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Letters to the editor

What is building electrification?

"Electrifying everything" and powering our lives with clean electricity is an essential way communities can respond to climate chaos (fires, droughts, poor air quality). In our homes and places of work, substituting natural gas appliances with new, highly-efficient electric alternatives effectively reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves health and safety, and lowers energy costs for residents. Therefore, the city of Lafayette is considering adopting policies to require newly constructed buildings to be built all-electric and to encourage existing building owners to convert their fossil fuel appliances to electric as well.

Some of the action items under consideration include the following: 1) Require all new building construction to be all-electric, with no gas hook ups; 2) Require certain electric appliances and electrical system upgrades during major remodeling of existing buildings;

3) Ensure that our citizens and local business owners are supported as we transition our city to meet its future energy needs, and goals toward resiliency; 4) Require an annual review and feedback process to ensure that our citizens' needs are addressed, and that our city's goals are being met; and 5) Require that natural gas lines be capped/decommissioned in existing buildings by 2045.

Please go to <http://lovelafayette.org/ebuildings> to learn more, watch the Environmental Task Force's recorded Building Electrification webinar (22 minutes). For questions, email planning technician Josh Muller JMuller@lovelafayette.org.

Nancy Hu DDS
Chair of Lafayette's Environmental Task Force

Vision Zero in Lafayette

The Lafayette City Council has just approved improvements in the neighborhood of three of the local schools regarding traffic safety. This is said to be part of the Vision Zero program. Vision Zero is a series of activities said to improve safety as far as pedestrian and vehicular accidents go. It is not a prescribed program but rather a an amorphous series of steps to reduce auto-pedestrian collisions.

One thing is evident, Improvement does not come until the speed is reduced for vehicular traffic. When Lafayette started it had to make a decision about how it was going to manage vehicular traffic. They decided that the best thing was to get the automobiles through town. It has now been 60 years and I think it's time for the city to say "STOP". Something must be done to moderate vehicular speed.

In many of the cities where the Vision Zero program has been tried there was not improving safety until the speed limit was reduced. A car going at 30 miles an hour covers 1 mile in 2 minutes. A car going 25 miles an hour takes an extra 24 seconds. Surely the people of our community can afford 24 seconds per mile in order to make it safer for children, for adults, for seniors, and for bicycle riders, etc. It's time for the city to reduce the killer speed limits within the city of Lafayette. They now have that in their purview. The law has been changed and all it takes is city council action. I truly believe that most of the drivers in Lafayette would be willing to contribute a minute or two a day for the safety of their relatives and other people's relatives.

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