

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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HIGHLIGHTS

January 28, 2015

TAMC BOARD ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

With the start of the new year, The Board of Directors for the Transportation Agency for Monterey County elected new officers and recognized outgoing Chair, Supervisor Jane Parker. The newly elected officers are Salinas City Councilmember Kimbley Craig, Chair, Supervisor Fernando Armenta, 1st Vice Chair, Soledad Mayor Pro Tempore Alejandro Chavez, 2nd Vice Chair, Supervisor Jane Parker, Past Chair, Supervisor Dave Potter, County Representative and Pacific Grove Mayor Pro Tempore Robert Huitt, City Representative.

TAMC HONORS TRANSPORTATION EXCELLENCE

For the 13th year in a row, The Transportation Agency for Monterey County recognized excellence in transportation by honoring individuals, groups, programs and projects for their outstanding efforts to improve transportation in Monterey County. This year's honorees include a 100-year old World War 11 veteran, a mobility coalition, and an innovative "Free to Learn" program which provides free transportation for low-income families to visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

This year's recipients are:

Individuals:

- **Steve Price, Caltrans District 5, Deputy Director of Maintenance and Operations:** for consistently "going above and beyond" to ensure the safety and well-being of the residents of Big Sur and the traveling public.
- **Homer Bosserman Jr., Senior Volunteer, California Highway Patrol:** is a 100-year old senior volunteer and World War II Veteran, who has worked part-time for the California Highway Patrol for fourteen years; filing citations and performing other duties. Each hour that he contributes frees up employees to provide increased support to CHP officers on the road, and gives them more time to provide critical services to the public.
- **Bernard Green, CSUMB Student:** is recognized for his creative and tireless work to promote Transportation Demand Management techniques on campus at CSUMB and within Monterey County. He is helping create an alternative transportation culture at CSUMB; and with his work, the University is implementing its commitment to use Transportation Demand Management techniques to reduce the vehicle impacts on roads.
- **Susana Cruz, Caltrans District 5, Public and Legislative Affairs:** is recognized for the valuable services she provides to our community as the Caltrans Public and Legislative Affairs Liaison. She is instrumental in keeping the community informed about Caltrans projects and her skills as a bilingual translator/interpreter are invaluable for communicating with Spanish-speaking residents in Monterey County.
- **Chris Flescher, Alternative Transportation Advocate:** is a tireless advocate for alternative transportation, as well as, an advocate for working to improve transportation.

Business/Group:

- **Monterey County Mobility Coalition:** The Monterey County Mobility Coalition is the privately-funded volunteer committee that spearheaded the passage of Measure Q protecting vital transit services for seniors, veterans and the disabled. With the passage of Measure Q, there will now be a dedicated source of local funding that cannot be taken by the state or federal government and will be exclusively dedicated to funding these vital transit programs that would have disappeared if this measure had failed.

Projects:

- **Prunedale Improvement Project:** The landmark \$225 million Prunedale Improvement Project provides safer access for residents and reduces congestion for 60,000 to 80,000 vehicles each day. The project upgraded a 13-mile segment of U.S. Highway 101 from Russell/Espinoza Road to just north of Echo Valley Road. The project constructed two new interchanges, a new undercrossing, a new overcrossing, made various local road improvements, and installed a concrete median barrier at various locations, permanently removing left turns across U.S. Highway 101. The completion of this project makes U.S. Highway 101 much safer, reduces traffic congestion and improves access to local businesses and residents.
- **City of Marina Roundabouts-Reservation Road Improvement Project:** The Reservation Road Improvement Project was a collaborative effort between the City of Marina and the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District to improve vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle access through this gateway into Central Marina. The \$2.4 million project provided two new roundabouts at the Reservation Road intersections with Seaside Circle and Lake Drive. Improvements also include new pedestrian crossings at the roundabout intersections, improved bicycle access throughout the project site, as well as new a pedestrian sidewalk connecting Central Marina to the Marina Branch Library and Beach Road Shopping Center. In addition to the new amenities to improve accessibility for all users, each roundabout has also impacted vehicle emissions by effectively reducing stop delays and idling time.

Programs:

- **Moving Forward 2035 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation:** Solutions to our Monterey Bay regions' transportation needs require a comprehensive planning effort that coordinates land use and transportation, and develops an integrated, multimodal transportation system for citizens and businesses. The Moving Forward 2035 Monterey Bay MTP/SCS is the blueprint for a regional transportation system that further enhances our quality of life, promotes sustainability, and offers more mobility options for people and goods. The 2035 MTP/SCS contains a diversity of transportation projects and programs that will provide residents and visitors with a variety of travel choices.
- **MST- Monterey Bay Aquarium Free to Learn Program:** The MST-Monterey Bay Aquarium Free to Learn Program is collaboration between Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) and the Monterey Bay Aquarium to provide free transportation for low-income families to visit the Aquarium. The program provides free access for low-income families, youth at risk, seniors, veterans, foster families, and people with disabilities by partnering with nonprofit and government agencies who serve them. Since the fall of 2012, the Aquarium has arranged free transportation via MST for 5, 079 children and adults from 20 nonprofit organizations from Watsonville to King City. With the partnership, the Monterey Bay Aquarium promotes its education and community programs and MST has the opportunity to explain how MST works, and the opportunities available for low-cost, public transportation to access services, schools and work.

2016 SALES TAX BALLOT MEASURE

With the increasing lack of federal and state funding for transportation projects, the Agency is challenged to find alternative ways to fund projects. One alternative for the Board's consideration is the successful "self-help" method chosen by 20 other California counties: a local transportation sales tax.

The Agency's last attempt to pass a sales tax was in 2008. Measure Z was placed on the ballot in November and it received overwhelming support from 63% of Monterey County voters. However, even though this was a majority vote, it did not meet the 2/3 ("supermajority") requirement required for a sales tax measure and failed to pass.

In 2014, EMC Research conducted polling in Monterey County to gauge the potential support for a 2016 transportation sales tax. The results indicate that more than 2/3 of Monterey County residents are initially supportive of a 2016 transportation sales tax measure.

At today's meeting, the Board received a presentation by staff and EMC Research on a potential sales tax measure in 2016. The success of passing a transportation sales tax would make Monterey County a "self-help" county, where local money would provide local solutions for local needs.