

TAMC 2024 Annual Report Inaccuracies

TAMC Board of Directors,

Does the 2024 Annual Report accurately reflect what the Board's intentions are and what you have voted to do? Who is responsible for this description, has the public been accurately informed and what is their perception based on this report?

The section of the Annual Report describing the Hwy 68 Improvement Project states the following:

The Scenic State Route 68 Corridor Improvement Project aims to enhance safety and traffic flow along the nine-mile stretch of State Route 68 between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula by improving nine signalized intersections. **The preferred alternative is converting intersections to roundabouts, expected to reduce vehicle delays, collision rates, and improve wildlife connectivity. Phase I will prioritize upgrades at San Benancio Road, Corral de Tierra, and Laureles Grade intersections. Additionally, an interim solution involving adaptive signal operations is being implemented using Measure X funds to improve traffic flow and reduce delays while long-term improvements are developed.**

TAMC also initiated the Toro Park Cut-Through Traffic Pilot Project, which successfully reduced cut-through traffic using local roads to avoid congestion on SR 68.

It was my impression based on discussions by the Board over many months, your recorded votes and presentations by TAMC staff at Board meetings that **the Board intends to install AI Adaptive Signal Controls at all 9 intersections, review the performance of the system and its impact on peak commute traffic and then compare those results to the results predicted by computer simulation of installing 9 roundabouts. If the AI Adaptive results are the same or better than the roundabouts, then the roundabouts will not be built.** Is that correct? TAMC staff has stated on the record that **the AI Adaptive results will be the benchmark by which the roundabouts will be judged and the roundabouts will need to be significantly better, in order to proceed with them since they are so much more costly (\$200 Million).** Am I missing something? If AI has the potential to replace the proposed roundabouts why are they continually referred to as **"interim"** which everyone knows means **temporary**? Why not call it a **Traffic Study, Technology Evaluation** or something similar that is being studied to determine if it is a better solution to the corridor challenges than the proposed roundabouts?

If my impression described in the previous paragraph is correct then the description in the Annual Report is not accurate and is definitely misleading the public.

I have received numerous inquiries from neighbors, colleagues and even a local magazine editor who are acquainted with what has been happening over the last year and they all refer to the Annual Report and ask

“What is going on and why is TAMC going to install roundabouts regardless of the AI Adaptive performance”? It would have been so easy to accurately describe the situation, so why was it not done?

The description also makes claims that have **not been proven** by stating that roundabouts are **“expected to reduce vehicle delays and collision rates”** and is totally misleading with saying that the roundabouts will **“improve wildlife connectivity”** since the roundabouts have **nothing** to do with the wildlife crossings. The wildlife crossing separation from the roundabouts was even acknowledged by Todd in one of the recent Board meetings. Why is the public still being misled and is there a hidden agenda being pursued?

Wildlife Crossings

Caltrans acknowledged in 2023 that the proposed wildlife crossings were separate from the roundabouts but would not provide the separate cost when I initially asked for it. I had to make a Public Records Request to obtain the separate cost from Carla Yu at Caltrans on 12/19/23. **The total cost of the 5 wildlife crossings was estimated to be \$5,782,800 with current cost with contingency and an Escalated Cost of \$7,041,400.** The five locations are York (\$787,200), Pond (\$2,116,800), Pasadera (\$784,800), Laureles Grade (\$1,467,600), San Benancio (\$626,400). **Why has Caltrans and TAMC staff not been more transparent with this available information and provided it to the public?** Has the Board been given this information previously and if not, why? **These wildlife crossing can easily be installed separately at any time without roundabouts.**

While I realize that the Board originally voted between intersection widening and roundabouts and thus chose roundabouts, you have since become aware of the potential that the new technology of AI Adaptive offers for this Hwy 68 corridor and have decided to invest in determining what it can actually provide. **I realize that Ai Adaptive needs to prove its effectiveness before being considered as a replacement for the originally proposed roundabouts.** I believe the public needs to know this as well since it is their money being used and they will be physically impacted by the decision as well. Words matter, along with their definitions, and accuracy in communication with the public is critical, necessary and legally required. **Inaccurate and misleading statements made by TAMC staff and Caltrans** have plagued this project from the beginning and still continue with this most recent Annual Report. Does the Board find this acceptable and appropriate? What can be done to correct it?

Will the Board ask staff to post on TAMC’s website a totally accurate description of what is currently going on with the Hwy 68 project, which currently includes confirmed false claims, like “reduced emergency response times” and does not even mention the Board’s decision to install AI Adaptive Signal Controls?

[Scenic State Route 68 - Salinas to Monterey - Transportation Agency for Monterey County](#)

Sincerely,

Dwight Stump

