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COMPASS



Lafayette police chief updates council on crime rates, emergency preparedness



Photo courtesy Lafayette Police Department

by a white police officer in Minneapolis – among other unarmed Black men and women killed or critically injured last year by police – Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt's annual report included local crime rates and important information about community emergency preparedness.

While adjusting to the challenges of safely delivering service to the community and maintaining a healthy work force during COVID-19, Alldritt reported the department responded to 14,000 calls for service and filed 1,300 reports. Violent crimes continued to track at low rates (the 2020 yearly total

was 292; the highest in a 10-year comparison was 517 in 2015). An uptick in armed and strong-armed robbery (5 and 6 incidents, respectively) and commercial burglary (28 crimes) and drops in residential burglaries to 9 from 22 burglaries in 2019, were the most notable. Alldritt said police department and business-owned cameras in the downtown core provided effective coverage that helped solve some of the burglary cases. Lower residential burglaries he attributed to more people working from home during the pandemic.

After last year's devastating wildfire season and just one week before an early red

flag warning was announced (May 3) for a large area of Northern California from Shasta Dam to just north of Los Banos, Alldritt's presentation with updates about the Emergency Preparedness Commission's activities received critical attention. The last time the National Weather Service issued a red flag warning in early May for Northern California's interior was in 2014.

Referencing two public safety power shutoffs during 2020, Chief Alldritt said the department's generators were successfully deployed to provide power at several key traffic intersections.

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By Lou Fancher

Summarizing 2020, a year that saw a global pandemic, systemic public health and

safety disparities and social justice protests leading to calls for police reform at local and national levels following the murder of George Floyd

Council approves study of proposed downtown growth scenarios

Draft growth geometrics

- # Area Name
- 1 Downtown West End (north)
- 2 Downtown West End (south)
- 3 Downtown Core (north)
- 4 Downtown Core (south)
- 5 Downtown East End (north)
- 6 Downtown East End (south)
- 7 BART
- 8 Deer Hill Corridor
- 9 Oakwood / DeSilva
- 10 Village Center
- 11 West Road (MRT)
- 12 Bickerstaff / Crescent
- 13 Dewing / Brook / Rosedale
- 14 Almanor Lane
- 15 The Orchards

Image provided



By Jennifer Wake

Discussions of housing development opportunities in the city of Lafayette continued past midnight at the April 26 city council meeting after the council was tasked to consider approval of two proposed growth scenarios as part of the

sixth cycle of the state-mandated housing element process to be studied in the California Environmental Quality Act analysis.

In December 2020, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) executive board adopted the Housing Methodology Committee's recommendation to distribute the re-

gional housing need of 441,176 units established by the State Department of Housing and Community Development. Lafayette's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is expected to be approximately 2,114 units, according to the report, compared to 400 units in the city's fifth housing element cycle.

The city's CEQA consultant, ESA, will prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report, which is a more general environmental review for long range planning documents, for the potential zoning changes that may be necessary to accommodate the final RHNA allocation. CEQA review is expected to take about a year

and must be finished by mid-year 2022 in order to comply with AB 2923 – state legislation that affects zoning requirements on existing BART-owned property within a half mile of stations in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties.

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