

July 10, 2023



Honorable Pamela L. Butler, Presiding Judge
Monterey County Superior Court
240 Church Street
Salinas, CA 93901

Re: Response to Civil Grand Jury Report of June 14, 2023

Dear Judge Butler:

On behalf of the Monterey-Salinas Transit District (MST) Transit Board of Directors, I am replying to the findings and recommendations of the Civil Grand Jury report of June 14, 2023, pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05.

FINDINGS

F1. MST is managed by staff who administer a wide range of transportation services in Monterey County committed to serving the community's transportation needs in efficient and effective ways.

MST Response: Agreed.

F2. The community at large is unaware of the range of services provided by MST, including their training centers to assist vulnerable populations.

MST Response: Monterey-Salinas Transit initiated a 2022 MST Public Transit Non-Rider Survey in December 2022. The primary objective for conducting the survey was to gather information from customers that have not used transit in MST's service area, during the past year. A sampling plan was created to ensure that the overall results of the survey would be statistically valid for the region. A total of 409 completed surveys would have a precision of at least +/-4.8% at the 95% level of confidence. At least two-thirds (70%) of residents are either very or somewhat familiar with the services MST provides.

F3. A variety of funding sources contribute to the effective operations of MST.

MST Response: Agreed.

F4. MST collects data and disseminates real-time information and services for riders.

MST Response: Agreed.

Advocating and delivering quality public transportation as a leader within our community and industry.

Transit District Members Monterey County • Carmel-by-the-Sea • Del Rey Oaks • Gonzales • Greenfield • King City • Marina • Monterey
Pacific Grove • Salinas • Sand City • Seaside • Soledad **Administrative Offices** 19 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Suite 200 Monterey, CA 93940

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F5. Some complaints not submitted through formal channels may be overlooked, leading to potential frustration for the public.

MST Response: We acknowledge the potential for such outcomes and acknowledge that MST provides ample opportunities for members of the public to provide comments and concerns about services through a wide variety of media including voice, online, social media, in-person at customer service centers, and at publicly noticed MST Board meetings, and at public meetings of member jurisdictions.

F6. There is a lack of electric charging stations throughout the MST service area, limiting the range of electric buses.

MST Response: Agreed.

F7. The public perception that buses are underutilized is not consistent with the reality of logistics and the mandates of a functioning fleet.

MST Response: Agreed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. MST develop strategies to work with local and state entities to expand the infrastructure needed to keep electric vehicles adequately viable by December 31, 2023.

MST Response: The MST Board has adopted a state-approved Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) Rollout Plan consistent with requirements under the Innovative Clean Transit Rule promulgated by the California Air Resources Board. MST staff is actively involved in advocacy efforts to increase state and federal funds for zero-emission infrastructure and continues to apply for funding from a wide variety of sources.

R2. MST increase public service awareness regarding ridership levels and available services by September 30, 2023.

MST Response: MST will continue to promote the availability of our services through social media channels, print, broadcast, and outdoor media advertisements, and through increased participation in community events throughout the communities we serve. A wide variety of MST performance and ridership levels are reported monthly at MST Board meetings and are available from the MST website home page at www.mst.org.

R3. Enhance opportunities for MST board members, employees, and subcontractors to acknowledge and respond to all comments and complaints by September 30, 2023.

MST Response: All MST buses have the following interior signage prominently displayed informing passengers how to submit a comment or concern to the attention of MST staff.

MST wants you to have a safe and pleasant ride. Let us know about your experience. We're here to make it a pleasurable one.

MST quiere que tengas un paseo seguro y agradable. Háganos saber acerca de su experiencia. Estamos aquí para que sea una experiencia placentera.



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MST has recently partnered with our partners at Transit App to allow passengers to rate their rides in real-time. The results of the ratings will be summarized and reported to the MST Board of Directors starting in September 2023.

MST provides ample opportunities for members of the public to provide comments and concerns about services through a wide variety of media including voice, online, social media, in person at customer service centers, at publicly noticed MST Board meetings, and at public meetings of member jurisdictions. A standard operating procedure is in place for MST customer service representatives and other staff to respond to public comments.

The MST Board of Directors is most appreciative of the acknowledgment of the Civil Grand Jury in applauding MST's efforts in "providing safe and rapid transportation for residents most recently displaced by wildfires and floods". We truly believe that providing our residents with effective disaster response and recovery services is a primary community benefit provided by the Monterey-Salinas Transit District.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to your detailed and thoughtful report.

Sincerely,

Anna Velazquez, Board Chair
Monterey-Salinas Transit District

Cc: Monterey-Salinas Transit Board of Directors
David C. Laredo, MST General Counsel