

Trash Rates Likely to Rise

By Andrea A. Firth

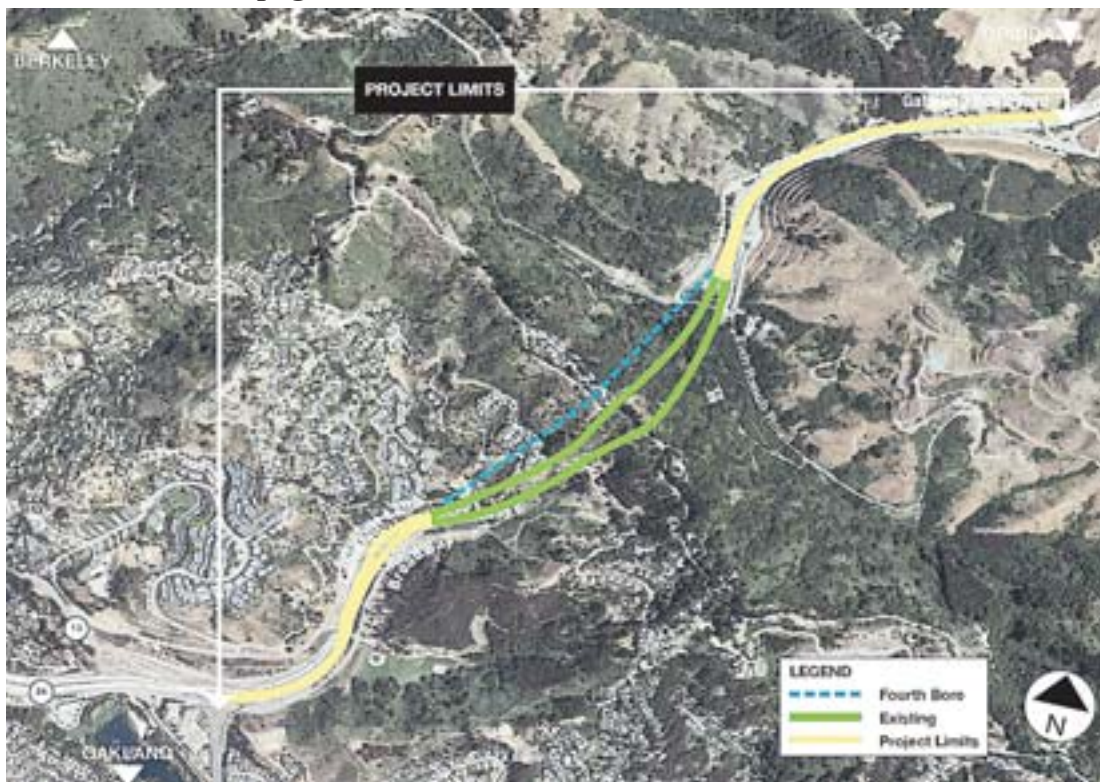
The Central Costa County Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA), the body that determines how much residents pay for the disposal of their trash and recycling, will adopt new rates in January and an increase in fees charged to Orinda residents and businesses is likely. The recommended rate adjustment is a 2.4% increase for Orinda residents and a 3.6% increase for Orinda's commercial customers. Vice Mayor Victoria Smith and Council Member Steve

Glazer serve as representatives to the CCCSWA Board. A commercial food waste program, sponsored by the CCCSWA, is geared to begin later in 2010 and will enable local restaurants and food stores to recycle food waste in the same way that residents use their own green bins. The goal of the CCCSWA Board is to get the most diversion of waste from landfills possible, explained Smith. "Unfunded" state mandates require cities to divert 50% of the waste generated

by residential and commercial customers away from landfills but provide no financial resources to make this happen. The CCCSWA has partnered with Allied Waste Management and East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) in the commercial food waste program that is designed to "digest" food waste, which represents 19% of all commercial waste, in a process that captures the methane produced by the waste and pipes the energy into the EBMUD plant and grid.

Caldecott Tunnel Fourth Bore to Get Underway

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Projected new bore

"It is a unique project in the state of California, because it is coming together through the partnership and funding of several agencies," stated Amy Worth, an Orinda City Council member and a representative to the Contra Costa County Transit Authority. The \$420 million fourth bore project will be funded through regional, state, and federal funding sources, including \$123 million in Contra Costa County Measure J monies and \$192 million from the federal stimulus

package. "This project is the largest recipient of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds in the nation," stated CalTrans Project Manager Cristina Ferraz, adding that approximately 7,000 to 8,000 jobs will be generated by the project. The addition of the fourth bore will relieve traffic congestion in the non-peak direction, eliminate the daily lane-direction reversals of the center bore, improve travel times, and increase safety and evacuation access in the case

Graphic courtesy of CalTrans of an emergency. "On top of all that, the fourth bore will look very nice," stated Ferraz, who also assured community members that they would continue to receive clear radio and cell phone transmissions (hands-free device required, of course) as they travel through the brightly lit tunnel. *A Little History.* Work on the Highway 24 connector between the Contra Costa and Alameda counties, through the Berkeley hills, started almost 140 years ago

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in the 1870's. Public funding for infrastructure was as hard to come by then as it can sometimes be today, and it took until 1903 before a timber tunnel passageway opened. The design for two bores placed on the southern side of the hill began twenty years later, and bores one and two opened in 1937 followed by the addition of bore number three on the north side of the hill in 1964. Almost a half-century later, the construction of a fourth bore will get underway.

How's it Done? The 3,389 foot-long tunnel will have 12-foot lanes, a 10-foot north shoulder, a two-foot south shoulder, a two-foot north emergency walkway, and a three-foot south emergency walkway. Utilizing a sequential excavation method, crews working from both the east and west sides of the hill will be excavating and stabilizing small segments of the tunnel progressing about one to two meters a day. Situated less than half a mile from the Hayward fault, the project has been designed to withstand a significant seismic event and will include seven cross passages to the adjacent tunnel.

"We will be closing bore three quite a bit during excavation," stated a CalTrans construction manager, however he explained that these closures would be conducted between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. "Traffic impact on

a daily basis will be relatively small," he said adding, "there will never be a full freeway closure during the project."

The Noise and Dust! There will be no blasting at night, and noise levels will be monitored throughout the project to ensure that the noise level is kept down, according to CalTrans. To control the dust and dirt, stockpiles of excavated material will be wet down,


trucks hauling debris will be covered, truck wheels will be washed, and local streets swept.

CalTrans will conduct further community outreach meetings throughout the project as needed. A fourth bore website will be up and running by mid-January. Until then information about the project can be accessed at the Cal Trans website, <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/caldecott/index.html>.

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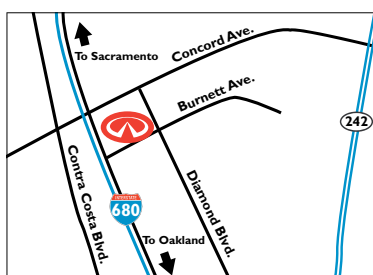


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