

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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HIGHLIGHTS

May 28, 2015

TAMC Board Approves Detailed Traffic and Revenue Study for HWY 156

The Board of Directors for the Transportation Agency for Monterey County decided that they needed to gather more information before they could make a decision about instituting tolling to fund four new travel lanes parallel to Highway 156. During Wednesday's meeting, the Board directed staff to collect traffic data needed for a Level 2 Traffic and Revenue Study for Highway 156. The Level 2 Traffic and Revenue Study will be designed to gather data for "guiding principles" the Board identified for the project. The three key issues are: the impact of current and projected traffic diversions, toll rates and discount toll rates for locals. The study will also provide information needed to develop a supplemental Environmental Impact Report to analyze the tolling option. In order to gather the critical information needed for the study, the agency will seek Requests for Proposals to collect traffic data and diversion routes in August during the peak summer season, when thousands of tourists visit the Central Coast.

The Board's decision was made after a thorough and informative presentation on the history of Highway 156 improvement design and the 156 Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations for the next steps. The presentation presented by David Silberberger from Caltrans and Todd Muck, TAMC's Deputy Director, focused on the project's goals to improve safety, provide local access and relieve congestion on what is now a busy highway built nearly 75 years ago. They also explained how after years of public participation, studies and design planning, the decision was made to explore the toll road option. The presentation provided the audience a better understanding of the design of the new 4-lane expressway, the new fly-overs separating local traffic from inter-regional traffic and the planned modifications for the current Highway 156 which would remain as a free option for those who chose not to use the new toll expressway.

TAMC Hires Consultant for Transportation Measure Public Outreach Plan

The TAMC Board of Directors approved a contract to hire the consulting firm of CliffordMoss to develop and manage a transportation measure public outreach plan. Tom Clifford, principal of Clifford Moss announced that Moxxy Marketing of Salinas will partner with him on the public outreach plan. The outreach plan will focus on challenges our community faces for funding transportation safety and improvement projects.

The plan will introduce the "self-help" concept adopted by 20 other counties and solicit public input to help identify local projects that impact safety, commerce and quality of life in Monterey County. Identified projects could be included in an Expenditure Plan should the Board opt to pursue a Transportation Improvement Plan Measure in 2016.

Biking to the TAMC Board Meeting

May is National Bike Month and is celebrated in communities across the county. Several TAMC staff members and columnist McGregor Eddy joined that celebration by riding their bicycles to the TAMC Board meeting. Sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists, National Bike Month was established in 1956, to showcase the many benefits of bicycling and to encourage more folks to give biking a try.

Bicycling is part of a sustainable, multimodal transportation system and a viable and environmentally sound form of transportation. It encourages outdoor activities, reduces pollution, reduces road traffic, improves health, well-being, quality of life, and provides economic and tourism benefits.