



MORAGA

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Town Council: Wednesday, July 13, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, July 19, 6:30 p.m.,
Park and Recreation Commission:
 TBA
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 TBA

Potential uses of Palos Colorados – Fund 100

By Vera Kochan

The Palos Colorados project had been in development for over 30 years. It involved a 1986 original plan submittal for 146 homes and a golf course in Moraga, bordering Lafayette. After several years of litigation, Moraga, Lafayette and Richfield Real Estate Corporation agreed to a settlement surrounding the original Palos Colorados project, reducing the number of homes to 123 and no golf course.

The town created Fund 100 – One Time Developer Fees (Palos Colorados), which are unrestricted and can be used for any purpose that the town council sees fit. At this point, the Fund has approximately \$2.8 million available which may increase by an additional \$11 million in the future if the Palos Colorados 123-unit residential development moves forward and the outstanding loans are repaid.

During the council's June 22 meeting, staff presented potential uses for the funds.

One suggestion was to have an emergency reserve fund to protect against any future financial or physical emergencies. Staff was directed to bring back a future agenda item regarding a possible establishment of such a fund.

According to the staff report by Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg and Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt, recreation and open space enhancements should be included for consideration "to improve the nearby trail system and construct projects and improvements identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Moraga Commons Park Site Specific Master Plan." The council decided that this issue should be discussed at a future meeting after the engagement of the Park and Recreation Commission and stakeholders with regards to potential uses and priorities related to that department's infrastructure.

Another use for the funds would be to address Moraga's unfunded pension liability. A 2019 study showed that costs

will peak between 2026 and 2035. Staff recommended that the town set aside \$1 million to \$1.5 million now, in a side fund, to assist in making the liability payments during the peak years. Council members agreed on a creation of some type of supplemental pension trust.

Additionally, as directed by the town council during its June 8 meeting, a \$250,000 contribution to the John Muir Land Trust from Fund 100 for the purchase of Harvey Ranch has been added to the proposed Fiscal Year 2022-23 budget. The decision passed with a 4-1 vote. Mayor Steve Woehleke expressed a desire to wait closer to the December 2022 deadline before making a contribution, in the event that more donations from the public might lessen Moraga's monetary load. The town received an overwhelming amount of correspondence from residents in favor of the \$250,000 decision in JMLT's favor.

PG&E donates \$100K for Moraga Commons Enhancement Program

Submitted by Kerry Hillis

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. doubled its donation to the Moraga Community Foundation's Moraga Commons Enhancement Program. PG&E's recent dona-

tion of \$50,000 matches a previous donation in 2021, raising to \$100,000 the total donation from the company.

"PG&E's generous donations in 2022 and 2021 will ensure that the Moraga Commons is fully accessible to all visitors. MCF appreciates and is grateful to have PG&E's support," said Dave Trotter, MCF's president and former Moraga mayor.

Initiated in 2021, MCF's Moraga Commons Enhancement capital campaign will fund accessibility improvements and amenities at the Commons and West Commons parks. The program's major elements include: Replacing aging restrooms to ensure ADA accessibility; installing a new water bottle filling station and drinking fountain near the entrance to the Commons and the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail; supporting the town's construction of ADA improvements to picnic areas near the All-Access Playground; planting trees in the Commons and West Commons parks; making irrigation improvements in the Commons and West Commons parks; and replacing the aging

flagpole at the entrance to the Commons Park.

With PG&E's recent donation to the enhancement program, MCF has raised over \$365,000, bringing the foundation close to its goal of \$450,000 in total funds raised. Between this year and last, MCF has presented checks totaling \$132,000 to the town of Moraga to fund the new drinking fountain, flagpole, tree planting and irrigation improvements, all of which have already been installed or are in progress. Additionally, a large portion of these funds are a down payment toward the construction of new accessible restroom facilities, which are expected to be completed in 2023.

"PG&E is proud to serve all of our hometown communities. It's at the heart of what we do and why we decided to support the Moraga Community Foundation and the Moraga Commons project," said Aaron Johnson, PG&E's Vice President of Bay Area Region. "We look forward to seeing the progress along the way, as this will benefit Moraga for years to come."

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