

Monterey County Priority Projects

SEPTEMBER 20, 2018



TOUR ROUTE *Tour starts and ends at Embassy Suites*

1 Highway 218 Improvements

2 Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)

3 Highway 68 Improvements

4 US-101 South County

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6 Highway 156 Improvements

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1 Highway 218 Improvements

Highway 218, also known as Canyon Del Rey Boulevard, is the main boulevard in the cities of Del Rey Oaks and Seaside. Residents, businesses, and parks are located along the highway; the corridor is also used by children to get to school. While there is a network of parks parallel to the highway, walking paths are not connected to each other, and there is a lack of safe crossings and sidewalks. The Caltrans-funded Canyon Del Rey Corridor Study aims to identify issues and safety improvements that can be made along the roadway. It will also coordinate with the planned Fort Ord Regional Trail and Greenway, which is envisioned as a safe and scenic travel corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists via the adjacent parks. The goal of the study is to make Canyon Del Rey Boulevard safer for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities by creating a set of publicly-supported improvements and a strategy to build them.

2 Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) used to house its administration, operations, and maintenance at this Monterey location. Maintenance bays were inadequate to service the entire fleet, and work often took place outside, rain or shine. To save operating costs and to better serve its 4.5 million passengers, the region's transit district moved its administration to another building and built this new state-of-the-art Operations and Maintenance facility. Funding for this \$22 million project came from state Prop 1B and the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program. MST now deploys 40% of its public transit services from this location facility. The 33,958 square foot facility, completed in June 2018, supports operations, maintenance and parts storage, as well as MST's communications center and emergency operations center.

3 Highway 68 Improvements

As the main connector between the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas (Monterey County's two principal urbanized areas), Highway 68 is often congested during peak hours. In fact, bus service on the corridor is limited due to unreliable travel times. Home to the Laguna Seca Raceway, several schools, the Fort Ord National Monument, and the Monterey Regional Airport, this corridor is also quite congested during the summertime and on weekends. In addition, Highway 68 creates a barrier to wildlife movement, resulting in conflicts that harm both animals and motorists. Due to these issues, voters identified improvements to Highway 68 as their top priority in the local Measure X transportation sales tax plan. The project aims to improve traffic flow and increase safety for all travel modes by adding a network of roundabouts, creating safe wildlife passages, and building a parallel biking and walking trail.

4 US-101 South County

US-101 is the primary corridor for the over 11,000 annual truck trips that support Monterey County's \$4.4 billion agricultural industry. Much of this truck traffic is focused south of Salinas: drivers deliver goods from the fields to the coolers for packaging and storage, and then to markets all around the country. Currently, a non-standard left merge lane, U-turns, and left turns add to the traffic congestion; there are also frequent truck-auto conflicts on this stretch of US-101. The corridor is targeted in regional Measure X for improvements to better accommodate this heavy truck traffic by constructing frontage roads, adding a new interchange, and removing left and U-turns.

5 Salinas Rail Project

As more residents commute between Monterey County and the San Francisco Bay Area, traffic congestions on US-101 has grown. The Salinas Rail Project is part of the greater Monterey County Rail Extension that will improve access to jobs, healthcare, and shopping. This project will provide new passenger rail service from Santa Clara County to Salinas, the largest city on the Central Coast. This project represents an unprecedented collaboration among state and regional transportation agencies, the City of Salinas and the County of Monterey, to put into place the rail infrastructure that Monterey County needs for it to thrive in the 21st century.

6 Highway 156 Safety Improvements

Highway 156 is a major link connecting the San Francisco Bay Area and northern Monterey County to the Monterey Peninsula. With its present two-lane configuration, the highway results in substantial traveler delays, particularly during the summer tourist season and event weekends. This congestion affects visitor travel to and from the Peninsula, as well as travel between US-101 and Highway 1 for commuters. In addition, the traffic impedes access to the Oak Hills neighborhood. The preferred solution is to build a new four-lane expressway just south of the current highway. The daunting challenge is finding \$388 million dollars to fund the entire project. To make progress, the Transportation Agency is moving forward with Phase 1, addressing a serious safety concern by removing a signal and building a new interchange at Castroville Boulevard and Highway 156. A new connection to Blackie Road will improve commercial truck access to the region's largest distribution center and make it safer for pedestrians and local traffic on Highway 183 through the low-income community of Castroville.

7 Rapid Bus Corridor

The Monterey Peninsula is home to the region's nearly \$3 billion tourist industry. Nearly 22,000 workers must travel from other cities to reach these jobs, which results in heavy rush hour traffic on Highway 1 between Monterey and Marina. Buses are stuck in the same traffic. The Transportation Agency-owned Monterey Branch Line provides a parallel transportation route that is available for transit service. A recent MST study showed that bus operations along the Monterey Branch Line would be a cost-effective way to reduce travel times in this corridor. This Measure X project will create a new rapid bus corridor to provide an alternative to the traffic congestion on Highway 1.

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