

## Town Council Moves Quickly to Seek New Traffic Signal

By Steve Angelides

The Town of Moraga is moving rapidly to take advantage of opportunities to enhance traffic safety. The newly formed Traffic Safety Advisory Committee held its first meeting last week, and on March 28 the Town Council authorized Town Engineer Jill Mercurio to apply for a \$710,000 fast-track grant to fund a traffic signal and other safety improvements at the intersection of Moraga Rd. and Ascot Dr.

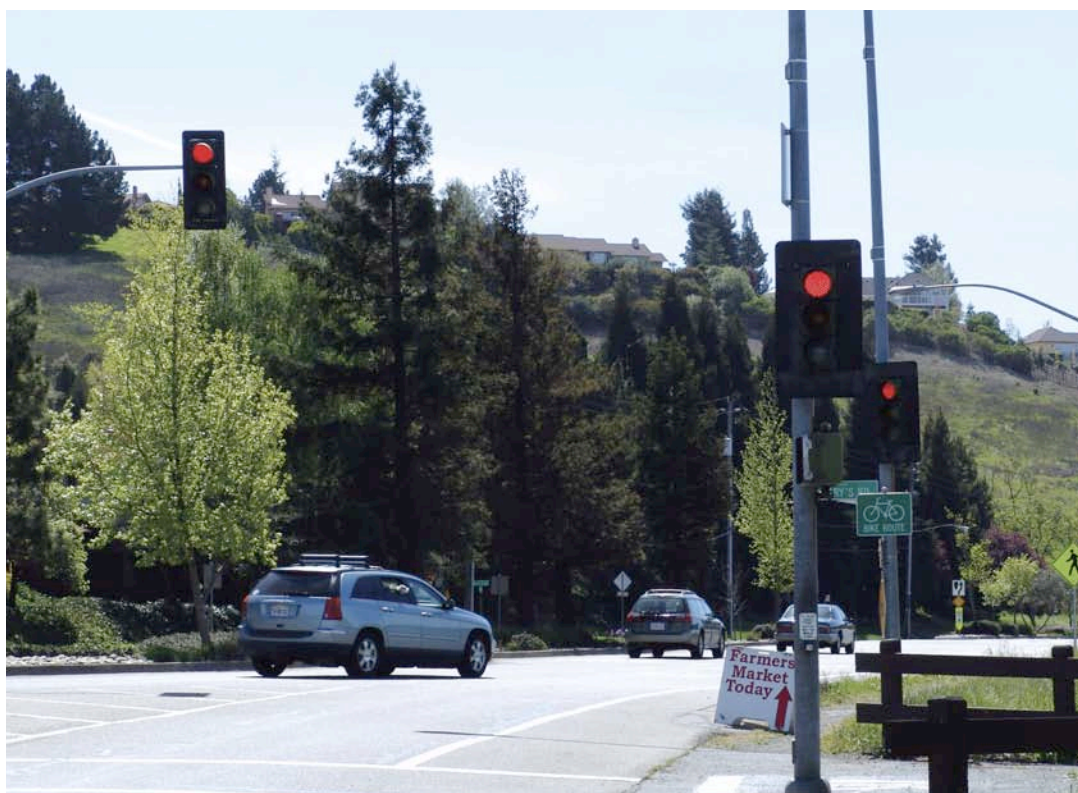
If approved, the Highway Safety Improve-

ment Program grant will meet 90% of the funding requirement, and the remaining 10% will come out of the Town's Measure C transportation funds of approximately \$125,000 per year. The application

is due April 13 and will be approved or denied by May 15. During the discussion, Mayor Mike Metcalf initially suggested that the Town's newly-formed Traffic Safety Advisory Committee first study the question, pointing out that some residents oppose a traffic signal at that intersection. Council member Rochelle Bird commented that residents want to be safer, but there are those who do not want to be slowed down by traffic signals. According to Po-

lice Chief Mark Ruppenthal, there is a partially completed study by a traffic engineering consultant, which the Town decided not to continue, that indicates a traffic signal at that location

is warranted. Mercurio explained that waiting for a study would cause the grant opportunity to be lost. She plans to incorporate preliminary plans for a meridian, part of the Town's beautification plan, into the grant submission as well. The Council voted unanimously to proceed with the grant process. In the grant selection process, priority will be given to projects that will start by August 15, and Town Manager Phil Vince said



he will support Mercurio's efforts to launch the project should the Town receive the award.

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