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## Construction Set to Begin on First Stage of Pumping Plant

By Cathy Tyson

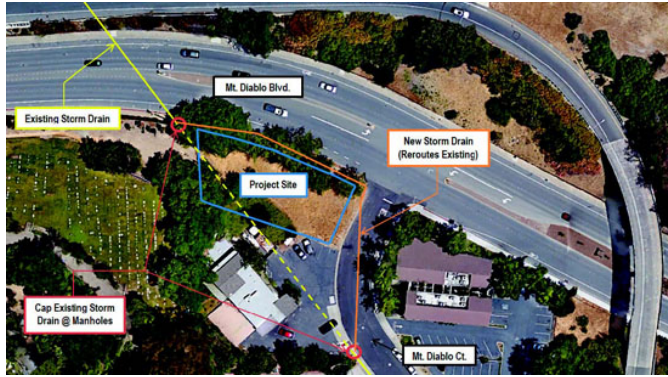


Image provided by EBMUD depicting location of existing and future storm drains.

new one.

Store owner and operator Larry Blodgett calls this the worst part of the entire project. He is concerned about customers as well as delivery trucks being able to access the longtime family-owned business. Contractor GSE has been very cooperative so far, according to Blodgett. Utilities are marked, but with more rain in the forecast, EBMUD spokesperson Michelle Blackwell was vague about a start date for the project: "Possibly November, maybe December."

Planning for the new water pumping plant has taken four years to get to this point. Part of the problem was the murky ownership of the parcel in question. Streets were realigned many years ago to make way for Highway 24 to be widened to accommodate BART. The newly created right-of-way land was never officially transferred from the county to the city of Lafayette. That issue has now been settled.

The new plant will look like a very large garage - 45-feet wide by 43-feet deep by 20-feet tall - with attractive landscaping, set back on the rectangular lot, closer to the cemetery than the intersection at Mt. Diablo Court. EBMUD's conceptual design calls for a durable low maintenance structure that is functional and a visual asset to the community.

In a unique deal with the city, once the new plant is up and running, the old plant will be demolished and public parking will take its place.

Storm drain work will presumably begin in the near future; in theory, it should not cause major traffic impacts. However, when the time comes to install the enormous new water pipeline, drivers will see a string of orange cones and will have to deal with intermittent lane closures.

According to EBMUD the project is slated to be complete in September of 2017. Noting the likely wet winter forecast, Blackwell said EBMUD built in potential rain delays to the construction schedule.

Job number one for the new East Bay Municipal Utility District Diablo Vista pumping plant is to reroute the existing storm drain that cuts diagonally from the edge of the Lafayette Cemetery across the parcel where the new plant will be built at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Mt. Diablo Court, and bisects the Blodgett's Abbey Carpet and Flooring parking lot. When complete, the rerouted storm drain will follow the sidewalk on the south side of the street, rounding the corner to connect with an existing storm drain down Mt. Diablo Court.

The new pumping plant replaces the plant built in 1956 adjacent to Ace Hardware; it will have the capacity to deliver 16 million gallons of water per day to Lafayette, Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill. In addition to the plant, a massive new 30-inch diameter water pipe will be installed along the freeway side of Mt. Diablo from the old plant to the

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