

# Park Theater on path to reopening



Image provided

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Along with the search for a for-profit partner to lease and operate the site as a movie theater, Park Theater Trust board members and the volunteer task force come with a mission to present multigenerational, multi-ethnic and racially diverse performing arts events. Farrell's Power-Point presentation displayed early architectural renderings for the new theater and community hub. "This will be a multipurpose venue for young and old," she said, "with two intimate theaters with flexible seating, a concession area, a commercial kitchen to serve patrons of the theaters, a mezzanine community space, a rooftop terrace, and the opportunity to create an inviting green space along Lafayette Creek."

Farrell said every community "needs a shining light" and the refurbished building will provide the city of Lafayette, its citizens, and visitors with three things: a signature sense of place and cul-

ture, additional visual texture and variety in the downtown core, and a location where people bond through a shared history.

Work projected to rehabilitate the building requires the roof must be replaced and HVAC and electrical issues addressed. Improvements to reach ADA compliance are necessary and asbestos abatement is likely, along with other aesthetic and code issues. Parking in the downtown core is always a hot button topic; the Park Theater Trust website reports that the city recently developed a surface parking lot with 23 spaces within a 5-minute walk of the Park Theater and an agreement with the city will allow for redevelopment behind the property to create 33 parking spaces. The Park Theater in the past has also been accessible by foot traffic, ride share, BART, and County Connection bus service.

Reaction from the council and public comments following Farrell's presentation were overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

# Lafayette police chief update

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Pleased with the city of Lafayette's emergency operations plan, he shared credit for wildfire safety improvements with the community. Out of Lafayette's 10,000 households, Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS) data shows that in 2019, approximately 2,900 households had signed up for CWS. At the end of 2020, signups had increased to 8,688. Alldritt said it demonstrated "a huge growth."

As with crime solving, cameras placed under the ALERTWildfire program - close to 30 installed by the Lafayette Police Department, he indicated - are collectively an instrumental component of public safety when it comes to wildfires. Additionally, establishing the community's own FCC-licensed radio station that transmits emergency information 24/7 throughout the area on AM 1670, Alldritt said, provides real time updates during wildfire emergencies, power outages and other disasters.

Mayor Susan Candell in a question following council members' inquiries about specific crime statistics, asked Alldritt to provide information about a \$250,000 grant recently received by the department. The State of California Office of Emergency Services in 2019 and 2020 offered opportunity for public safety departments to apply for grants related to power resiliency. "I did submit a grant request in 2019 but didn't get it; but in 2020, we did," Alldritt said. "We received a check from the State of California of just shy of \$250,000."

Specifically, the items included in the grant request addressed improvements such as solar panels and a generator

backup for the public works center to increase efficacy during emergencies. The chief also partnered with Acalanes Union School District Superintendent John Nickerson to apply for separate funds to purchase additional radios. The radios will be placed at school sites and on school buses and connect to public safety radio towers operated in Alameda and Contra Costa County by the East Bay Regional Communications System (EBRCS).

Alldritt told the council, "(This) means every Lafayette school site and all city department sites will be supported by the same service the police department uses." He said that with the additional radios, schools can reach out to each other during emergencies, city emergency centers will communicate more efficiently, and the police department can monitor the channel or coordinate with the county sheriff's office to dispatch assistance if necessary. Multiple backups to the channel ensures that even in a disaster, communication will be reliable. If for some reason the entire EBRCS system breaks down, Alldritt said it would mean the disaster is so dire that regardless of radio communications, "we're all in trouble."

Expectedly, response from the council and public comments regarding Alldritt's success in funding additional safety measures for Lafayette were congratulatory. A special city council meeting regarding wildfire preparedness, featuring presentations by Contra Costa Fire Protection District, Lamorinda CERT, Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission, and Lafayette PD will be held at 7 p.m. May 17 via Zoom webinar.

**Correction:** In the April 28 Lamorinda Weekly article, "Council considers potential Conflict of Interest violation," the story should have stated that Design Review Commissioner Kristen Sidell agreed not to bill the client \$855 in fees, not the city of Lafayette.



## Lafayette Public Meetings

### City Council

Regular Meeting  
Monday, May 24, 7 p.m.  
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

### Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, May 17, 7 p.m.  
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

### Design Review

Wednesday, May 12, 7 p.m. Zoom  
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

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