

The City of Lafayette  
A Brief Timeline

- ❖ 1400s - The Saclan inhabit the area that will become the City of Lafayette
- ❖ 1600s - Spanish settlers explore California
- ❖ 1847 - Elam Brown arrives in California and purchases Rancho Acalanes for \$900
- ❖ 1848 - Elam Brown builds first house in Lafayette
- ❖ 1849 - The Gold Rush begins in California
- ❖ 1850 - California becomes the 31st state
- ❖ 1852 - First grammar school in Lafayette is opened by Benjamin Shreve; Lafayette population is 76
- ❖ 1853 - The first business in Lafayette, Grist Mill, is established
- ❖ 1855 - Benjamin Shreve opens first general store in Lafayette
- ❖ 1857 - The town is officially established with the opening of the Lafayette Post Office
- ❖ 1864 - Plaza Park is deeded to the Citizens of Lafayette by Elam Brown
- ❖ 1871 - Second school is built in Lafayette

- ❖ 1889 - Elam Brown dies, age 92
- ❖ 1883 - Third school in Lafayette is built at the current site of the United Methodist Church
- ❖ 1904 - First tunnel through the Oakland hills is built
- ❖ 1914 - The Town Hall opens in Lafayette at its present site
- ❖ 1927 - Construction by EBMUD begins on the dam for Lafayette Reservoir
- ❖ 1935 - First Annual Lafayette Horse Show takes place
- ❖ 1937 - Another tunnel, later named the Caldecott Tunnel, is built
- ❖ 1939 - Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building is opened
- ❖ 1940 - Lafayette Chamber of Commerce is established
- ❖ 1941 - Lafayette Park Theater is opened
- ❖ 1960 - Lafayette's population reaches 7,114
- ❖ 1966 - Lafayette Reservoir is opened for recreational use
- ❖ 1968 - Lafayette is incorporated and becomes the City of Lafayette; a Lafayette Parks & Recreation District narrowly fails to pass, the only city park is Plaza Park; Ernie Marriner is hired first City Manager; and the First General Plan is adopted

- ❖ 1969 – The City purchases the Brook Street property for use as a future neighborhood park
- ❖ 1970 – Lafayette’s population grows to 20,484
- ❖ 1970 – The BART station is built in Lafayette
- ❖ 1973 – The City purchases 243 acres from 3 three property owners along Lafayette Ridge to preserve scenic open space, Lafayette Community Center gives 711 St Mary’s Road property to City for recreational and cultural use; a plan for the recreation of the Parks & Recreation Department is submitted
- ❖ 1974 – First General Plan adopted
- ❖ 1975 – BART service begins
- ❖ 1975 – EBRPD approves a budget of \$168,000 for planning and construction of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail
- ❖ Late 1970s – Lafayette completes first and only annexation
- ❖ 1979 – City builds Brook Street Park with major assistance from Lafayette Rotary Club and Seabees
- ❖ 1980 – Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail Staging Area is constructed at Olympic Blvd
- ❖ 1980 – Lafayette’s population reaches 20,837
- ❖ 1982 – Ernie Marriner retires as City Manager

- ❖ 1983 – Parks & Recreation Director is hired; Burton School property is purchased from the school district; Community Park property is purchased from CalTrans; and a Master Trails Plan is adopted
- ❖ 1984 – The Lafayette Community Center Foundation is established with the goal of turning the old Burton Elementary School into the Lafayette Community Center
- ❖ 1988 – Community Park Master Plan Adopted
- ❖ 1990 – Lafayette’s population reaches 23,175
- ❖ 1993 – Hillside Ordinance approved
- ❖ 1994 – City of Lafayette Redevelopment Agency formed (Disbanded by the State 2012)
- ❖ 1995 – Voters Approve Road and Drain Bond
- ❖ 1996 – Steve Falk is appointed City Manager; Lafayette Community Park playing fields are opened
- ❖ 1997 – LaFiesta Square upgrades and remodel approved
- ❖ 1998 – Lafayette holds its Sesquicentennial; Town Center is approved (all three phases completed in 2018)
- ❖ 1999 – Oakwood Athletic Club opens
- ❖ 2000 – Redesigned Plaza Park opens; Lafayette’s population reaches 23,988

- ❖ 2001 – The City holds grand openings for Leigh Creekside Park and group picnic site at the Lafayette Community Park
- ❖ 2002 – The City’s General Plan Update approved, Ridgeline Ordinance approved; grand opening is held for the Katheryn Peterson Bridge that connects the Lafayette Community Center to Lafayette Community Park
- ❖ 2004 – Park located at 711 Saint Mary’s Road is renovated and named Buckeye Fields
- ❖ 2005 – Mercantile completed
- ❖ 2006 – New Veterans Memorial Building opens; memorial crosses are placed on a hillside in Lafayette; Lafayette Pétanque Courts open
- ❖ 2009 – A new Lafayette Library and Learning Center is opened
- ❖ 2010 – Lafayette population is 23,893
- ❖ 2012 – Downtown Specific Plan adopted
- ❖ 2015 – Grand Opening of the Jennifer Russell Building at the Lafayette Community Center
- ❖ 2017 – Lafayette named a “Great Place in California” by the California Chapter of the American Planning Association
- ❖ 2018 – City of Lafayette 50th Anniversary of Incorporation (July 29); Current population of the City is 24,900