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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Historic sign replica installed in Old Town

LAFAYETTE, Colo December 21, 2018 – In 2010 when Vhim and Kamala Rai purchased the old LaFamilia Restaurant building, little did they know their acquisition would bring about exciting historic preservations and restorations in Old Town Lafayette. Friday marked the latest historic pursuit at 201 N. Public Road with the installation of Lafayette’s creative*diverse*eclectic version of an iconic neon sign that once flashed its welcoming message to local drinking establishment customers.

Initial plans for the building involved renovating the former restaurant into a new venue, but the owners soon realized it was not structurally sound and would require a re-build. City Administrator Gary Klaphake worked with City Council and the Lafayette Urban Renewal Authority (LURA) to develop a vision for the demolition and replacement of the structure. This plan involved replacing the south and east facades with a historically accurate reconstruction and leasing the front portion of the building to create a community arts center to support the City’s burgeoning arts scene. During the demolition process in 2015, a fully intact [Coca-Cola advertising mural](#) was uncovered. The mural was removed, preserved, and installed onto the southern wall of 103 N. Public Road – another historic renovation project incorporating the Black Diamond Restaurant and Tap House, Chocolaterie Stam, and Just Dandy boutique. Today, [The Collective Community Arts Center](#) and William Oliver’s Publick House provide an eclectic use of the notable building at 201 N. Public Road.

While funds were not available when the original reconstruction project launched, strong support existed to further recapture the full impact of the building’s façade by incorporating a replica of the “Coors on Tap” neon sign that once graced the structure. In late 2018, the LURA board resurrected the refurbished sign concept and began discussions to fund a reproduction with a twist, one that incorporated the words “Arts on Tap” to creatively promote the new community arts center. LURA aligned resources with the Lafayette Arts and Cultural Resources Division to make the sign a reality.

"The reproduction sign salutes the historic roots of Old Town and embraces the creative and eclectic character of the Lafayette community," said Kevin Muller, LURA Chair. "We're excited and honored for the opportunity to give the Collective a cool beacon on Public Road."

The historic neon sign was manufactured by Gordon Sign Company of Denver who is touted as the “oldest sign company in America” and specializes in iconic neon signage.

