

Developer targets new Fresno business park at rail-displaced firms

BY TIM SHEEHAN

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<http://www.fresnobee.com/2013/10/25/3571823/developer-aims-new-business-park.html?sp=/99/406/263/1256/>

Fresno builder/developer Don Pickett & Associates is starting construction on a 39-acre industrial park the company hopes can provide sites for small businesses destined to be displaced by high-speed rail construction.

Hydro Business Park is named for Hydro Conduit Corp., which once occupied the property as a site for making large concrete pipes for storm drains and sewer lines, said Pickett owner and president Mike Pickett.

The company bought the land at Brawley and Gettysburg avenues, east of Highway 99, about three years ago. Since that time, Pickett has put in all of the underground utilities, curbs and gutters, and street paving is expected to be finished by the end of November.

Pickett said there have been no new business parks built in Fresno since the recession. But with the California High-Speed Rail Authority working to buy the land it needs for right of way for its proposed bullet-train system, "we feel the time is right to build."

The state hopes to begin construction late this year or early next year in the Fresno-Madera area -- the first portion of what is planned to be a line that will support high-speed trains traveling between San Francisco and Los Angeles through the San Joaquin Valley. The route will displace hundreds of homes and businesses and cut through farm properties, including some along nearby Golden State Boulevard through northwest and central Fresno.

Pickett said he believes that will create a demand from the displaced companies for new sites. "But our project is not dependent on high-speed rail," he added. "If high-speed rail doesn't go through, it will just take a little longer to build out."

Pickett's project has 63 lots to accommodate buildings ranging in size from 5,000 square feet to 24,000 square feet. The area is zoned for light industrial, with office and warehousing as the allowed uses.

View [Hydro Business Park](#) in a larger map