



LAFAYETTE
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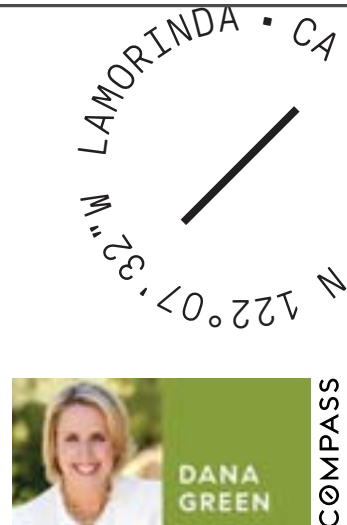


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Focus groups form to tackle age-friendliness of Lafayette



Photo Pippa Fisher

The Don Tatzin Community Hall was packed with people brainstorming ways to improve options for senior inclusion within the city.

By Pippa Fisher

The room was filled to capacity for the Feb. 20 Age-Friendly Community Kickoff event as residents came together to brainstorm ways in

which Lafayette could improve as a livable city to allow the full inclusion of people of all ages and abilities, particularly older adults.

AARP California Associate State Director Rafi Nazarians flew in from Southern Cali-

ornia to present the city with a framed proclamation of Lafayette's commitment to become an Age-Friendly Community under the criteria established by AARP and the World Health Organization, and stating that Lafayette has

been accepted as a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

One by one, speakers introduced the eight domains of livability. These speakers will be leading focus groups over the next few weeks to examine the following areas (domains): outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, work and civic engagement, communication and information, and community and health services.

For a 30-minute period the room was filled with chatter and laughter too as the community grappled with the prompted questions: What do you love about Lafayette? What are the current age-friendly needs, and what age-friendly needs do you foresee for the future? With suggestions ranging from the need for better transportation options to longer walk times on crossing lights, ideas were shared and recorded and will be assigned to the relevant domain over the next few weeks as smaller focus groups meet and work on the next steps.

Lafayette Senior Services Coordinator Maureen Neumann was pleased with the

strong turnout. "I was thrilled to see so many join us at the kickoff to have their voices heard. Excellent ideas, thoughts and suggestions were shared, many of which will hopefully be included in the end result: an action plan," she said.

Mayor Cam Burks was delighted with the event too, saying that the event represented the truly remarkable character and spirit of the city. "It was an amazing success with an absolutely packed room filled with community members who immediately rolled up their sleeves and dove right in to developing scope, strategies, ideas and approaches to improve the eight Domains of Livability in Lafayette."

Burks noted that the leadership of the senior services commission was extraordinary, saying "I'm grateful to Chair Terry Black and every one of our volunteer commissioners and city staff members for the profound impact they are making. Something very special happened in that room on Wednesday and it made me more proud of Lafayette than I've ever been."

No imminent plans to build on Lafayette BART-owned land

By Pippa Fisher

The city council kept the possibility of development on BART-owned property firmly on its radar at the Feb. 25 meeting, hearing from BART Transit Oriented Development Manager Abby Thorne-Lyman and BART Department Manager Rodd Lee, who reaffirmed the agency's commit-

ment to work with local officials on rezoning and gave assurances that there are no plans to develop the land currently.

Mayor Cam Burks explained that during his earlier phone conversation with BART General Manager Grace Crunican and Thorne-Lyman he received that same assurance and that he had re-

quested that assurance in writing.

Following the passage of state Assembly Bill 2923, which was signed into law last year and became effective as of Jan. 1, Lee explained BART is now mandated to implement it. The bill is designed with the intent of easing the housing crisis in the Bay Area by development of high-

density housing around transit stations. Lafayette lawmakers objected strongly to the idea that local control would be stripped from them. BART itself, Lee reminded the council, took a neutral position on the issue.


Thorne-Lyman explained that BART is now required to set standards for height, floor-to-area ratio and parking for all eligible properties, affecting 26 stations in three counties, by July 1, 2020. She said that the city will have two years to rezone to meet those standards.

Looking at the immediate future Thorne-Lyman explained that BART intends to

work with city staff and elected officials over the next couple of months, returning to its own board by late spring to provide a 10-year work plan regarding which stations they anticipate developing by 2029 when the bill sunsets.


Thorne-Lyman said that a statement indicating that they do not intend to build at the Lafayette station, barring some unforeseen circumstance, should come out by late spring. She stressed the difference between zoning the property and developing the property and noted that AB 2923 did not provide a mandate to develop.

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Photo Pippa Fisher

The city council contends that it is already doing its part in Lafayette to provide multifamily housing centered near transit, such as this recently completed development – a short walk to BART.



<p>Lafayette Public Meetings</p> <p>City Council Wednesday, March 6, 6:15 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p> <p>School Board Meetings Acalanes Union High School District Wednesday, March 6, 7 p.m. AUHSD Board Room 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette www.acalanes.k12.ca.us</p>	<p>Planning Commission Monday, March 18, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p> <p>Design Review Monday, March 11, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Arts & Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p> <p>Lafayette School District Wednesday, March 13, 7 p.m. Regular Board Meeting District Office Board Room 3477 School St., Lafayette www.lafsd.k12.ca.us</p>
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