

PROPOSED "DOWNTOWN PROJECT"

\$4.4 Million Project Would Improve Traffic Flow

After more than two years of review, the City of Lafayette may soon embark on its largest-ever capital improvement project. Designed primarily to improve traffic flow at and around the City's busiest intersection (Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Rd.), the "Downtown Project" would also rebuild, enlarge, and re-landscape Lafayette Plaza, reconfigure Plaza Way, and realign Golden Gate Way. The architectural firm responsible for the La Fiesta Square renovation – SZFM Design Studio – was retained to develop the Downtown Project design.

Given the magnitude of the project and its potential impact on downtown Lafayette, the City Council seeks opinions from residents before it awards the construction contract. The purpose of this *Special Edition Vistas* is to update you on the project, and to invite you to attend a special public workshop with the City Council on May 6th.

How the Project was Developed

The \$4.4 million project would take 12 to 18 months to complete and would culminate more than two years of workshops and public meetings. Efforts were made during the design phase to balance the needs of pedestrians, commuters, shoppers, merchants, schools, the Lafayette Historical Society, and other interested parties. Most of the funding for the project comes from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority's half-cent sales tax increment, and the balance from City redevelopment funds.

The project is not without controversy. The improvements would reduce congestion delay at the Mt. Diablo/Moraga Rd. intersection by up to 50% during the evening commute, but — in order to do so — would require that Mt. Diablo Blvd. be widened by five feet in front of World Savings and two feet along the Safeway parking lot, for a total of about 1,000 square feet of additional paving. Critics have charged that this capacity enhancement will encourage more autos to use the corridor and thus make the downtown less friendly for walkers. They also note that the widened Mt. Diablo Blvd. will take longer for pedestrians to cross. Conversely, others have criticized the proposed addition of a new traffic signal at the intersection of

Moraga Blvd. and Moraga Rd., near the Lafayette Library, contending that it will mainly benefit walkers and school children, and that commuters will be slowed and thus suffer.

The City Council is weighing the advantages and disadvantages of this project, seeking a balance between competing factors. As a means of gathering input, the Council has scheduled a public workshop for Saturday, May 6, 2000, at 9:00 am and invites all interested parties to attend and voice their opinions. The meeting will be held at the Park Theater (3529 Golden Gate Way). Alternatively, if you cannot make the meeting but have opinions about the project, please let the Council know what you think via "snail-", "voice-", or e-mail. See the *Vistas* directory (back page) for addresses.

Improvements at the Intersection

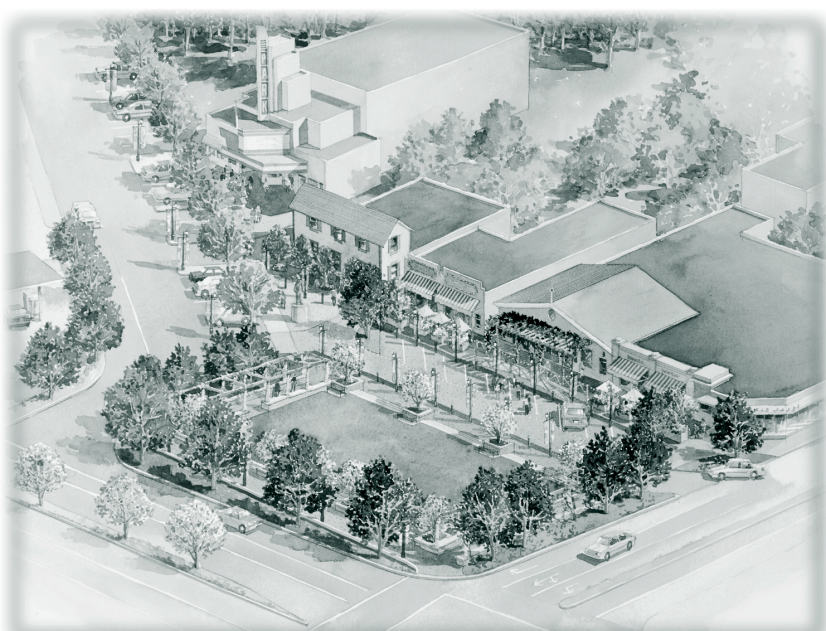
Inside, you'll find plans for the proposed project. In general, traffic improvements would be made by adding vehicle "stacking"

capacity at intersections and synchronizing traffic signals to reduce backups. Converting parallel parking to slant-in spaces along Golden Gate Way would increase the number of available parking spots and make them easier to use.

Improvements to the Lafayette Plaza

The centerpiece of the project would be the renovated Lafayette Plaza. Terraced downward from Mt. Diablo Blvd. to Plaza Way, reconfigured to a rectangular shape, and doubled in size, the Plaza would contain architectural features and an historic town square theme. The irregular, stepped sidewalk along Plaza Way would be replaced with a ramped boardwalk, and Plaza Way would become a narrower, one-way street, where pedestrians comfortably mix with vehicles as they cross from the park to the storefronts. For special events such as the annual Art and Wine Festival, Plaza Way would be closed to vehicles and merged with the Plaza as a large Town Square.

Other improvements included in the project would be a prominent community events sign, new "Battery Park" street lamps, and the addition of 97 flowering pear and sycamore trees.



AROUND TOWN

May 20

LAFAYETTE JUNIORS KITCHEN & GARDEN TOUR – Saturday: 10:00am – 3:00pm. Tour six Residential Kitchens and three Gardens – *added attraction*: sampling food from local restaurants. *Proceeds to High School and Middle School Youth Mentoring Program.* Tickets: \$25. Call 974-7863.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY: LAFAYETTE'S ON-LINE FORUM – Get opinions and opinionated using the City's new Community Forum Website. <http://ci.lafayette.ca.us/Forum/>

STORM DRAIN MARKER PROJECT 2000 – Creek Committee is soliciting youth volunteer groups to apply "No dumping – drains to creek" decals on 1300 drain inlets in May. For info call: 284-4251 or 299-3240.

HOME COMPOSTING WORKSHOPS FOR BUSY PEOPLE – Yard trimmings and kitchen waste. FREE workshops – reservations requested, call: 906-1806. At the following locations, dates and times:

- Heather Farm, Walnut Creek: 5/9, 6/13, 7/11 • 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- McDonnells Nursery, Orinda: 6/17 • 9:00 – 11:30 am
- Navlets, Danville: 5/20, 7/22 • 9:00 – 11:00 am
- Crow Canyon Gardens, San Ramon: 5/27, 6/24 • 1:00 – 3:00 pm

TOWN HALL THEATRE: 283-1557 Open Tues-Sat: 1-6 pm.

- 5/20: Gold Coast Chamber Players, 8pm
- 6/1 – 6/25: Red Scare

CITY PARKS & RECREATION – 284-2232
Summer Programs

- SUMMER FUN & ADVENTURE CAMP:** 6/26 – 8/4, register now!
- SPORTS CAMPS:** Multi-Sport, basketball, Soccer & more!
- SUMMER KID SHOWS:** Each Thursday: 6/29 – 8/3, 1:00pm, Stanley Auditorium
- ROLLER HOCKEY:** (1st – 9th grade) 7/11 – 8/29, Registration day: 6/7, 5:30 pm.
- FLOOR HOCKEY:** (4 & 5 yrs) 7/13 – 8/31, Registration begins 5/8.

Teen Activities: 284-5815 (6-12 grade) (Volunteer chaperones needed!)

- ACE OF CLUBS CONCERTS:** (High School only) Call 284-5815 for dates, locations and bands.
- MOVIE MADNESS:** (Junior High only) One Friday per month; \$5, 6:30–9:00 pm, reservations required, Lafayette Community Center

Family Events

- PARENT'S NIGHT OUT:** Saturday nights, 6:30 – 10:30pm. Call 284-2232 for dates and reservations.

Adult Classes: Call for prices and times.

- CPR & First Aid, Bridge, Cooking Workshops, Dog Obedience, Exercise & Fitness, Internet Basics, Swing & Ballroom Dance

CITY DIRECTORY

Leave your Council Members a message!
Call 284-1968

Council Members		EXT.
Jay Strauss	Mayor	270
Ivor Samson	Vice Mayor	272
Carol Federighi	Council Member	273
Erling Horn	Council Member	271
Don Tatzin	Council Member	274

New City Council Members were seated 11/22/99

For messages to all Council Members: 907

Administration

General Reception and	284-1968
Steven Falk, City Manager	Fax: 284-3169
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	299-3213
Sue Jusaitis, City Clerk	299-3212

Community Development

- **Director,** Craig Ewing 284-1968
- **Engineering Services** 284-1951
Tony Coe, Manager 299-3203
- **Planning Services** 284-1976
Mike Henn, Manager

Public Works Services

- Ron Lefler, Manager 299-3214
- P.W. Hotline (to report problems) 299-3259
- 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 Shanks, Analyst 299-3216
- Or 299-3215

Parks and Recreation

- Jennifer Russell, Director 284-2232
- Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services 284-5050
- Teen Programs 284-5815

Police Services

- Emergency: 24 Hours 911
- Police Dispatch: 24 Hours 284-5010
- Police Business Office: 283-3680

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Addresses

- Fax: 284-3169
- Street Address: 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
- Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1968
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

- E-mail: lafay1968@aol.com
- Website: www.ci.lafayette.ca.us



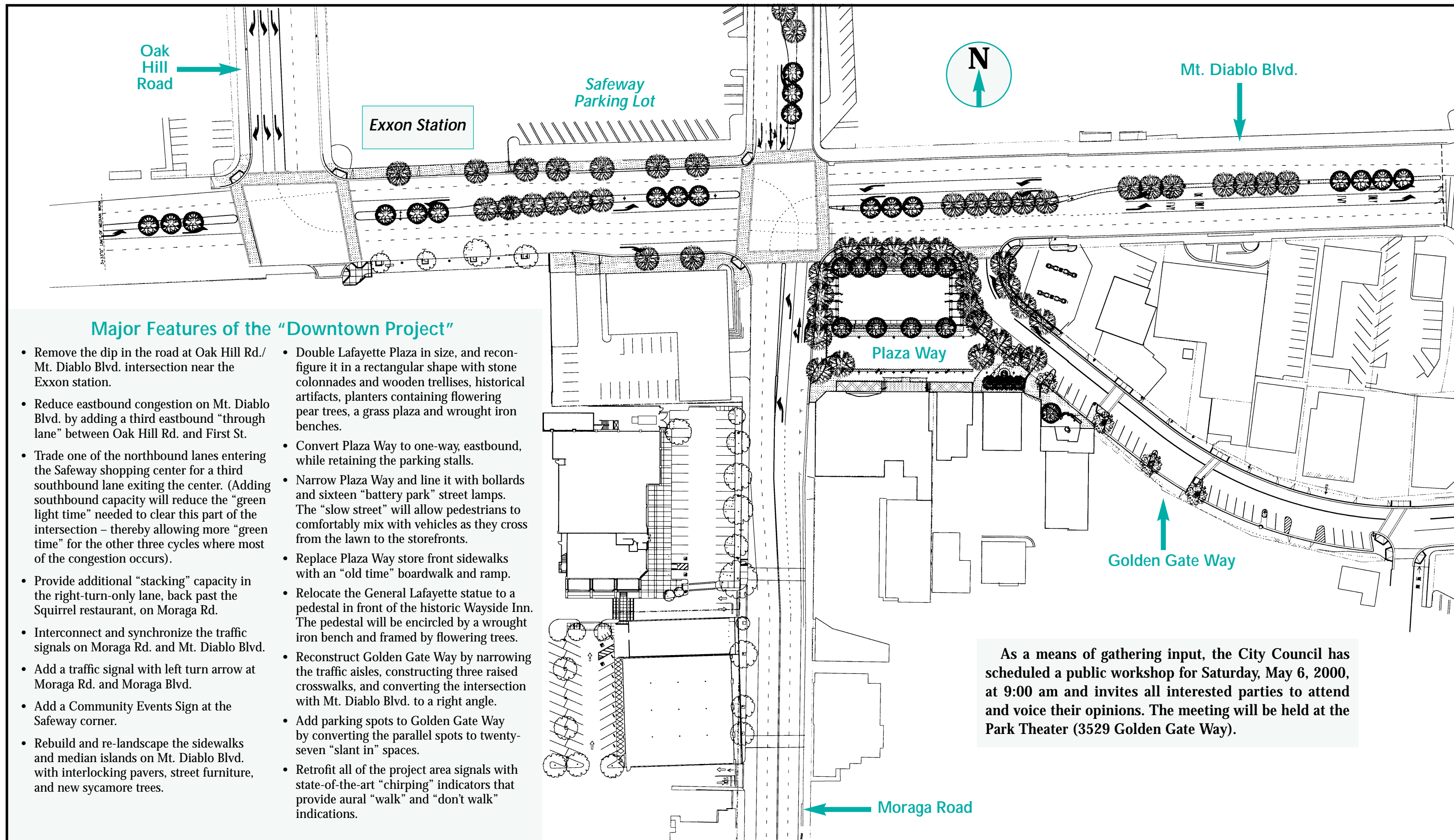
City of Lafayette
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“DOWNTOWN PROJECT” Streetscape Concept

Mt. Diablo Blvd. • Moraga Rd. • Golden Gate Way
Plaza Way • Lafayette Plaza



Major Features of the “Downtown Project”

- Remove the dip in the road at Oak Hill Rd./ Mt. Diablo Blvd. intersection near the Exxon station.
- Reduce eastbound congestion on Mt. Diablo Blvd. by adding a third eastbound “through lane” between Oak Hill Rd. and First St.
- Trade one of the northbound lanes entering the Safeway shopping center for a third southbound lane exiting the center. (Adding southbound capacity will reduce the “green light time” needed to clear this part of the intersection – thereby allowing more “green time” for the other three cycles where most of the congestion occurs).
- Provide additional “stacking” capacity in the right-turn-only lane, back past the Squirrel restaurant, on Moraga Rd.
- Interconnect and synchronize the traffic signals on Moraga Rd. and Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Add a traffic signal with left turn arrow at Moraga Rd. and Moraga Blvd.
- Add a Community Events Sign at the Safeway corner.
- Rebuild and re-landscape the sidewalks and median islands on Mt. Diablo Blvd. with interlocking pavers, street furniture, and new sycamore trees.
- Double Lafayette Plaza in size, and reconfigure it in a rectangular shape with stone colonnades and wooden trellises, historical artifacts, planters containing flowering pear trees, a grass plaza and wrought iron benches.
- Convert Plaza Way to one-way, eastbound, while retaining the parking stalls.
- Narrow Plaza Way and line it with bollards and sixteen “battery park” street lamps. The “slow street” will allow pedestrians to comfortably mix with vehicles as they cross from the lawn to the storefronts.
- Replace Plaza Way store front sidewalks with an “old time” boardwalk and ramp.
- Relocate the General Lafayette statue to a pedestal in front of the historic Wayside Inn. The pedestal will be encircled by a wrought iron bench and framed by flowering trees.
- Reconstruct Golden Gate Way by narrowing the traffic aisles, constructing three raised crosswalks, and converting the intersection with Mt. Diablo Blvd. to a right angle.
- Add parking spots to Golden Gate Way by converting the parallel spots to twenty-seven “slant in” spaces.
- Retrofit all of the project area signals with state-of-the-art “chirping” indicators that provide aural “walk” and “don’t walk” indications.

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