


EDUCATION FUNDS
LEAGUES OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE SALINAS VALLEY AND MONTEREY PENINSULA
MEASURE Z – COUNTY OF MONTEREY
INVESTMENT PLAN FOR MONTEREY COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

(2/3 Approval Required)

THE QUESTION

Should the voters adopt a Transportation Investment Plan and approve a 25-year ½-cent sales tax to fund safety/congestion relief projects, local road repair, improved bus service, and other projects to provide alternatives to driving?

THE SITUATION

Construction and maintenance of roads and highways are primarily funded by state and federal revenues. These funds vary from year-to-year depending on budget priorities and other decisions made by the state and federal governments. Gasoline tax revenues continue to decline because of more efficient cars and alternative fuels. Fees collected from new land use projects provide the major source of local funds for new construction. Together, these revenues are insufficient to meet existing transportation needs in Monterey County. For example, deferred maintenance for roads in unincorporated areas alone is estimated at \$800 million.

Monterey-Salinas Transit is funded by state and federal revenues and bus fares. These funds vary yearly and are projected to decline while demand for services increases. Without added revenue, cuts in service and increased fares are likely to occur.

THE PROPOSAL

Measure Z would adopt a Transportation Investment Plan and levy a countywide 25-year ½-cent sales tax. It is estimated that it would raise nearly \$1 billion. Along with an estimated \$800 million in state and federal matching funds and regional developer fees, the following projects would be funded:

Safety and Congestion Relief Projects (50% of Sales Tax)
Completed during 2009-2016

- Highway 68-Holman Highway widening to the CHOMP hospital
- Highway 156 widening and interchange improvements at US 101
- US 101-San Juan Road interchange
- Eastside Bypass Study

Build during 2009-2033

Westside Salinas Connector

Build during 2017-2024

- Del Monte/Lighthouse Avenue improvements
- Highway 1-Seaside/Sand City widening
- Highway 68 commuter improvements
- US 101-South County improvements

Build during 2025-2033

US 101-Harris Road interchange

Local Road and Street Maintenance (25% of Sales Tax)

- Flexibility for the cities and County to use funding based on local needs with priority for road repair and maintenance
- Requires the cities and County to maintain prior years' funding levels from other sources

Alternatives to Driving (25% of Sales Tax)

- Transit (20%)
 - a. Commuter bus service – Monterey to Salinas
 - b. Transit services for the elderly and persons with disabilities
 - c. 511 Traveler Information
 - d. New transit facilities
 - e. Rapid bus corridor ("bus rapid transit"): Monterey to Marina; Pacific Grove to Monterey; Monterey to Seaside; Marina to Salinas; Westside Salinas Connector and East Salinas Corridor
- Regional bicycle/pedestrian facilities (3%)
- Smart growth transportation incentives (1%)
- Habitat conservation (1%)

Other Provisions

- Administrative costs limited to no more than 1%
- April 1, 2034 sunset date
- Funds exclusively for transportation
- Independent audits
- Plan can be amended by 2/3 vote of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) Board of Directors and a simple majority weighted vote of the TAMC Board.
- Citizens Oversight Committee composed of 18 organizations and agencies to review audits; make recommendations on changes to the Plan or project delivery priorities; and prepare annual reports.

WHAT A YES VOTE MEANS

The Investment Plan would be adopted and a ½-cent sales tax would be levied countywide for 25 years.

SUPPORTERS SAY

- Our county transportation system is stretched beyond its capacity and will only get worse in the future without additional funding.
- Tourists/visitors to our area might choose not to return because of lengthy delays on roads such as Highway 156.
- The Investment Plan provides funds for environmentally friendly mass transit and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Improvements to Highway 101 would provide frontage roads for farm equipment and better road systems for the many produce trucks going in and out of the county.
- The Improvement Plan is balanced with projects throughout the county; continues the recently adopted transportation fee on new development; would help secure an estimated \$800 million in state and federal matching funds.
- The Improvement Plan includes taxpayer safeguards such as a 25-year sunset date; all funds would be spent locally and cannot be taken away by the state; a 1% limit on administrative fees; a requirement for independent annual audits; and a requirement for a 2/3 vote of the TAMC Board and a simple majority of a weighted vote of the TAMC Board to change the plan.
- The Improvement Plan projects would provide 30,000 jobs in Monterey County.
- The Improvement Plan would ease congestion and improve emergency access to area hospitals.

SUPPORTERS INCLUDE

- All 12 city councils
- Monterey County Board of Supervisors
- Supervisor-Elect Jane Parker
- Monterey Peninsula Taxpayers Association
- Monterey County Hospitality Association
- Farm Bureau of Monterey County
- Building Trades Association of Monterey County
- Leon Panetta
- Julie Packard

For a complete list of supporters, go to www.zformontereycounty.com

The Leagues of Women Voters of the Salinas Valley and the Monterey Peninsula are nonpartisan organizations committed to informed and active citizen participation in government. All citizens, men and women, of voting age are welcome to join. The League has two roles, citizen education and advocacy. Our election services are carried out by the Leagues of Women Voters of the Salinas Valley and Monterey Peninsula Education Funds and exclude all advocacy.

Pros and Cons on the State Propositions prepared by the League of Women Voters of California are available at local libraries on the Monterey Peninsula or by going to the website at lwvc@lwvc.org.

WHAT A NO VOTE MEANS

The Investment Plan and a ½-cent sales tax levied for 25 years countywide would not be adopted.

OPPONENTS SAY

- Measure Z does not include fair share contributions from agriculture and the hospitality industry even though they will receive significant gains through Highway 156 and Highway 101 improvements.
- Because the measure includes fees on new development, it is growth-inducing. This would lead to approving large developments that cannot be supported by existing resources and infrastructure.
- Studies done for the Regional Impact Fee (part of the Investment Plan) show that congestion would not be improved by many of the proposed projects.
- Measure Z does little to address the County's deferred maintenance cost of \$800 million.
- There is no guarantee that the state, which has shown preference to metropolitan areas, would provide matching funds. Regional impact fees count as matching funds, thus limiting the need for other matching funds from a sales tax.
- Since the Investment Plan can be amended by the TAMC Board of Directors, there are inadequate taxpayer safeguards, including no penalties for misuse of funds and no assurance that the priority for projects will be followed or even funded.
- This is no time to increase taxes given the uncertain economic conditions.
- While proponents claim that the highway projects would improve safety, almost 40% of the funding for highways would be used to widen Highway 156, number 12 on the list of the 16 most unsafe roads (from Caltrans and city data).

OPPONENTS INCLUDE

- Fort Ord Community Advisory Group
- Prunedale Neighbors Group
- Prunedale Preservation Alliance
- Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club
- Seaside Taxpayers Association
- Salinas Valley Taxpayers Union
- Douglas M. Kasunich, Contractor
- Janet Martella Fay, Rancher
- Rita Dalessio, resident
- Marit Evans, resident