



V LAFAYETTE VISTAS

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POLICE ADD CAR AND BODY CAMERAS *A \$75,000 Expenditure*

Lafayette has, thankfully, been free from the various allegations of police misconduct that have dominated news outlets all over the country during the last few years.

That's no excuse to become complacent.

In January, the Lafayette Police Department installed mobile cameras in every one of its squad cars and placed body-worn cameras on all of its sworn officers. To our knowledge, Lafayette is the first Contra Costa city to deploy both body-worn and car cameras for all of its officers and vehicles.

"Car cameras and body cameras ensure that officers are doing what they are supposed to be doing," said Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen. "They protect everybody: the officers, the public, and the city."

Body cameras allow officers to record their interactions with the public simply by wearing a small mobile device on their uniforms. When appropriate, officers will activate the recorders,



making recordings of the event as it unfolds. According to Chief Christensen, these mobile video recordings will aid in investigating cases and evaluating officers' performance. The use of recorded interactions with the public should also reduce the number of complaints against officers and improve community relations.

Christensen said officers will activate the body cameras during any police-public interaction, when responding to calls for service, or

taking enforcement actions. Officers, for instance, will not have the body cameras rolling while driving around on patrol but will turn the camera on once a traffic stop is initiated.

The car cameras, likewise, will be activated during each traffic stop and will provide a second view of the same interaction. They can also be used to record traffic violations as they occur. This makes the courtroom process for the



officer much more efficient because it will provide a true record of the interaction between the driver and officer.

The department began planning to purchase the cameras last year, but first had to develop a policy for their use with the Contra Costa

County Sheriff, with whom the City contracts for police services. The Lafayette City Council approved the \$75,000 purchase last June, and the cameras arrived last autumn. The equipment has since been run through a series of tests to ensure it works as promised.

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"Our officers are extremely professional, and I have no doubt that these cameras will demonstrate that, over and over again," City Manager Steven Falk said. "More importantly, my bet is that the cameras will increase the civility of the interactions between the officers and the citizens, and reduce to almost zero the number of disputes. I am expecting that the number of complaints will go down significantly."

Wild Night at the Library!

On the evening of Saturday, March 5th they'll be breaking all the rules at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, with joyous people cavorting through the Library stacks, enjoying delicious food, libations, and making all kinds of noisy laughter. It'll be chaos – chaos, we say! – as the LLLC comes alive after dark for a special *Night at the Library* fundraiser. Guests will re-discover the Library through a series of creative themed stations featuring imaginative exhibits, literary guests, and engaging activities. Support your local library and get your tickets at lafayettelib.org.

LAFAYETTE GOES FOR GREEN POWER

If you live in Lafayette, you'll soon likely have several new green energy options to choose from.

In January, the City Council passed a resolution stating that Lafayette intends to join Marin Clean Energy (MCE), a community choice energy program that provides renewable energy to residents. The Council's action allows MCE to conduct a membership analysis for Lafayette.

Over the next few months, MCE will compare Lafayette's projected power load to MCE's capacity to provide additional energy. If all goes well – and there's no reason to believe it won't – Lafayette will then become a member of the program.

Lafayette residents could be running their blenders on green MCE power as soon as Fall, 2016.

The project is the result of years of behind-the-scenes work by Sustainable Lafayette and the City's Environmental Task Force.

"Joining a community choice power aggregator is the single most significant thing that a Bay Area city can do to reduce carbon emissions," said City Manager Steven Falk. "This is a big step forward."

Overseen by a professional staff of energy experts and a governing board of elected officials, MCE is a non-profit organization that not only purchases power from the grid, but also provides local customers with green power delivered from bioenergy, geothermal, solar energy, and wind power sources. The company even uses power propelled by methane from dairy cows.

MCE has also recently committed \$516 million to new

sustainable energy projects, including \$24 million to build a 10.5-megawatt solar project in Richmond.

Later this year, when the system is up and running in Lafayette, PG&E will still handle the billing and turn the power on and off when residents move. It will also maintain the power lines, own the utility infrastructure, and fix outage issues.

All Lafayette customers will initially be enrolled in MCE's "light green" 50% renewable power option. Users that are willing to pay more for their power will have the choice to switch to 100% wind and solar power via MCE's "deep green" option, or to 100% local solar power with MCE's "local sol" option. For comparison, about 27% of PG&E's power comes from renewable energy.

Residents who prefer to stay with PG&E will be allowed to do so at no extra cost by simply opting out of the MCE program. In other communities that have teamed with MCE, about 15% of the residents have opted out and stayed with PG&E.

Since its inception six years ago, MCE has delivered renewable energy at rates that are competitive with, and sometimes even less expensive, than PG&E.



SPIRIT VANS PROVIDE CRUCIAL TRANSPORTATION FOR ELDERS

The Lamorinda Spirit Van Program is growing! Created as a way to allow older adults to live independently, last year this program served 125 individuals and provided more than 4,200 rides throughout the area. Now in its 10th year, this plucky transportation program has grown from a one vehicle/one driver program to four vehicles with fourteen drivers.

How does it work? When older adults are no longer able to drive, they simply phone the Lamorinda Spirit office at 925-283-3534 and ask to sign up. The dispatcher will explain the program, answer questions, and ask the passenger to fill out a simple registration form. Once registered, all seniors need to do is call in two business days ahead of time for a ride reservation, and the ride will be there. We love to say yes! Although you can leave a message anytime, our dispatchers are available from 1:00 to 5:00pm Monday through Friday except for holidays.

There are about 9,300 seniors in Lamorinda, and according to a recent survey, 25% of the Lamorinda population will be seniors by 2020. That number is projected to grow to almost 30% by 2030. The need for safe transportation is on the rise.



The continued growth of the Spirit Van program, however, is entirely dependent on the number of volunteer drivers. If you're a good driver and want to help – whether it be Monday through Friday, or for Sunday morning rides to church – give us a call at 925-284-5546. A regular Driver's License is sufficient, training is provided, and we will do our best to work around your schedule and vacations.

Program funding comes from the City of Lafayette, Town of Moraga, Lafayette Community Foundation, Orinda Community Foundation, Federal Transit Administration, Contra Costa Community Development Block Grant, Lafayette Juniors, Moraga Juniors, Orinda Woman's Club, S.H.A.R.E., van fares, and private donors.

If you can't drive but want to support our efforts to keep seniors in their homes and engaged in their community, please consider making a tax-deductible donation. Checks should be made out to the "City of Lafayette" with "Lamorinda Spirit" on the memo line; and mail to Lamorinda Spirit, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette, CA 94549.

Thanks for your support!

NEW CONDOS NEAR TRADER JOES

In March, the Planning Commission will consider an application by Lennar Homes to approve a mixed use development on two acres in downtown Lafayette. The project will be at the northwest

corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Dolores Drive, where Celia's Restaurant now sits, and catty-corner from Trader Joes. If approved, Lennar will build sixty-six for-sale residential units, a 4,000 square-foot restaurant, and 1,400 square feet of commercial "flex" space. Project amenities will include a 25-yard lap pool and pool house, two lobbies, a club room, a fitness room, a storage room for bicycles, private and public landscaped courtyards and public art. The EBMUD aqueduct right-of-way located behind the buildings will also be improved with landscaping and a pedestrian/bicycle pathway, consistent with the City's aqueduct pathway plan. Ten of the condos will be sold at prices affordable to very low to moderate income households. For more information or to be added to the mailing list for this item, drop a note to planner@lovelafayette.org.



GRANNY LIVES IN THE BACKYARD! *How to Build a Second Unit*

Have you ever dreamed about building a tiny house in your backyard, somewhere where your aging parent or freshly-graduated college student might live? A place that's close-by but still allows them to live independently? Many people have.

So many people, in fact, that the City of Lafayette has policies and procedures in place to encourage such units. The rules can be complicated, and so you should definitely check on your specific situation, but generally speaking, in most of Lafayette's residential zoning districts, second units will be permitted by the City if the in-law unit:

- Is at least 250 square feet but not bigger than 750 square feet;
- Is shorter than seventeen feet tall or shorter than the main house, whichever is lower;
- Complies with the setback requirements applicable to the main house;
- Has no more than two bedrooms;
- Has an on-site parking space for each bedroom (not on the street); and,
- Looks good with architecture that is consistent with the main house.

In most of Lafayette's zoning districts, if the in-law unit complies with these rules, it can be approved by the City's Zoning Administrator in one meeting with a flat fee of \$700. You can study the City's complete *Second Unit Checklist* at lovelafayette.org.

What About Already Built Units?

Meanwhile, over the years, we are aware that many people have added second units to their property without permits. So

as to bring these units into compliance, the City is studying whether to grant amnesty to illegal in-law units.

What we know so far is that there are more of these in Lafayette than you might expect. Some were built before the City incorporated, or before in-law standards were required. Others were built knowingly without permits to save time or avoid cost. Given that these units have long existed in our neighborhoods and only a small fraction have been the subject of complaints, it is possible that legalizing them would not result in additional impacts on neighbors.



And so the Lafayette Planning Staff is currently engaged in a research project to figure out what other communities have done, and is developing a list with best practices to consider and pitfalls to avoid. Once completed, we'll prepare a report for the Planning Commission and City Council that includes recommendations for a local second unit amnesty program. The program might include reduced, deferred or waived development fees or penalties for illegal construction. Leeway from development standards might also include flexibility in location or orientation, reduced parking, or aesthetic review.

Ultimately, the City Council will be called upon to balance the goals of bringing illegal units into compliance and increasing the housing stock for all segments of the community with the City's mission to preserve and enhance Lafayette's neighborhoods.

More information will be posted on the City's web site and publicized in the *Weekly Roundup* as it becomes available. In the meantime, if you would like more information or to be added to an email list for future updates, please send us a note at planner@lovelafayette.org.



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LAFAYVIGNETTES

Share Your Artistic Talent at the LLC Art Gallery

If you've ever attended a City Council meeting, a lecture, or a concert in the Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center (LLC), you've no doubt noticed the art work in the art gallery as you enter the building. Where does this art work come from and who are the artists? The quick answer is: the art comes from the community and the artists are YOU! Most of the exhibitors are local, Bay Area artists and many live and work right here in Lafayette. You could be one of them!

In fact, the City of Lafayette Public Art Committee is looking to fill its 2016 and 2017 calendar with new art. The current exhibit "Art of Nagui," on display through the end of February, features modern Egyptian cubist art. Past exhibits have included pen and ink wildlife drawings, Plein Air acrylic paintings, digital photography, and high school student art. The art gallery also has a case for three dimensional art which has featured ceramic figures, glass masks and student art from Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE).

Exhibitors interested in displaying artwork in the library art gallery must submit an exhibit application and art gallery release to the City of Lafayette Public Art Committee. Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year. Please contact Staff Liaison Juliet Hansen for more information, 925-299-3216 or Jhansen@ci.lafayette.ca.us.

Mark Your Calendar for Earth Day

On April 24th, Sustainable Lafayette, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Lafayette invite you to Lafayette's 11th Annual Earth Day Festival from 11am to 3pm in downtown Lafayette. This year's event will focus around the theme "Act Locally", inspiring people to take local actions that have a positive environmental impact. For more information about the Festival, please visit: sustainablelafayette.org.

Lafayette Goes to the Dogs. Again!

Dogs will once again have their day in Lafayette on April 9th when the city celebrates all things canine. The third edition of **Dogtown Downtown** will be a fun and festive community event for dogs and dog lovers featuring activities geared toward well-behaved, leashed pups and their owners. There will be agility demonstrations, contests, and even "canine crafts" for kids. And don't miss Lafayette's best parade! It starts promptly at 10am and meanders from Lafayette Plaza to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. See you - and your pooch - there!

Lafayette Goes All In on Social Media

Some of the young whippersnappers around the office have recently introduced us to two new computer programs. One is called "Facebook" and the other one is "Twitter." Together they are known as Social Media! What funny names! Anyway, because we strive to be ever current with the times, the City has begun to use these tools to get the word out. You can "follow" or "like" us on either platform at LoveLafayette and, if you do, you'll automatically receive links to the *Almost Daily Briefing*, the *Weekly Roundup*, and other blasts of information from the good people at the City of Lafayette. Get with the times! Do it now!

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 284-1968

Council Members

Mark Mitchell	Mayor
Mike Anderson	Vice Mayor
Brandt Andersson	Council Member
Traci Reilly	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
Jennifer Wakeman, Financial Srv. Mgr.	299-3213
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	299-3210
Tony Coe, City Engineer	299-3203
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning & Building Dir.	299-3206
Mike Moran, Public Works Dir.	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), 299-3230

Fax 284-3169

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

Website www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

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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