



MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org
Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



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Moraga's new public works director is a familiar face



Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga Public Works Director/ Town Engineer Shawn Knapp

By Vera Kochan

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp first came to Moraga in April 2017 as the town's senior civil engineer. From the moment he showed up for his first day of work Knapp's skills were put

to the test.

According to Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg, "Shawn's first day at the town was the morning after the Canyon Road bridge closure." Battenberg took Knapp out to the site 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."

"I was supposed to get a lot of filing done and get accustomed to Moraga's files and projects," Knapp recalled. Instead, he had to begin designing the new bridge and secure funds for it. He also had to tackle the 2016-17 Rheem sinkhole repair project.

Moraga has kept Knapp busy in the three years he's been here. Besides providing technical assistance on last summer's crosswalk and

paving projects, he has overseen the town's land use development function.

Knapp's prior experience was working as a civil engineer for the city of Pleasant Hill. Before his 16 years with Pleasant Hill, Knapp spent eight years as a consulting energy conservation engineer/scientist for Pacific Gas and Electric Company. His many professional licenses and certificates include: Civil Engineering P.E.; Mechanical Engineering P.E.; Qualified Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan Developer and Practitioner; and California Department of Transportation Resident Engineer.

When questioned about the progress of repairs for the latest Rheem sinkhole, located at the intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Center Street, Knapp explained that the town is in the process of filing an

abatement request with the Superior Court. The property owner of Moraga Star Gas Station, where the sinkhole is located, was sent a courtesy notice of the town's intent. "The town is separately coordinating with the Rheem Valley Shopping Center on repair work that may impact Center Street, which is part of the shopping center property," Knapp said. "These impacts include setting up traffic control with lane closures while the work is happening." Due to the danger the current situation poses to the public, the town plans to proceed with repairs, and upon completion expects a reimbursement from the Moraga Star property owner. If a reimbursement is not forthcoming the town can put a lien on the property.

On Knapp's Wish List are the storm drain projects. "I'd like to get that up and running.

That will be fun for me. With most of the disasters behind us and the funds we've been able to get back I can concentrate on construction projects." In April, he plans to revisit pavement options for some of the town's worst streets.

"I am confident that he will continue to serve the town well in this new role," Battenberg added. "Shawn has new ideas and strategies for how to do things more efficiently and cost effectively and has already begun implementing them."

"I am looking at efficiency within the department. How we're staffed and our costs," Knapp said. "I want to train staff to be able to do each other's jobs as much as possible - change the philosophy on how we run the department and save costs so as not to hire outside consultants."

Clarification of responsibility for storm drain easements

By Vera Kochan

With rain finally falling once again, storm drain topics began to take a front seat in town council discussions once again. During Moraga's March 11 town council meeting a private drainage easement ordinance update was on the agenda.

The town doesn't maintain such facilities on private property unless an easement has

been accepted through a resolution by the town council or by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors before Moraga's 1974 incorporation. Such is the case with Lafayette, Orinda and Contra Costa County jurisdictions.

Public Works Director Shawn Knapp stated, "The staff report is based on clarifications about private storm drain easements. We are not changing how the town operates re-

garding subdivisions, but providing some additional information in our code for residents, property owners and developers to understand a little bit about how the town functions when it's creating storm drain easements and other types of easements within subdivisions. We're not changing how we normally do business."

Some property owners may not understand their maintenance responsibilities in



Typical storm drain in a Moraga neighborhood. Photo A. Scheck

regards to their own storm drain facilities, leading to unanticipated costs and garnering confusion as to what's expected from the town's services. The public works staff report recommendations attempt to clarify the town's limited responsibilities for private storm drain systems.

Minimal standards such as creating a legal document noting where the location of the easement and ensuring materials in construction of the type

of drainage facility are to current standards, must be met before the town would step in, Knapp explained.

The town council cast four votes in favor with one absentee vote, as Council Member Roger Wykle was not present, to approve a resolution amending the Moraga Municipal Code to clarify the town's policy regarding drainage easements with amended language.

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Nominate a 2020 Moraga Citizen of the Year

It's time to nominate a person you think should be Moraga's 2020 "Citizen of the Year".

This year's Selection Committee consists of 2019 Citizen of the Year Fred Weil and representatives from the event's four sponsors: The Lamorinda Weekly; The Moraga Chamber of Commerce; Saint Mary's College and the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley.

The basic criteria for selecting this year's Citizen of the Year are:

1. The nominee should have given of their time, talent and energy to help make Moraga a vibrant community - one where people want to live, work and shop;
2. The nominee's body of work should have helped to bring our community together and made us proud to be Moraga residents;
3. Please include specific examples of your nominee's contributions to Moraga.
4. Nominees must reside in Moraga. Paid public officials, current members of the Moraga Town Council and other current elected officials are not eligible;

Email your nominations to nominations@lamorindaweekly.com or send them to: "Moraga Citizen of the Year Nominations", Lamorinda Weekly, PO box 6133, Moraga CA 94556.

An optional, directly downloadable, easy-to-fill-in Nomination Form is at: <http://bit.ly/2020Moraga>

The deadline for receiving nominations is March 25.

The celebratory dinner honoring this year's Citizen of the Year will be held on Saturday, May 2 at Saint Mary's College Soda Center.