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Town Council approves funding agreement for Smart Signals

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Town Council approved two proposed cost sharing funding agreements with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), to design and construct the Moraga Community Smart Signals Project, during its Oct. 11 meeting.

The federal government appropriates transportation funding approximately every four years through the Federal Highway Administration that flows to the state level and later is distributed to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for use in the Bay Area. This distribution is called One Bay Area Grant, and since it's in its third iteration, it is referred to as OBAG-3. The grants are meant to improve, among other things, safety and induce economic development.

"The Town has a total of 8.5 traffic signalized intersections, with the Moraga Way and Ivy Drive intersection shared with the City of Orinda," stated Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp in his Oct. 11 staff report. "The existing signal system is antiquated and needs frequent repair and servicing. It lacks the required infrastructure, such as fiber and cellular/wireless-based communications, making it challenging to implement traffic signal synchronization and coordination. The traffic signal systems do not include signal control and prioritization technologies to reduce delays for transit, increase safety for multimodal users, coordinate evacuation routes, and reduce emergency response times."

CCTA will take the lead with regards to this Countywide Smart Signals project which is intended to unify the major traffic corridors that will eventually monitor conditions in real time and help in managing traffic during disruptions to the normal flow.

Thanks to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (H.R. 2617) sponsored by Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, the Lamorinda communities were awarded \$4.185 million in funding for the Smart Signals System project. As such, each municipality needs to provide its local matching contribution to CCTA before starting the design phase of the project. Moraga's is \$224,845.

Included in Moraga's Smart Signals project are the following intersections: 1) Moraga Way/Ivy Drive (shared with Orinda); 2) Moraga Way/School Street; 3) Moraga Way/Moraga Road/Canyon Road; 4) Moraga Road/St. Mary's Road; 5) Moraga Road/Donald Drive; 6) Moraga Road/Ascot Drive; 7) Moraga Road/Rheem Boulevard; 8) Moraga Road/Campolindo Drive; and 9) Moraga Way/St. Andrews Drive/Camino Ricardo.

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