

WEEKLY FLASH

Assembly Programs \$1/4 B For Emergency Water Transit

An intense two-year effort by the Bay Area Council to help prepare this region for a nearly inevitable 1906-size earthquake with an emergency water transit system bore a \$250 million authorization from the state Assembly in the budget process. The funds come from the November 2006 infrastructure bonds, specifically the System Safety, Security, and Disaster Response Account. While the Senate must still approve the budget and the Governor sign it, Senate President Perata [has worked with us](#) on the project for two years and the Governor [reiterated his support](#) a few weeks ago in a private meeting.

[The need is great.](#) In addition to the FEMA-predicted 5,000 deaths, 18,000 hospitalizations and 165,000 people made homeless by a major quake, the region will also face a transportation cataclysm. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) says that more than 1,700 roads will be closed by a major earthquake on the Hayward Fault. Despite all of the completed and ongoing transportation seismic safety efforts, ABAG and the U.S. Geological Survey warn that all transbay bridges will be closed, either by bridge damage or access-road failure. Soil liquefaction will render many key roads – such as bridge approaches, Highway 101 and I-80 and 880 – impassable. Violent ground movement and fault slip will cause large fractures and landslides to block roadways. The BART Berkeley hills tunnel, which passes directly through the Hayward Fault, will be likely closed for years. In short, if you survive, you will be stuck in place for a long while.



[Ferries evacuated the majority of 9-11 survivors](#)

And the quake is almost certainly coming. The USGS reports a two-thirds chance of a massive, deadly Bay Area earthquake in the next 25 years. [In the aftermath of such a disaster](#), the water will be the only way to move reasonable amounts of people, goods, and emergency personnel and equipment. The \$250 million is for new boats, new terminals and related equipment. While we are incredibly proud and excited, we would be foolhardy to celebrate yet. The budget hasn't passed and more legislative work remains. The Council is working on a supportive information campaign for that effort that will require some member financial support.

Article of the Week

This fascinating [San Jose Mercury News article](#) explores how a growing California population is bucking national trends with four straight quarters of *less* gasoline use.

Quote of the Week

"Let me be clear. There is no discussion of granting any water district guaranteed water rights, regardless of drought, at the expense of cities or other water users." – Senator Dianne Feinstein on a [federal Central Valley water deal](#) that could result is less drinking water for Bay Area cities.

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