



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 Meetings
Wed., May 22, 6:30 p.m.
Wed., June 12, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission:
Tuesday, June 4, 6:30 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission:
Mon., June 10, 6:30 p.m.

Local Hazards Mitigation Plan seeks public input

By Vera Kochan

Contra Costa County is in the process of updating a 5-year Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Plan will require working with cities, special districts, and county departments involving three main areas: hazard identification, mitigation action planning, and public comment and outreach.

Moraga's residents are invited to provide input for the LHMP. In doing so it will allow the town to meet federal, state, and local requirements for grant funding. Associate Planner Mio Mendez said that by providing comments, "the Town of Moraga will be eligible for resiliency grants to reduce

Moraga's vulnerabilities to local hazards, as they are made available, and for recovery grants once the town experiences and recovers from a local hazard."

According to the Contra Costa County website, "During the hazard identification phase, the planning team analyzed data on natural and human-caused hazards based on the likelihood, impact, and severity. For the county, the three highest-ranked hazards were earthquakes, wildfires, and landslides. Even though every participating city and special district also ranked their hazards based on their area, there are common trends across

the county in the hazard ranking."

In Moraga's case, the LHMP Hazard Risk Ranking's high probability factor included landslides, heavy rainfall, severe thunderstorms, strong/damaging winds, heat wave/extreme heat, and utility interruptions. The town's medium probability factor included earthquakes, wildfire, flood (urban/flash flood and ravine/creek), drought, hazardous materials incidents, climate change, cyber security threats, and active shooter incidents.

"After hazards were identified, at least one mitigation action item was identified for each hazard," continued the

county website. "This ensures that each participating agency has a proposed strategy to mitigate hazard impacts."

"In an effort to make the county more disaster-ready and resilient, the Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services is seeking public feedback on the 2024 LHMP," stated Moraga Planning Director Afshan Hamid. "The plan serves as a guide for the county to become more resilient to the impacts of natural, human-caused, and technological disasters."

The county also wants to remind residents that "just as mitigation planning helps local governments be-

come more resilient during disasters, personal preparedness can help you and your family recover more quickly after a disaster. Talk to your family about your local hazards, make a preparedness kit for every household member and pet, and practice your emergency plan at least twice a year."

The 2024 LHMP for Moraga is available on the town's website: www.moraga.ca.us/599/Local-Hazards-Mitigation-Plan. Interested residents have until May 31 to view and provide comments on the Plan before it is submitted to FEMA for review.

Council votes to adopt FY 2024-2025 Townwide Goals and Priorities

By Vera Kochan

Moraga's council members agreed to the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Townwide Goals and Priorities during their May 8 meeting. While initial discussions began in March, staff was requested to make revisions and wait to make the updated presentation when all council members were in attendance.

There are 11 agreed upon Goals and Priorities, which include working with local property owners, Chamber of Commerce, and the community to create a mix of housing, revitalize the town's commercial areas, im-

plement the town's Housing Element, and continue the General Plan 2040 update effort.

Moraga also wants to maintain a balanced Biennial Budget, 50% General Fund Reserve, AAA Credit Rating, and develop a Ten-Year Financial Strategic Plan to provide long-term fiscal sustainability and core municipal services.

Another priority is to complete construction of the 2023-2025 Townwide "Worst Streets First" Street Reconstruction Projects, implement the revised Street Rehabilitation Cost Sharing Policy, and improve the Moraga's

overall Pavement Condition Index.

Completing construction of the 2023-2025 Storm Drain Capital Improvement Projects and continuing the town's Storm Drain Operations and Maintenance Program are also on the list, along with maintaining high-quality public safety services by providing responsive law enforcement, continuing to coordinate with Moraga-Orinda Fire District, and completing the Lamorinda Evacuation Study.

Additional goals are to commence preparation of a Recreation and Open Space Master Plan;

the implementation of measures to address congestion and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along streets and roads, especially near schools; and lessen Moraga's impact on the environment by implementing environmental sustainability and resiliency initiatives – including those contained in the town's Climate Action Plan and Facility Energy Generation Study.

The final goals and priorities include reviewing the town's Fee Schedule, development fees, and other potential fees that would benefit the community, such as

a fee for the arts, landscaping, stormwater, drainage, Transient Occupancy Tax, etc. Finally, the town plans to continue to improve the town-gown relationship with Saint Mary's College and update the Townwide Noise Ordinance.

In the past, Moraga's town councils approved the annual Townwide Goals and Priorities at the beginning of each new calendar year. However, a shift to a fiscal year basis of July 1 to June 30 will align the process with the timing of the budget cycle.

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Moraga Library goes batty

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Some of the fun facts that attendees learned about bats during the presentation were that bats fly with their hands; worldwide there are over 1,400 species of bats (47 of which are in the United

States, 26 of those are located in California, and 17 are found in our region); for the most part, bats eat insects, but some eat fruit, nectar, or very rarely meat; bats drink milk when they are born and water when they get older.

More interesting

facts are that bats can be found on every continent but Antarctica. They are born as a single birth, but there are rare occasions when they have a twin. Bat guano (droppings) is highly valued and used in fertilizers. A bat's wings are made of skin with trails of blood vessels within. If a wing is torn, thanks to the blood vessels, it can grow back and heal. House cats are a bat's primary predator, because they can climb trees. Raccoons and squirrels are also their enemies, in addition to any tree snakes.

Depending on the species, bats can, on average, fly 100 mph, so this comes in handy when chasing their favored meal of flying insects, which they eat immediately. Because bats dine on insects that can be harmful to crops, the farming community appreciates them as a non-



Photo Vera Kochan

NorCalBats' Corky Quirk extends a Pallid Bat's wing

toxic and natural form of "pesticide".

Quirk informed everyone that, contrary to popular belief, bats are not blind. They navigate using echolocation by producing sound waves at frequencies above human hearing, called ultrasound. The sound waves they emit bounce off objects in their environment which then return to the bats' ears. Dogs and cats can hear the echolocation of bats.

Bats do like to sleep during the day and hunt

for food at night. They sleep upside-down by hanging onto objects with their sharp claws.

According to Quirk, Hoary Bats are a large, hairy species that likes to stay in trees instead of hiding in caves. They arrive during the spring and fall and are considered to be solitary creatures. Mexican Free-Tailed Bats have short hair and very sharp teeth, and use their ears to help them fly. The Big Brown Bat can be found near wood such as dead trees, under the eaves of houses, and in barns. They chew their food and love to eat mealworms. Lastly, Pallid Bats can live in a variety of habitats. They have large ears and they hunt for food on the ground, looking for crickets, beetles, grasshoppers, and potato bugs. They've been known to enjoy munching on centipedes and scorpions without getting sick from the venom. They protect themselves by emitting a mild, skunk-like odor.

A bat on the ground is usually sick, injured, or orphaned. "Do not touch it," explained Quirk. "If you pick it up it will be scared and might fight back. There is a possibility of being bitten and contracting rabies. Instead, cover it with a box or container and call wildlife rescue."

For more information visit: norcalbats.org.

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