# VIC TRACE RESERVOIR REPLACEMENT PROJECT

City of Santa Barbara

**FACT SHEET**

## BACKGROUND

The Vic Trace Reservoir is located in the Alta Mesa neighborhood and was constructed in 1956 as a partially buried, 10-million-gallon concrete reservoir for drinking water storage. As the City's largest single reservoir, it serves as a vital component of the City's water distribution system, serving nearly 60,000 people or approximately 70% of the City's population. With the reservoir approaching the end of its useful life, the City will be replacing it through the Vic Trace Reservoir Replacement (Project).

## PROJECT SCOPE

This multi-year Project will design and construct two new buried reservoirs to meet modern standards and to improve serviceability, enhance resiliency, and strengthen the City's ability to deliver water to the community. Once the Project is complete, the site will have enhanced security, new fire and drought-resistant landscaping, as well as improved site drainage and stormwater capture. Beyond the property, aging pipelines and valves will be also replaced along La Coronilla, Dolores Drive, and Ricardo Drive.

### NEW BURIED RESERVOIR DESIGN

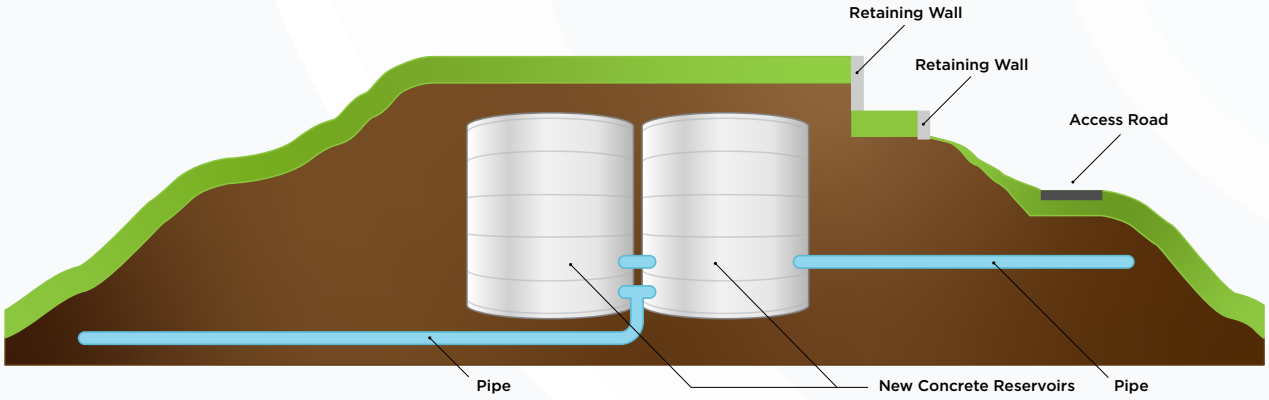


*Figure 1: Preliminary Vic Trace Reservoir replacement design*

## SCHEDULE

Public outreach will be performed on an ongoing basis throughout the life of the Project:

- **Design**: Summer 2024 – Spring 2027
- **Environmental Review**: Winter 2025 – Fall 2026
- **Preconstruction**: Winter 2027 – Spring 2028
- **Construction**: Spring 2028 - 2031

## BENEFITS

*Seismic Updates* - The 70-year-old reservoir will be replaced to meet modern standards, helping ensure water is available during future earthquake events or other emergencies.

*Safety and Security* - The City is committed to the safety and security of its water supply and co-located public safety communication facilities. The Project will address updated federal regulations that require more robust security for water infrastructure including secure gates, fencing, and cameras.

***For more information:***

To sign up for Project-specific email updates, visit SantaBarbaraCA.gov/VicTrace, enter your email address and select **"Subscribe."**

For questions, please contact VicTrace@SantaBarbaraCA.gov or call **805-564-5579**.

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Why does the reservoir need to be replaced?**
A: Proper maintenance and replacement of all the City's water infrastructure is critical to maintaining a highly functional water system. Aging infrastructure replacement also minimizes the potential for breaks that can cause flooding, property damage, water loss, expensive emergency repairs, and temporary water outages. The Vic Trace Reservoir is nearly 70 years old and is nearing the end of its expected service life. By strategically investing and replacing the reservoir now, the City is avoiding future high-cost repair expenses and unexpected water service disruptions.

**Q: Will the reservoir continue to be in service while it's being replaced?**
A: During construction, the reservoir will be taken offline for approximately 1.5 years. A City analysis performed in 2019 confirmed the Vic Trace Reservoir could be taken completely offline after other improvements in the system were completed, which are currently taking place. As part of the Project design effort, the Project team is performing hydraulic simulations to prepare for potential emergencies during construction when the reservoir is demolished.

**Q: Will I continue to have water service once the existing reservoir is demolished?**
A: Yes, the drinking water supply and fire protection will be maintained throughout the Project. However, there may be elements of the Project that require temporary water shutoffs. These infrequent water outages will be planned and communicated to impacted properties in advance. These shutoffs are likely not to exceed eight hours in duration. When design for the Project is completed in 2027, the City will know more about the extent to which water service may be interrupted and for how long. If a water interruption is needed, impacted properties will receive advanced notice.

**Q: How is the Project being paid for?**
A: The City is exploring various funding mechanisms, including low-interest loans from the State's Drinking Water Revolving Funds, grants and possible bond measures. The current Project cost estimate is $130 million.

**Q: What environmental reviews and permits are required for this Project?**
A: A California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being developed. The City anticipates distributing a CEQA EIR Initial Study and hosting a Public Scoping Meeting in Fall 2025. The Project will also be applying for the City's Conditional Use Permit and following a process similar to any new development within the City.

**Q: What type of impacts can I expect during construction?**
A: You can expect noise from construction equipment associated with demolishing the existing reservoir and constructing the new reservoirs. There will also be some level of dust associated with this earth work and excavation. As we get closer to the start on construction, the City will be hosting community meetings to provide additional information about construction impacts and answer questions.