

## New passenger train lines still planned for Salinas

MACGREGOR 'GOYA' EDDY Published 2:30 p.m. PT Feb. 2, 2017 | Updated 16 hours ago



Buy Photo

Colombian travelers Jennifer Borelly, left, and Lissa Valdivieso head toward the southbound Starlight Express at the Salinas train station.(Photo: Jay Dunn/The Salinas Californian)Buy Photo

1 CONNECT[TWEET](#)[LINKEDIN](#)COMMENTEMAILMORE

Increasing passenger train service to and from the north to Salinas has long been a goal of Monterey county and Salinas city leadership. The plans to link either the Capitol Corridor, (which now ends in San Jose), or Caltrain, (which now ends service at Gilroy) will be in place “optimistically by 2020,” said Christina Watson of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC).

At the TAMC Executive Committee meeting Wednesday, Kimbley Craig expressed some frustration at the perceived slow progress of the plan. Craig, District 5 Salinas city council member and past TAMC board chair, said “the rail service to Salinas, once expected by 2018, has been pushed back year by year since I came on the (TAMC) Board in 2010.”

Todd Muck, deputy executive director of TAMC, explained the delays are due to factors that are not under TAMC control, primarily negotiations with Union Pacific, which owns the railroad tracks.

“We have 10 TAMC professional staff working on all of our programs,” Muck said.

“Originally, the project was to extend Caltrain, (which now runs between San Francisco and Gilroy) to Salinas,” said Watson, the lead TAMC staffer coordinating the rail project. “Then the plan changed to extending the Capitol Corridor (which runs between Sacramento and San Jose) to Salinas. There are a lot of plans in flux for rail projects across the state, so we are coordinating with both Caltrain and Capitol Corridor to see what service we can have in the near term.”

Caltrain is a commuter train between Gilroy and San Francisco and is now being improved in preparation for becoming part of the California High Speed Rail (HSR). The improvements include converting to electric and enlarging the stations. From Gilroy, the High Speed Rail would continue to Merced, down the San Joaquin Valley to Los Angeles.

“I want to be clear, I think TAMC is one of the most pro-active and functional agencies in Monterey County,” Craig said at the Wednesday TAMC executive meeting. “I want to ensure that we pursue critical stakeholders, such as Union Pacific,

to bring passenger rail to Salinas.”

The TAMC Rail Policy Committee will meet Monday at 3 p.m. at 55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas. The agenda is available at [www.tamcmonterey.org](http://www.tamcmonterey.org) or call 775-0897.

### **New Salinas traffic commissioners**

Yolanda Hayes, community activist for traffic calming, was appointed to the Salinas Traffic and Transportation Commission by Mayor Joe Gunter. Retired Salinas policeman Brandon Hill was appointed by District 4 council member Gloria de la Rosa. New council member Tony Villegas has expressed an intention to appoint Ulises Gonzalez, vice principal of Bardin Elementary school, but as of Thursday James Serrano of Salinas Public Works has not received notice of this intent. New District 1 council member Scott Davis has informed the Salinas city clerk that he intends to appoint Elias Nunez. I hope to see you at the next Traffic and Transportation Commission meeting, Thursday at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Rotunda, 200 Lincoln Ave., Salinas. For the agenda go to [www.cityofsalinas.org](http://www.cityofsalinas.org) or call 758-7241. Past meetings are available on thesalinaschannel on You Tube.

### **Bus board meets Monday**

The Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) board meeting will be held Monday at 10 a.m., at 19 Upper Ragsdale Dr., Monterey. For agenda see [mst.org](http://mst.org) or call 888-678-2871.

### **Family bike ride**

Family Biking Monterey County will celebrate Black History Month with a family bike ride on Saturday, noon to 2 p.m. Meet by the bike trail at 125 Ocean View Blvd, Pacific Grove at noon, and then the group will bicycle to Caledonia Park at 161 Caledonia in PG, see [www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyBikingMC](https://www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyBikingMC) or you can email organizer Lauryn Ricigliano at [ricigliano@gmail.com](mailto:ricigliano@gmail.com).

Walkers and folks with strollers are welcome. The ride will be cancelled for heavy rain but not for light drizzle.

1 CONNECT [TWEET](#) [LINKEDIN](#) COMMENT EMAIL MORE

Read or Share this story: <http://bit.ly/2k65Ot3>

### **TOP VIDEOS**



[Opinion: Arizona isn't crazy enough to target gay kids](#)

[0:55](#)