



## ABOUT TOWN - FEBRUARY 28, 2020 UPDATE FROM MORAGA TOWN STAFF



### MORAGA TOWN STAFF APPRECIATED BY THE COMMUNITY



On February 24, Town staff attended a celebration of appreciation at the Hacienda de las Flores. The event was hosted by the Moraga Citizens Network (MCN) and included local citizens representing the MCN, Garden Club of Moraga, Rotary Club of Moraga, Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley, Lions Club, Moraga Art Gallery, Moraga Education Foundation and Lamorinda Movers. Members of the organizations hosted food and drink and took the opportunity to personally thank each staff member for their service to the Town. Staff thoroughly enjoyed the event and felt very appreciated by the community.



### CRIME STATISTICS FOR 2019

In 2019, overall crime reported in Moraga increased 39.6% when compared to 2018 statistics. This increase is largely due to increases in the number of thefts and assaults. Officers continue to investigate incidents and follow up on leads, recently arresting suspects and solving over 20 theft and burglary cases. The following is a comparison of Moraga crimes reported to the Department of Justice in both 2018 and 2019:

<u>Type of Crime</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>% change</u>
Homicide	1	0	(100%)
Rape	2	1	(50%)
Robbery	2	3	+50%
Assault	14	28	+100%
Burglary	12	8	(33%)
Larceny	72	106	+47%
Auto Theft	8	9	+12.5%%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>+39.6%</b>

The 2018 statistics were the lowest for Moraga in the past ten years. While 2019 reflects a substantial increase, Moraga's crime rate is still very low, largely due to residents who secure their property, use alarms and video surveillance systems and report suspicious persons and activity to the Police. Please do your part to help the Moraga Police keep our community safe.



## RECENT TOWN COUNCIL ACTIONS ON FEBRUARY 26

### **MOFD FIRE CODE PRESENTATION**

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Chief Winnacker made a presentation of the [Proposed Fire Code Updates](#). The changes, if adopted, would affect construction methods and materials for new buildings and major remodels and landscaping on residential parcels with existing structures. The intent of the proposed changes is to reduce the risk of fire and loss of life by implementing requirements on new structures, such as ember-resistant construction and exterior under-eave sprinklers. The proposed changes also impact current residents by imposing additional fire prevention requirements, such as banning of the use of combustible ground cover within 2 ft. of structures, removal of eucalyptus and monterey pine trees within 6 ft. of structures, and requiring the removal of juniper and bamboo within 10 ft. of a road by the end of 2023. For questions regarding the proposed code updates visit [MOFD](#).

### **GENERAL PURPOSE FUNDS RESTORED**

Since 1978 the Town has transferred general purpose funds into a special assessment account for lighting that was voided by Prop 13. The funds have been used exclusively for lighting, including paying for the portion of street lighting costs not covered by the Town's Lighting Assessment District, undergrounding the utilities on Moraga Road, and installing new streetlights and traffic signals. Given the Town's unfunded infrastructure needs, the Council authorized the reduction in future funding to the lighting account, which should make \$120,000 available annually for general fund needs. Additionally, the Council authorized the allocation of an estimated \$470,000 (the fund balance exceeding \$100,000) for capital asset replacement and/or storm drain projects.

### **CANYON ROAD BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR SELECTED**

The Town Council approved awarding the construction contract for the Canyon Road Bridge Replacement Project to Bridgeway Civil Constructors, Inc., as well as amendments to the consultant services contracts for NV5 (design) and Harris and Associates (construction management). Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2020. For questions, contact [Sharon Chan](#) or call at 925-888-7028. For more updates, please visit the [Canyon Road Bridge Replacement](#) project page.

### **LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICT FOR FY 2020/21**

The Town's Lighting Assessment District constructs, maintains and services existing and future public lighting facilities, including traffic signals and street lights. In order to maintain and continue the assessment district, the Town is required to conduct an annual levy and collection process. Town Council initiated the first step of this process by ordering engineering assistance to prepare and file the required street lighting assessment district annual engineer's report to levy and collect assessments for FY 2020/21.

### **MOU FOR SHARED ENGINEERING TECH/GIS SUPPORT SERVICES**

Town Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Lafayette and Orinda to jointly share a Lafayette staff person on a temporary basis, at a considerable cost savings versus contracting out these services. The shared engineering staff person will help with the implementation of the Town's enhanced Storm Drain System Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Program collecting field generated storm drain inspection data and inputting it into the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS). The Town of Moraga continues to explore areas of cost savings and efficiency in delivering needed services and maintaining public infrastructures, regularly partnering with our neighboring cities of Lafayette and Orinda.

### **CONSOLIDATION OF DRB AND PC AND CODE AMENDMENTS ORDINANCE**

The Town Council adopted an Ordinance to amend several sections of the Municipal Code to consolidate the Design Review Board (DRB) and Planning Commission (PC) and: (1) change the Planning Commission officer appointment procedures to enable the Commission to re-elect an officer for consecutive terms without requiring Council approval; (2) clarify the appeal process such that items can only be called up for appeal; (3) amend the development standards to streamline the application process for new professional office uses in the Suburban Office District; and (4) exempt certain minor improvements from design review for alterations to single-family residential properties.



## COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Council interviewed and appointed applicants for the Town's Commissions and Committees as follows: David Zeimer and Sophie Braccini to the Art in Public Spaces Committee; Stephen Huxley and Tim Freeman to the Audit and Finance Committee; Bob Foxall, Graig Crossley and Larry Rosenberg to the Local Sales Tax Oversight Committee; Bob Giomi, Tom Shephard and Joanna Haskin to the Park and Recreation Commission; and Ben Helber, Graham Thiel and Andrew Lueder to the Planning Commission. The Town appreciates and thanks all of the volunteers.



## SHAWN KNAPP, NEW PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/TOWN ENGINEER



Following a competitive process, Shawn Knapp has been appointed as Moraga's permanent Public Works Director/Town Engineer. Shawn has steadfastly served as the Town's Senior Engineer since April 2017. Shawn's first day at the Town was the morning after the Canyon Road bridge closure. Rumor has it that Shawn was greeted at the door by the Town Manager, who whisked him away for a field inspection of the damaged bridge. Shawn guided the Town through the temporary bridge project, including obtaining Federal funding and applying for reimbursements. Shawn has also worked hard to obtain funding for the permanent bridge and construction of the bridge is scheduled to start in April 2020. In addition

to working on capital improvement projects, Shawn has overseen the Town's land use development function and provided technical assistance on paving projects. Shawn has already begun implementing his new ideas and strategies to work more efficiently and cost effectively. Shawn came to the Town after 16 years working as a civil engineer for the City of Pleasant Hill and eight years as a consulting energy conservation engineer/scientist for PG&E. Shawn's multiple professional licenses and certificates include: Civil Engineering P.E.; Mechanical Engineering P.E.; Qualified Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan Developer and Practitioner; and Caltrans Resident Engineer.



## CROSSWALK SAFETY

Moraga Police have received numerous complaints about drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Pedestrians have the right-of-way in crosswalks and drivers must stop their vehicles and yield until the pedestrian is COMPLETELY OUT OF THE CROSSWALK. However, pedestrians should only enter the crosswalk and cross when it is safe, remembering that cars cannot stop instantaneously. Moraga Police will be conducting extra patrols of crosswalks and citing violators. Please drive safely and stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.



## MORAGA WAY PAVEMENT REPAIRS

Ghilotti Construction Company is currently working on finishing the Moraga Way and Canyon Road/Camino Pablo Improvement project. The contractor was delayed in finishing this project, as the crosswalk safety beacons and solar powered street lights are custom ordered items with very long manufacturing and delivery time. These items are now being installed. Additionally, the contractor is tentatively scheduled to perform additional pavement overlay work along the north bound lanes of Moraga Way on March 13, 2020. Please refer to the [Moraga Way project web page](#) for updates and changes.



## MORAGA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE

Congratulations to Mechanics Bank as Moraga Chamber's Business of the Year and Lamorinda CERT as their Nonprofit of the Year. Over 60 dignitaries and community members celebrated this year's recipients during a dinner and awards ceremony at La Finestra Ristorante on Monday, February 24. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 9, for the 14th annual Moraga Community Faire at the Rheem Valley Shopping Center from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. All your favorites will be returning along with many new booths and events!



## SUMMER RECREATION JOBS AVAILABLE



Are you looking for a fun summer job? Are you creative, organized, energetic, resourceful, and a team player? We are looking for YOU to join our summer camp team that works at various Town-run camps at the beautiful Hacienda de las Flores! Recreation Leader I (age 16+) leads songs, games, crafts, field trips, and other activities for campers. Recreation Leader II (age 18+) supervises Recreation Leader I's as well as leads activities and field trips. Camps run June 8 through August 7 with staff training

taking place June 1 to 4. Apply today at [CalOpps](#). Camp Play n' Learn - ages 3.5 to 5; Moraga Day Camp - ages 5 to 11; Afternoon Rec - ages 5 to 12; Camp Connect - ages 12 to 15. Not old enough to work yet? Check out our [Counselor in Training](#) program for ages 13-15.



## MAIL-IN BALLOT BOX UPDATE

The Town of Moraga's secure Vote-By-Mail ballot drop-off box for the March 3 Presidential Primary Election is located in the lobby of the Town offices at 329 Rheem Boulevard. The box will be available from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm through Tuesday, March 3. Ballots may also be dropped off between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm at the Contra Costa Elections Office in Martinez, 555 Escobar Street, or at any polling place on Election Day. For more information call 925-335-7800 or visit the Elections Office website at [CoCoVote](#).



## UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

- Monday, March 2 – [Planning Commission](#), **CANCELLED**
- Wednesday, March 11, 7:00 pm – [Town Council](#), Council Chambers
- Monday, March 16, 7:00 pm – [Planning Commission](#), Council Chambers
- Tuesday, March 17, 7:00 pm – [Park and Recreation Commission](#), Council Chambers

The Town Council Chambers are located at [335 Rheem Boulevard, Moraga, CA 94556](#).  
The Hacienda de las Flores is located at [2100 Donald Drive, Moraga, CA 94556](#).

All meetings are open to the public. Visit the [Town's](#) website for updated agendas and packets.



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