



Meeting Date: October 16, 2012

TOWN OF MORAGA

STAFF REPORT

To: Park and Recreation Commission
From: Jay Ingram, Parks and Recreation Director
Subject: October Agenda Items

New Business

Item VIII. A. Discussion on Trails in the Town of Moraga – (discussion/action)

During the September Park and Recreation Commission meeting, Chair Reed reported on discussions with Commission chairs in Lafayette and Moraga. One take away from this discussion was the topic of trails in Lafayette and Orinda, with Lafayette being the most proactive. With the recent interest in potential residential developments, the Commission could once again address trails to make sure new developments not only include parkland, but trails as well in order to further address pedestrian connectivity throughout Town. Since our last meeting staff contacted both Lafayette and Orinda to better understand how they address public access trails in their cities, a brief summary is provided below.

Lafayette

Lafayette has a nine member Commission for Parks, Trails and Recreation. They have a separate trails subcommittee that consists of three Commissioners who meet monthly with a publically noticed meeting agenda.

2011-2012 Goals

- Develop Dianne Court Trail
- Continue to pursue easements for trails as shown on the Master Plan
- Construct, maintain and upgrade trails over easements already obtained
- Increase public awareness of trails in Lafayette
- Collaboration with other agencies

2012-2013 Goals

- Virtually the same list as 2011-2012 with the addition of Updating the Trails Master Plan

Orinda

In 2011 the City of Orinda Bicycle, Trails and Walkways Master Plan was approved and is available on-line. Orinda appoints a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission consisting of three members. This subcommittee meets on an as-needed basis to discuss trail related topics. The subcommittee does not have general goals like Lafayette but the three member subcommittee does examine trail related items before they go to the Parks and Recreation Commission. They focus on identifying projects related to trails and the connectivity using the newly adopted Trails Master Plan as a guide.

Moraga

Looking back through recent Town documents one trail discussion was memorialized through Town Council Resolution 4-1994 in the matter of coordinating a regional trail between Moraga, Orinda, Lafayette, EBRPD, EBMUD, PG&E and Contra Costa County. A few years later there was a fair amount of trails discussion and work in Moraga between 2002 and 2004. In preparation for the 2006-08 Town of Moraga Parks and Recreation Master Plan a document titled “Description of Current and Proposed Trails” was prepared. This document was divided into proposed trails and existing trails.

Proposed Trails

- Palos Colorados – trail in the northern Town boundary through the development
- Rheem Blvd. – trail would run south and parallel to Buckingham and potentially meet up with trails in Rancho Laguna II
- Bollinger Canyon Road – this trail would follow the road and could extend to the Las Trampas Wilderness
- Old Moraga Ranch Trail – comes off Bollinger Canyon Road and heads west behind Saint Mary’s College heads south and eventually connects to Sanders Ranch Road
- St. Mary’s Road to the Utah Easement – starting behind the Moraga Library, follow PG&E power lines up the hill to the Old Moraga Ranch Trail
- Indian Ridge – from the Valley Vista Staging Area, a trail follows along Canyon Road heading towards the Town on EBRPD Lafayette Moraga Trail, proposed trail would follow the ridge N/W overlooking MCC and cross to the Orinda city limits, eventually connecting up with the Orinda Gateway development
- Indian Valley – starting at the Valley Vista Staging Area, trail would cross Canyon Road and extend the Lafayette/Moraga Trail further west towards Canyon, trail would continue north up the fence line through Indian Valley and continue along the ridgeline to the Town boundary, meet up with the Indian Ridge Trail and continue to the EBRPD Huckleberry Botanical Regional Preserve
- Heritage Trail – from the Moraga Library a bridge will cross the creek into the back side of the Commons Park where a trail will continue around the backside of the Frisbee golf course and join the paved portion of the trail along Moraga Road

- Los Encinos Trail – begins from the end of Baitx and then traverses through the grassy hillsides behind Larch, connecting on the other side to the Old Moraga Ranch Trail
- Rheem Reservoir Trail – would run either behind the old fire station or Carroll Ranch, starting at the end of Hanson Court and go to the top of the Campolindo Ridge paralleling Rheem Blvd. The trail would follow the ridge to the Rheem Reservoir water tank and connect with the EBMUD Rim trail that leads over to the Lafayette Reservoir

Existing Trails

- Rheem Blvd. (Moraga Rd./St. Mary's Rd.) – portion already exists. If development occurs, potential to widen Rheem Blvd. as it connects to St. Mary's Road
- Hiking trail from Rheem Blvd. – a paved EBMUD access road from Rheem Blvd. up to the Fayhill Reservoir
- Mulholland Open Space Preserve – Donald Drive continues up the hill and wraps around the Hacienda property, Waxman trail connects the Hacienda to this trail. A gravel road connects upper Donald Drive to the EBMUD Mulholland Reservoir. A dirt fire road connects upper Donald Drive to Laird Drive and leads to Rheem School. A dirt road from the old portion of Donald Drive heads north and then down the ridgeline to meet up with Ascot Drive. Lastly, there is a trail at the top of Mulholland that leads west and drops you into the upper side of Orinda Oaks Park in the City of Orinda.

Unfortunately the 2008 Moraga Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not address trails with much detail. It recommends the development of a series of trails that form a network of alternative transportation and recreation opportunities and access to major community destinations. It acknowledges that while some of these trails may fall to the Town to develop, trail projects may also be accomplished as a condition of approval for new developments.

The Park and Recreation Commission could consider options for addressing trail development within Moraga.

Questions to consider and discuss:

- Is this a project we want to address through an ad hoc committee made up of a minority of the Park and Recreation Commission?
- The Commission has some outstanding goals to accomplish such as, work with the Moraga School District to reduce facility use fees to Town Parks and Recreation enrichment programming and discuss development of the Commons Park Back 40 (this discussion may lead to a site specific master plan as recommended in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan).
- A challenge we will face and one we faced during the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process is that of land ownership. The Town currently does not own

much land where trail connections could make sense for cross town bike and pedestrian usage.

- Staff currently provides support to the Park and Recreation Commission Hacienda Foundation and Park Foundation on a monthly basis. Staff also provides support for the bi-monthly Town Council meetings. Adding monthly ad hoc trail meetings would further extend resources.

Recommendation

Staff suggests the Park and Recreation Commission establish an ad hoc committee to meet and discuss trail related issues on a case by case basis as residential developments evolves in Town.