

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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HIGHLIGHTS

January 26, 2011 Meeting

TRANSPORTATION EXCELLENCE CELEBRATED

The Transportation Agency for Monterey honored outstanding Monterey County individuals, projects, and programs in the field of transportation at the ninth annual Transportation Agency for Monterey County Excellence Awards Ceremony. Those receiving awards have shown exceptional hard work and dedication in improving transportation in Monterey County. The Agency also congratulated outgoing Chair Louis Calcagno, District 2 Supervisor, for his services.

Programs:

- **Monterey Bay Electric Vehicle Alliance:** The Electric Vehicle Alliance has been successful in partnering with local agencies on different grant opportunities to help secure funding for a total of approximately 23 Level II charging stations in the Monterey Bay region. They are providing local leaders valuable information on electric vehicle producers, infrastructures, needs, challenges, and technical issues to enable local leaders to make sound decisions related to electric vehicles and its infrastructure needs.



Individuals:

- **Richard Krumholz: Director, Caltrans – District 5:** In 2010 Mr. Krumholz worked tirelessly to obtain the Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit for the US 101 Prunedale Improvement Project. This critical permit will allow TAMC's highest priority project to start construction in 2011. For the past several years Mr. Krumholz has been a strong supporter of highway safety and capacity improvements in Monterey County. He took the lead in acquiring



state interregional funds to reinstate the US 101 San Juan Road Interchange Project Study Report, and worked hard with TAMC to obtain state bond funding.

- **David Murray: Senior Transportation Planner, Caltrans – District 5:** During his 34 years with Caltrans, Dave Murray has assisted with the creation of the Monterey County Regional Development Impact Fee Program, and has coordinated with the Transportation Agency to negotiate mitigations for major land use developments, which will protect and improve regional transportation. He has also taken the lead in making Caltrans contributions to the development of Monterey County's Regional Transportation Plans.



- **Megan Tolbert: Transportation Planner, California State University – Monterey Bay:** Ms. Tolbert has been a strong advocate for alternative transportation in Monterey County. Not only has she been an asset to the Transportation Agency as a Transportation Planner with CSUMB but her work with Monterey Green Action has been key to promoting the use of bicycles as a viable transportation alternative. She has taken a lead role in educating the public on the importance of rail projects in Monterey County.



Projects:

- **East Laurel Drive Improvement Project: City of Salinas:** This federal stimulus funded project was not only completed within budget it was completed on a very aggressive construction schedule. It provides improvements to a 1.25-mile segment of East Laurel Drive, a major corridor that links residential areas, retail shopping areas, and major job destinations north and south with its connection to the US 101 highway. East Laurel Drive carries an average daily traffic of 36,000 vehicles per day.



- **US 101 Prunedale Improvement Project Team: Caltrans – District 5:** The Prunedale Improvement Project team has been key to the upcoming delivery of this top priority safety project for the Transportation Agency. The project faced numerous hurdles, including finalizing the complex environmental document, holding numerous public briefings, securing over \$200 million, acquiring over 100 right-of-way parcels, preparing over 500 engineering plan sheets, and finding new funds.



2035 MONTEREY BAY AREA REGIONAL BLUEPRINT: ENVISIONING A GREENER MONTEREY BAY AREA

The Monterey Bay Area Blueprint Plan, titled: *Envisioning the Monterey Bay Area: A Blueprint for Sustainable Growth and Smart Infrastructure* is being developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and intends to identify growth areas and transportation corridors that can be served by fast, convenient transit services, and support land use that promotes walking and biking. The Regional Blueprint will be used as a starting point to develop the Monterey Bay area’s “Sustainable Communities Strategy” for achieving regional greenhouse gas emissions targets

The Transportation Agency is budgeted to receive \$60,000 from the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants program to participate in the development of the transportation components of the region’s Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Transportation Agency’s efforts will focus on working with local jurisdictions to incorporate “Complete Streets” policies into our region’s transportation network. The Transportation Agency will also be working with local jurisdictions to identify high quality transit corridors for the purpose of identifying Transit Priority Projects.

Public workshops and outreach will be undertaken over the course of 2011 and 2012 to develop the Sustainable Communities Strategy. As part of the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan update, the existing transportation network in Monterey County must also be evaluated against the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Transportation Agency’s Regional Transportation Plan is scheduled to be completed by December 2012.

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE
REDUCTIONS TO BE EVALUATED**

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The Transportation Agency Board directed staff to evaluate the potential for making reductions to the regional development impact fees in infill and redevelopment areas. The proposed reduction is based on the notion that in denser urban areas, more people are taking transit, walking and biking rather than driving on regional roads, so the impact fees should be lowered. The Board of Directors also asked staff to analyze what the financial impact would be of suspending the regional fees altogether for infill developments in Salinas and countywide over a two-year period. Some Boardmembers raised concerns that a fee suspension rather than a discount would create a shortfall in the agency's ability to build the projects that will accommodate the traffic generated by new developments. Staff raised the concern that developments that pay no fee would risk a challenge under the California Environmental Quality Act as not adequately mitigating their cumulative traffic impacts.

The Transportation Agency adopted the regional fee in 2008 to assure that new development pays for the traffic generates on regional roads and highways. Given the sluggish economy, developers and cities are asking for a suspension of the regional fee in infill areas. Transportation Agency staff encouraged all fee reductions to be on a technical analysis of how many vehicle trips the new development would generate, rather than on economic conditions, in order to keep the fee in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

During the next month, the agency will ask consultants to evaluate to what extent infill developments will have a lower impact on the regional transportation network than developments in outlying area, and as a result should get a discount on their traffic fee. A discount for such "smart growth" would have the benefit of promoting land uses that don't require as many costly new traffic lanes by encouraging bicycling, walking and riding the bus. Staff will report back to the Board with a draft proposal and financial analysis at the February meeting.

**TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SEEKING
ON-CALL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT**

The Transportation Agency is updating its list of "on-call" construction management consultants through a competitive process. Firms will be evaluated based on pre-construction, construction, and post-construction qualifications.

This list is intended for member agencies to select and contract with consultants on an "as-needed" or "on-call" basis. The benefit of this system is that the member agency does

not need to go through the Request for Proposal process to select the consultants, resulting in time and effort saved.

To learn more about the Request for Qualifications, contact Hank Myers with the Transportation Agency at: (831) 775-4412 or by email at: hank@tamcmonterey.org.

CITY OF SOLEDAD AND GONZALES RECEIVE
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDS

The Transportation Agency reallocated more than \$12,000 in Local Transportation Funds to the city's 2010-11 congestion management contribution to the Agency. The Local Transportation Fund represents one quarter of a percent of the sales tax revenue collected in Monterey County. The Transportation Agency administers these funds in accordance with the State of California Transportation Development Act rules and regulations, which require that Local Transportation Funds be used to support public transit, rail projects, planning and administrative costs, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Article 8 of the act also allows jurisdictions to submit claims for local street and road improvements, congestion management contributions, local transportation planning costs and other minor eligible claims after funds are allocated for any reasonable unmet transit needs that are identified by the Agency each year.