

## **Proposed Recycling and Solid Waste Infrastructure Charge FAQ's**

- 1) Q: How will the County use the proposed recycling and solid waste infrastructure charge?  
A: The County will build and operate three necessary infrastructure projects:
  1. A compost facility to comply with state law to reduce greenhouse gasses by removing green waste and food scraps from landfills
  2. A commercial waste transfer station to collect trash from commercial haulers
  3. A residential waste transfer station to collect trash from county residents
  
- 2) Q: Why does the County need to construct two new transfer stations?  
A: The Buena Vista Landfill, the County's only landfill, will reach capacity in 6-8 years. The new waste transfer stations will replace the landfill as a county trash collection/recycling location and must be complete before the Buena Vista Landfill closes in 2030.
  
- 3) Q: What are the costs of these three proposed infrastructure projects?  
A: Two transfer stations and the compost facility are projected to cost \$55 million to design, permit, and construct. Current engineer's estimates are based on locating all three projects at the Buena Vista Landfill site. Costs could change if the project is modified, regulatory requirements change, or material/labor costs increase.
  
- 4) Q: Who will pay the proposed charge?  
A: Only parcel owners in the unincorporated County will pay the new charge. Residents from outside of the unincorporated County will pay a surcharge to use our facilities, currently set at 28% over the use fees paid by residents in the unincorporated County.
  
- 5) Q: How much is the Bond amount and what are the terms?  
A: The engineers cost estimate was based on a standard 30-year bond. We won't know the exact terms and amount of the bond until we apply, but current estimates for the two transfer stations and the compost facility at the Buena Vista Landfill site are \$55 million inclusive of design and permitting costs. Also, by beginning the charge now, we will place most of the fees collected into a reserve (other than the amounts paid towards design and permitting costs) which will be used as a bond down payment. This down payment will reduce our overall bond and annual payment, which should keep costs down and limit future increases to the proposed annual charge.
  
- 6) Q: How much money will be collected from the proposed Recycling and Solid Waste Infrastructure Charge?  
A: See Cost of Service study here, [Solid Waste System Cost of Service Study Report](#).
  
- 7) Q: What happens to this proposed charge after 2026-2027?  
A: We will have to go back to the Board every 5 years to adjust the amounts for what is actually needed. The bond will be a 30-year bond; the closure costs will drop off in about 6-8 years. Landfill maintenance and post-closure costs will continue.
  
- 8) Q: When will construction of the proposed transfer stations and compost facility begin?  
A: Environmental permitting is underway. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025 and be complete in 2026.

- 9) Q: Why is the proposed charge being implemented now, when the Buena Vista Landfill has 6-8 years of remaining capacity?  
A: The transfer stations must be complete and in use ***before*** the landfill closes so waste haulers will have a local disposal site for recyclables, organics and waste materials.
- 10) Q: Can the County charge a reduced fee for people on low and fixed incomes?  
A: No, Proposition 218 applies to this proposed infrastructure charge. When the voters passed Proposition 218 in 1996 it changed the California Constitution by requiring government service fees to be proportional to the cost of providing the property related service. All property owners, including government property owners, subject to the fee must pay their fair share of these costs. Proposition 218 makes it unconstitutional for the government to adjust fees for any reason other than a change in the cost to provide services.
- 11) Q: Will the proposed charge end in 2027 as shown in the Cost of Service Report?  
A: Proposition 218 only allows for a charge to be in place for up to 5 years at a time before a new Proposition 218 notice and updated engineer's report must be submitted to the public. In this way, the County is required to adjust funding levels and ensure the fee for service remains proportional to the cost of service.