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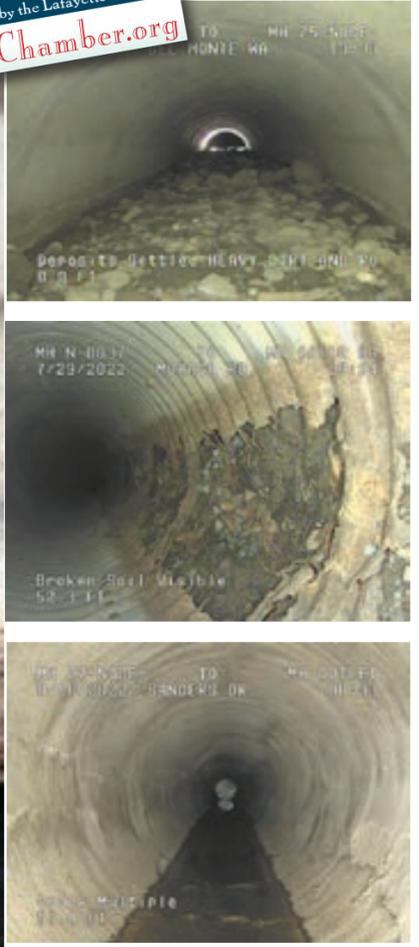
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Photos courtesy Town of Moraga, Public Works Department

Corrugated metal pipe deterioration of invert near Donald Drive and Moraga Road.

# State of some Moraga storm drains cause alarm

By Vera Kochan

As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words," and the condition of some of the town's storm drains speak volumes.

There are "21 miles of publicly maintained storm drain infrastructure consisting of underground pipes, culverts at roadway under crossings, improved and unimproved ditches, and natural creeks within the Town's Right of Way easements," according to a Nov. 9 staff report by Public Works

Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp and Senior Civil Engineer Farah Khorashadi. "The remaining 8 miles of the storm drain system are within private property, and maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner."

A Storm Drain Master Plan was developed in 2015, with an eye toward creating a Capital Improvement Program in order to get a jump on any potential issues in the making. The Master Plan included video inspections of pipelines, field investigations of creek culverts and drainage features (in-

cluding manholes and catch basins). This allowed for recommendations and repairs to the areas that needed immediate attention first.

Measure K funds were directed to the repairing of failing streets, storm drains and other related infrastructural needs. The storm drain repairs are a necessity in order to help maintain the roadways above them. Repairs through the years have included removal and replacement of pipes, lining, and point repairs.

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# Orinda takes an early lead on evacuation planning under new law

By Sora O'Doherty

Although not required by law to address the issue of evacuation planning until the update of the local hazard mitigation plan in a few years, Orinda decided to get an early start on the issue which has been mandated by Assembly Bill 747. The matter was brought to the City Council on Nov. 15, and the council received a presentation by city consultants, PlaceWorks.

When it comes to evacuation, Orinda is affected by evacuations of other local jurisdictions. City Manager David Biggs responded to a question about this, saying that like Orinda, Lafayette has also decided to get started on its AB 747 evacuation planning but Moraga has not yet moved in that direction. The evacuation plan will be an appendix to the Orinda Safety Element, which will come back to the city council in January.

PlaceWorks Assistant Project Manager Jacqueline Protsman and Evacuation Study Lead Allison Giffin gave the presentation and answered questions during the ensuing discussion. A considerable portion of the presentation focused on the methodology used to identify different scenarios that might require evacuation of residents in various areas of Orinda. The methodology involved is not pre-

scribed and is still somewhat new, according to PlaceWorks.

The council discussed the three scenarios in the presentation, wondering why there was not a scenario that would resemble the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire, which moved from the west toward the east. PlaceWorks suggested that the scenario that focuses on Briones Regional Park could be broadened to include a fire threat from a more westerly direction, but the council did not wish to take the focus off the substantial threat from Briones. Both Council Member Nick Kosla and Vice Mayor Inga Miller talked of their memories of the devastating 1991 fire, and expressed concerns that Orinda residents have appropriate evacuation routes in the event that another such fire should ever occur.

Another topic that came up for much discussion, including public comments from Gene Gottfried and Lynne Trowbridge, was the issue of locked gates on Emergency Vehicular Access roads throughout the city. Trowbridge stated that she almost lost a loved one during the Tubbs Fire when such a gate was not opened by the fire department, even though the fire truck was within sight of the gate, but was instructed to go somewhere else. Council Member Amy Worth asked if a car could drive through such a gate, even when locked, and City Manager David Biggs suggested that it would be

a good area to study in the future.

The evacuation plan is limited to wildfire events and landslides, as earthquakes and floods do not usually result in widespread evacuation. The presentation contained recommendations for both wildfires and landslides.

The recommendations arising from the wildfire analysis included employing red flag day parking restrictions and/or contra-flow land policies for certain roadway segments; having active preferred signal timing for signalized intersections along evacuation routes in direction of evacuation travel; facilitating the evacuation of vulnerable populations and residential facilities and reducing vehicle counts during an evacuation. Worth noted that staff has been working on a grant application to allow the upgrading of traffic signals to have more flexibility, especially in the event of an emergency. Mayor Dennis Fay also raised the issue of the crucial nature of the Camino Pablo interchange with the freeway and potential capital improvements to enable faster access to Highway 24.

In regard to landslides, it was recommended that Orinda staff maintain a database of evacuation route segments that are susceptible to landslide and use the database to track geotechnical studies and possible associated capital improvements.

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