

Busy times ahead for intersection of SR-26 and Vista del Lago

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By Nick Baptista

The intersection of State Route 26 and Vista Del Lago is expected to be a busy place over the next year as two long-awaited projects are completed.

District 1 Supervisor Gary Tofanelli received word this week from Caltrans that construction of a traffic signal at the busy intersection is scheduled to begin on May 31, while Dr. Randy Smart, Mark Twain Health Care District board member, informed the Valley Springs Area Business Association on Wednesday that work on a new clinic for Valley Springs will begin by the end of this year or early next year.

Signalization of SR-26 at Vista Del Lago is expected to be completed in August. Caltrans officials estimate traffic delays will be approximately 10 minutes at times, with one-way traffic control in use and most of the work being done primarily at night. George Reed is the contractor.

Dr. Smart told the VSABA that the district has received the necessary approvals from the county and once work begins on the 10,000-square-foot state-of-the-art clinic on the southwest side of the intersection, it is expected to be completed within six months, but don't be surprised if it takes a month or two more.

The health care district secured a 30-year low interest loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Community Facilities Program to finance construction.

Dr. Smart added the construction bid process calls for the use of local subcontractors and workers wherever possible.

The clinic will be situated on a 14.4-acre parcel with plans for a second phase that could include a grocery store, senior-living center, restaurants, retail sites and professional offices. The new clinic replaces a much smaller facility on the northeast side of the intersection and will offer more medical services to the public, Dr. Smart said.