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"Twinkle, twinkle little civic median" doesn't have quite the same ring to it as "little stars," but

It takes a village to bring this much sparkle to

Blocks of festive twinkle lights along Mt.

Thanksgiving. New this year was an expansion all

definitely helped to meld the east end of Mt. Diablo

of several switches the weekend before

the way down to Brown Avenue which "has

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More Sparkle in Downtown Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson

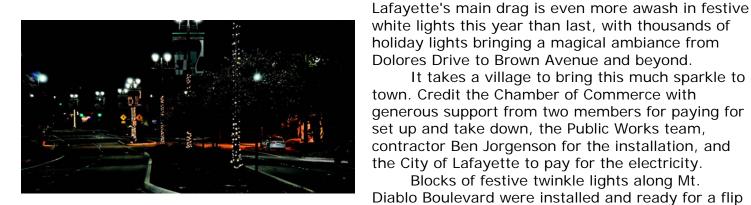


Photo Andy Scheck

Boulevard with downtown," said Public Works

Director Mike Moran. He adds that recently planted baby trees require more care and less weight from lights. "Since the median trees on the east end are younger and smaller than most of the trees to the west, they will use less strands of lights per tree," he said. In addition to Mt. Diablo Boulevard, for the first time ever the islands on Pleasant Hill Road will also be lit at night.

All of the many strands are composed of energy-efficient LED, or light emitting diode fixtures, that use much less energy than old-school incandescent bulbs, specifically about one-fourth the electricity and boast a longer lifespan.

The annual tradition has, in years past, struggled to find funding to literally "keep the lights on." The city used to be responsible for the entire project, but amid budget cutbacks a few years ago most of that responsibility shifted to the Chamber of Commerce. As recently as 2011, Chamber of Commerce executive director, Jay Lifson, was asking for donations to keep the twinkle lights twinkling. This year is brighter than ever, with thousands of lights that will remain up through New Year's.

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