

“LOVE LAFAYETTE” IS NOT JUST A BUMPER STICKER

More than 20 years ago, the former City Manager came up with the tagline, “Love Lafayette” to concisely embody who we are as a community. One of the ways we show that love is through our long history of embracing volunteerism, a community spirit, and working together for the common good. We sometimes refer to this ethos as “communitarianism,” and it is evident when neighbors support neighbors and when residents volunteer their time and services for the betterment of our community. The coronavirus continues to impact our daily lives, but the strength of our community endures!

Love Lafayette

In this issue of *Lafayette Vistas* we take a look at civic engagement in Lafayette, both at the neighborhood level and directly with the City. If you are also interested in the many service organizations that contribute to Lafayette being a community that cares, you can read about them in two recent issues of *Vistas* (Winter 2020 and Fall 2019) online at lovelafayette.org/Vistas.

HELP SHAPE LAFAYETTE’S FUTURE

Lafayette is in the process of updating its General Plan. Leading the effort is the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), a team of 11 people appointed by the City Council to help guide this complex process. Together with the public – *that means you!* – GPAC is in the second year of a multi-year process to review, discuss and draft all chapters of the General Plan, including the Housing Element.

Your participation is essential to create a General Plan that represents the community’s values and meets the city’s goals. If you have not yet participated in a GPAC meeting or activity, we encourage you to attend one or both of the next Housing Element community workshops on **Thursday, March 17 or Saturday, March 19.**

To meet state requirements for the Housing Element, the GPAC now needs your help to identify:

- the best locations for new housing
- barriers to housing development
- sources of housing discrimination

In the second half of 2022, the GPAC will engage the community regarding the Land Use and Circulation Elements.

Visit PlanLafayette.org for more details about the General Plan as well as all the ways GPAC continues to engage with residents.

What better way to show that you Love Lafayette than to ensure that you have a voice in what happens in Lafayette – both now and in the future!

Contact us by email at generalplan@lovelafayette.org or call 925-284-1976 to request disability-related accommodations. Language interpreters (American Sign Language, Mandarin, Spanish, etc.) can be arranged if requested at least five days in advance.



GPAC hosted an interactive workshop in June 2021 to hear from the community.

SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE OR PASSION BY SERVING ON A CITY ADVISORY BODY

Do you have a passion for Lafayette’s gorgeous open space and trails? Are you concerned about protecting Lafayette from natural disasters? Have you ever thought you had a better idea for solving a problem that bugs you about the City? Well, there is probably a place for you serving on one of the City’s advisory boards. Serving on an advisory body can be a rewarding way to give back to your community and plays an important role in accomplishing goals that may

not otherwise be achievable. Learn more at lovelafayette.org/commissions. For more information about advisory body meetings and how to apply to serve, contact the City Clerk’s office at jrobbins@lovelafayette.org.

No time to serve? No problem. This issue of *Vistas* shows you how you can stay in the know and up to date with what is going on in your city, strengthen your neighborhood, and get involved in planning for Lafayette’s future.

GET (MORE) INVOLVED IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

There are many ways you can help support and strengthen your neighborhood. Whether you are an “old timer” or new to the block, here are some ways you can get to know your neighbors and create a welcoming, safe and more resilient neighborhood:

The next time you see a neighbor, make eye contact, wave and smile (even under a Covid face covering!). This casual, friendly exchange opens the door for future conversations. If possible, go for walks around your neighborhood. Walking is more than good exercise; it gives you an opportunity to meet your neighbors and get to know your neighborhood a little better, too.

If your neighborhood has a formal or informal homeowners’ association, attend its meetings and gathering. If not, consider creating a “neighborhood directory” and sharing the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of everyone in the neighborhood who is participating in the directory. Check-in annually to update the list, or sooner if new neighbors move in. Once you have a way to connect with your neighbors, it’s easier to arrange carpools, host block parties, find a babysitter or reunite a lost pet.

Participate in Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch is a police/community partnership and relies on the best tool ever invented – a good neighbor! The benefits of an active Neighborhood Watch program include:

- Neighbors get to know each other and work together in a program of mutual assistance.
- Residents learn how to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhood.
- Residents learn about crime prevention techniques such as home security.



Unfortunately, like so many other things during the pandemic, the City has temporarily paused sending a police officer to make presentations at Neighborhood Watch meetings; however, we plan to resume this service in the future. In the meantime, visit lovelafayette.org/neighborhoodwatch for more information and what you can do to organize on your own!

National Night Out

National Night Out is another opportunity to host a gathering with your neighbors. This national event will be held at the end of summer on **Tuesday, August 2**.



Whether it’s a block party, BBQ, ice cream social, or just a simple gathering in someone’s driveway, this is another community-building effort that promotes first responder-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. Use gatherings like this as an opportunity to make sure your neighbors, especially seniors and those without a personal vehicle, have a plan in the event of emergency or evacuation.

The uncertainties due to the coronavirus mean we’re not yet sure the level that first responders might be able to participate this year. However, if you are planning to host an event and are interested in first responders stopping by, contact Cathy Surges-Moscato, Police Administrative Analyst at 925-299-3220 or via email csurges@lovelafayette.org to express your interest.

Drive like your kids and pets live here!

Please slow down when driving and remember that our streets are shared by children walking to school, bicyclists and motorists. Let’s all do our civic duty to look out for each other.

STAY IN THE KNOW ABOUT CITY NEWS, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

It’s easy to sign up for e-notifications about City announcements, meetings, news releases, calendar events, the Almost Daily Briefing (a curated list of news articles) and the Weekly Roundup (a summary of what’s happening around Lafayette). Go to lovelafayette.org/e-notification then enter your name, email address, and select the calendars/topics you wish to receive. If you haven’t already, you should also register for the Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Services

Community Warning System (CWS). Registering with CWS ensures that you will receive immediate notification of wildfires and other disasters affecting Lafayette. Register now to receive CWS alerts in either English or Spanish at <https://cwsalerts.com>.

You can also connect with the City on social media. Follow us at @lovelafayette on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and watch for City posts on Nextdoor.

BE PREPARED FOR WILDFIRE

Read tips on how to reduce your home's wildfire risk in the Lamorinda Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness & Evacuation Booklet, available online at bit.ly/Lamorinda_Wildfire_Guide. You can also request a hardcopy by calling the main office at 925-284-1968.

Get Firewise

Firewise is a national program of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) that helps residents to identify, prioritize and undertake wildfire risk reduction tasks to protect their neighborhood from wildfire. This is important throughout Lafayette, but especially where houses are near open space.

In 2021, four neighborhoods either applied for or received their certification as a Firewise neighborhood, while six more are currently in the process. The Firewise designation demonstrates that the group has worked with Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire) and developed a neighborhood action plan, taken action to reduce their wildfire risk reduction, and is committed to participating in annual tasks and education activities.

Learn more about the Firewise program at firewise.org. If you would like to learn more about the steps to become a Firewise neighborhood, you can start by contacting the City's Emergency Preparedness Commission via Police Administrative Analyst Cathy Surges-Moscato at csurges@lovelafayette.org. Once you have identified other neighbors who are also interested in pursuing the Firewise certification, you can reach out to Taylor King, Fire Inspector at Con Fire at tking@cccfpd.org or phone 925-941-3300, ext. 1544.



CERT members provide information at a local event.

Get CERT-ified to Assist After a Disaster

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. CERT is about people helping people and is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where you, your family and your neighbors may initially be on your own for hours or days until help arrives. CERT members also often assist with large civic events, so it's a great way to get involved in the community.



Basic CERT classes are offered twice each year by the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Teenagers (age 14 to 17) are welcome with a parent, guardian, or Scout Leader. The next class series will be held in Lafayette on Thursday evenings this fall. For more information on classes, visit classes.lamorindacert.org or call 925-255-5143 and leave a message.

CERT also hosts monthly meetings for all community members, on topics such as earthquake and wildfire safety, mental health during disasters, etc. Read their calendar at www.lamorindacert.org and click on the "meetings" tab.



President Paul Melmed (left), and neighborhood Firewise Coordinator Jim Cervantes (right) hold up the Springhill Valley-Prado Way Firewise recognition sign.



Residents of all ages lent a hand at a recent Lafayette Valley Estates clean-up event.



Lafayette Valley Estates residents removed clippings and plant litter at a neighborhood clean-up event.



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SHOPPING LOCALLY IS TWICE AS NICE

The Love Lafayette ethos extends beyond our neighborhoods; it also includes local shops and businesses. When you shop local, you are supporting local business owners and helping to keep the Lafayette business community unique, helping local workers keep their jobs, and helping the overall community because a portion of the sales tax collected on purchases comes back to our community to pay for police, safety, road repairs, etc.



To support local brick-and-mortar businesses that have experienced economic uncertainty as a result of the pandemic, the City recently launched the Shop Local Lafayette eCard Program. Customers who purchase a Shop Local Lafayette eCard will receive double the value to spend at participating businesses in Lafayette. For example, when you purchase a \$50 card, the City will match your purchase and you will receive a bonus \$50 card, giving you more to spend at participating businesses. This incentive will encourage customers to shop, dine or receive services in Lafayette, while generating more sales for local businesses. The City's "Twice as Nice" bonus card offer is only available for a limited time. Limit of two bonus cards per purchaser. For full details and to purchase eCards, visit lovelafayette.org/eCard.

LAFAYETTE TOGETHER COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER DAY

What better way to embrace "communitarianism" than to participate in a citywide community service day? The City, Lafayette Community Foundation and Lafayette Chamber of Commerce are busy planning for Lafayette's first Community Day! This special day will include a time in the morning for all of us to come together before work parties head out to their volunteer assignments. We will wrap up by coming together again for a celebration where you can learn more about the participating nonprofit organizations, participate in activities, enjoy food and music, and recognize all those who participated in making this new annual event a big success! Mark your calendars and plan to roll up your sleeves on June 4th. More details to follow soon at lovelafayette.org/CommunityDay. Email CommunityDay@LafayetteCF.org with any initial questions or ideas.



CITY DIRECTORY

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

Council Members

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

City Departments

Main Offices	3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210
City Manager – Niroop K. Srivatsa	
General Reception	925-284-1968
City Website	lovelafayette.org

Connect with us on social media
and sign-up for agenda notices:
lovelafayette.org/connect

Administration	925-284-1968
Admin. Services Director – Tracy Robinson	
City Clerk – Joanne Robbins	

Engineering Services & Public Works

Director & City Engineer – Mike Moran	
Engineering Dept.	925-284-1951
Maintenance/Corp. Yard	925-934-3908
Submit Public Works maintenance requests online at:	
lovelafayette.org/maintenance-request	

Report illegal dumping into waterways and
accidental spills to Contra Costa Hazardous
Materials Division 925-646-2286

Parks, Trails, Recreation	500 St. Mary's Rd
Director – Jonathan Katayanagi	
Youth/Adult Recreation,	
Parks & Trails	925-284-2232
Senior Services	925-284-5050
Lafayette Spirit Van	925-283-3534
LafayetteRec.org	

Planning & Building	925-284-1976
Director – Greg Wolff	
Building Inspection	925-299-0263
lovelafayette.org/Planning	

Police Services	3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Police Chief – Ben Alldritt	
Emergency (24 Hours):	911
Police Dispatch (24 Hours):	925-284-5010
Police Business Office:	925-283-3680
Code Enforcement:	925-299-3280
Anonymous tipline, traffic enforcement suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network):	925-299-3230 or 94549Tip@gmail.com