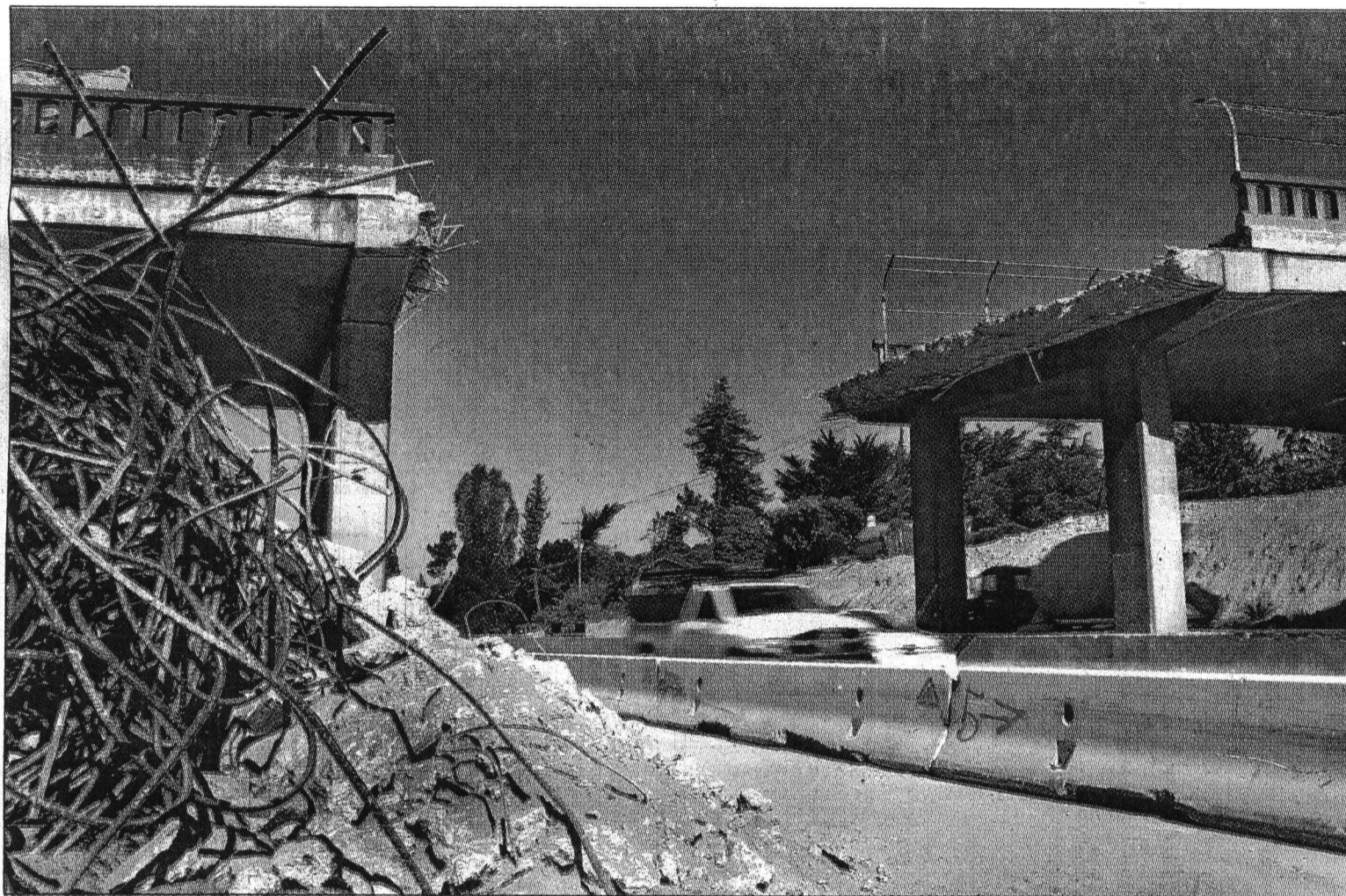


# Goodbye, Bridge

La Fonda Avenue crossing comes down as part of \$22 million project



KEVIN JOHNSON/SENTINEL

Cars pass underneath the remains of the La Fonda bridge on southbound Highway 1 on Tuesday after construction workers demolished a portion of the overpass in the early morning.

*Bridges*

8.8.12

Span expected to be rebuilt in 6 to 8 months

By JASON HOPPIN

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SANTA CRUZ — Commuters heading to work Tuesday were greeted with rubble and rebar where part of the La Fonda Avenue Bridge used to be, heralding a critical step in an ongoing highway widening project.

The bridge is being rebuilt as part of an \$22 million overhaul between Morrissey Boulevard and Soquel Avenue, including the addition of exit lanes in both directions that could help ease what is ranked among the worst traffic congestion

in the Bay Area.

The work went off without a hitch. The bridge over the northbound lanes comes down next week.

"It's going really well," said Karena Pushnik, a spokeswoman for the county Regional Transportation Commission, which is managing the project.

Pushnik was among a small group of onlookers who came out to watch the overnight work, which involved cutting the bridge in place and using an excavator to knock



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

The sun sets, both literally and figuratively, on the La Fonda Avenue Bridge on Monday, as the structure's final days are at hand to make room for two additional lanes on Highway 1. The other half of the span will be demolished next week.

SEE BRIDGE ON A3

## BRIDGE

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it down.

The concrete will be crushed on site and used as aggregate, with the rebar recycled elsewhere. The new bridge will include sidewalks and bike lanes in both directions, and will take six to eight months to complete.

Southbound Highway 1 was closed while the work took place. Northbound lanes will be closed Monday and Tuesday from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. Pushnik said the California

Highway Patrol redirected traffic Monday night without significant problems.

"No problem, very light traffic," she said.

Students at DeLaveaga Elementary School and Harbor High School will be affected when the bridge is out. The commission has set up websites for each school to assist teachers, parents and students. Visit [commutesolutions.org/delaveaga](http://commutesolutions.org/delaveaga) or [commutesolutions.org/harbor](http://commutesolutions.org/harbor) for more information.

The project is not related to a nearby gas leak that closed Soquel Avenue for hours on Tuesday, adding another snarl

to a woeful summer for local traffic.

Follow Sentinel reporter Jason Hoppin on Twitter @scnewsdude