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## Moraga Town Council adopts Hacienda Biennial Budget

By Vera Kochan

During its June 28 meeting, the Moraga Town Council unanimously approved the adoption of the Biennial Fiscal Year 2023-24 and Fiscal Year 2024-25 Operating and Capital Improvement Program Budget, and to establish the annual Gann Appropriation Limit for Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget.

A Gann Appropriation Limit, according to the staff report by Administrative Services Director Annie To and Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp, is a state law whereby "local governments are required to annually approve a local resolution that includes a 'Gann Appropriation Limit' calculation to ensure that the local budget doesn't exceed the local appropriation limit based on each local jurisdiction's population and annual per capital personal income change from the previous year. The Town of Moraga's calculated applicable Gann Appropriation Limit of \$9.9 million for FY 2023-24 falls within the applicable Gann Appropriation Limit of \$19.1 million."

Included in the Budget Appropriation Revisions requested by the council are: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) items such as, earmarking \$25,000 for the town's 50th Anniversary Celebration in November 2024, by reducing ARPA funds that supported the FY 2023-24 Annual Storm Drain Repairs Program CIP Project. Also coming out of ARPA Funds is an appropriation of \$20,000 to be split among four businesses that missed the deadline to participate in the COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Grants.

The Lamorinda Fee and Financing Authority (LFFA) Fund 799 item regarding the Lamorinda Spirit Van Program Subsidy appropriation of \$20,000 in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 was suggested by staff as a "two-year trial period" based on an annual performance review.

There are several projects without Budget Appropriation Revisions. First is the Town Hall & Council Chamber Energy Reliability Study & Initial Projects (\$230,000 in FY 2023-24 and \$405,000 in FY 2024-25). This proposed CIP Budget includes funding for initial stages of Town Hall and Council Chamber projects, along with energy efficiency projects at the Moraga Library.

An Evacuation Study appropriation for up to \$100,000 in FY 2023-24 directed staff to explore cost sharing options with other local government public safety partners including the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

Staff recommended using the FY 2023-24 General Fund Planning Department's Contract Services line-item budget to pay for a Noise Ordinance Study - \$40,000.

The Upper Moraga Road Preliminary Traffic Study appropriation of \$25,000 in FY 2023-24 should come from the CIP Project 14-404 Traffic Safety Program. If additional funds are needed, staff recommends using the Palos Colorados Development Impact Fees Fund.

Other "housekeeping" revisions to the Proposed Biennial Budget that staff has identified according to the staff report are: an "Updated Town Manager Budget Message; Revised Department Performance Measures; updated general and department budget/financial summaries to reflect the final budget totals; Revised CIP Project narratives to ensure more accurate individual project descriptions; and other revisions/updates where needed."

The Town's total Operating and CIP Budget for FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 is proposed to be \$22.6 million and \$21.2 million respectively. The General Fund's share of the budget will be \$11.9 million for FY 2023-24 and \$12.3 million for FY 2024-25. Staff states that "the CIP Budget for the next two fiscal years will total \$20.8 million to support 30 ongoing and new Capital Improvement Projects, including \$16.4 million for transportation safety, street rehabilitation and storm drain projects, and \$3.9 million will be dedicated to funding eight traffic safety and congestion projects around local schools."

Staff also added that "the budget for both years will remain 'balanced' and fully comply with Town Council's Strategic Plan, Fiscal Policies, and Budget Policies, including maintaining a 50% reserve for both fiscal years."

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