



MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on these 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

Town Council

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission:
Tuesday, Oct. 17, 6:30 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission:
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.

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Moraga Road drainage improvements slowly on track for Rheem intersection

By Vera Kochan

Last winter's substantial rains created havoc on the town's roadways, but the Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard intersection always seems to pay a heavy price when it comes to flooding.

The street directly below what locals have dubbed Painted Rock, but is officially titled John Muir Land Trust Painted Rock Open Space, typically bears the brunt from inclement weather, and even the existing 9-inch Asphalt Concrete Berm, designed to keep runoff from pouring over into the Lafayette-bound lanes, has proven insufficient to hold back the flood waters from pooling onto the 500-foot stretch of Moraga Road between Dolores Street and Hansen Court.

The town awarded an engineering design services agreement to CSG Consultants, Inc. (Pleasanton) in February 2022, in the amount of \$57,500 to complete their agreement by the end of October 2022. In April, CSG's subconsultant, LSA Associates, Inc., determined that the area where the runoff was being trapped could potentially be wetlands. In July 2022, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) verified and agreed with the assessment, to which CSG began developing stormwater improvement concepts that would allow construction outside of the wetland area.

The project suffered delays due to analyzing multiple layouts for vehicle, bicycle, and storm drain improvement

concepts within the limited existing pavement width. During this time, the town's project manager departed, and replacement staff needed to be recruited and brought up to speed. This delay increased the engineering design hours.

Back on track again, staff has proposed two feasible project design options according to a Sept. 27 staff report by Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp and Associate Civil Engineer Edrienne Aguilar. The first option is to "collect and convey stormwater runoff to the existing drain inlet by constructing either a dirt or concrete swale [a low or hollow place] outside the existing pavement, potentially impacting the proposed wetlands area. For the town to construct within the dirt shoulder, either USACE will need to officially move or remove the proposed wetlands area, or the Project will need to provide mitigation measures per permitting agencies."

The second option is to "collect and convey stormwater runoff to the existing drain inlet by replacing the existing AC Berm with a taller concrete Berm intended to retain runoff from overtopping."

Moraga's staff has requested to be present during a second USACE site visitation to determine their next course of action as to whether the AC Berm can be eliminated or moved.

In the meantime, the town council



Photo courtesy Public Works Dept.

Flooding last winter at the end of the existing turnout along northbound Moraga Road.

has approved a \$17,490 increase to CSG's originally contracted \$57,500 for a new total amount not to exceed \$74,990 in order to complete the additional engineering design services.

Theme chosen for upcoming Moraga Mural

By Vera Kochan



Site of future Moraga Mural

Photo Vera Kochan

In an effort to bring more outdoor art to the Moraga community, the Art in Public Spaces Committee has set its sights on turning the empty wall space located at 335 Rheem Blvd. into a mural.

"The APSC wants to increase the frequency and visibility of art performances and artworks in Moraga," stated Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady in her Sept. 27 staff report. "To achieve

this goal, the APSC requested the Town Council allow them to explore the possibility of installing a mural on the wall outside of the Public Works Corp Yard/Town Council Chambers. At the March 8, 2023 meeting, the Town Council also approved APSC engaging the public in selecting a mural theme with keywords."

A survey was initiated asking the community to submit key words that generally

bring to mind life in Moraga. The survey was open for six weeks between June 19 to July 31 and received 221 responses, to which the APSC Mural Subcommittee analyzed and condensed the information from one of the questions asking: "In 2-3 words, what defines Moraga?"

APSC compiled the results and noted that the most often used words were: "nature, open space, hills, semi-rural, and beautiful." By combining those descriptions the theme of the mural is: "Natural Beauty of the Surrounding Hills."

The next most popular running theme was "peaceful," with residents using words such as: "peaceful community," "kind," and "calm."

The "small town" theme came through with some responses bordering on the negative such as: "boring," "commercial areas old and lack character," and "isolated." However, other responses were more uplifting, using "small town feel," "home," and "small town friendliness" to describe Moraga.

"Community" popped up often with descriptions like: "active community involvement," "community spirit," and "inclusive community," while another buzzword was "safe" as in: "safe and beautiful place to raise a family."

The word "quiet" was used with: "quiet family town," and

in the lengthiest description of the entire survey, "quiet oasis in the center tucked away but close to major metropolitan area of San Francisco and all the city has to offer!"

"Family" came through with descriptions such as: "family-centric," and "great for families." "Friendly" was described through "friendly people," and "friendly community." And "schools" offered high praise with "great schools," "excellent schools," and several mentions of "Saint Mary's College."

The town council approved the selected phrase of "Natural Beauty of the Surrounding Hills" during its Sept. 27 meeting, and it was noted that the phrase itself would not actually be written as part of the mural, but serve as the inspiration for it.

The next step for APSC is to issue a Request for Proposals to the public in order to have prospective applicants submit information and a rendering based on how they interpret the theme. The chosen artist's conceptual design, after APSC approval, would go to the town council for final review and authorization.

The artist will also be chosen for fitting into the project's budget. Estimated costs are approximately \$10,000 for the mural (\$4,500 from Fund 134 and an additional \$5,500 fundraised), plus maintenance based on the specific medium.

Correction : In the article, "Rancho Laguna Park to receive fitness equipment donation," published on Sept. 27, it stated that "the only cost to the town will be staff's installation of the equipment." The town of Moraga is not doing the installation of equipment. "The only cost of the town is minimal yearly maintenance," Bobbie Preston noted, "which consist mainly of touchup paint; the maintenance costs are paid for by the donor."

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