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Moraga

Campo Trees Removed

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Photo Cathy Dausman

He says they are "on track" for a completion in mid-July.

"People just love trees," Humphrey said, "and I'm with 'em!"

Asked if the district has landscape projects slated for Miramonte High School or Acalanes High School, Humphrey said Miramonte is undergoing an irrigation replacement which involves digging up planters and repotting some vegetation. The Acalanes campus landscape "looks gorgeous as it is," Humphrey said.

Here is a partial list of trees removed and some of their replacements.

Removed:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Arizona cypress | Aleppo Pine | Willow |
| Bottle Brush | Liquid Amber | Ponderosa Pine |
| Canary Island Pine | Ash | Mulberry |

Replacements:

- Trees:**
October Glory Maples
Easter Red Bud
Western Red Bud
Raywood Ash
Deep red Crepe Myrtle
Chinese Pistache
Aristocrat Pear
Coastal Live Oak
Valley Oak
Soquel Redwoods

Shrubs and ground cover:

- Strawberry trees
Four varieties of manzanita
Japanese Barberry
Bush ananome
Wild lilac
Lantana
Western ferns
Flowering currant
Sage
Periwinkle

Front Page

Sinkhole

Lamorinda resident and businesswoman Natasha Grasso designs and manufactures handcrafted jewelry. Grasso recently moved her studio and boutique from Burlingame to the Rheem Center, but is fearful of a public perception that the area is presently closed or inaccessible.

"The lack of traffic and stigma around the Rheem shopping center is a real problem for my business and I know I am not the only one," she said. "A setback like this threatens the health of our business community and drives our residents and customers to other shopping areas that are more accessible," she said, adding that she thinks it would be helpful to put together a small group "think tank" to brainstorm and spearhead some solutions.

William Chao, of Chef Chao, also reports his restaurant business has been "down significantly" as a result of the sinkhole, saying he has even had to close "for a couple days." Chao told Moraga Chamber Executive Director Kathe Nelson that "PG&E estimates that it will take two to three months to complete repairs; however, I worry that will continue to hurt our business. I'm hoping you can help us by expediting the repair construction."

While Autohaus owner Xiao Zheng agrees the sinkhole detour is inconvenient he cannot complain about business downturn because he does not depend on foot traffic. "It is what it is," he said. Zhen said the customer cars he moved away from the sinkhole "smelled like a gas chamber" inside, noting the town was lucky a stray cigarette didn't ignite any fumes.

Nelson said she feels the Rheem Center owners' pain. Her

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first challenge was providing the city contact information for the affected businesses. "We started and stopped a comprehensive list of businesses in Moraga," Nelson said, adding she thinks they reached out to "99 percent" of the Rheem Center businesses.

Doing that was complicated because not all Moraga businesses are Chamber of Commerce members. Interim Town Manager Robert Priebe has received a few detour comments himself. "I understand the problems and we're working on it," Priebe said. He says the town administrators are "working very hard to find more assistance."

Addressing Somers' concern, Priebe told the Lamorinda Weekly "we are making changes." He says the town will add a sign underneath the present electronic "Rheem Boulevard closed; detour ahead" sign in Lafayette on southbound Moraga advising drivers that Rheem Center businesses remain open. The town will also post metal traffic signs in both directions along Moraga Road and Rheem Boulevard before and after the closure with the same information. Would the police department assign an officer to direct traffic through the intersection?

"We're playing that by ear," Priebe said. According to Priebe the forensic analysis of the hole should be completed approximately April 15, but completion of the project will likely take another three to four months. He remains pleased with how the town is managing the event, saying "I don't think there's much more we can do to keep the public informed," and adds that the work done by Town Engineer Edric Kwan has been "phenomenal."



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