

## **TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY**

[www.tamcmonterey.org](http://www.tamcmonterey.org)

### ***HIGHLIGHTS***

**December 7, 2011 Meeting**

#### **TRANSPORTATION AGENCY APPROVES STUDY FOR TOLLING ON HIGHWAY 156**

A vital connection between Highway 101 and the Monterey Peninsula, Highway 156 is frequently congested during the summer, holiday weekends, and during special events. As a result Highway 156 is a major interregional bottleneck. Because of this roadway's importance for Monterey County's economy and hospitality industry, the Transportation Agency has been examining all options for funding the \$60 million widening. One of the options under consideration is congestion pricing/ tolling.

The Transportation Agency Board directed staff to partner with Caltrans to conduct more due diligence analyzing the potential for using congestion pricing/ tolling to fund the Highway 156 widening project. Key items the analysis will study are how the toll road will work with the current highway, possible tolling price and duration, whether vehicles will shift to local roads to avoid the toll route. Just the beginning of the study process, extensive public outreach will also be conducted to seek input from residents and those traveling on Highway 156. The Monterey County Hospitality Association, is "very much in favor" of the toll road idea and the group is looking at forming some kind of district that would enable the collection of fees from tourist businesses to help pay for the project.

The widening project will include constructing 4 new lanes from Castroville Blvd to the US101/156 interchange. The existing Highway 156 will become a county frontage road that runs from Castroville Boulevard to Highway 156. A new interchange will be constructed at Castroville Boulevard and Highway 156. A future phase 2 of the project will improve the US 101/Highway 156 interchange.

#### **MONTEREY COUNTY PROPOSES FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM FOR STATE TRANSPORTATION FUNDS**

A number of projects, such as the US 101 San Juan Road Project and the Highway 156 Widening are closer to construction with the Transportation Agency approval of the

resolution adopting the Monterey County 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which proposes programming projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program for funding. The 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program will allocate funding for the next five years with a target amount for Monterey County of \$46,860,000. This funding is made available from state and federal gasoline taxes and is allocated by the California Transportation Commission, a board appointed by the Governor and the state legislature.

Project programming is focused on fully-funding or advancing the priority regional transportation projects adopted by the Board in August. Projects on the list for funding include: the US 101 San Juan Road Project, Highway 156 Widening, the US 101 South County Frontage Road Projects, and Commuter Rail to Salinas. The Highway 1 Climbing Lane from Rio Road to Carmel Valley Road in Carmel, and Castroville Bike/Pedestrian Railroad Crossing are also in the proposed program. These projects are consistent with the list of priority regional transportation projects adopted by the Board of Directors in August 2012.

The Transportation Agency will find out which projects are funded at the California Transportation Commission's meeting on March 28, 2012.

### **TRANSPORTATION AGENCY AND AMBAG WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE REGIONAL COORDINATION**

After six months of research the Transportation Agency received a final report on a single-county Metropolitan Planning Organization proposal. The Agency directed staff to work with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) to reduce duplication of efforts, improve the regional travel forecast model and increase coordination and collaboration among agencies.

The City of Salinas and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments voted to retain the current four-agency transportation planning structure within the Monterey Bay Area, and have instead directed AMBAG to work on performance and other related improvements. Per the request of the City of Salinas, a report back on the status of these activities will take place by the end of 2012. During that year, certain developments may occur, including hiring of a new AMBAG Executive Director, and a proposed federal change in the allowable size of metropolitan planning organizations that may affect the region's ability to devolve into smaller agencies.

### **CONSULTANTS APPROVED FOR TRANSPORTATION MARKETING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN**

Monterey County cities may now use a list of well-qualified on-call marketing and graphic design consultant, approved by the Transportation Agency Board. This list will help local agencies to streamline the consultant selection process for design and marketing services. The following firms were evaluated on previous project experience, staff experience, experience with public agencies and transportation, and design and marketing creativity.

- Circlepoint
- Eric Gouldsberry Art Direction
- Martella Printing
- TMDcreative

To utilize one of the consultants, Transportation Agency member agencies should contact Kristen Hoschouer with the Transportation Agency at: (831) 775-4403 or by email at: kristen@tamcmonterey.org.

### **FREE BICYCLE RACKS AND LOCKERS AWARDED TO MONTEREY COUNTY BUSINESSES AND SCHOOLS**

-

-

Bicyclists will now find it easier to park their bicycles at local businesses and schools with the Transportation Agency approval of the Bicycle Protection Program, which will provide free bicycle racks and lockers to local businesses in need of the facilities. Having a secure facility in which to store bicycles provides a strong motive for travelers to bicycle to work, school or to restaurants. The following applicants will receive free bicycle racks and lockers:

- Rancho Cielo Youth Campus
- Seaside Middle School
- Trailside Café, Monterey

Five organizations submitted applications for Phase IV of the program. All the applicants demonstrated a need for bicycle storage, potential usage, frequency of usage, and existing storage facilities in proximity of the applicants' locations.

If bids are low, bike racks will also be provided at these second tier locations: California State University Monterey Bay and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County. Due to limited funds, bicycle storage facilities could not be provided at all the requested locations.

### **MST RECEIVES FEDERAL RURAL TRANSIT FUNDS**

South Monterey County residents will continue to benefit from Monterey Salinas Transit Line 23 services to Salinas for one more year with the allocation of \$370,869 in federal rural transit funds to operate line 23 between Salinas and South Monterey County. Line 23 not only provides an alternative to driving it also reduces the number of vehicles on Highway 101 and local roads.

The Federal Transit Administration's Section 5311 grant provides federal funding for public transportation projects and intercity bus projects serving areas with a population of 50,000 or less. The grant is intended to provide access to employment, education, health care, shopping and recreation in small towns and rural areas.

### **INCREASED TOW TRUCK SERVICE FOR PRUNDALE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

In order to keep traffic flowing on US 101 and provide a safe travel environment, the Transportation Agency approved an agreement to provide additional tow truck services on behalf of Caltrans as needed along the 8-mile stretch of the Prunedale Improvement Project. This agreement authorizes the Transportation Agency to provide extra tow truck service in the construction zone of the Prunedale Improvement Project, utilizing the Agency's existing contract with tow operators. The tow operators will patrol the Prunedale Improvement Project construction zone and move any stalled vehicles to designated drop locations. The service will last until the Prunedale Improvement Project is completed, or until December 31, 2014, whichever occurs first.

### **2012 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

#### **Board of Directors**

Unless otherwise noticed, all meetings held at the  
Agricultural Center Conference Room  
1428 Abbott Street, Salinas  
9:00 a.m.

(The exact location of the meeting will be noted on each agenda)

Month	Date	Day
January	25	Wednesday
February	22	Wednesday
March	28	Wednesday
April	25	Wednesday
May	23	Wednesday
June	27	Wednesday
<b><i>No July TAMC Board meeting</i></b>		
August	22	Wednesday
September	26	Wednesday
October	24	Wednesday
<b><i>No November TAMC Board meeting due to Thanksgiving Holiday</i></b>		
December	5	Wednesday