

## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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### *HIGHLIGHTS*

**February 22, 2017**

#### **Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start Project Moves Forward**

The Agency's Board of Directors received an update on the Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start Project. During the presentation by staff, they learned that the project to extend passenger rail service from Santa Clara County south to Salinas is moving forward. For over the past year, the Agency has been negotiating with the property owners near the Salinas Rail Station to purchase the properties for the Kick-Start project.

The purchase of nine properties near the Salinas Rail Station are needed in order to construct an extension of Lincoln Avenue into the rail station providing direct access to the station, more room to accommodate buses and improve circulation. The purchase would also accommodate the expansion of the parking area for people to leave their vehicles while riding the train, and build a train layover facility.

To date, the Agency has negotiated a settlement on two properties - 20 West Market Street, which was the allUS Credit Union Building and 30 West Market Street, which is Frank's Fish Market and Olivia's Café.

The Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start Project is an exciting project that will revitalize downtown Salinas and transform an underutilized corner that will serve as a gateway to the City; and provide safer access to the existing train and bus service for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. This project is also the first visible step toward implementing the City of Salinas' Vibrancy Plan, connecting the historic train district to downtown.

This community-based Vibrancy Plan will offer a vibrant place where the City's past and future come together to create a healthy mix of residences, businesses, civic institutions, recreation and culture in a fun, safe and family-friendly setting. In order to make that happen, the Plan is intended to address serious needs to update Downtown's infrastructure to assure pedestrian safety, calm vehicular traffic to encourage increased bicycle use, provide a sustainable parking strategy, and create a sense of place through art and culture that attracts visitors to a new, safe destination. The Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start Project will be one of the first visible steps in implementing this City of Salinas community-based vision plan.

To learn more about the Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start Project visit the Transportation Agency's website at: <http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/rail/salinas-rail-extension/>. Once there, you will find more information about the benefits of the kick-start project, view the project map and see visual design simulations.

## Transportation Agency is Seeking Comments on Unmet Transit Needs

After receiving a presentation on the unmet needs process, the Transportation Agency's Board of Directors held a public hearing to receive comments to identify unmet transit needs in Monterey County. In its role as the Transportation Development Act fund administrator, the Agency annually holds this hearing annually to seek public input to identify unmet transit needs in Monterey County.

This unmet needs process is associated with the Local Transportation Fund, which is one of two designated funding sources for public transit created by the California Transportation Development Act. Though the Agency no longer allocates Local Transportation Funds to local streets and roads because funding has not been available for years, the Agency still continues to solicit public input on unmet transit needs and places comments into the following categories:

1. Transit service improvement requests that would improve an existing service.
2. Transit service expansion requests that extend a transit route beyond its current limits and fill a gap in service.
3. Capital improvement projects that would enhance existing public transit facilities.

Although, there weren't any comment from the public during the hearing, the Transportation Agency is still seeking public comments on unmet transit needs. The deadline to submit public comments and questionnaires for consideration as part of the Agency's annual unmet transit needs process is **April 30, 2017**.

All comments are reviewed with MST staff to consider options to implement requests and to evaluate comments based on the time frame in which unmet transit needs can be met. The unmet transit needs comments list serves as a public input tool for MST's short and long term transit planning and improvements.