

MEMORANDUM

DATE August 29, 2019
TO MCSP Implementation Project Citizens Advisory Committee
FROM David Early and Carey Stone
SUBJECT CAC Meeting #2

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) information to be discussed at the second CAC meeting, which will be held at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, September 4, 2019 in the Orinda Room of the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College. This memorandum describes:

- Background regarding the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) Implementation project.
- Two draft land use scenarios that could occur under the MCSP.
- Discussion topics for CAC consideration and feedback.
- Next steps for the upcoming two CAC meetings.

MCSP Background

The Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) was adopted in 2010 and lays out a future for new development in the Moraga Center area near the intersection of Moraga Way and Moraga Road. Table 1 shows the development potential by use allowed under the MCSP.

The MCSP requires that the Town adopt corresponding amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to reflect its policies and land use program. Zoning to implement the MCSP was adopted in part through a new Residential 20 Dwelling Units per Acre (R-20) zoning district, which was adopted following with the Specific Plan. However, other necessary zoning changes have not yet been enacted which has been problematic.

The Town has been working on aspects of the needed zoning changes intermittently since the MCSP adoption occurred. One step in this process was the development of a Vision Concept that articulates a set of three design principles that are to form the basis for the rezoning. These three principles are:

1. Create a connected street network through the site.
2. Support new public spaces through active block frontages (i.e. requiring building fronts to face streets and public spaces).
3. Create fine-grain pedestrian and bicycle routes through the site.

TABLE 1 MCSP DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Land Use Category	Quantified Development Objective
Retail and Entertainment	90,000 square feet
Focused Office	50,000 square feet
Bed and Breakfast/Boutique Hotel	85 rooms
Assisted Living/Congregate Care (20-40/ac)	150 rooms
Active Senior (12-20/ac)	200 (300) units
Single-Family (3-6/ac)	65 units
Workforce Housing (12-20/ac)	80 (100) units
Compact Single-Family (10-12/ac)	165 units
Housing Subtotal	(510) 630 units

Source: 2010 Moraga Center Specific Plan, page 35.

Draft Scenarios

In order to advance the discussion regarding new zoning regulations, PlaceWorks has generated two development scenarios and accompanying visual simulations and cross-sections to illustrate different ways development could occur under the MCSP, all of which are shown in Attachment 1.

The two scenarios represent possible futures under the MCSP, but they are not actual development proposals, which would be put forth by the owners and developers of the property in the MCSP area. Instead, they illustrate the type of development that could be proposed under the Specific Plan. Their purpose is for the community to understand the MCSP's potential, and to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the zoning.

Both scenarios assume the maximum development allowed under the MCSP, described above, and both assume the same 130-foot creek corridor setback along Laguna Creek which includes 30 feet for the creek and an additional 50 feet on each bank, the minimum setback generally required for creeks. The scenarios differ in the way that development is arranged within the Specific Plan area with one focusing the residential development on the hillside and the second focusing development in the mixed-use core. Below is an overview of the highlights of the two scenarios.

SCENARIO 1: HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL FOCUS

Scenario 1 is organized under the following design principles:

- Plan for a revitalized shopping center with new community gathering spaces (similar to Marin Country Mart in Larkspur), with more peripheral development along Moraga Road on both sides of School Street. Include parallel parking along School Street.
- Step back the second and third story of buildings 2 to 3 feet.
- Focus residential development in the hillside northwest of the creek.
- Provide a connection for the Lafayette/Moraga Regional Trail along School Street to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists on an off-street pathway.
- Include a pedestrian-only path (labeled as “Proposed Creek Walk”) along the northwest side of Laguna Creek that connects to Moraga West Commons Park. Include a pedestrian connection from the pedestrian-only path to School Street mid-block via the proposed pedestrian-only bridge.
- Set back development 40 feet from the Moraga Road and Moraga Way scenic corridors.
- Site the hotel/bed-and-breakfast along the mid-point of School Street and leave the existing Moraga Ranch buildings in their current state.

SCENARIO 2: MIXED USE CORE

Scenario 2 is organized under the following design principles:

- Plan for a new town center with mixed-use buildings and new town gathering places along School Street, with the existing shopping center remaining largely as is. Include a mix of parallel and diagonal parking along School Street.
- Generally step back the second and third story of buildings approximately 8 feet.
- Spread residential uses throughout the site and activate School Street with mixed-use senior and workforce housing.
- Provide a connection for the Lafayette/Moraga Regional Trail along School Street to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists on an off-street pathway.
- Include a pedestrian-only path (labeled as “Proposed Creek Walk”) along the southeast side of Laguna Creek that connects to the new pocket park at the corner of School Street and Moraga Road. Include two pedestrian connections from the pedestrian-only path to School Street mid-block and along the west side of Moraga Road to School Street.
- Set back development 20 feet from Moraga Road and Moraga Way.
- Develop the hotel/bed-and-breakfast inside of the existing Moraga Ranch, with a hotel building at the corner of Moraga Way and School Street to create a gateway to the new town center.

CAC Discussion Topics

The CAC's role is to advise and provide recommendations for zoning and related regulations to implement the MCSP. With that in mind, the three remaining CAC meetings will be structured to educate CAC members on the range of possibilities allowed by the MCSP and to get feedback on land use, design, and circulation elements that require regulation through the Zoning Code. The CAC will be asked to provide feedback on the scenarios, particularly on the elements that could be controlled through zoning. In particular, staff and consultants expect the CAC to comment on the following topics:

1. **Moraga Center Land Use Allocation, Density and Design.** The MCSP allows up to 140,000 square feet of non-residential uses, an 85-room hotel, 150-room assisted-living/congregate care facility, and up to 630 residential units. Retail, office, and residential uses are limited to two stories (35 feet) and mixed-uses to three stories (45 feet). Scenario 1 suggests a revitalized Moraga Center shopping center that incorporates new community gathering spots within the interior of the shopping center. Scenario 2 focuses new retail development and community gathering spaces along School Street. Both Scenarios incorporate the maximum building height, but Scenario 1 provides for a 2 to 3 foot step back on the second and third stories and Scenario 2 generally provides for an 8 foot step back on the second and third stories. In addition, Scenario 1 provides for parallel parking along School Street whereas Scenario 2 provides for a mixture of parallel and diagonal parking. Should the Zoning Code allow for both these scenarios?
2. **Residential Development in the Hillside Area vs. Mixed-Use Core.** The MCSP provides for up to 630 new dwelling units (as shown in Table 1) and allows it to be configured in a variety of ways. Scenario 1 focuses residential development northeast of Laguna Creek while Scenario 2 focuses housing in the new town center. Should the Zoning Code allow for both these scenarios?
3. **Creek Corridor/Public Access.** Both Scenarios 1 and 2 have the Lafayette/Moraga Regional Trail follow the northwest side of School Street, which would accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists on an off-street pathway. In addition, both Scenarios include a pedestrian only trail along Laguna Creek: Scenario 1 incorporates the pedestrian-only trail on the northwest side of Laguna Creek and Scenario 2 incorporates the pedestrian-only trail on the southeast side of Laguna Creek. Should the Zoning Code allow for both these scenarios?
4. **Scenic Corridors/Setbacks.** To create a vibrant town center that is pedestrian and bike-friendly, the MCSP does not require building setbacks from the street for retail, office, and mixed-uses. Town staff and consultants believe this is appropriate for the interior of School Street. However, because Moraga Way and Moraga Road are scenic corridors, community members have suggested that building setbacks from these roadways be included in the Zoning Code. Scenario 1 depicts a 40 foot setback and Scenario 2, Mixed Core Use, a 20 foot setback from Moraga Way and Moraga Road. Should the Zoning Code allow for both of these scenarios?

5. **Moraga Ranch.** In both Scenarios, Moraga Ranch would be part of the hotel facility. Scenario 1 places the hotel along the interior of School Street and Scenario 2 sites the hotel at the corner of Moraga Way and School Street. Should the Zoning Code allow for both of these scenarios?

Upcoming Meetings and Next Steps

The CAC will consider the Draft Scenarios and the five discussion topics above at its three remaining meetings:

- **CAC Meeting #2: Wednesday, September 4.** Town Staff and PlaceWorks will provide an overview of the two scenarios and the topics covered in this memorandum, answer CAC questions, and facilitate an initial conversation on the discussion topics listed above.
- **CAC Meeting #3: Thursday, September 19.** CAC members will work in groups to explore the discussion topics in more detail and report back areas of agreement and differences to the large group. Additional group(s) will be facilitated for members of the public.
- **CAC Meeting #4, Tuesday, October 1.** At the final CAC meeting, the CAC will wrap up the conversation on the discussion topics and provide final input on the elements that should be incorporated into the Draft Zoning Code.

Following the conclusion of the CAC meetings, the Town and PlaceWorks will prepare an initial Draft Zoning Code, which will also include input from the Technical Advisory Committee of experts in transportation and circulation. The Draft Zoning Code is slated for review by the Planning Commission and Town Council in early 2020.