

## **A Study of Monterey County Commuter Conditions**



### **Summary:**

In a recent report entitled “California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment,” Monterey County is among the worst road conditions in the state based on a pavement condition index of 50 out of a possible 100. Persistent complaints concerning the deteriorating streets everywhere in Monterey County and commuter traffic congestion along major arterial roadways reveal a serious traffic problem within Monterey County. Monterey Peninsula's economy is driven by tourism and the Salinas Valley's multi-billion-dollar agricultural industry. Both are dependent upon un-cluttered roadways and rail systems not to mention the fact that stalled traffic along major highways contribute to air pollution. The basic economic dilemma is that most Monterey County businesses require employees and those employees are affected by massive congestion on the way to and from the work place. Local cities have argued that there is insufficient road tax money to properly maintain existing streets. The increasing

number of pot holes, the lack of routine street maintenance, and persistent highway congestion within the county, warrant a study by the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury (MCCGJ).

### **Investigative Methodology:**

The Grand Jury's study of traffic congestion includes a summary of where the road tax funds originate, and a look at The Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC), which serves as both the local transportation commission and the regional transportation planning agency. The scope of this study includes the staffing of this agency as well as whether the make-up of the board members is too large to be effective. This study shall also include a brief look at the twenty-five-year plan offered by TAMC regarding relieving major arterial highway congestion. The MCCGJ interviewed numerous members of TAMC and the Board of Supervisors and obtained information from the internet.

### **Background:**

#### **Federal Road Taxes**

Funding sources from the Federal Fuel Excise Tax includes 18.4 cents per gallon on gasoline and 24.4 cents per gallon on diesel fuel. Of the Federal excise taxes collected by the IRS, California gets back approximately 90% of these contributions through the Federal Obligation Authority (OA). The Federal road taxes are released to California subject to many federal restrictions. On a local level they are accessible by grant applications covered under "The Regional Surface Transportation Program" (RSTP) which will be discussed later.

#### **California's Road Taxes**

1. A gasoline excise tax of 18 cents per gallon
2. "The Price-Based Excise Tax" was formerly a sales tax on gasoline. In 2010 legislation AB86 and SB70 created the "Fuel Tax Swap", which replaced the sales tax on gasoline. This new "Excise Tax" is adjusted, annually, by the Board of Equalization (BOE), in relation to the price of gasoline. In November 2010 voters passed Propositions 22 and 26,

which prohibited the state from using “Excise Taxes” for General Fund relief and required a two-thirds vote by both houses for any tax measure.

But to clarify this issue, the California Senate and Assembly passed AB105 by a two-thirds vote to reinstate the “Fuel Tax Swap”. The tax was originally 18 cents per gallon but because of declining fuel prices it has been adjusted to 9.8 cents per gallon for fiscal year 2017-18.<sup>1</sup>

3. A Diesel Fuel excise tax of 11 cents per gallon
4. A Sales Tax of 9.25 percent per gallon on Diesel Fuel which provides funds solely for The Public Transportation Account (**PTA**).
5. Truck Weight Fees: The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) calculates weight fees based on the gross weight of commercial vehicles. These fees generate approximately \$900 million a year.
6. Vehicle license, registration and Driver’s license fees are allocated to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the Department of Motor Vehicles for traffic law enforcement and regulations.
7. The Vehicle License fees, paid by all California motorists, includes a county/district fee of \$10.00, \$1.00 which goes to TAMC to pay for roadside call boxes. The remaining \$9.00 goes to the following county functions:

Summary for Fiscal Year 2015-2016	
County Administrative Office	\$747,391
Behavioral Health	\$649,467
Health	\$8,001,860
Social Services	\$584,358
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,983,076</b>

#### **California Road Taxes go to:**

1. Of the base Excise Tax of 18 cents a gallon: 64% goes to the State Highway Account (**SHA**) and 36% goes to the cities and counties.
2. The “Price-Based” Excise Tax is complicated by the passage of Proposition 1B approved by voters in the November 2006 election. It enacts the Highway Safety Traffic Reduction, Air Quality and Port Security Bond Act of 2006 to authorize \$19.925 billion of state general obligation bonds for specified purposes, including high-priority transportation corridor improvements. A portion of the “Price-Based Excise Tax” along with all of the *Truck Weight Fees* are allocated to defray the cost of the Proposition 1B bonds.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>

3. The Diesel Fuel taxes go to The Public Transportation Account (**PTA**) to provide funding for local transit, as outlined in the Transportation Development Act.
4. The Vehicle License Fees, as previously noted, are not applied to road construction or repairs.

**California Road Construction and Repair Taxes:**

90% of Federal Excise Tax on gasoline (18.4 cents per gallon)	16.56 cents per gallon
California's Excise Tax on gasoline	18. cents per gallon
Price-Based Excise Tax (a maximum of 9.8 cents per gallon) The exact amount depends on the remainder after bond payments.	TBD
<b>TOTAL (estimated)</b>	<b>40. cents per gallon</b>

**Distribution of Road Taxes for Monterey County:**

As previously noted, there are multiple road related taxes. An explanation of how these taxes are applied and where they go is too detailed to include in this study. However, in accordance with the California State Streets and Highways Code Section 2103 Transportation Tax Fund, 50% of the Gasoline Tax Revenue is sent to the Highway Users Tax Account (**HUTA**), of this amount the Weight Fee Revenues and a portion of the Price Based Excise Tax are deducted (they go to the State's General Fund for payment of the obligation bond) and the balance is apportioned in accordance to Sections 2104-2108 as follows:

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) 44%

State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) 12%

Local Streets and Roads Program (LS&R) 44%: (City gets 22% County gets 22%)

Monterey County and Cities therein receive a direct payment of the following amounts:

Location	FY 2015-2016	July 2016 thru Jan 2017
Monterey County	\$9,000,020	\$4,887,929
Carmel	\$82,418	\$44,195
Del Rey Oaks	\$39,743	\$21,358
Gonzales	\$177,682	\$94,096
Greenfield	\$353,754	\$190,661
King City	\$282,148	\$155,673
Marina	\$470,938	\$228,926
Monterey	\$586,671	\$310,317
Pacific Grove	\$373,451	\$168,593
Salinas	\$3,178,481	\$1,709,999
Sand City	\$13,202	\$7,815
Seaside	\$545,212	\$367,869
Soledad	\$537,085	\$280,049
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,640,805</b>	<b>\$8,467,480</b>

In accordance to “Fair Share Funding,” based on population, TAMC periodically allocates RSTP funds to cities and the county – typically every two to three years. The last allocation of the “Fair Share” funds – calculated at \$1,200,000 annually - was distributed in 2014. This formula has been increased to \$1,830,000 per year covering the next three years for a total of \$5,490,000 and will be distributed in 2017 as follows:

Jurisdiction	% Total Population	Fair Share Funding
Carmel-by the-Sea	9.0%	\$49,170.00
Del Rey Oaks	39.0%	\$21,465.00
Gonzales	1.97%	\$108,056.00
Greenfield	3.97%	\$217,897.00
King City	3.1%	\$170,277.00
Marina	4.76%	\$261,453.00
Monterey	6.7%	\$367,985.00
Pacific Grove	3.62%	\$198,867.00
Salinas	36.35%	\$1,995,640.00
Sand City	0.8%	\$4,402.00
Seaside	7.9%	\$433,892.00
Soledad	6.03%	\$331,228.00
County of Monterey	24.22%	\$1,329,668.00
<b>Fair Share TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$5,490,000.00</b>

### **Distribution of Federal Funds:**

RSTP was established by California State Statute utilizing Federal Surface Transportation Program Funds.<sup>2</sup> The State of California allows smaller counties to exchange their apportionment of Federal RSTP funds for State Highway Account funds, which are easier for local agencies to use for transportation with less stringent paperwork than with federal funds. TAMC distributes these funds to local agencies as part of its responsibilities as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. Access by local agencies for use of these funds must meet Project Eligibility requirements which are detailed and too extensive to include here.

### **Road projects funded by Grants:**

Virtually every major road construction project in Monterey County is funded by way of a grant application for federal or state funds. The four major sources of grants are:

1. The Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) as previously discussed.
2. State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which funds new construction projects that add capacity to the transportation system. STIP consists of the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) developed by Caltrans and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). STIP funding comes from a mix of state, federal and local taxes and fees.
3. State Highway Operation and Protection Plan (SHOPP) which provides funds for pavement rehabilitation and operational and safety improvement of the state highways and bridges.
4. Local Assistance Program: Caltrans' Local Assistance Program oversees more than one billion dollars in federal and state funds, which are available annually to over 60 cities, counties and regional agencies for the purpose of improving their transportation infrastructure or providing transportation services.

The grant application procedure begins by filling out a grant request form and submitting it to the TAMC Board of Directors for approval and submission to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for final approval.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 133 of Title 23 of the United States Code

## **California Transportation Commission (CTC)**

The CTC consists of eleven voting members and two non-voting ex-officio members. Of the eleven voting members, nine are appointed by the Governor, one is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee, and one is appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly. The CTC reviews and adopts the state transportation programs and approves projects nominated by Caltrans and regional agencies for funding; it is also responsible for project delivery oversight.

## **The Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC)**

This agency was created by the Transportation Development Act of 1972. The mission is to plan and proactively fund a transportation system that enhances mobility, safety, access, environmental quality and economic activities by investing in regional transportation projects serving the needs of Monterey County residents, businesses, and visitors.

### **The duties performed:**

1. As the local Transportation Commission, it must administer the provisions of the Transportation Development Act in allocating Local Transportation Funds and State Transit Assistance Funds to the cities, county and transit operators.
2. As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, it must engage in transportation planning activities for the county and cities of Monterey County.
3. This agency also serves as the Monterey County Service Authority for freeways and expressways which requires implementation of a motorist aid program having the primary function of installing and monitoring roadside call boxes. Funding for the roadside call box is provided from the Vehicle License fees at the rate of one dollar per license fee.

TAMC has a staff of 13 full-time permanent employees, and 1 part-time person, with an estimated 2016-17 operating expense of \$2.6 million. The permanent positions include the Executive Director, Deputy Executive, a Transportation Engineer, 6 Transportation Planners, and 4 Administrative Support Staff.

### **TAMC's Annual Operating Expenses:**

Salaries	\$1,478,644
Fringe Benefits	\$633,052
Material and Services	\$495,042
Depreciation & Amortization	<u>\$10,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,616,738</b>

### **TAMC Board Members:**

The TAMC Board of Directors is comprised of voting and non-voting members. The voting members include all five elected Board of Supervisors and one representative of each city in Monterey County for a total of 17 voting members. It should be noted that no TAMC staff member is allowed a vote.

Voting Membership Fees			
Carmel	\$1,344	Monterey County	\$131,557
Del Rey Oaks	\$544	Pacific Grove	\$5,136
Gonzales	\$2,985	Salinas	\$51,247
Greenfield	\$5,861	Sand City	\$112
King City	\$4,327	Seaside	\$11,432
Marina	\$9,213	Soledad	\$9,286
Monterey	\$10,032	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$243,076</b>

### **Non-Voting Ex-Officio TAMC Representatives:**

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), Caltrans District 5, City of Watsonville, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD), Monterey Regional Airport and Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)

### **2016-17 TAMC Revenues:**

<b>Total Revenue by Source FY 2016/2017</b>	
Federal Grants	\$525,000
State Grants	\$14,921,812
Local Contributions	\$678,382
Other	\$640,000
Reserves	\$677,339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,442,533</b>

Even though the 1972 Transportation Development Act created TAMC, the legislation did not provide for independent State funding for this agency. TAMC's staff time and costs for processing applications and securing of road related State and Federal Grants provide much of the funds for their operating expense. Local Contributions, impact fees, and "Other revenues," are also included as revenue but are insufficient to pay for the annual Operating Expenses. \$14,825,795 of the above grants are to be applied to the TAMC Direct Program, see Appendix 1 for details.

### **Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan**

TAMC is responsible for completing a long-range transportation-planning document known as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). According to state and federal requirements, the twenty-five year RTP is subject to updates every four to five years to meet current requirements for Monterey County regional projects. To accomplish this, the regional plan identifies existing and future transportation related needs, considers all modes of travel, and identifies what can be completed with anticipated available funding for projects and programs. The RTP provides an underlying blueprint for investing in Monterey County's transportation future.

### **The Regional Transportation Plan**

1. Safety and operational improvements to high-priority corridors along State Routes 1, 68, 156, and US 101

2. Additional roadway capacity on key regional intercity arteries along US 101, and between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula
3. Extending new rail services to the Monterey Bay region
4. Pursuing both intercity and commuter based rail services
5. Expanded bus and rail transit services
6. Rehabilitation and enhancements of local major transportation corridors and increased multi-modal access.

With respect to the RTP plan, the Grand Jury limited its study to a look at plans for extended rail services and improvement to key regional intercity arteries along US 101, and between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula.

### **The TAMC Light Rail Project**

In 2003, TAMC purchased 16 miles of railroad tracks, known as the Monterey Branch Line, for \$9.3 million. This former Union Pacific rail line runs from Castroville to Monterey. According to a November 2010 report, phase 1 of this two phase project would begin with a rail line between Marina and Monterey at an estimated cost of \$145 million. There would be train service every 15-30 minutes between Custom House Plaza and the Marina Green with 10 stops in between. The annual cost to run this service was estimated at \$4.3 million.

TAMC projections indicate 3,725 passengers would use the service on a daily basis at a cost of \$2.50 per ride. The second phase, at an estimated cost of \$85 million, would extend the line over a newly rebuilt Salinas River Bridge to a new station house on Blackie Road in Castroville.

### **Problems with the Light Rail Proposal**

What was not mentioned is that if you multiply 3,725 times \$2.50 times 365 days per year, the total annual revenue would be \$3,399,245 which means the system would suffer an annual loss of more than \$900 thousand each year.

This project was not well received at public meetings. Marina residents were concerned for public safety with respect to the noise and possible injury along the railroad tracks and Monterey opposed

the rail service because they felt it would obscure their “Window to the Bay” area along the beach front.

In the end, more than \$23 million was spent on this light rail project with no satisfactory resolution. Additionally, the estimated daily passenger count of 3,725 travelers could well be wishful thinking. It is difficult to believe that a light rail system from Marina to Monterey would sufficiently relieve the current traffic problems along Hwy 1 and justify the projected \$900 thousand operational loss each year.

As previously mentioned, the TAMC “Direct Program” for 2016-17 has budgeted \$12,535,000 for a “Commuter Rail Extension” project from Salinas to Gilroy which could relieve road congestion if done in conjunction with rail access for tourists to reach the Monterey Peninsula.

### **More Light Rail problems: The Cal-Trans Audit**

In January, 2014, CalTrans submitted the results of an extensive audit covering reimbursed costs involving TAMC, the Association of Monterey County Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and costs related to four consultants involved in the Light Rail Project. The audit was performed to determine whether costs claimed were allowable, adequately supported, and in compliance with the respective Agreement provisions and State and federal regulations.

A small sample of the “Findings” of this CalTrans audit:

- *“TAMC improperly procured the consultant, Parsons & Associates, for the Phase One Project Development Services for the Commuter Rail Project. The contract was executed for \$974,900 and did not specify a termination date.”*
- *“TAMC did not prepare independent cost estimates for projects, rather, the practice was to request a cost proposal from the consultant selected to determine the contract amount.”*
- *“TAMC improperly procured the consultant, Harris & Associates, for the Carmel Hill project. TAMC used its prequalified list for construction management services to select the consultant for this project. TAMC did not prepare a project specific Request for Quotation (RFQ) and did not advertise / publicize the project.<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> CalTrans Audit and TAMC response dated Jan. 15, 2014

A final determination was made that costs in the Amount of \$5,019,986 were supported and in compliance but additional amounts of \$9,460,292 were not adequately supported. CalTrans requested the unsupported amounts be refunded based on an annual payment of \$821,585 each year for 10 years.

TAMC appealed this decision and pointed out that TAMC staff provided CalTrans with ample documentation to disprove many of the audit findings; moreover, the regional CalTrans officials approved TAMC's processes only to be overruled by state-level officials. After considerable appeals, the total reimbursement to CalTrans is \$851,644.90 with an immediate payment of \$29,786 and the balance of \$821,858.90 to be paid over a 10-year period without interest.

### **Other Regional Transportation Considerations**

#### **The Regional Transportation Study**

In 1997 TAMC conducted a Regional Transportation Study to analyze roadway impacts of the former Fort Ord development and in 2005, working with The Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA), provided the "TAMC Reallocation Study." This study estimated roadway development costs at nearly \$400 million to relieve traffic congestion resulting from Fort Ord Reuse development. Projects resulting from this study include widening of Highway 1 from 4 to 6 lanes from Fremont Ave. interchange south to the Del Monte interchange (\$45 million), widen Hwy 156 to four lanes (\$197 million) and operational improvements to Hwy 68 (\$9.8 million) just to name a few. The total estimated cost of these three items equals \$251 million with FORA's obligation to contribute \$22.6 million toward these costs.

The TAMC study includes provisions to widen Davis Road between Blanco and Reservation Road to four lanes including a four-lane bridge over the Salinas River and widen Reservation Road

to four lanes from Davis Road to the Watkins Gate of East Garrison for a total estimated cost of \$41.3 million of which FORA would be responsible for \$15.7 million of this expense.

### **Problems with Transportation Study**

Funding from FORA to assist in roadway expenses resulting from Fort Ord re-development was, and is, dependent upon Mello-Roos impact fees which would not be available until the various development projects are complete.

In April, 2016 TAMC created a workshop for public input regarding commuter relief. The daily traffic count using Blanco Road from Salinas to Highway 1 was calculated at 25,000 to 30,000 vehicles.

Considering the traffic along Blanco Road, money spent to widen Davis and Reservation Roads seems wasteful when widening Blanco Road appears to be more direct and less expensive.

TAMC lamented that regional roadways often are embroiled in politics which affect approval of any major roadway construction. The Salinas farmers and associates represent a substantial political force in the valley and were opposed to any widening of Blanco Road.

Currently, commuter traffic between Salinas and Monterey and tourist traffic along Highway 156 remains unresolved. The proposal of a toll road on Highway 156 resulted in negative complaints by local residents and the two major roadways between Salinas and Monterey are insufficient to handle high speed commuter traffic.

## The Holman Hwy Roundabout



Project Revenue / Order of Funding	Funding
MBUAPCD (Air District Grant AB2766)	\$350,000
Pebble Beach - Initial Funding Commitment	\$1,333,256
TAMC RSTP Competitive - City 2015/2016 + RDIF	\$1,874,329
TAMC RDIF 2015/2016	\$450,000
City of Monterey Gas Tax	\$500,000
TAMC RSTP Competitive - County 2017/2018	\$1,329,671
City of Pacific Grove RSTP	\$100,000
County of Monterey RSTP	\$68,168
Pebble Beach - Supplemental Funding	\$466,744
Pebble Beach - Contingency	\$500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,972,168</b>

This project was advanced by the City of Monterey with support from the various cities most affected by the traffic congestion at the intersection of Highway 1 and Holman Highway. TAMC chipped in \$1.3 million acquired through an RSTP competitive grant.

The real question is whether a double roundabout will solve the problem. The only other alternative involving a much higher cost, is a separate overpass south of Holman Highway designed specifically for Pebble Beach access which, then would eliminate the Pebble Beach option at the current intersection. Left turns at Holman Highway intersection could then be eliminated which would make the stop lights unnecessary and traffic would flow unimpeded.

### Measure X

The Transportation Safety & Investment Plan, Measure X, is estimated to generate \$20 million in taxes per year, or \$600 million over a thirty-year period. It is funded by a 3/8 percent sales tax.

The revenues generated are divided 60% for local road maintenance, pot hole repairs and safety projects. The remaining 40% goes to TAMC for regional safety and mobility projects.

This is the third attempt by TAMC to pass a sales tax measure. The two prior attempts in 2006 and 2008 failed to acquire the necessary two-thirds approval.

Local Potholes and Repair	Amount	TAMC Hwy and Road Safety	Amount	Other	Amount
Carmel	\$4,292,000	Hwy 68 Safety	\$50,000,000	Ped. & Bike	\$20,000,000
Del Rey Oaks	\$1,566,000	US 101 So County	\$30,000,000	School Routes	\$20,000,000
Gonzales	\$4,386,000	Route 156	\$30,000,000	Senior Trans.	\$15,000,000
Greenfield	\$9,131,000	Imjin Safety	\$20,000,000	Commuter Bus	\$25,000,000
King City	\$8,097,000	Hwy 1 Rapid Bus	\$15,000,000	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$80,000,000</b>
Marina	\$14,370,000	68 Holman Hwy	\$10,000,000		
Monterey	\$22,643,000	Habitat Plan	\$5,000,000		
Pacific Grove	\$12,314,000	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$160,000,000</b>		
Salinas	\$91,383,000				
Sand City	\$586,000				
Seaside	\$22,193,000				
Soledad	\$12,595,000				
County Roads	\$156,444,000				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$360,000,000</b>				

### Problems with Measure X

The TAMC board approved the ordinance Wednesday, June 22, 2016. Because Prop 13 and related tax law prohibit any agency other than a city or a county from placing a tax measure on the ballot, the ordinance was forwarded to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors.

On July 19, 2016, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors authorized that the TAMC ordinance be placed on the November ballot. The MCCGJ was concerned whether or not the Brown Act applied as this meeting was not published.

When asked why Monterey County did not publish their meeting in accordance to section 54954.6 of the Brown Act, the response given was: *“The ordinance referenced in the July 19, 2016 agenda item is a TAMC ordinance. The Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution on that date that included the TAMC ordinance as a referenced attachment.”*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> County Clerk, Monterey Board of Supervisors Nov. 10, 2016

- Since the Board of Supervisors had previously voted in favor of this tax measure as members of the TAMC Board, is it possible for them to be objective or impartial in any subsequent meeting?
- If this is a TAMC ordinance, why is it that the cities and county receive 60 percent of the taxes and TAMC is left with only 40 percent?

### **Lack of Jurisdictional Support**

Neither Marina nor Monterey offered much support for the idea of a light rail project on the Monterey Peninsula and the cost was a major impediment. The proposed Highway 156 toll road resulted in substantial criticism, and consideration for Blanco Road as a major arterial roadway between Salinas and Monterey was abandoned because of unfavorable public and political response.

TAMC agrees that any proposal for regional roadways are dependent upon approval of those jurisdictions affected. Meantime, the Davis Road to Reservation Road remains as a costly alternative and even if that route proceeds, the Imjin Parkway portion of this project is dependent upon decisions made by the city of Marina.

To solve the traffic congestion at the southbound off-ramp of Hwy 1 and Imjin Parkway, Marina has installed a stop light at a cost of \$962,294. Marina's Capital Improvement Program has reserved \$2 million to install a south-bound loop at this intersection no later than 2020 which would solve the problem without a stop light. Moreover, future plans for sections of Imjin Parkway might include three roundabouts which would completely defeat future plans for a regional freeway.

Some Monterey County residents complain that TAMC's Board of Directors is too large and ineffective. In its' defense, the TAMC Board, comprised of every city in Monterey County and the five County Supervisors, offers a broad spectrum of county wide traffic problems which should

lead to a more complete understanding of jurisdictional problems and result in a mutual agreement over regional solutions; however, tourist routes to the peninsula and daily commuter traffic between Salinas and Monterey remains unresolved. The fact that the county and the twelve cities of Monterey County received \$360 million of Measure X to fill potholes and road repair and TAMC is left with \$160 million to handle regional and road safety issues would seem to indicate home town issues by the TAMC Board has preference over any consideration to solve regional highway problems.

### **Final Comments**

It appears Monterey County planning incorporates a liberal use of roundabouts as a solution to high volume traffic. Other large cities in California have found that freeways with overpasses, clover leafs and on and off ramps allow high speed traffic resulting in less lost time for daily commuters because of traffic congestion. Sacramento, for example, allows Interstate 5, Hwy 99, Hwy 50 and Hwy 80 to pass through their city with traffic clocked at 65 miles per hour because they found this technique worked best when traffic is not encumbered with stop lights and roundabouts.

Possibly, Monterey County might consider this alternative in their long-range planning.

### **Findings:**

- F 1. There is little doubt that an agency like TAMC is necessary to provide substantive long range planning for regional roadways within Monterey County. To get the job done, TAMC is faced with several obstacles including lack of funding and jurisdictional support.
- F 2. The annual distribution of excise taxes in accordance to the Local Streets and Cities Program is well short of necessary funding for routine county and city road maintenance. A solution to this dilemma is beyond the scope of this report.
- F 3. Tourist routes to the peninsula and daily commuter traffic between Salinas and Monterey remains unresolved.

F 4. TAMC's Board of Directors is comprised of local cities who have voting control over the disbursement of funds. TAMC has no voting privileges, but is responsible for the planning of regional highway systems.

**Recommendations:**

- R 1. TAMC Board of Directors should identify specific "regional" freeways or highways which would resolve commuter and tourist traffic problems.
- R 2. Local jurisdictions should be required to contact the TAMC Board of Directors prior to making amendments to the "identified" regional arterial roadway.
- R 3. TAMC Board of Directors should limit the use of stop lights and roundabouts as solutions for local traffic problems. Major regional freeways or highways should utilize on and off-ramps, overpasses and clover-leaves to expedite traffic.

**Request for Responses:**

None.

## Appendix 1

<b>Direct Programs</b>	<b>FY 2016/2017</b>
Rail-Commuter Rail Extension	\$12,535,000
Rail-Monterey Branch Line	\$65,000
Rail Leases-Salinas	\$5,500
Coast Daylight	\$149,520
FSP Towing Contracts	\$192,000
SAFE	\$102,710
SAFE-ADA Compliance	\$42,207
SAFE-511 Deployment	\$60,000
SAFE-Rideshare	\$22,000
SAFE-Radio Show	\$5,000
Traffic Counts	\$25,000
RTP/EIR Update Shared	\$25,000
Legislative Advocates	\$35,000
Public Outreach Program	\$450,000
Roundabout Outreach-Construction	\$6,172
Complete Streets Project Implementation	\$505,000
SR 156 Project Management	\$294,000
FORA & ROW Property Expenses	\$42,000
Bike-Bike/Ped Events	\$27,500
HWY 68 Study-Pacific Grove	\$0
HWY 68 Study-Monterey to Salinas	\$100,000
Reg Impact Fee Study	\$10,000
Ortho Imagery	\$10,000
Triennial Audit	\$35,000
CT-Payment	\$82,186
<b>TOTAL Direct Program</b>	<b>\$14,825,795</b>

Two items of note. The largest investment is the “Commuter Rail Extension” project and the other item to note is the category termed “SAFE” which is funded by the one dollar taken from the Monterey County allocation of VLF fees. The roadside call box expenses are included in this category.