

Executive Women's Leadership Seminar

Statement of Interest

Debra L. Hale, Executive Director, Transportation Agency for Monterey County

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the WTS San Francisco Bay Executive Women's Leadership Seminar. The San Francisco Bay chapter has a proven success record in holding productive workshops, and I look forward to this opportunity for professional growth and networking with other executive leaders.

Expanding WTS activities in the Monterey Bay Area has helped our region to better support the role of women in transportation. Our Programs Committee has not only provided a new opportunity for local professional women, it has also created a new forum for discussing issues unique to transportation, beyond the broader planning, environmental or public works associations. By participating in this leadership seminar, I will bring a new level of investment in WTS activities to our region.

I entered the transportation field much like others – with no specific background in transportation issues, but an interest in public service. After a short internship in Congress, and a stint in state government, I was convinced that local government was the best place to make a difference in people's lives. I have been in the transportation field ever since, and find it satisfying to plan, fund and then build improvements that people make use of every day.

As of this May, I will have been Executive Director for 11 years. I am proud of our positive and energetic team, in which everyone strives for continuous improvement. We focus on creating consensus and public support, figuring out how to pay for projects, keeping the community informed during construction, and getting projects open to the public as soon as possible. Our 14-member staff and 23-member Board of Directors take a collaborative approach, and we have built a reputation for delivering on our promises.

We have reached several major milestones during my tenure, including:

- Delivery of the \$225 million US 101 Prunedale Improvement Project, over 40 years in the making;
- Creation of a countywide traffic impact fee program, which all 12 cities and the county adopted;
- Securing \$70 million in state funding needed to bring new passenger rail service to Salinas; and
- Adoption of a 3/8% local transportation sales tax in November 2016, after four previous attempts.

Given our new self-help county status, and our goal of bringing new passenger rail service to the county within 5 years, it is time for me to grow my leadership skills. My vision is for TAMC to become the premier project delivery agency in the County. To do so, we need to strengthen our partnerships with outside agencies, the cities and County, and community leaders; reach agreement on project delivery priorities, while supporting environmental preservation and active transportation; strategically leverage outside funding; and work with our partners to reduce project costs. All these activities will take the right touch, and a lot of hard work.

The WTS Executive Women's Leadership Seminar can give me new insights and focus my skills to step up to these new challenges. Thank you for bringing this program to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Sincerely,



Debra L. Hale