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# ‘More Moraga’ offers actionable items to support the business community

By Sophie Braccini



Bob Fritzky at the Rheem Shopping Center.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Bob Fritzky took the Moraga Chamber of Commerce presidency at the beginning of the year with the intention of creating with the board “More Moraga” – a series of tangible new opportunities supporting Moraga businesses.

Fritzky, who has been living in Moraga for almost 20 years, runs his business, Med Matrx, from Moraga and has clients all over the United States. During his first years in town, he had no desire to reach out to the local chamber; for him it was a service dedicated to those who have busi-

nesses in town. He recalls a discussion six years ago with Frank Melon, then president of the chamber and general manager of the country club: “He told me that a prosperous town needs a successful school district and a vibrant economy,” remembers Fritzky, “and that the chamber does have an impact.” Fritzky realized then that contributing to the chamber would support the town as a whole, and he joined.

After Fritzky made proposals to improve the chamber’s golf tournament, he was encouraged to join the board; he was

vice president for two years before becoming president.

Fritzky and the board have worked with several stakeholders to develop “More Moraga.” The first service available to members starting April 1 will consist of grants to improve operations of local businesses. The grants will be open for retail as well as service businesses. One example, cites Fritzky, is a retail store that might need a facelift, or a local service that would need support for its marketing program. Each year the chamber will raise funds, working with strategic partners and allocating the monies to several local businesses.

Fritzky explains that right now the chamber has garnered the support of Orchard Supply Hardware for the grant program and is working with other large corporations. The objective is to start with \$10,000 the first year and to grow from there. He adds that these strategic partners, along with several chamber board members, will sit on the committee that will review the applications and allocate the grants, and that they will receive a lot of recognition in town.

The second “More Moraga” actionable item will come from a closer relationship with the Saint Mary’s College School of Business. Each year, Fritzky says, teams of business students will choose a study topic focused on ways to improve an economic aspect of Moraga impacting businesses, like how to help transport employees to Moraga or how to make Moraga more of a

college town. The teams will give a presentation to a panel made up of Saint Mary’s professors and members of the chamber, and the winning group will make propositions for change in town and be heard by the town council.

The last “More Moraga” program is the creation of a discount card sold by the chamber featuring local retail and services. Fritzky says that it will not compete with other cards sold by the local Boy Scouts or Campolindo sports teams, which feature mostly restaurants; the chamber card will offer discounts at places such as Massage Envy or Captain Vineyards. The chamber president says that the card will be part of the Shop Moraga campaign and he hopes that the sale of the card will replace all other fundraisers led by the chamber.

Fritzky says that the Moraga Chamber has been much more than an organization offering mixers and presentations; in the recent past the chamber advocated for improving the town’s regulations to make Moraga business friendly. He remembers how the chamber took an active role in advocating for the creation of Commercial Planned Development districts that will allow property owners to adopt blanket rules for a commercial area, making it simple for new and existing businesses to remodel. He believes that the actionable items of the “More Moraga” program will make Moraga an even more attractive town for new businesses while offering support for existing ones.



## MCE Contra Costa

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#### How does MCE affect electricity services for Moraga residents and businesses?

Aside from having access to more renewable energy, not much will change. Residents and businesses can choose 50–100% renewable energy from a local public agency. MCE customers continue to enjoy the same reliable electricity service, with PG&E delivering power, maintaining the wires, and providing billing and gas services.

#### Does MCE cost less than PG&E?

Yes. MCE’s 50% renewable electricity **costs less** than PG&E’s 33% renewable electricity. You will save between 2-5% (3% on average) with MCE depending on your rate class. MCE has reduced rates the past two years in a row). For detailed rates and cost comparisons visit: [mceCleanEnergy.org/rates](http://mceCleanEnergy.org/rates)

#### Do CARE, Medical Baseline, and other discount programs continue with MCE?

Yes. Low-income assistance programs like CARE, FERA, and Medical Baseline are unaffected by enrollment; these customers receive the same discount with MCE as they would with PG&E. Customers in these programs do not need to re-enroll nor take any further action.

#### Will my billing change?

No. PG&E will continue to send one monthly bill. Instead of one fee that combines charges for the delivery and generation of your electricity, the bill will show separate charges — one for electric delivery (PG&E) and one for electric generation (MCE). **MCE’s generation rates simply replace the generation charges you currently pay to PG&E;** they are not an additional charge.

#### Is MCE’s power supply more renewable than PG&E’s?

Yes, considerably! MCE’s power supply contains a higher portion of renewable resources like solar, wind, bioenergy, and geothermal. According to the most recent California Energy Commission Power Content Labels, MCE’s Light Green service is 55% renewable and PG&E’s service is 33% renewable.

#### Which communities does MCE serve?

MCE has been serving Bay Area electric customers since 2010. Today, about 255,000 customers in Marin and Napa Counties, and the cities of Benicia, El Cerrito, Lafayette, Richmond, San Pablo, and Walnut Creek are buying more renewable energy from MCE. Concord, Danville, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley,

Pinole, Pittsburg, San Ramon, and unincorporated Contra Costa County will enroll with MCE in April.

#### What kind of organization is MCE and who controls it?

MCE is a local, not-for-profit, public agency directly controlled by its member communities — like Moraga. Formed by the public to buy cleaner power and re-invest ratepayer dollars locally, MCE always prioritizes the interests of its customers. MCE’s Board of Directors are democratically elected leaders from each community MCE serves and are not paid for their role with MCE. In consultation with MCE’s staff, the Board determines MCE’s rates, policies and programs in meetings that are open to the public.

#### How is MCE funded?

Like PG&E, MCE is funded by electricity ratepayers through their monthly energy purchases. MCE is not funded by taxpayers. A cornerstone to MCE’s mission is to redirect ratepayer dollars back to local economies, and reinvest in its communities by providing low, stable rates, supporting local workforce development, and partnering with community-based organizations.

#### HOW MCE WORKS

