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## **ABAG Denies Moraga's Application**

*No Priority Development Status for Rheem*

*By Sophie Braccini*

At the February 22 Town Council Meeting, Moraga Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read announced that the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) denied the Rheem Center Area the status of Priority Development Area (PDA). Because new rules require that in order to qualify for a Federal or Regional grant a project needs to have 70% of its impact in a PDA, this is not good news for Rheem.

"We had to submit the General Plan for that area as part of our application," said the Director, "ABAG noticed that at this time the Rheem neighborhood is not zoned for high density and therefore we don't meet that criterion. They also said that the district was located in close proximity to two BART stations, but that since we do not have a bus system with 20-minute headway, the PDA designation could not be granted."

The Contra Costa Transportation Agency (CCTA) is not likely to increase bus rates in Moraga while service is being cut back all over the County. Brekke-Read believes that other options can be studied, such as a shuttle system between Moraga and the two BART stations. She has also been asked by CCTA to sit on a committee that is studying a smart phone application geared at organizing real time ride-sharing using individual cars.

The rezoning of the Rheem area is part of a General Plan amendment that Brekke-Read is working on with the Town Council and Planning Commission.

The only part of Moraga that is an approved PDA is the Moraga Center, which encompasses Safeway and the surrounding area.

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