



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors

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August 13, 2024

Dr. Caryl Hart, Chair and Commissioners
California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

**SUBJECT: Support for Monterey-Salinas Transits SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit Project
CDP Application #3-23-0288**

Dear Chair Hart and Commissioners:

The County of Monterey Board of Supervisors enthusiastically supports Monterey-Salinas Transit's SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit Project for the far-reaching benefits it will provide to our communities now and into the future. This generational investment in high quality public transit will improve access for all our residents and especially for those living in disadvantaged communities making minimum wage. It is a critical step in planning for future rail service, a value that is deeply held within our community.

To help our low-income workers, those historically disadvantaged, students, seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans realize their goals and dreams, frequent and reliable public transit is critical to our collective success. Monterey County has a jobs-housing imbalance where much of the new housing is being built in the northern part of the Monterey Peninsula, but hourly jobs and educational opportunities are in the southern part of the peninsula. This project helps provide high quality transit to connect the two.

In fact, 17% of the Monterey County population resides within a 15-minute walk to a SURF! bus stop while 94% of the County population lives within a 15-minute walk to a bus stop with connecting service. In more detail, these populations will specifically and directly benefit from the SURF! project: 69% are non-White or of Hispanic/Latino origin; 14% live in poverty; 11% live with a disability; and 5% are veterans.

We support the SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit Project and urge you to do the same for the positive impact it will have for generations to come. When implemented, the SURF! project advances environmental justice by providing low-cost transportation for our students, hourly wage earners, those accessing healthcare and those needing to cool off at the beach in the summer. The cost to ride is \$2 for 2 hours or \$1 for 2 hours for students, seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities, and humanitarian parolees. Building infrastructure for the future is important as many youths are opting not to get drivers licenses and many in our aging population can no longer drive. This project provides a climate-friendly alternative for many generations.

By using only zero-emissions buses on the SURF!, our community benefits from GHG reductions and lowering harmful air pollution from cars and light trucks. This means a decreased pollution burden on those who can afford it the least and fewer student asthma cases for people living in disadvantaged community areas along the SURF! corridor.



Finally, the project was included in the local Measure X transportation plan as a much-needed improvement to Highway 1 congestion. The voters of Monterey County approved the sales tax with this project in mind. Significant local resources have been invested in the thoughtful planning and design of the project.

It is for these compelling and important reasons that the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors urges the Coastal Commission's support for a Coastal Development Permit for the SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit Project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn Church", written in a cursive style.

Glenn Church, Chair
Board of Supervisors

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom
Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
Senate President Pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Senator John Laird
Assembly Member Dawn Addis
Dr. Kate Hucklebridge, Executive Director, California Coastal Commission
Dan Carl, District Director, Central Coast & Central Coast (North) / California Coastal Commission
Kevin Kahn, Central Coast District Manager / California Coastal Commission
Carl Sedoryk, MST General Manager
Lisa Rheinheimer, MST Assistant General Manager
Michelle Overmeyer, MST Director of Planning & Innovation
Todd Muck, TAMC Executive Director