

CITY PROVIDES A HELPING HAND TO BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY THE PANDEMIC

It's been a long 18 months since last March when the initial stay-at-home orders were issued and the world seemed to shut down. Health orders required many businesses to shut their doors to in-person customers, and restaurants and other industries were particularly hard hit. Businesses are an important part of Lafayette's vibrancy so within a month of the initial "safer-at-home" orders in Spring 2020, the City Council authorized the creation of the Lafayette COVID-19 Business Assistance Program (BAP). The BAP is a concierge program, giving our small businesses time-sensitive information needed to navigate the labyrinth of funding programs, forms, and procedures to help them to apply for and receive COVID-19 relief funding.

In the 16 months since its launch, the BAP has assisted over 160 small businesses, over 960 employees, and helped businesses secure over \$1.8 million in COVID-19 emergency funds. This includes federal rehiring funds like the Paycheck Protection Program, small business grants like the CA Relief Grant, and emergency programs like Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.



Many restaurants, like Lafayette Public House added or expanded their outdoor dining.

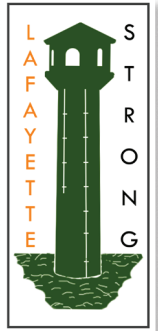
The BAP directly served the Lafayette community by responding to over 300 emails, 3,200 phone calls and over 75 video calls to answer the questions of local small businesses in need.

Business owners in Lafayette who would like to receive one-on-one support, can still register for the BAP at www.lovelafayette.org/BAP.

The new year brought new relief efforts. To assist with the nation's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government created the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

ARPA is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill that was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021. Within the ARPA, \$130 billion was allocated for local municipalities and counties. Cities can use ARPA funds:

1. In response to COVID-19 public health emergency and any of its negative impacts;
2. To respond to workers performing any essential work during the pandemic;
3. For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction and revenue due to the public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency; and
4. For investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.



The City of Lafayette will receive about \$6M – one-half of the funds were received in July 2021 and the second half will be received in July 2022. Funds must be obligated by December 2024 and spent by December 2026.

To assist the City Council in determining how best to use the funds, staff has been researching the economic impact of the pandemic in our community as well as soliciting input from businesses, non-profits and the community at large. In August, local businesses and non-profits were surveyed about their experience during the pandemic, their greatest challenges and what types of assistance would help them the most. In October, residents can participate in a survey and community workshops. The data will then be shared with the City Council in November along with recommendations on using the funds.

Get Involved: Visit www.lovelafayette.org/bizrecovery to learn how you can take part in the conversation about how to best use Lafayette's ARPA funds. You can also contact Thomas Myers, Economic Development Manager at tmyers@ci.lafayette.ca.us or 925-299-3257.

Vaccines are one of the most important tools we have to end the pandemic. Since mid-June, the COVID-19 vaccine has been available to everyone ages 12 and older in California. The vaccine, paired with other daily health habits, is slowing the spread of COVID-19 and it is our ticket to a more normal way of life. Lafayette has been among the communities with the highest vaccination rates in the county.

The Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) is your source for local COVID-19 data and information.

WAY TO GO LAFAYETTE!



CCHS is the County department responsible for issuing health orders in Contra Costa County. Their website includes information about vaccinations, getting tested, health resources and data dashboards. The dashboards are updated frequently to assist decision-makers and inform the general public. To look at the current data, visit www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/overview. (Click on the "vaccine" button for that dashboard.) For statewide data, you'll

need to visit the State's COVID-19 dashboard at covid19.ca.gov/state-dashboard.

RIDING OUT THE PANDEMIC ROLLERCOASTER TOWARDS NORMALCY

During the pandemic, there were plenty of adjustments that needed to be made by everyone. While essential services continued in the background, many day-to-day activities were halted or altered to fit the new reality of social distancing. Public meetings were held online. Kids were attending school remotely. Restaurants moved their operations outdoors. But honestly, a lot of the “fun” activities and events we typically enjoy here in Lafayette – the ones unique to our City – were not available.



Outdoor Dining Patio at Headlands Brewing Company

Fast forward to the present. In June, the state retired its color-coded system of regulations by business industry, however due to rising cases, by late July Contra Costa County reinstated the mask policy for indoor locations and residents and businesses were once again on the pandemic rollercoaster. Nonetheless, signs of rebirth

have started to emerge during the summer with more businesses fully re-opening for in-person shopping, dining and services (even with the new restrictions). And the fun is finally coming back to Lafayette with some favorite events returning!

In June, the Lafayette Chamber hosted the annual “Taste of Lafayette”, and it was as popular as ever with the event selling out in advance and 33 restaurants participating in the stroll. Following its success, the Lafayette Chamber hosted a citywide sidewalk sale in late July to welcome shoppers back to the downtown to support local merchants.

However, the rollercoaster ride continues, and the Lafayette Chamber unfortunately had to make the tough decision to cancel the Art and Wine Festival that had been scheduled for September 18 and 19. Regardless of these setbacks, we are pleased to see signs of a renaissance for our business community – a renaissance that we hope is the first step toward a return to normalcy.

To help downtown return to its former vibrancy residents are urged to support our local restaurants, shops, service providers, and arts organizations. We’re all on this crazy ride together!



Staff at Local Kitchens during the Taste of Lafayette

CHANGES LEAD TO EMBRACING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Like other businesses, the City has learned from the challenges and hardships faced during the pandemic. Perhaps not surprisingly, there were some changes for the better that we will continue to implement. For example, not only did the City Council and City commissions move their meetings to the online meeting platform, Zoom, but the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) pivoted to offer online town halls and other engagement opportunities to keep the momentum going on the important task of updating the City’s General Plan. Based on feedback, people really seem to like being able to participate in important meetings from the comfort of their homes. So, staff is looking into offering “hybrid” City Council and Planning Commission meetings in the future, allowing for both in-person and remote participation (i.e. via Zoom).

Also, while the City’s Main Offices and the Police Department lobby re-opened for public visitors on July 6, with staff still available by telephone or email, the busy Planning Department’s Virtual Planning Counter continues to be offered with drop-in hours as a convenient tool for customers with planning and zoning

questions. Visit www.lovelafayette.org/Planning for more details.

Another change is how the City accepts and reviews building permit plans; Since July 1, 2021, Lafayette Planning accepts applications for building permits through the Electronic Review Portal, idtPlans at lovelafayette.idtplans.com. This is now the only way building permit applications will be accepted. However applications for Design Review, Hillside Development, and other discretionary permits should still be submitted via email to planner@lovelafayette.org.

At the start of the pandemic, the Parks, Trails & Recreation Department created a Virtual Community Center providing fun, education, recreation and resources for all ages including ideas for indoor exercise activities, kid-friendly recipes to cook at home, nutrition services for seniors, how to stay connected with friends and family, links to educational online resources, and

more. You can still visit the Virtual Community Center at www.lovelafayette.org/VirtualCommunityCenter. For information on classes, programs and activities (both in-person and online), visit www.lovelafayette.org/rec.



General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) hosted four online workshops about the Housing Element – the average online participation was 96 people.

LIGHT UP THE PARK, LIGHT UP LAFAYETTE

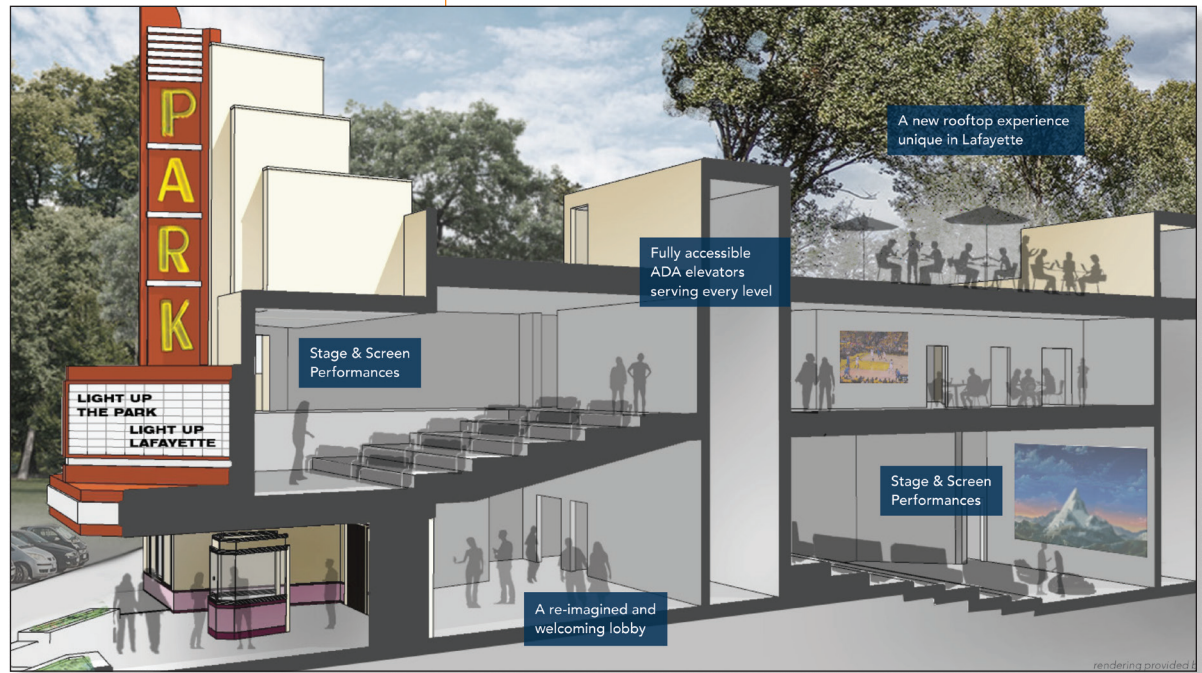
Picture this – it’s a warm summer evening and a friend asks, “Hey, wonder what’s playing at the Park?” You check the listings and see showtimes for a recent movie release in the downstairs theater, or an appealing acoustic duo in the mezzanine space upstairs. There’s even a trivia contest later in the evening. In fact, the rest of the calendar shows a whole week of entertainment guaranteed to entice patrons of all ages and interests – a book-to-film club meeting hosted by the author and director, a TED talk, even some streaming sports – all mixed in with movies every day! After getting an early meal at one of Lafayette’s great local restaurants you walk over to the cinema. After the show, you take the elevator to the Park’s rooftop terrace for a snack and a glass of wine. How great that you never had to get on the freeway or navigate the Tunnel!

Sound like fantasy? Nope, it’s all about to really happen. Following years of uncertainty, it appears that Lafayette’s beloved Art Deco gem has finally been rescued. In April the current owners of the Theater struck an agreement with The Park Theater Trust (TPTT) which is now on its way to revitalizing our iconic theater into an accessible, inclusive, community-centered cinema, arts and culture hub.

TPTT grew out of a grassroots task force of citizens and community organizations formed in the summer of 2018. The Trust became a 501(c)(3) corporation in 2019 and received official IRS tax-exempt status in February 2020. In May 2020, TPTT was set to close on the property but the global pandemic derailed the contract. The Trust has spent the subsequent months refining financial operations, establishing a donor strategy, vetting potential operators, and quietly expanding its community outreach. The Trust has been the grateful recipient of three grants from the Lafayette Community Foundation (LCF), several private donations, and a \$2MM donation from a local developer. In addition, several local businesses have been supporting TPTT with generous pro bono assistance and expertise.

Research into operating models of small community cinemas led TPTT to determine that success and sustainability would be achievable with a nonprofit owning the Park to protect it for future generations, and a for-profit operator offering movies and

a robust calendar of diverse programs.. TPTT has just launched its \$8MM capital fundraising campaign to finalize the acquisition and begin the rehabilitation; the goal is to be up and running by the end of 2022, the Park’s 81st birthday. The beauty of the nonprofit ownership/for-profit operator is that TPTT’s campaign is a one-time fundraising “ask” to get the theater back



The renovated Park Theater will be reconfigured within the existing footprint to incorporate two screens, a community space and commercial kitchen, and a rooftop terrace. The iconic marquee will be restored to its former Art Deco glory. *Drawing by Larson Shores Architecture and Interiors*

in action – afterwards, operating costs will be covered by the operator lease, with minimal fundraising only to maintain TPTT’s nonprofit status.

What about parking, you ask? Not a problem! TPTT and the City have negotiated an agreement to redevelop the rear of the property for parking in conjunction with Parks, Trails & Recreation’s plans for a downtown creekside pathway. The Park has always been highly accessible by foot, ride share, BART and County Connection but now there will be even more parking spaces on-site and in close proximity.

COVID has dimmed Lafayette’s light, but only temporarily. Data proves how small hometown cinemas are key to keeping a downtown vital by helping local businesses thrive and attracting loyal customers and a stable workforce. These venues serve as meeting places and social centers, with films, special events, educational programs, and fundraising activities that engage community groups, families, and senior citizens, as well as serve as safe, secure venues for our youth.

In 1941, the Park Theater came into being out of a desire for arts, culture, entertainment – and community – in downtown Lafayette. Those desires have not changed in 2021. Reconstructed, repurposed, and renewed, the Park Theater is poised to shine again! For more information on how you can help please visit www.parktheatertrust.org.



City of Lafayette
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
Lafayette, CA 94549

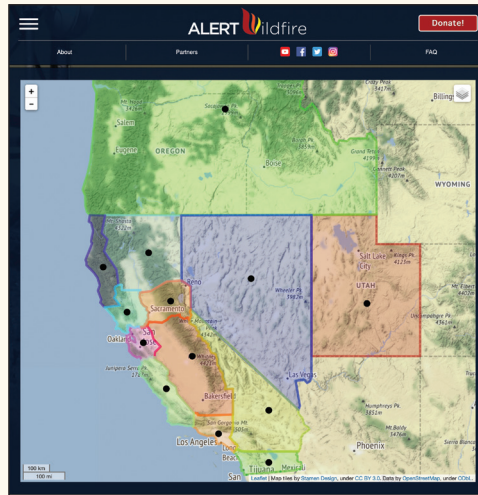
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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IMPROVEMENTS

Despite the pandemic, Lafayette is committed to improving the safety of our community and has embraced new technologies that help in that effort. Recent risk-reductions and emergency response improvements include:

- Installed more cameras across the county as part of the regional ALERTWildfire program, bringing the total to nearly 30 cameras. ALERTWildfire provides access to state-of-the-art fire cameras and associated tools so fire fighters and first responders can remotely control the cameras to discover, locate and monitor fires which can help save lives and property. The public can view the live camera feeds from the San Francisco South Bay and East Bay at: www.alertwildfire.org.
- Acquired a \$250,000 grant from CAL OES to install solar panels and battery backup at our public works facility, purchase additional radios for enhanced communication with City staff and volunteers, and purchase a portable generator to provide emergency power during evacuations.
- Partnered with the Acalanes Union High School District and Lafayette School District to provide new two-way radios at school sites and on school buses that are coordinated with Lafayette Police Department and the regional public safety radio towers owned by the East Bay Regional Communications (EBRCS). This enables schools to reach out to each other during emergencies, and allows them to communicate more efficiently with the police department to dispatch assistance if necessary. These radios will be purchased utilizing funds from the CAL OES grant mentioned above.
- Hired a contractor with special equipment, a masticator, to mechanically remove dry weeds at the community park open space as part of fire prevention measures in open spaces. The masticator more efficiently removes dead plants and dry leaves that could become fuel for a wildfire while also creating a fire break that will help slow the spread if a fire should occur.
- Installed generator interfaces at critical street intersections throughout the City to allow for organized traffic flow in the event of a power outage.



CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: **925-284-1968**
Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Council Members

Susan Candell	Mayor
Teresa Gerring	Vice Mayor
Carl Anduri	Councilmember
Gina Dawson	Councilmember
Wei-Tai Kwok	Councilmember

Administration

General Reception and	925-284-1968
Niroop K. Srivatsa, City Manager	
Tracy Robinson,	
Admin. Services Director	925-299-3227
Jennifer Wakeman,	
Assist. Admin. Services Dir.	925-299-3213
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	925-299-3210
Suzanne Iarla, Communications	925-299-3241

Planning & Building

Greg Wolff, Director **925-299-3206**
Virtual Planning counter (via Zoom)
available during certain hours:
www.lovelafayette.org/Planning

Public Works

Mike Moran, Director	925-299-3203
& City Engineer	
Donna Feehan, Manager	925-299-3214

Public Works maintenance requests
may be filled out online at:
www.lovelafayette.org/maintenance-request

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 925-646-2286.

Parks, Trails, Recreation **925-284-2232**

Jonathan Katayanagi, Director

Senior Services **925-284-5050**

Police Services

Ben Alldritt, Police Chief
Emergency: 24 Hours **911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours **925-284-5010**
Police Business Office: **925-283-3680**

Anonymous tipline, traffic enforcement, suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 925-299-3230

Fax **925-284-3169**

Address 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
Lafayette, CA 94549

Website www.lovelafayette.org

The City of Lafayette gives residents and business owners a number of ways to stay informed. Subscribe to City of Lafayette email announcements and follow us on social media. Details at www.lovelafayette.org/connect