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## New town manager, Scott Mitnick, takes the helm

By Vera Kochan



Scott Mitnick stands alongside his framed copy of the Athenian Oath. Photo Vera Kochan

A framed copy of the Athenian Oath - a 2,000-year-old Greek code of civic responsibility that basically states, "Leave the city better than you found it" - hangs near the office door of new Moraga Town Manager Scott Mitnick. He has adhered to that mantra for decades, both in spirit and in duty, tackling various community challenges through the years.

Mitnick has studied abroad, majoring in Political Philosophy and World Politics at the University of Bristol, England; a political science major at California State University, Fullerton; and received a Master of Public Administration degree in Public Finance and Local Government Management Concentration from Maxwell School, Syracuse University, New York.

analyst; project manager; assistant to city manager; deputy city manager; city manager; and county administrator, has helped Mitnick to bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to Moraga.

Serving municipalities such as El Segundo, Thousand Oaks, Yuba City, Burbank, and Sutter County in various managerial capacities over the years, including financial

Mitnick's first official day on the job was April 10, and he has wasted no time in acclimating himself with the town and getting to know its residents. He has met with several civic organizations including Moraga Valley Kiwanis, Moraga Rotary, Moraga Citizens Network, Smart Moraga, and is looking forward to attending many community functions in town.

While he is currently staying with friends in the area, Mitnick's wife, is holding down the fort in Southern California until things settle down. Their twin sons, Michael and Matthew (22), are both in college studying first year law at the University of California at Davis; and earning a Master of Public Administration from the University of Washington, respectively. "I'm very proud of them," he stated. "They're good kids."

During a house-hunting trip for a previous Bay Area job several years ago, Mitnick and his wife were shown the Lamorinda area. "In the back of my mind I thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to be up here?'"

As fate would have it, when he heard about Moraga's town manager position opening up, he realized, "I was meant to be here. The things that the town council wants to achieve and their expectations of me - it's a match."

With summer and fall coming soon, residents are once again thinking about the fire season.? Mitnick and his family have already experienced the stress of mandatory evacuation. "I have a lot of muscle memory on what to do in a disaster. It takes a lot of agency cooperation to make sure that the community is well-positioned to respond to something like that. There's no on-the-job training for me. It's ingrained in me."

Mitnick sees the effects of the state's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), requiring the town to add 1,118 new housing units, as "the key to the future of Moraga's revitalization. The goal is to protect the integrity of the existing single-family units, and there has to be sufficient infilling in the shopping centers. It'll be good for the people that make the community work. We could have a more balanced community if those that worked here, lived here."

When commenting on the town's personnel, Mitnick said, "It's a talented work force. I'm very impressed with the quality of the staff and their commitment to Moraga. It's also an honor to work with such a forward thinking and appreciative town council."

Mitnick's enthusiasm at being Moraga's new town manager comes through when speaking about his plans to continue making it a great place to live. "I'm not here to make Moraga a different town," but he definitely expects to leave "the city" better than he found it.

Reach the reporter at: [vera@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:vera@lamorindaweekly.com)

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