



THE WORKS

NEWSLETTER FROM THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY

How long would it take you to mow 275 acres? A ridiculous amount of time, right?

Well, that's the ongoing challenge the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) faces in the Alameda Creek area, where vegetation management in flood control channels is critical.

So, what's a District to do – short of hiring hundreds of people with hundreds of lawn mowers or using herbicides? The solution: “rent-a-goat” or, more accurately, rent about 1,000 goats to do what they do naturally – graze. Moving along the creeks and flood control channels, it takes about two to three months for goats to eat away 275 acres of vegetation.

“The goat grazing is cheaper per acre than any other vegetation clearing method. It reduces the use of herbicides and assists in reducing fire and flood hazards. It also has a social benefit as citizens embrace the goats and feel happy about what they are doing. People really embrace the goats’ environmental benefit,” says Justin Laurence, Environmental Compliance Specialist with the District.

Goats “Mow” 275 Acres, Naturally

Goats have been so successful that, pending the favorable results of a benefits analysis, the District plans to continue the pilot program and expand the acreage grazed to over 1,000 acres in future years.



ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY

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DON'T BLOCK OUR WALK

Did you know that parking on a dirt pathway or an unimproved sidewalk can create a problem for pedestrians?

That's right! Blocked pathways force pedestrians to venture into busy streets to maneuver around the obstacles in the pathway. And vehicles are not the only things that can block walkways. Landscaping, walls and other obstacles can also hinder pedestrian traffic.

To promote public awareness and action, multiple Alameda County agencies collaborated on a one-minute Public Service Announcement (PSA) video titled "Don't

Block Our Walk." The video highlights some of the common obstructions found on unimproved sidewalks and shows how to properly park a vehicle on dirt sidewalks.

[View the PSA here.](#)

And please,
DON'T BLOCK OUR WALK!

SUMMER PAVING PROJECTS

Making the Road Smooth

Paving is one of those things no one really thinks about unless there's a pothole or bump in the road.

Fortunately, Alameda County's road conditions are considered good as measured by the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). The most recent statistics indicate the County's PCI is 73, above the Bay Area's average PCI which is 67. To keep things running as smoothly as possible, the Public Works Agency completes "pavement rehabilitation" projects on approximately 40 miles of road each year.

These projects are completed using several methods. Filling cracks and sealing the asphalt surface is the lowest cost method of pavement preservation, though slurry seal, asphalt overlay and asphalt reconstruction are also paving methods used by the County. Overlay projects involve applying new asphalt to existing pavement. These projects offer opportunities to install or update pedestrian ramps to comply with ADA requirements or restripe the roadways for needed bicycle facilities. This pavement rehabilitation is funded by Measure B/BB, the County's one-cent transportation sales tax, the Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) and other local funds.



Because of these efforts, we all enjoy better driving surfaces, prolonged life of the roads combined with pedestrian ramps to comply with ADA requirements.

FLEET OPERATIONS

Many people know about services provided by the Public Works Agency, but few know about some of the invaluable services provided behind the scenes by the Fleet Operations Division.

Located at the County's Heavy Equipment Repair Building (H.E.R.B.) in Dublin, this division purchases, maintains and repairs over 354 Public Works Agency vehicles, off-road heavy equipment, boats, trailers and more. Additionally, this division maintains the Alameda County Sheriff's Department prisoner transportation buses, all Office of Emergency Services rescue equipment, and trucks above one ton for all County departments.

As if that wasn't enough to keep this



department of 14 employees busy, they also customize basic Ford F-150 trucks with upgrades that can include a light bar rack, tool box and upper and lower lighted safety zones, with pulsating strobe lights. During the winter storm season, several trucks are outfitted with additional equipment to respond to emergency storm-related issues such as

flooding, downed trees, mudslides and roadway washouts.

Yes, this might be a small and hidden division of the Public Works Agency, but many of the Public Works services—and many other County services—rely on these fleet management experts to keep things moving.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS

Partnering for Success

The long-time partnership between the Public Works Agency and Civicorps has proved to be beneficial on multiple levels. Civicorps provides youth with academic and professional pathways, and the PWA benefits from well-trained, driven Civicorps graduates.

Braden Ashford, a 26-year-old Civicorps graduate and valued employee of PWA's Maintenance and Operations Department, is one example of the successful PWA-Civicorps partnership.

Braden openly shares some of the challenges he faced in his youth, including being a 10th grade high school dropout who was "distracted and not focused." In fact, he twice failed to complete the Civicorps program before finding success by earning his high school diploma and becoming a Crew Leader, managing Civicorps participants on work projects.



Braden credits Civicorps for his success and for preparing him to work with PWA. "I learned leadership skills and how to use power tools and chainsaws to cut trees and vegetation. To succeed, you have to come in with a positive attitude. Now, I'm very ambitious and am striving to move up in life. My work with Public Works has me on the right track."

UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



Engineers have been busy over the past few months finalizing plans, specifications and construction documents for a number of upcoming projects. That means there are numerous contracting opportunities for both prime contractors and subcontractors.

Below are just a few of the many opportunities we anticipate advertising in the coming months.

Roadway Improvement Projects

East Avenue Sidewalk Improvements

Estimated Value: \$1,000,000

Subcontracting Opportunities: Trucking, Concrete Flat Work, Structure/Concrete/Masonry, Grading and Paving, Traffic Control, Traffic Striping, Electrical, Landscaping

East 14th Street Streetscape Improvements

Estimated Value: \$15,000,000

Subcontracting Opportunities: Trucking, Small Concrete Structures, Concrete Flat Work, Grading and Paving, Traffic Control, Traffic Striping, Electrical, Landscaping

Santa Maria Streetscape Improvements

Estimated Value: \$1,000,000

Subcontracting Opportunities: Trucking, Concrete Flat Work, Traffic Control, Traffic Striping, Landscaping

Via Enrico and Channel Sidewalk Improvements

Estimated Value: \$900,000

Subcontracting Opportunities: Trucking, Small Concrete Structures, Concrete Flat Work, Traffic Control, Landscaping

West Blossom UPRR Railroad Crossing

Estimated Value: \$250,000

Subcontracting Opportunities: Trucking, Concrete Flat Work, Traffic Control, Traffic Striping

Please be sure to check our [**Current Contracting Opportunities**](#) webpage for advertised projects.

To stay connected and learn about upcoming PWA contracting opportunities and Business Outreach events, please call **510-670-5480**.