



ABOUT TOWN ▪ NOVEMBER 20, 2009 BI-WEEKLY UPDATE FROM MORAGA TOWN STAFF



STATE OF THE TOWN ADDRESS

Please join the Town of Moraga on Monday December 7, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. for the annual State of the Town Address. This year's event will be held at the beautiful Holy Trinity Cultural Center located at 1700 School Street. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to meet your local elected officials and network with community groups and neighbors while enjoying wine and appetizers! Please mark your calendars and plan to join us.



NEW ON-LINE SERVICES FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ARE AVAILABLE

The Police Department has added the ability for a citizen to make an on-line request for a "Vacation House Watch" and/or "Patrol Request." If you are leaving your home for any length of time, or have a problem in your neighborhood that warrants special attention, simply fill out the form(s) on-line and press "Submit." You will receive a confirmation email. The department is asking residents to send any suggestion on how to improve its website to police@moraga.ca.us.



APPLICANTS NEEDED FOR TOWN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Check in the upcoming Town Crier for opportunities to volunteer to serve on one of the Town boards and commissions. There are vacancies for the ADA Advisory Committee, the Design Review Board, the Park and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission and the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee. Information on the purpose of each one, when it meets and the terms, as well as who to contact for more information is included in the Town Crier.



IS THE MORAGA ROAD WORK COMPLETED?

Yes, the resurfacing work is complete, but what most people do not realize is that it will take a month or so for the aggregate (asphalt coated gravel) to become fully embedded in the asphalt mixture. Staff has been fielding a number of calls from residents concerned about the final quality of the project. The process is not the same type of work that was done on Moraga Road from the Lafayette limits to Buckingham, but is a process called a "rubber cape seal". It adds roughly ½" of resurfacing material on top of the recently repaired roadway. Because it is less costly than an asphalt overlay, the Town opted to implement this process to provide a rehabilitated roadway all the way to Draeger Drive; a repaving project would have gone only from Buckingham to 5A Mini Storage.

Since the Town does not have adequate funds to maintain the roads to the high level of repaving, we are forced to spread the funds we do have over the greatest amount of roadway to prevent degradation of the roads. We were very fortunate to receive federal stimulus funds for this project. On a positive note, this approach uses recycled tires (more than 3,000 on this stretch alone!), consumes far fewer resources than an asphalt overlay, and still provides for the protection of our investment in the roadway for seven to ten years.

The road is noisier initially than an asphalt overlay, but will become smoother and quieter with use. The Town will evaluate the ultimate results over time to determine if it is a suitable solution for future projects.



TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE, MORAGA CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN AND 20 DWELLING UNIT PER ACRE ORDINANCE

On November 18th, the Town Council reviewed and discussed the revised draft Housing Element and Moraga Center Specific Plan. The Council also discussed a new draft 20 dwelling unit per acre ordinance for the Moraga Center area. Staff was directed to refine the draft documents so that they are internally consistent and consistent with one another and produce revised draft documents for consideration and possible adoption by the Town Council at a special meeting on December 2, 2009. On November 30th, the Planning Commission will conduct a required public hearing and make a formal recommendation to the Town Council regarding the draft documents. The Planning Commission hearing will be held at the Moraga Library at 7:30 p.m. and the special Town Council meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Joaquin Moraga Auditorium.



WINTER/SPRING ACTIVITY GUIDE AND TOWN CRIER COMING SOON

The 2010 Winter/Spring Activity Guide and Town Crier can be expected in the homes of Moraga residents by the end of November. This edition of the guide highlights the newly reduced rental rates for weekday and off-peak use of the Hacienda de las Flores and the new website www.moragahacienda.com. New enrichment classes include Ballet for all ages, Electronics Engineering Fundamentals, Mat Pilates, Yogic Breath Awareness, and a Small Vineyard Series. These new offerings, in addition to our existing programs, make for a well-rounded curriculum with something for everyone. Sign up before 12/18/09 and receive 10% off!



BUY-A-BULB, LIGHT THE HOLIDAY TREE

Be part of the holiday spirit by contributing to Moraga's "Buy-a-Bulb" fundraiser to light the Holiday Tree in the Commons Park on Saturday, December 5th. Please help the Town reach its goal of raising \$6,000 and remit a check payable to *Town of Moraga*, Town of Moraga, 2100 Donald Dr., Moraga 94556, Attn: Buy-a-Bulb Fundraiser. Enjoy holiday music, cookies and hot cocoa while watching Santa light the Holiday Tree! Event begins at 6:30 p.m., lighting at 7:00 p.m.



TOWN COUNCIL ACCEPTS REPORT FROM THE REVENUE ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

After over five months of work and numerous meetings, the Revenue Enhancement Committee presented its report to Town Council on November 18th. The Committee found that the Town ranks lowest in per capita revenue compared to peer cities, several needs have been deferred due to lack of funding, and that reserves are too low. They concluded that the Town "has a revenue problem, not a spending problem." The Committee made some very specific recommendations regarding funding for infrastructure replacement, General Fund needs to maintain services, and economic development ideas to increase business activity in the Town. The Committee stressed the need for new revenues to be sustainable and free of possible "takeaway" by the State. Recommendations included: pursuing Charter City status to give the Town local control and allow the residents to consider enacting a real property transfer tax; an assessment district to address neighborhood streets; a business license tax to provide funding to support economic development; as well as other revenue options. All of the revenue options would require voter approval. The complete report is

available on the Town's web site. Town Council is expected to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the Committee's recommendations and receive community input on the ideas presented by the Committee after the first of the year.



"SPARE THE AIR" NIGHTS – WOOD FIRE BURNING RESTRICTIONS

As cooler temperatures begin to mark the beginning of fall, the American Lung Association of California is urging the public to avoid wood burning and to consider cleaner burning alternatives. Burning wood emits harmful toxins and fine particles in the air that can worsen breathing problems and lead to heart and lung disease and even early death.

Wood smoke poses a special threat to people with asthma and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and should be actively avoided by those with lung disease. The American Lung Association strongly recommends using cleaner, less toxic sources of heat, such as natural gas. Converting a wood-burning fireplace or stove to use either natural gas or propane will eliminate exposure to the dangerous toxins wood burning generates including dioxin, arsenic and formaldehyde.

The Air District will call a winter Spare the Air Alert making wood burning illegal until the alert is lifted. Individuals can make a complaint about wood smoke pollution by calling the air district's hotline at 1-877-4NO-BURN or sign up to receive air alerts on the District's website at: www.sparetheair.org