



MORAGA

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Town Council: Wednesday, May 11, 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, May 25, 6 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, May 17, 7 p.m.,
Park and Recreation Commission:
 Monday, May 16, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings :
 Tuesday, June 7, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

Town Council gives staff direction regarding Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Budget

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Town Council reviewed a report for a one-year budget authorization and a four-year forecast of dedicated revenues for specific projects regarding the Capital Improvement Program during its April 27 meeting. The purpose was for council to provide input to staff on what it considered high priority projects.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp's presentation began with a quick overview of the 2022 Town Council and Community Goals and Priorities that happen to fall under the CIP's purview: Efficiently sustain core operations and services with a nod to fiscal discipline and long-term fiscal sustainability; Satisfy the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) through rezoning and revisions; Complete the finishing touches on the Canyon Road Bridge project and secure reimbursements; Complete the 2022 construction phase and the 2023 design of the "Worst First" Pavement Reconstruction projects; Continue the Storm Drain System Operations and Maintenance Program; American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funding allocation to highest priority needs; Enhance Moraga's parks, open space and facilities; Focus on traffic, congestion and pedestrian safety; and Implement viable strategies with regards to the town's Climate Action Plan.

Important points to note, besides the staff report that was prepared by Knapp and Senior Administrative Assistant Janet Lara, mention "The proposed CIP allocates available funding to projects. Funding would need to be shifted to add new projects. The \$1.4 million in Measure J remains available and can be allocated to traffic safety projects upon completion of the Local Road Safety Plan which will prioritize traffic safety projects. The CIP continues to prioritize storm drain projects that were started in Fiscal Year 2021-22 given ARPA funding."

New CIP Projects recommended for funding FY 2022-23 are: Pavilion flagstone staircase \$49,000; Town facility energy reliability (funded through Government Impact Fees) \$100,000; Laguna Creek Restoration at Hacienda - Phase 2 (fully funded) \$228,000; Hacienda metal entrance fence and gate \$42,000; Rancho Laguna Park picnic tables \$53,000; Canyon Road Bridge replacement riparian remediation (87% funded from Caltrans) \$340,000; Bollinger Canyon Road tree remediation \$50,000; and Pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Camino Pablo \$5,000.

Ongoing CIP Projects with additional funding recom-

mended for FY 2022-23 are: Laguna Creek Restoration at Hacienda - Phase 2; Commons Park picnic area renovation and restroom replacement; Livable Moraga Road Study; Annual street repairs; 2022 pavement rehabilitation; and Corliss Drive safe routes to school.

There were several Carry-over Projects FY 2021-22 with Planned Funds such as: Moraga Library carpet replacement; 2021-23 Annual road rehabilitations and storm drain repairs; Housing Element/General Plan update; and Central Video Surveillance System, to name a few.

Looking ahead to Scheduled FY 2023-24 to 2026-27 CIP: Hacienda parking lot retaining wall repairs; Hacienda trash enclosure; Drainage Sedimentation and Slide Failure Study; 2025-27 Storm drain repairs; Bollinger Canyon Road hillside stabilization; 2023-26 pavement rehabilitation; and more.

The town council and staff received an over-abundance of correspondence from the community regarding the unsafe route from Corliss Drive to Los Perales Elementary School. In deference to the potential dangers of the route, council strongly urged staff to make this a top priority CIP and were willing to shelve non-critical projects in order to make it happen.

Prospective Governing Board Candidates

Candidate Information Session
 Tuesday, May 17, at 6:00 PM
 Joaquin Moraga School Library
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
 RSVP to jbaier@moraga.k12.ca.us




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Planning Commission approves temporary Bay Area Ballplayers' enhanced outdoor facility



Photo Provided

Project setting for expanded temporary Bay Area Ballplayers location

By Vera Kochan

The success of owner Steve Hammond's Bay Area Ballplayers, located at 1460 Moraga Road in Moraga, began in January 2019, when he took over the space formerly occupied by a Hallmark card store.

When COVID-19 mandates limited public use of his indoor facility, Hammond was granted a permit in August 2020 to run a temporary outdoor facility located on a vacant lot of the property at 1325 Moraga Way behind Safeway. The permit was valid for six months under the expectation that county mandates would be lifted or adjusted.

By March 2021, with the pandemic still looming, Ham-

mond received a one-year permit extension to continue running the temporary outdoor facility. One year later, the popularity of his facility had prompted him to submit an application for a new temporary conditional use permit to allow for an expansion of services for a 70,000-square-foot outdoor sports and recreational facility consisting of sports training and camps, baseball and lacrosse training, adult fitness classes, birthday parties, a 22,500-square-foot artificial turf field, batting cages, portable baseball backstop, lacrosse goals, portable medicine ball wall, portable toilet and temporary walkway.

There was hesitation by the Planning Department staff to sanction the notion for a permit as the location might conflict

with the Moraga Center Specific Plan's Mixed Retail/Residential (MCSP MU-RR) zoning policies and objectives.

According to Moraga Principal Planner Ashley James' May 3 staff report, "In addition, the site continues to be available as a housing opportunity site under the 2023-31 sixth cycle Housing Element for increased housing in order to meet the state mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) as well as a future Town Center."

In Hammond's favor was an overwhelming response from the public commending his facility for giving the town's youth a place to be after school while doing something constructive during COVID's fallout.

Keeping this in mind, the Planning Commission granted Bay Area Ballplayers the requested permit with a limitation of 18 months and an expiration date of Oct. 31, 2023. There were several Conditions of Approval that applied, including: all features and structures must be dismantled by the expiration date; the hours of operation would be Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to sunset and Saturday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and no installation of lighting, amplified sound generating equipment or any permanent buildings or structures. The town is also allowed to inspect the site on a monthly basis.

In granting the permit, the Planning Commission made clear that Bay Area Ballplayers must actively work to find a more permanent location.

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