

STAY OUT, STAY ALIVE

Last February, two Walnut Creek teenagers drowned in a Walnut Creek stormwater channel when they attempted to raft down the concrete chute. In an effort to prevent similar tragedies, the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District has launched an ongoing effort to educate the public about creek and channel safety.

During the parched summer months, the water flow in these chutes dries up to a trickle. However, in fall and winter, the danger escalates dramatically when rain swells the creeks and channels. Although it may appear to be only a few feet deep, an almost certain fate awaits those who venture into the fast moving water. The flood control channels are part of our community's infrastructure and, like freeways and railroad tracks, should never be used for recreation.

The channels are designed to drain stormwater from our communities and take it swiftly out to sea, to prevent flooding. Water from the surrounding watershed area first gathers in small streams and creeks and then flows into the large channels for a quick trip to the Delta, Carquinez Strait and San Pablo Bay.

Stormwater passes from small open creeks to large underground tunnels; from narrow rocky stream beds to wide concrete channels; all the while gathering debris, speed, volume and power. At key points along the way, large structures have been built into the system to slow down the water and control the power. This allows the water to flow back into wide earthen channels without destroying the natural habitat or causing erosion. These structures are an efficient tool for managing our floodwaters but can be deadly for humans.

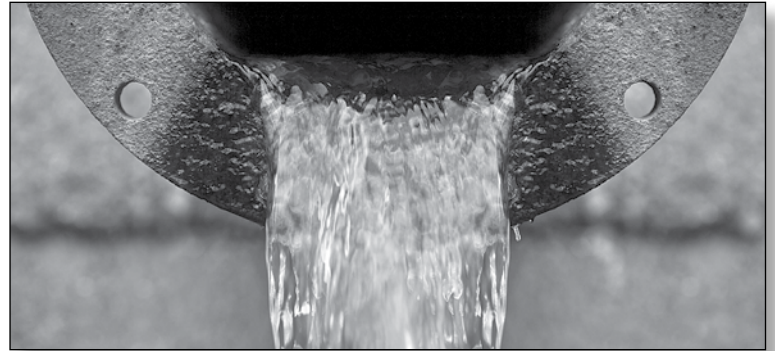
This annual campaign reminds us to be aware of the urban dangers around us and take steps to educate ourselves and our children to avoid them. Please talk to your children and friends about the flood control channels. Appreciate the great job they do for our community, but leave the channels for stormwater only.



READY FOR THE RAIN?

Summer is over and – like it or not – wet weather is on the way. Now is the time to “batten down the hatches” to protect not only your own property, but also the many beautiful, natural creeks running through the City. Here's what you need to do:

- Remove trash and large debris that might have piled up in creeks or near creek banks.
- Don't dump anything into creeks or storm drains.
- Compost leaves, grass clippings, and other organic waste in an area away from creeks.



- Check for eroding creek banks and protect bare surfaces by planting native vegetation. Disturb existing vegetation as little as possible.
- Avoid or minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
- Slow down rain water by using alternatives to impervious concrete such as brick, pavers, porous asphalt, or flat stones or decking that allow rainwater to infiltrate the soil.
- Take all potentially hazardous items such as motor oil, batteries, paint, pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides to the Contra Costa Hazardous Materials drop off site.
- Contact the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District regarding discharges to the sanitary sewer to empty pools and spas.

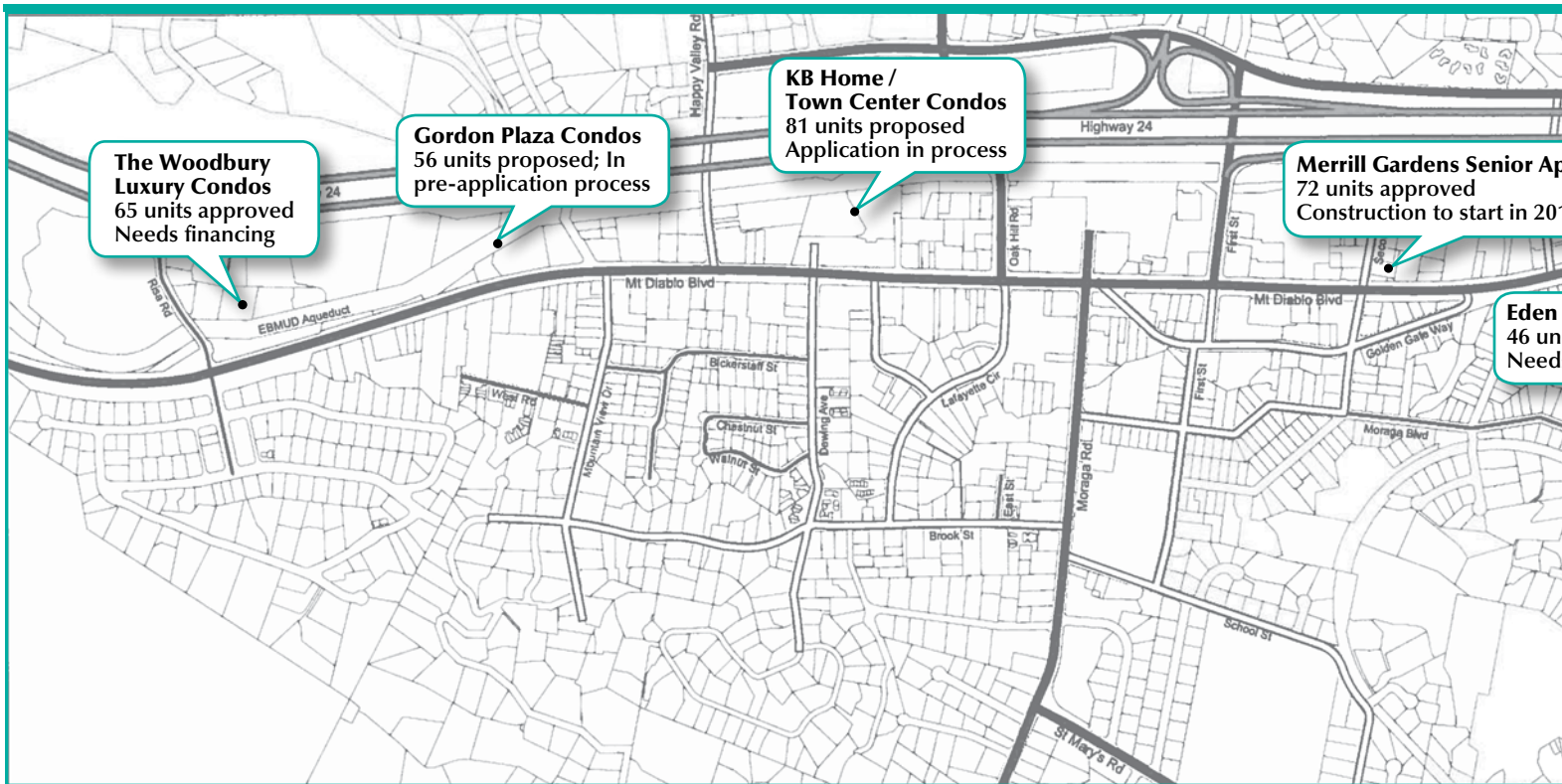
Major creek repair work requires an agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game and permits from Contra Costa County Public Works Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineering, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Please contact the City of Lafayette if you are planning any construction projects.

Report a creek problem or any dumping activities to the City of Lafayette Public Works at 925-934-3908 during working hours 7am to 4pm or to Police Dispatch at 925-284-5010 at other times.

Results of MEASURE G

Parcel Tax for Lafayette Road and Drain Reconstruction and Maintenance

On November 8th, 57% of Lafayette's voters sought to fix the City's failed roads. However, this did not reach the necessary 2/3 threshold so Measure G failed.



From the City Manager's Notebook:

DEVELOPERS TEE UP MULTIFAMILY PROJECTS

It must say somewhere in the big book of real estate maxims that developers “plan during the down-cycle and sell during the up-cycle” because, while Lafayette hasn’t seen much in the way of residential construction during this deep recession, we have seen lots of planning activity from developers wanting to build new multi-family housing units when the recession ends.

In fact, all told, there are now eight separate condominium or apartment proposals somewhere along the continuum of Lafayette’s development approval pipeline, totaling about 677 new units.

When you consider that, during the last two decades, the City added less than twenty people per year to its population, these developments – and the quantities of people they would presumably house – represent a big potential change for Lafayette.

Why the sudden demand? It’s not because the City’s zoning laws have changed; they haven’t. It has been Lafayette’s official policy since the first General Plan was adopted in 1974 to encourage multifamily residential uses downtown. We just haven’t seen very much of it over the last forty years.

We believe instead, that three factors are driving the market for multi-family units in downtown Lafayette:

- **Seniors.** The demographers tell us that the City’s population is aging, and our seniors have been vocal about their desire to stay rooted in Lafayette and move into a high quality downtown townhome where they can ditch the yardwork, walk to the grocery store or their favorite restaurant, and catch BART into San Francisco for the latest ballgame or symphony.

- **Families.** The State’s financial crisis has negatively impacted all of California’s school districts and even led some to the brink of bankruptcy. Young families searching for homes in Bay Area communities are thus attracted to the three Lamorinda cities, where parents, taxpayers, and businesses have done what’s required to maintain the excellent public schools. Acalanes, for instance, was recently named the top scoring public high school district in all of California – a remarkable achievement that draws education-oriented families into Lafayette’s residential real estate market.

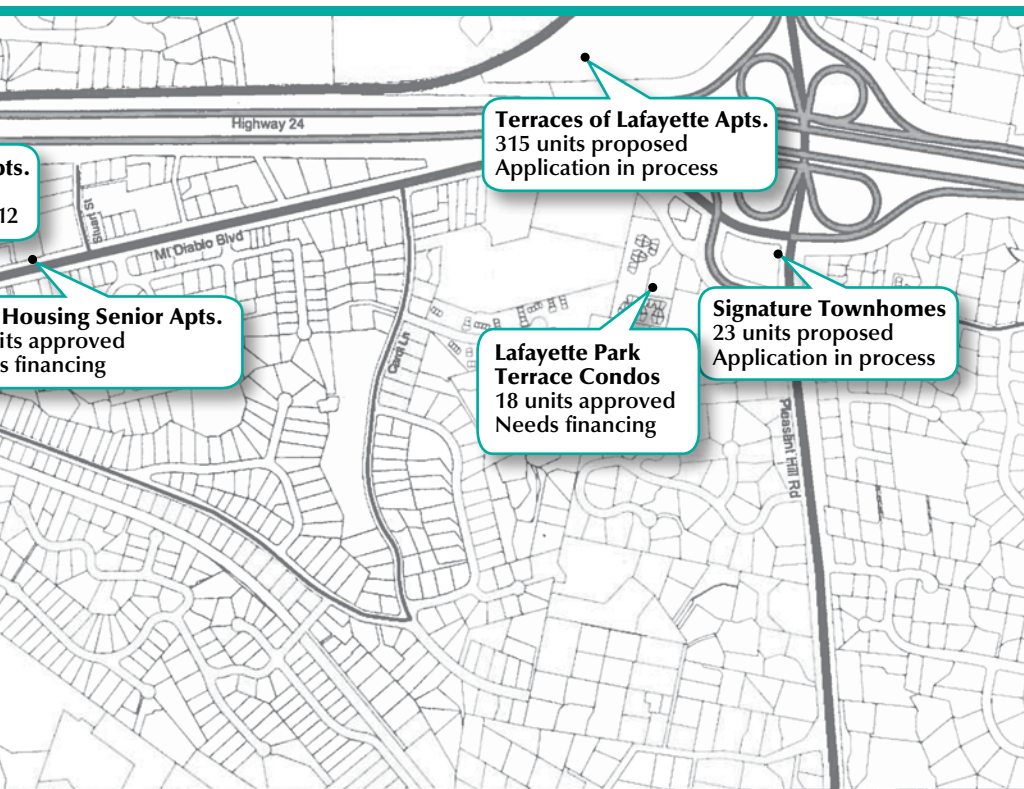
- **Vitality.** Downtown Lafayette is safe, vibrant, walkable, and full-service. With its many excellent food stores, customer-friendly businesses, thirty-five fabulous restaurants, and easy access to BART, Lafayette tops just

about any other Bay Area commercial district for sheer livability. Add to that the newest and best library in the Bay Area and the splendors of the Lafayette Reservoir – a 550 acre natural preserve located just 1/3 mile from the center of downtown – and you’ve got what just might be the finest small downtown in the Bay Area. Indeed, *San Francisco Magazine* recently listed downtown Lafayette as one of the region’s top hot spots.

The upshot of all this is, evidently, significant potential demand for new multifamily housing in Lafayette for entry-level, family, and move-down buyers. Which raises the question: if there’s so much pent-up demand, what are the developers waiting for? Why don’t they start the projects now?

They tell us that that it’s still difficult or impossible to find financing, and that banks – many of which were burned badly by the 2008 housing crisis – are often too skittish to make the multi-million dollar loans required to get projects out of the ground.

Given the economy’s seemingly endless funk, this isn’t likely to change any time soon. But, when things finally do turn around, Lafayette might see some new multifamily developments in and around the downtown area.



Downtown Housing Details

The Woodbury Luxury Condos

These units would be built behind the Veterans Memorial Building. As part of project, the EBMUD right-of-way between the homes and the Vets Building would be landscaped with native plants and shrubs and improved with art installations, benches and a pedestrian and bicycle pathway for use and enjoyment by the public.

Gordon Plaza Condos

Gordon Plaza is a proposed mixed use project with retail uses on the ground floor and housing above. An application has not yet been submitted.

KB Home / Town Center Condos

Public hearings on this project are slated to begin in January 2012. Plans include a public plaza behind Baja Fresh restaurant where children can test their skills on a climbing rock.

Merrill Gardens Senior Apts.

In addition to the 72 assisted living units for seniors, this project will include a 16-bed memory care facility, 6,000 sq. ft. of retail space and a landscaped plaza on Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Eden Housing Senior Apts.

Eden Housing will provide 46 apartments for lower income seniors. Construction plans have been prepared and building will begin when funding from either the federal or state government is secured.

Terraces of Lafayette Apts.

Preparation of an environmental impact report is underway to assess traffic, noise, air quality, aesthetic and other impacts of the proposed project.

Lafayette Park Terrace Condos

A small pocket park at the corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Mt. Diablo Court is included as part of the development of these condos which, if built, will be "bunkered" into the hillside.

Signature Townhouses

Located at the site of the old Hungry Hunter, the project would offer twenty-three for-sale townhouses in five separate buildings surrounding a central private green space. The majestic redwoods at the corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Pleasant Hill Road would be preserved.

DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

In 2006, the City Council held a public workshop at the Community Center and initiated a dialogue about the need for a long term plan for downtown Lafayette. Five years and well over a hundred meetings later, the community's vision and ideas about our downtown have been transformed into tangible concepts and are housed in the draft Downtown Specific Plan.

The draft Downtown Specific Plan builds on the Lafayette General Plan and provides a detailed land use and design framework to guide private development and public investment in the downtown over the next 20 years. The draft Plan's overarching principles can be found in its **Vision Statement**:

- Create a downtown, with small town character and a sustainable quality of life that includes a central core, pedestrian relationships between services, and is a place where residents can congregate, shop, enjoy cultural activities, conduct their civic affairs, and savor the beauty and ambience of a small town.
- Encourage the evolution of a distinctive Lafayette character that is informal with variations in architectural styles, massing, and setbacks while maintaining scenic views to surrounding hills and maximizing the enjoyment of its natural environment.
- Reinforce downtown as the city's center for business, civic and cultural activities with land use, circulation and design policies that retain the focus of the downtown as a retail center and multifamily residential neighborhood.
- Encourage economic activity beneficial to the community and support, enhance and maintain the community.

The Planning Commission will hold public hearings on the draft Plan in November and December and submit its final recommendations to the City Council. For more information on the Downtown Specific Plan, contact Niroop Srivatsa, nsrivatsa@lovelafayette.org, 925.299.3206. To download the plan, go to www.lovelafayette.org.



City of Lafayette
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
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THE MOST DIFFICULT JOB IN LAFAYETTE

“Thanks, officer, for reminding me not to park in that handicapped spot. I deserve the \$275 fine!”

“But officer, I only ran into the store for a minute. I’ll use the ticket as a helpful reminder to put my quarter in the meter next time!”

These are comments that our parking enforcement officers Sharon Lloyd and Niccole Kotschwar have never heard. Instead, what they generally get is something less appreciative, including remarks and hand gestures that are inappropriate to detail in a municipal publication.

Which raises the question: if parking tickets make people so angry, why do we even have meters at all?

The first parking meters were installed in 1992 at the request of local business owners and the Chamber of Commerce. Merchants complained that the on-street spaces were clogged with local employees and BART parkers. Meters, they said, would turn the parking spaces over, giving customers more opportunities to park closer to stores.

While timed parking zones might accomplish the same overall goal, enforcement is more difficult. Furthermore, the meters provide revenue to help offset the cost of enforcement.

Business owners also requested that net revenue generated by meters and citations be reserved to purchase or build additional off-street parking in the downtown that would be free of charge. The City Council agreed, and since its creation



Niccole and Sharon

twenty years ago, the Parking Fund has accrued over \$2M. That money was recently used to purchase property on Moraga Road that is now available for free parking.

None of this would be possible without the diligent efforts of Lafayette’s parking enforcement officers who may, indeed, have the most difficult job in the City. Despite popular belief, Sharon and Niccole do not hide around corners waiting for meters to expire. They are each tasked with working half the downtown area, and their job is pretty simple: if they see a car parked with an expired meter, they stop and issue a citation. The meter might have been expired for twenty minutes or twenty seconds – Sharon and Niccole have no way of knowing. They simply see the red flag in the meter and issue the ticket.

Another myth is that Sharon and Niccole are not real people, but heartless Cyborgs. Not true! Sharon grew up in Oakland, loves to cook, watch movies and enjoys all types of music but especially R&B. Niccole is a former Cornhusker from Nebraska who likes concerts, running the Rez and being outdoors.

While digging for quarters or getting a ticket while shopping is obviously annoying, try to remember that it’s also a “necessary evil” that actually makes it easier to park downtown. Remember, too, that Niccole and Sharon are just doing their job – one of the least glamorous and thankless duties in the entire City.

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 284-1968

Council Members

Carl Anduri	Mayor
Carol Federighi	Vice Mayor
Brandt Andersson	Council Member
Mike Anderson	Council Member
Don Tatzin	Council Member

Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

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

Community Development

Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	284-1951
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	284-1976
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	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 Hansen, Program Mgr.	299-3216
	Or 299-3215

Parks, Trails and Recreation 284-2232

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Senior Services	284-5050

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

Fax	284-3169
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Address	3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
	Lafayette, CA 94549

Website	www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
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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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