>

#### Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	<b>911</b>
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	<b>284-5010</b>
Police Business Office:	<b>283-3680</b>

**Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3230**

<b>Fax</b>	<b>284-3169</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210</b>
	<b>Lafayette, CA 94549</b>
<b>Website</b>	<b><a href="http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us">www.ci.lafayette.ca.us</a></b>

**E-MAIL:** Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using this address format:  
**First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org**  
**Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org**

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