



MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
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Town Council: Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m.
Special Joint Town Council and Planning Commission Meeting:
 Wednesday, May 4, 6 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, May 3, 7 p.m.,
Park and Recreation Commission:
 Monday, May 16, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 Tuesday, May 10, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us

Prospective Governing Board Candidates

Candidate Information Session
 Tuesday, May 17, at 6:00 PM
 Joaquin Moraga School Library
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
 RSVP to jbaier@moraga.k12.ca.us

Capital Asset Replacement Five-Year Plan presented to Town Council

By Vera Kochan

Capital Asset Replacement involves services and programs that are essential to the community and include the town's parks, buildings, permanent fixtures, facilities, vehicles and information technology infrastructure. Moraga had experienced three lean years between 2016-19, whereby many asset replacement or repairs had to be postponed if not crucially necessary. As such, in 2019, both the library's heating system broke down during the winter, and the restrooms in

Rancho Laguna Park were incapacitated for nine months.

According to an April 13 staff report by Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt, "The Asset Replacement Program transitioned into a five-year program in 2021-22 to align with the town's implementation of a five-year Capital Improvement Program. The complete list of assets that are past due or due for replacement in the next five fiscal years totals \$2,418,700. Staff is recommending \$1,582,000 in asset replacement projects over the next five years, with an annual investment average of \$317,000

per year."

For Fiscal Year 2022-23 staff recommendations include: Hacienda Metal Entrance Fence and Gate (nearly 30-years old, is unstable and rusting; repairs would be cost prohibitive) \$42,000; Pavilion Flagstone Staircase Phase 1 - Design (c. 1938 is not ADA compliant and unstable) \$49,000; Rancho Laguna Park Picnic Tables (dry rot, replace with 100% recyclable plastic tables) \$53,000; Police Vehicle 2016 Ford Explorer (police vehicles experience high wear and tear, this vehicle is at its service life of five to seven years. ... continued on Page A5

Moraga's third mayor, Merle Gilliland, is fondly remembered



Merle Gilliland Photo provided

By Vera Kochan

The town of Moraga was incorporated in 1974, and one of its citizens, Merle Gilliland, played a large role to that ef-

fect. Having served on the initial town council for two terms, Gilliland, who passed away on March 31, became Moraga's third mayor in 1976.

Besides using his architectural skills to design the Town Seal, Gilliland worked on several projects within Moraga and the Bay Area (San Francisco International Airport). As a member of the very first town council, he helped to format ordinances, plans and the eventual establishment of the Moraga Police Department. In 1976, Gilliland and his fellow council members were presented a town certification plaque from then Gov. Ronald Reagan acknowledging Moraga's incorporation. It was also the first five council members who were instrumental in preserving the area now known as Moraga Commons Park for family recreational purposes.

Former colleague and the town's fourth mayor (1977), Susan McNulty-Rainey stated, "We were a close group. We all kept on getting together after our council duties. We were very close on many decisions - it took us forever to decide the color of the town's stationary." She remembers Gilliland as "a wonderful man who donated a lot of his time and used his architectural skills to help us out."

"Merle was a pleasure to work with," recalled Barry Gross, the town's fifth and 11th mayor (1978 and 1983), who also served with Gilliland on the town council. "He was very talented. He had the ability to disagree without being disagreeable. His loss is felt

deeply, I'm sure, by anybody and everybody who knew him besides his family."

Betty, Gilliland's wife of 64 years, has fond memories of their time in Moraga. Although they have since moved to Montana, she also remembers the closeness of the town's first elected officials and their families. "We had a lot of really good times with the town council. We got along so well - it was a blessing."

Many will remember Gilliland for his sense of humor and injection of fun for the town's benefit. His wife reminisced about the time Saint Mary's College hosted a Fourth of July event and she was in charge of baking 14 cakes for the occasion. She enlisted one of their daughters to help frost all of the cakes who eventually lost enthusiasm after completing a very few. Enter Gilliland who not only helped to frost the rest of the cakes, but when the job was done proceeded to have a frosting war with his daughter all over the kitchen.

Before the Pear Harvest existed, Gilliland had arranged with the owner of Nation's Bakery to bake pear pies to sell at the Pear Festival. He went out to the orchards every year and hand picked pears to personally deliver to the bakery.

Borrowing from Gilliland's obituary, "Through both challenging and joyous moments, Merle created levity through laughter, bringing smiles to those around him. It is through those relationships and memories that Merle's legacy will proudly and confidently live on."

Want safer roads? Public Works Dept. needs your feedback

By Vera Kochan

The state of California is required by the Federal Highway Administration to have a Strategic Highway Safety Plan aimed at reducing traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries on its public roads.

In order for Moraga to qualify for federal grants, the town has hired TJKM Transportation Consultants to develop a Local Roadway Safety

Plan. Community input is important for the project's success. The Public Works Department has set up a link on the town's website for residents to provide feedback related to traffic safety issues. Examples are: drivers often speed along this road segment; cars don't stop at this stop sign; please add bike lanes here; and crossing the street is difficult at this intersection.

To provide your own feedback visit: www.moraga.ca.us/515/Local-Roadway-Safety-Plan. Please submit your feedback by May 31.

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