



See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Lafayette:
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Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council
 Regular Meeting: Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Planning Commission Meeting
 Monday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Design Review
 Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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New public art planned for Lafayette

By Elaine Borden Chandler

When out and about in Lafayette, it is easy to see a variety of sculptures, fountains, paintings, and other pieces of art dotting the city. Many of these are part of Lafayette's growing public art collection, either gifted by artists and residents or donated because of Lafayette's Public Art Requirement. A new piece of public art will soon be joining this collection -- a glass sculpture titled "Komorebi" by the artist Mariana Botero. It will be installed at 3742 Mount Diablo Boulevard, a property that is currently being remodeled into a condominium complex called Woodhaven.

"Komorebi" will have six glass sections in six different colors and heights, all connected to a central pillar from which they radiate out like the spokes of a wheel. The colored glass will overlap, creating new colors and combinations based on the angle of the viewer and the angle of sunlight. It will also be lit from below at night so that a stream of colored light from each panel will land on a different condo door.

This emphasis on light came from Botero pondering the name Woodhaven when she first started designing the piece. In a presentation to the City Council, she said, "To me, it meant shelter, being

surrounded by nature, [...] and that blissful moment where light comes through the trees and the different colors that it creates." Botero decided to use this piece of art to explore how physical, mechanical actions, such as light traveling through a leaf, can cause transcendent emotions. The sculpture is named after this filtering of light through leaves, which is called 'komorebi' in Japanese.

"Komorebi" is also inspired by the structure and nature of a condo building. The six different pieces of glass represent the six different households of Woodhaven -- unique and separate, but also united and interacting. Each piece of glass also represents the height of a person. "These are all human sizes," explained Botero, "For example, six feet six is the height of the developer, my height is five feet six inches, and my son is three feet tall."

Botero was born and raised in Colombia, leaving to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Master of Architecture degree from Rhode Island School of Design and a Master of Strategic Design from IE University in Madrid. Her interest in art, architecture, and how they interact with each other and with people has remained constant through her career. She has had exhibitions of



Courtesy City of Lafayette

Projected image of what the sculpture Komorebi will look like when installed.

both her art and architecture, including a performance art piece involving laundry machines at Art Basel Week 2014. She founded her interior architecture and design firm, Designio Contento, in 2018 before moving to California. She currently lives in San Francisco with her son Rafael and her dog Shasta. In addition to designing "Komorebi," she is the interior designer and the designer for the façade of Woodhaven.

Woodhaven's location is up the hill from the Lafayette Veteran's Memorial Center near the Lafayette Reservoir. Permits were first filed in 2021 to remodel the office building on the property into residential condominiums. It is owned by Nikhil Gera of

Gera Developments and currently in the process of being renovated.

"Komorebi" is being installed because of Lafayette Municipal Code 6-2603, Lafayette's Public Art Requirement. In accordance with this code, all commercial or multi-family constructions or alterations in downtown Lafayette must donate a piece of publicly accessible art to the City of Lafayette. The artwork must be reviewed by the Public Art Committee and approved by the Lafayette City Council.

The initial presentation for "Komorebi" to the Public Art Committee took place on May 1. The committee did not approve it due to several concerns, including that the plan was for the sculpture to be made of acrylic, which is not known for its longevity or beauty. Another presentation was held at the next committee meeting on June 6, where Botero presented the new schema, which including changing the acrylic to glass. The committee passed a motion to recommend that the city council approve the project.

At the Aug. 12 City Council meeting, Jenny Rosen, the staff liaison to the Public Art Committee, formally made a Request for Approval for the sculpture. She was joined by Botero, Gera, and Erling Horn, a Public Art Committee member. Rosen gave a quick overview of the previous meetings with the Public Art Committee, noting what a pleasure it was to work with Botero and Gera. This was seconded by Horn, who added that the collaborative nature of those interactions is what makes being on a city committee a pleasure. After Botero's quick presentation, the city council members asked questions on the sculpture's final appearance and then unanimously approved the sculpture. The sculpture is expected to be installed by winter.

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