

# LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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One of an army of sewers formed in Lafayette to meet mask needs.



The Kosla sisters, Audrey and Grace, have been leading production of face masks in Orinda.



CAPA moms worked in Moraga on mask production.



With bags donated from Diablo Foods to the Lafayette volunteers, masks are allocated to various recipients across the area ready for use.

Photos provided

## An army of local volunteers answer call for face masks

By Pippa Fisher

Although the news is dire, Lamorindans across the tri-city area can take pride in knowing that the sense of community is alive and thriving. In Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda teams of volunteers have taken quietly and without fanfare to their sewing machines to churn out large numbers of non-medical face masks for essential workers in

the area.

In Lafayette Susan Goldie of Sewnow Fashion Studio said the idea originated from the community. "As the extreme nature of the pandemic was unfolding, I received email after email or tags on my social media account, asking if there was any way we could help make masks," she said.

Goldie explains she started with the medical community but their requirements were not compatible with what they could provide, so she pivoted

to designing the best cotton mask they could realistically create. About the same time, Kathy Bowles of the Lafayette Community Foundation and Anne Birdsong at Lafayette Rotary were seeking mask solutions for non-healthcare essential workers in the community. They reached out to Goldie and the Lafayette Mask Brigade was born. Their goal: Identify the organizations in need and then create and deliver up to 2,000 free, reusable face masks as quickly as possible. ... continued on Page A10



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## Pandemic delivers a blow to public finances. But how much of one?

By Nick Marnell

Because of actions taken at the federal, state and local level, COVID-19 is expected to negatively affect the financial condition of the Lamorinda municipalities, but for how long and how severely remain in doubt.

"Nobody has a crystal ball," said Steve Salomon, Orinda city manager. "There is a wide range of beliefs about what's going to happen, and some are more optimistic than others."

Business closures and the order for residents to stay at home will likely have the most negative effects on local financial statements. Over the next "month or so," Salomon sees a drop in fees the city earns from classes, facility rental and sports activities through the Parks and Recreation Department as one of the biggest losses in revenue to

Orinda, and he expects that sales tax, gas tax and development related revenue will be less than the amount the city budgeted. "My own estimate is that the impact could be well over \$1 million on the city's \$16.3 million budget," Salomon said.

Assuming that the stay-at-home order remains through June, Lafayette estimates slightly more than a \$1 million hit to its operating budget. Sales tax will contribute \$650,000 to the deficit, the largest component of the loss by far. Because property is not changing hands as expected, transfer tax revenue will come up \$180,000 short, but property tax revenue itself should be relatively stable. "Prices have not dropped at this point, so property tax should come in close to normal," said Tracy Robinson, administrative services director.

Neither city included expense reductions in its

forecast, though Orinda has declined to fill three staff vacancies and has stopped scheduling hours for part-time employees. "While it is not necessary to make any drastic changes now without the full complement of facts, the city manager has already put a hiring freeze in place and instructed department managers to cease all nonessential spending," Robinson said.

Moraga has not released updated financial information as it pertains to the virus. "The budget discussion is scheduled in May and we are addressing the financial impact in the adjusted FY20 and proposed FY21 budget," said Norma Veloso, director of administrative services. According to town documents, Moraga reports a 2020 operating budget of \$10.24 million.

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