



Published May 11th, 2022

Town Council gives staff direction regarding Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Budget

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Town Council reviewed a report for a one-year budget authorization and a four-year forecast of dedicated revenues for specific projects regarding the Capital Improvement Program during its April 27 meeting. The purpose was for council to provide input to staff on what it considered high priority projects. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp's presentation began with a quick overview of the 2022 Town Council and Community Goals and Priorities that happen to fall under the CIP's purview: Efficiently sustain core operations and services with a nod to fiscal discipline and long-term fiscal sustainability; Satisfy the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) through rezoning and revisions; Complete the finishing touches on the Canyon Road Bridge project and secure reimbursements; Complete the 2022 construction phase and the 2023 design of the "Worst First" Pavement Reconstruction projects; Continue the Storm Drain System Operations and Maintenance Program; American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funding allocation to highest priority needs; Enhance Moraga's parks, open space and facilities; Focus on traffic, congestion and pedestrian safety; and Implement viable strategies with regards to the town's Climate Action Plan. Important points to note, besides the staff report that was prepared by Knapp and Senior Administrative Assistant Janet Lara, mention "The proposed CIP allocates available funding to projects. Funding would need to be shifted to add new projects. The \$1.4 million in Measure J remains available and can be allocated to traffic safety projects upon completion of the Local Road Safety Plan which will prioritize traffic safety projects. The CIP continues to prioritize storm drain projects that were started in Fiscal Year 2021-22 given ARPA funding."

New CIP Projects recommended for funding FY 2022-23 are: Pavilion flagstone staircase \$49,000; Town facility energy reliability (funded through Government Impact Fees) \$100,000; Laguna Creek Restoration at Hacienda - Phase 2 (fully funded) \$228,000; Hacienda metal entrance fence and gate \$42,000; Rancho Laguna Park picnic tables \$53,000; Canyon Road Bridge replacement riparian remediation (87% funded from Caltrans) \$340,000; Bollinger Canyon Road tree remediation \$50,000; and Pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Camino Pablo \$5,000.

Ongoing CIP Projects with additional funding recommended for FY 2022-23 are: Laguna Creek Restoration at Hacienda - Phase 2; Commons Park picnic area renovation and restroom replacement; Livable Moraga Road Study; Annual street repairs; 2022 pavement rehabilitation; and Corliss Drive safe routes to school. There were several Carryover Projects FY 2021-22 with Planned Funds such as: Moraga Library carpet replacement; 2021-23 Annual road rehabilitations and storm drain repairs; Housing Element/General Plan update; and Central Video Surveillance System, to name a few.

Looking ahead to Scheduled FY 2023-24 to 2026-27 CIP: Hacienda parking lot retaining wall repairs; Hacienda trash enclosure; Drainage Sedimentation and Slide Failure Study; 2025-27 Storm drain repairs; Bollinger Canyon Road hillside stabilization; 2023-26 pavement rehabilitation; and more.

The town council and staff received an over-abundance of correspondence from the community regarding the unsafe route from Corliss Drive to Los Perales Elementary School. In deference to the potential dangers of the route, council strongly urged staff to make this a top priority CIP and were willing to shelve non-critical projects in order to make it happen.

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