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## Students are Primed, but are Local Roads Ready for School to Start?

By Nick Marnell



Repaving on Ivy Drive in Orinda is just one local roads improvement project. Photo Victor Ryerson  
days later.

"It is too expensive to bring in the striper to mark one small street," he said. Though part of Ivy Drive lies in Moraga, Edric Kwan, Moraga public works director, said that Orinda is managing the project, and the town pays the city for its portion of the repairs.

Chavarria did warn that Ramona Drive, off of Ivy, may not be completed because of a work delay on a PG&E gas line. Tamar Sarkissian, PG&E spokeswoman, did not respond to questions about Lamorinda construction projects.

"Ten of our buses go to Orinda Intermediate School," said Juliet Hansen, manager of the Lamorinda School Bus Program. "It's a concern." Also, a few bus stops may need to move, or equipment be rerouted, near Sleepy Hollow Elementary School while work continues at Charles Hill Circle and along Singingwood Lane.

### Lafayette

The roundabout project at the Pleasant Hill Road-Olympic Boulevard intersection will impact three bus routes, according to Hansen.

"But the buses will still be able to run their routes," said Lafayette city engineer Tony Coe. "Intersection closures will be only on weekends, causing a detour." The city required that its contractor forbid weekday lane closures before 8:30 a.m., but Coe said there may be delays in the afternoons.

The East Bay Municipal Utility District forced no such requirement on its contractor working on the Mt. Diablo Boulevard pipe installation west of Pleasant Hill Road, but district spokeswoman Charlotte Sullivan promised drivers that more flaggers will be added once school begins. Lane

With school starting in just a couple of weeks, some local residents fear a "Commuter-geddon" due to several high-profile Lamorinda road projects.

As the voters passed the tax measures, and funding has been allocated, the infrastructure projects approved and bid out, Lamorinda is experiencing the tough part: the actual construction. Many roads in Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga have been getting a summer makeover. But the school bell waits for no one.

### Orinda

"We are not concerned at all. It will be paved by Aug. 23," said city of Orinda engineer Daniel Chavarria, regarding the Ivy Drive reconstruction between Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. The paving will be completed, but the road may not be striped until 30

switching will likely be required into October, as the eastbound lane is open now, but will change.

## Moraga

Kwan warned that a paving project over a portion of Corliss Drive in Moraga will disrupt the area near Los Perales Elementary School. The town is working out contract details with two utilities before it can complete the job.

School traffic will not be further impeded by the sinkhole, Kwan said, and though Rheem Boulevard will be closed until mid-October, the road will be opened for emergency vehicles when necessary. Hansen said that new bus route 5, from Burton Valley to Campolindo High School, will begin this year, snaking through Fernwood and Draeger Drives and avoiding all but a tiny section of Rheem Boulevard.

The solar panel installations at each of the Lamorinda high schools will continue well into the fall, according to Jeff Arnold, a consultant to the Acalanes Union High School District. But, except for maybe a couple of exceptions near corners or poles, spaces in the school parking lots will not be eliminated. "None of this work will have any effect on students or parents accessing the schools," Arnold said.

Chavarria noted that, in addition to frayed nerves during their construction, newly paved roads such as Ivy Drive elicit another emotional response: Drivers tend to speed up on the smooth surface.

"Be careful out there," he urged, undoubtedly speaking for all Lamorinda officials as the improved roads and other infrastructure repairs welcome drivers to a new school year.



The road, sidewalk and parking lot at Miramonte High School are still under construction. Photo Andy Scheck

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