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New City Website in the Works

By Cathy Tyson



Looking for improved functionality with an updated look and feel, Lafayette city staffers are seeking to provide a portal to the city with easy and intuitive navigation that delivers complete government transparency. Because the current site dates from 2000, there was room for improvement. After diligently working to hone a new website with host Vision Internet, an award-winning government website developer, the city recently launched final beta testing.

Beta testers, including yours truly, were asked to take a spin on the new draft site to find the information we needed intuitively and check to see if links worked properly and to make suggestions for any additions to make the site more useful. With links to all things civic and beyond, at first glance, it looks ready for prime time. Features include seasonal colorful photos that rotate through the homepage and buttons for city hall, residents, business, visitors and services - each with a drop-down menu of choices to easily find what you're looking for, from permits to the library to parking to public transportation. One of many out of the ordinary features is the Map Room that includes traffic counts, FEMA flood maps, fire severity zones, trails and

more.

Upgrades have already been made to document and audio managing of civic meetings, seamlessly provided with new cloud-based services from Granicus, because the old vendor discontinued its service. City documents are searchable to find a complete history of events, just by plugging in key language like "bike park" or "terraces." Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson hopes to officially launch the new website July 1.

For residents who currently receive helpful automated notices for meetings and the City Manager's Friday Summary, that service will be continued, with a simple change-over. "People will need to re-subscribe to the notifications that they want when the new site launches. We will send out an email to everyone who is currently subscribed before we cut over to the new site to let them know what they need to do," said Robinson. The new website will have the same address as the old website, www.lovelafayette.org.

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