

G Street project begins this month

Underpass work expected to take 18 months, \$18 million

More than 80 years ago, a Merced school bus rattled down G Street taking a load of kids home from school.

As the bus crossed the tracks at G Street, a Santa Fe freight train smashed into it. Six students from Fremont School were killed, another 23 injured.

That tragedy on May 7, 1931, helped lead to the legislation that requires all buses to stop at rail-road crossings.

But that dangerous crossing at G Street and the BNSF tracks has not been remedied. The City's G Street Undercrossing Project will finally solve that problem.

When the project is completed 18 months from now it will pro-

vide a safe, quick route under the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad tracks.

The \$18 million project is paid for by state and local funding, with some help from the BNSF railroad.

G Street will be closed at the rail crossing starting this month and construction will last approximately a year and a half.

Technically, work has already begun on the project. A water line has been installed to replace one that will be removed during construction. Power lines have been moved out of the way of construction to make it safe for crews.

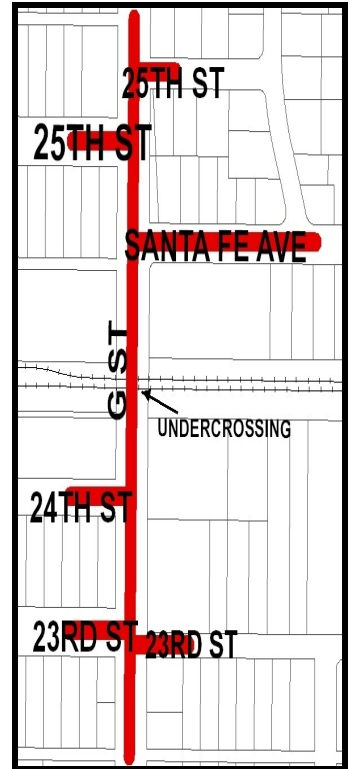
The map to the right shows the portions of the roads that will be

Road updates on Facebook @ The Streets of Merced

closed for construction.

Because G Street is such a major route through town, expect traffic to be heavier on other streets. Plan to leave earlier and consolidate your trips during the construction phase. Juggling work hours will improve your commute times.

And remember, it will be worth it once the project is finished and you are able to cruise down G Street and not have to wait for a passing train.



Yes, it was a wet winter, but we still need to conserve water

It was a wet winter this year, with wave after wave of rain storms pelting the Valley.

All the rain helped the snow-pack and filled reservoirs around the state. However, it doesn't provide a lot of direct help to Merced water users.

The City water supply comes from aquifers, which are layers

of water that are a couple hundred feet below ground.

The drops that soaked into the soil this winter will take a long time to sink to the water table, so it can take decades (or more) to recharge those aquifers.

Use water wisely

The City has been advocating water conservation since 1993

when it passed an ordinance creating the Odd/Even watering schedule shown below. This schedule is in effect year-round.

No watering is permitted during the midday hours from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

That is the hottest time of the day, and the time when the water you apply to your plants is most

likely to evaporate into the air instead of sinking into the ground.

Don't be a water waster

When you are watering, make sure it is going on the plant, and not on the sidewalks or driveways.

For more tips, see the flip side of this newsletter.

Odd/Even Address Watering Schedule

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Water from Midnight to 11 AM and 7PM to Midnight	ODD	DO NOT WATER ANYTIME	EVEN	ODD	EVEN	ODD	EVEN

NO MIDDAY WATERING — 11 AM to 7 PM ON ANY DAY

Merced City Council

Mayor Bill Spriggs
Council Members:
Bill Blake
John Carlisle
Michele Gabriault-Acosta
Noah Lor
Josh Pedrozo
Mary-Michal Rawling

Contact the City Council by email at Citycouncil@cityofmerced.org, by calling 385-6834 or writing to Council members at the Civic Center address below.

Council meetings

The Council usually meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center. The agenda is posted online at www.CityofMerced.org.

Contacting us

The Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Municipal Code, General Plan and other information. Contact the Newsletter at newsletter@CityofMerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center
Attn: Public Information Office
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., except holidays. It will be closed July 5.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	388-7100
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6861
Finance	388-7900
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel.....	388-7100
Planning Department.....	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Parks/CommServices	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department..... 385-6891
Police Department 385-6912

Ask the City: Sewer and water line responsibility

Ask the City is an ongoing column answering questions that have been submitted to us by mail, email or phone. Readers can submit their questions to the addresses in the column on the left.

The Public Works Department regularly gets calls and emails from property owners asking who owns the water lines and sewer lines, and who is responsible for repairs.

The property owner is responsible for the water line up to the point where it connects to the water meter, usually near the curb. After that it is the City's responsibility.



With sewer lines the property owner is responsible for the line until it connects with the sewer main, often under the street.

Licensed plumbing contractors can handle the repair work for leaky or broken sewer and water lines.

However, if the sewer line repairs have resulted in ripping up some of the roadway, a licensed contractor

who holds a Class A C-34 or a C-61 Specialty license (D-56) must do the road repairs. Call Inspection Services at 385-6861 if you have questions.

The change was made because there have been a number of cases where roads have been repaired after sewer line work and then fallen apart.

A contractor who specializes in roadwork will have the equipment and training to make sure the repairs last.

If you have questions about water and sewer lines, call the Public Works Department at 385-6800.

Paying utility bills online is green and easy

There are easier ways to pay your City utility bills than mailing in a check every month.

You can sign up to have your bill paid through a

credit card or have it taken out of your checking account every month. The service is quick, easy and free.

The first step is to go to www.cityofmerced.org and

click on the I Want to... button that says "Pay My Utility Bill Online" and follow the directions.

You also can sign up for Park and Rec classes online.

Think Green

Ten tips to save water, help the environment

Research shows many Californians want to save water, but they're not sure where to begin.

Here are 10 simple tips for saving water from www.saveourH2O.org from the California Department of Water Resources.

Fix those drips

A dripping faucet can waste 20 gallons of water a day, while a leaking toilet can waste 90,000 gallons in a month.

Shorten that shower

Cut five minutes off your shower time and save up to 25 gallons a day.

Slow the flow

Inexpensive faucet aerators can save gallons of water per person every day.

Turn off the tap

When brushing your teeth or shaving, turn off the faucet tap and save eight gallons a day.

Go low-flow

Replace your old shower head with a

low-flow model and cut your water use by 20 percent or more every time you shower.

Update those appliances

When it's time to update your appliances, go for a front-loading washing machine and a water-efficient dishwasher. You'll save both water and energy.

Replace that water-guzzling toilet

If possible, replace your old toilet with a modern, water-efficient one and use about half the water per flush.

Sweep up savings

Instead of hosing your driveway or sidewalk, use a broom.

Think beyond the lawn

Choose plants appropriate to your climate when you landscape. They'll need much less water.

Irrigate like a pro

Your lawn probably needs less water than you think. And your sidewalk doesn't need any.