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## Moraga Town Council authorizes purchase of new police vehicle

By Vera Kochan



The Moraga Police Department will soon acquire a new police vehicle that will replace one of its older 2011 models in the fleet. The MPD currently has six active marked patrol cars. It also uses an off-road vehicle for any emergencies that could transpire on any of Moraga's hillsides and steep terrains.

According to a staff report by Moraga Police Chief Jon King, "Although the Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor vehicle was the primary vehicle for several years, this vehicle model has been out of production since 2012. Since that time, the police department has transitioned to both the Ford Pursuit Utility (Explorer) and the Dodge Charger for use as patrol and administrative vehicles."

Moraga Police Department's Dodge Charger Photo Vera Kochan The old vehicle carries approximately 73,000 miles on it and is beginning to show its age with increasing maintenance costs. King stressed the importance of

using newer vehicles with the public's safety in mind. "It's critical that all of our vehicles are in the best shape and condition they can be. It's imperative. You can't risk the police not getting to anyone during a call. It could be a matter of life and death." He pointed out that the California Highway Patrol replaces its vehicles every three to four years.

The town will purchase a brand new black and white, 2019 Dodge Charger Pursuit V-8 Engine Patrol unit from Bravo Dodge. They are part of B & W Automotive Inc. located in Alhambra, California, which won a bidding contract from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. King explained, "I shop for the best price I can get. I look at the state bids for all the deals, and we were able to pick this one."

The new vehicle will cost the town \$28,239.60 including sales tax and delivery to Moraga from Southern California. MPD has a contractor in the area that will customize the exterior and another that will install police equipment to the interior, both at additional cost.

No one particular officer is assigned a permanent vehicle. "We make assignments for the cars. We rotate who uses each vehicle," King said. "We want to make sure all officers are comfortable with all of the cars."

The Capital Improvement Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20 includes \$45,000 in the Vehicle and Operating Equipment Program: Citizens Option for Public Safety, that allows for the purchase and equipping of a police vehicle.

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