

## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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### *HIGHLIGHTS*

#### **January 27, 2010 Meeting**

#### **TRANSPORTATION EXCELLENCE CÉLEBRATED**

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The Transportation Agency for Monterey honored outstanding Monterey County individuals, projects, and programs in the field of transportation at the seventh 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 Frank Sollecito, Monterey City Councilman, for his services, and recognized Supervisor Dave Potter for serving 16 years on the agency's Executive Committee.

#### **Individuals/Groups**

- **Reinie Jones, District Local Assistance Engineer, Caltrans – District 5:** Ms. Jones went above and beyond expectations to provide Monterey County with the highest quality assistance in navigating the complex federal requirements for delivery of transportation projects. She was instrumental in helping Monterey County jurisdictions be ready to use federal Recovery Act funding. With Ms. Jones' assistance, Monterey County projects were some of the first in the state to obligate Recovery Act funds.
- **Adriana Frederick, KSMS Channel 67 Univision, Reporter:** Ms. Frederick has done an exceptional job of following regional transportation projects and reporting these important projects to the Spanish speaking community of Monterey County.
- **Robert Down Elementary School:** An exceptional effort was made by this school to promote alternative transportation for students and staff, such as riding the bus, bike riding and walking throughout the year. Their campaign has dramatically increased bus ridership and improved air quality by taking cars off the road. The school also promotes bicycling and walking, which improves student health and can reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **Programs**

- **Kings Area Rural Transit & City of Greenfield, Agricultural Industries Transportation Services:** This program has filled a critical need in Monterey County by administering 20 vanpools serving approximately 220 agricultural workers in Salinas, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield and King City, reducing vehicle miles traveled by

approximately 14.8 million miles, yielding a total greenhouse gas emissions reduction of up to 2,871 tons of emissions annually.

- **Monterey-Salinas Transit, Presidio Bus Service:** These new commuter bus operations have substantially reduced vehicle miles traveled on regional roadways as Department of Defense employees choose to ride transit, thus contributing to the reduction of traffic congestion on the Monterey Peninsula during peak commuting periods. This reduction in vehicle miles traveled also helps Monterey County reduce its carbon footprint to help combat climate change.

### **Projects**

- **City of King, First Street Bridge Replacement:** This long awaited bridge provides a vital connection between US 101 and Metz Road and Bitterwater Road/Highway 25. This project has improved safety for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on a heavily used truck route. It also raised the bridge eight feet above the flood zone, reducing the potential for flooding. This bridge has improved the corridor by creating a southern gateway into town and promoted economic development in the area.
- **City of Seaside: West Broadway Urban Village Specific Plan:** The City of Seaside made an exceptional effort to incorporate transit-oriented elements into this specific plan for the city's downtown core. The plan incorporates mixed-use and high-density buildings as well as connectivity to the proposed light rail transit station. This plan will also provide for a more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- **Caltrans – District 5: Highway 101, Gloria Overpass Repair in Soledad:** Following a terrible accident, the Gloria overpass in Soledad experienced extensive structural damage. Caltrans worked diligently to complete the modifications and repairs to the overpass in two months. With the erection of the new safety fencing and the improvements to the overpass, residents saw their tax dollars utilized in a timely fashion to improve the quality and safety of roads in Monterey County.

### **CARMEL AREA TRAIL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARDED**

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Construction of a new trail linking Carmel Valley Road with Rio Road will soon begin after the Transportation Agency awarded the construction contract to HSR General Engineering Contractors Inc in the amount of \$1,177,329. In June 2009, the Transportation Agency Board approved the environmental document for a 1.2 mile trail that includes a tunnel under Carmel Valley Road and a 12-foot wide paved pedestrian and bicycle trail south to Rio Road. A future project will connect this trail to a new pedestrian and bike bridge crossing Carmel River.

Construction is expected to begin this February and be completed in Summer 2010. The project is fully funded by federal, state, and regional trail funding. Project partners include the Big Sur Land Trust, the Monterey Peninsula Regional Open Space District, Caltrans and California State Parks, who will own and operate the trail.

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**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County adopted the Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which proposes funding for priority transportation projects over the next five years.

The focus of the Transportation Agency's 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program proposal is to keep the agency's highest priority project, the US 101 - Prunedale Improvement Project, on track to start construction in early 2011. The Prunedale Improvement Project is aimed at improving safety in the 8 mile corridor between Crazy Horse Canyon Road in North Monterey County and Russell Road in north Salinas. The project will construct 2 new interchanges at the north and south of the project and one overpass at Blackie Road/Reese Circle. A network of local frontage roads will connect travelers to safe crossings and nearly all left turns on US 101 will be eliminated with a median barrier.

Some of the other projects requesting state transportation improvement dollars are:

- US 101-San Juan Road Interchange Project: This new interchange near the Red Barn will continue the corridor of safety improvements on north US 101 to help improve safety and reduce the congestion along this heavily traveled highway.
- Hwy 1/Hwy 183 Fly Under at Artichoke Avenue in Castroville: This project will improve safety and traffic flow at this busy intersection along the coastal corridor.
- Monterey Branch Line Light Rail Project: This project will provide light rail transit using the existing Monterey Branch Line alignment between Marina and Monterey.
- Castroville Undercrossing: This bicycle and pedestrian crossing under the Union Pacific Railroad tracks parallel to Highway 156 in Castroville will improve safety for those traveling between existing residential areas and North County High School.

Kristen Hoschouer  
Associate Transportation Planner  
Transportation Agency for Monterey County  
55-B Plaza Cir. Salinas, CA 93901  
831-775-4403  
fax: 831-775-0897  
[kristen@tamcmonterey.org](mailto:kristen@tamcmonterey.org)