



## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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

### *HIGHLIGHTS*

**September 24, 2025**

#### **TAMC Board Receives Presentation on the Road Charge Pilot Program**

The Transportation Agency's Board of Directors received a Caltrans presentation on the Road Charge Program. The program is one of the alternative funding mechanisms that allows drivers to support road and highway maintenance based upon how many miles they drive, instead of how many gallons of gas they use. Instead of paying the state's gas tax, which disproportionately impacts those who cannot afford more fuel-efficient vehicles, everyone would pay a per-mile fee for how much they use the road, regardless of what kind of car they drive.

In December 2023, the Legislative Analyst's Office released a report stating that the state's gas tax revenues are projected to drop by \$6 billion over the next decade. Senate Bill 339 (Wiener, Statutes of 2021) required the Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee to develop design recommendations for the Road Usage Charge pilot program that will test mileage-based revenue collection as an alternative to the gas tax system.

The Road Charge Program has completed several pilot programs to determine viability including the California's 2017 Road Charge Pilot Program, piloting more than 5,000 vehicles; the California Four Phase Demonstration, testing how road charge could work with usage-based insurance, ridesharing, electric vehicle charging stations, and autonomous vehicles; the Public/Private Roads Project, testing the ability of current GPS technology to differentiate when a car is driving on a public versus private road; and the Road Charge Collection Pilot, testing and evaluating issues with billings and payments of money to the State.

Lauren Prehoda, from the Caltrans Road Charge Program, reported that the analysis of the Road Charge Pilot Program is now underway with a final report to be released in 2026. A study session will be scheduled for the Board at a future date to discuss alternatives to the gas tax and the impacts on Monterey County residents.

## **Transportation Agency Will Request Construction Manager/General Contractor Delivery Method for the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor Project**

The TAMC Board of Directors received a presentation on the complexity of the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor project due to the scale, environmental considerations, right-of-way constraints, and the need for phased implementation based on available funding for the project aimed at converting the corridor into a full freeway.

The eight-mile segment of US Highway 101 between Salinas and Chualar functions as an expressway with eleven at-grade intersections and two interchanges. These at-grade crossings pose significant safety risks, particularly for agricultural vehicles and local traffic attempting to cross or merge onto the highway. The corridor also experiences congestion due to a mix of local, regional, and interregional travel, and lacks adequate frontage roads to support safe and efficient local circulation.

Given these challenges, the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) delivery method was recommended over the traditional Design-Bid-Build approach. In the Design-Bid-Build model, the project is fully designed before a contractor is selected through a competitive bidding process. This linear structure limits the contractor's ability to provide input during design, often leading to unforeseen issues during construction, change orders, and delays. In contrast, CM/GC allows the construction manager and general contractor to be brought on board during the design phase. This early collaboration enables the team to identify and mitigate risks, optimize construction staging, and propose cost-saving innovations before construction begins.

Under CM/GC, Caltrans, as the project owner, will negotiate a guaranteed maximum price with the contractor prior to construction, providing greater cost certainty. The method also offers flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, such as shifts in funding availability or environmental permitting requirements. This is particularly important for a project like US 101 South of Salinas, which is expected to be delivered in phases and funded through a combination of state, federal, and local sources.

After a thorough discussion following the presentation, the Board agreed that the CM/GC method offers a more responsive and collaborative framework to ensure successful project delivery for the US 101 South of Salinas project and authorized the Transportation Agency's Executive Director to request that Caltrans use the Construction Manager/General Contractor delivery method for improvements in the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor project. Caltrans District 5 Director, Scott Eades, indicated that Caltrans would begin pursuing this delivery method for the project.

## **North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan & Participatory Budgeting** **Project Update**

TAMC staff provided an update on the North Monterey County Safe Routes to Schools Plan and Participatory Budgeting process.

The North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan is a collaborative effort led by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Monterey County Public Works, the Health Department, Ecology Action, and the Center for Community Advocacy.

Over a two-year planning process, the team identified barriers to safe access for ten public schools across North Monterey County, including Pajaro, Las Lomas, Prunedale, and Castroville, and developed recommendations for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements. These recommendations aim to reduce traffic congestion and promote healthier transportation options like walking, biking, carpooling, and bus use. Community engagement played a key role, with students, parents, and school staff participating in assessments, mapping, and surveys to highlight safety concerns.

Steering Committee members presented their recommendation for projects on North Monterey County Unified School District (NMCUSD) property to the district's Board of Directors on August 14, 2025, and their recommendation was approved by the Board. Steering Committee members will present their recommendations for projects that would be implemented by the County of Monterey to the Board of Supervisors on October 14, 2025. If the project list is approved by the Board of Supervisors, the funding agreements for both NMCUSD and the County of Monterey will be on the agenda at the October 22, 2025 TAMC Board meeting for consideration.

The North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan was funded through a \$665,092 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant and \$126,683 of Measure X Safe Routes to School Program funds. The projects selected through the Participatory Budgeting process are funded by \$781,500 in Regional Surface Transportation Program reserve funds and \$218,500 in Measure X Safe Routes to Schools funds, for a total of \$1 million.