

Civic News



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Public Meetings

City Council Monday, January 10, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission Monday, January 17, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review Monday, January 10, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Arts & Science Discovery Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Lafayette: www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
Chamber of Commerce: www.lafayettechamber.org

• Police Report •



Police Blotter will be back next time.

Road Repair a Top Priority for New Mayor

By Cathy Tyson

A city council member since 2002 and mayor in 2005, Carl Anduri will once again be wielding the gavel as Mayor of Lafayette for 2011. His top priority this time around is to come up with a plan to fix local roads and find a way to fund that plan. "This will require a community solution," he said, explaining that the Council has wrung all the savings possible out of the current budget. The amount going toward road repair every year is just not enough to solve the problem, "It requires an additional revenue source," said Anduri.

He continued, "It's just not fair to those living on failed roads. We have got to come up with a solution." His ambitious

goal is a plan that will address all 97 failed roads over a ten year period – leaving roads that just require regular maintenance.

As noted in the September 29th issue of this paper, in the aptly named, "Want Roads Fixed – Need More Money," article, Engineering Services Manager Tony Coe made it clear: "Unless a new revenue source is found, the road repair backlog will never be solved."

Anduri also wants to help define what city government supports and values during his tenure as mayor. He wants to encourage life-long learning via the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, the Recreation department, and the Senior

Center, and communicate those opportunities to residents.

Environmental concerns are another priority. Now that the city has an Open Space Task Force and its first success with the Acalanes Ridge Open Space, he feels it's important to continue focusing on the environment and sustainability. He points out that virtually all the hillsides that residents enjoy are vulnerable to building because they are privately owned.

The new mayor is also passionate about providing housing for all generations. One project already in the pipeline is the 46-unit Eden Housing complex for seniors. Its design has already been approved; once financing can be

obtained, the project can finally break ground. He would also like to look into a way to provide services for seniors, potentially through a private non-profit organization.

"Big family news this year is we had our first granddaughter," said Anduri. He and wife Sharon have two grown children and have owned a home in Lafayette since 1980 – with an 11-year work-sponsored intermission in the far east when, as a lawyer with Morrison & Forerster, Anduri had the opportunity to open offices in Tokyo and Hong Kong for the firm. Since 2000, Anduri has been the President of Lex Mundi, a global network of 160 law firms in over 100 countries.

Report Defines Parking Situation Downtown, Suggests Solutions

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

Big surprise! There aren't enough parking spaces, especially at peak times, in downtown Lafayette. City Planning staff took on the formidable task of counting every single parking spot in order to define the problem and suggest ways of providing real solutions. Developing a complete set of parking recommendations is helpful to alleviate parking congestion, but it's also an important component of the Downtown Specific Plan.

Information gleaned from staff efforts was used to prepare the Downtown Core Parking Inventory and Parking Occupancy Survey as well as a Parking Demand Assessment. Key findings and recommendations were scheduled to be presented to the Planning Commission on January 3 (after press time) and are included in a staff report for that meeting.

To many drivers, it may not seem like there are over 5,400 on and off-street spaces

in the downtown core. With 81% of those spaces located in scattered off-street parking lots, and only 328 spaces, less than 8% of the total, available "without restriction to the public" according to the report – it's easy to see why drivers are frustrated.

In analyzing parking demand, "The problem is not how much parking the downtown core contains; it's where the parking is located, how accessible it is and how it is regulated or restricted," noted the report.

Results of the Parking Occupancy Survey clarify some of the issues, finding that metered street spaces are largely underutilized. A significant majority, 80%, of the employees that responded to the mailed survey said that they parked in the same lot as their place of business. Ironically, over half of the employers that responded said that parking is an occasional or significant problem for customers.

With parking regulations that were adopted in 1977 and parking standards that define the number of spaces required for different land uses last updated in 1989, staff recognizes these regulations need to be updated and fine-tuned. For example, a bakery has a different parking ratio than a coffee shop.

Recommendations that will be presented to the Planning Commission identify the need for additional parking but suggest solving the old problem in a new way. Currently each property is required to provide all parking on-site. Staff now recommends that the City examine parking challenges on a block-by-block basis rather than parcel-by-parcel. This goal, in theory, will make it easier and more economical for individual property owners and could spur development.

Other concrete recommendations to solve the problem include increasing the supply, accessibility and usage of off-street parking. This goal is broken down into small actions: topping the list – pursue opportunities to acquire land for public parking. Also, work with owners of underutilized parking lots to allow the public and employees to park there; work with owners of adjacent properties to connect parking lots; and work with banks to use lots after hours.

Additional suggestions include considering the creation of a Downtown Core Parking Improvement District to update the City's parking regulations and more. To see the complete report, go to the city website at www.lovelafayette.org, click on Agendas, Staff Reports under the Planning Commission heading, then follow prompts to 2011 Commission Agendas and Staff Reports.

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