



City of Salinas

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

65 W. Alisal Street, 2nd Floor • Salinas, California 93901
(831) 758-7387 • (831) 775-4258 (Fax) • www.ci.salinas.ca.us

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 23, 2025

TO: Lisa Brinton, Community Development Director

FROM: Grant Leonard, Planning Manager
Yesenia Segovia, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: Findings from ITC Existing Conditions Public Survey Conducted

Background:

The Intermodal Transit Center (“ITC”) is a 9-acre area located around the City’s central passenger rail and bus station that encompasses several historic / tourist attractions and parking for the transit station. In 2024, the City contracted with Harris and Associates to evaluate and prepare a Phase 1 analysis of existing conditions, opportunities for activation and marketing, branding, and naming of facilities in and around the ITC. The city aims to utilize this analysis to inform and guide the development of a future master plan centered around the ITC. As identified in the 2015 Downtown Vibrancy Plan, the City envisions the ITC as a mixed-use transit-oriented development, connecting Salinas’ downtown area to transit options while providing needed housing and commercial services

As part of the ITC existing conditions work, Harris and Associates, with support from the City, and ITC stakeholders who contributed to the survey design, conducted a survey to engage community members and gather input from Stakeholders to ensure that the City’s goals for the future ITC master plan align with community needs. The survey was conducted online and in person at the Old Town Salinas Farmers Market. The survey addressed various topics related to the ITC, including:

1. Public transportation usage and improvements in the ITC area,
2. ITC amenities and activities, and
3. The historical value and significance of the ITC area.

A total of 161 responses were received from both in-person and online outreach. An analysis of the responses to the three main survey aspects, including implementation recommendations is provided in sections below. Many of the survey questions were based on answers to earlier questions and included predefined options. Many respondents selected all that applied, although, some questions had an "other" option for respondents to provide more detailed responses.



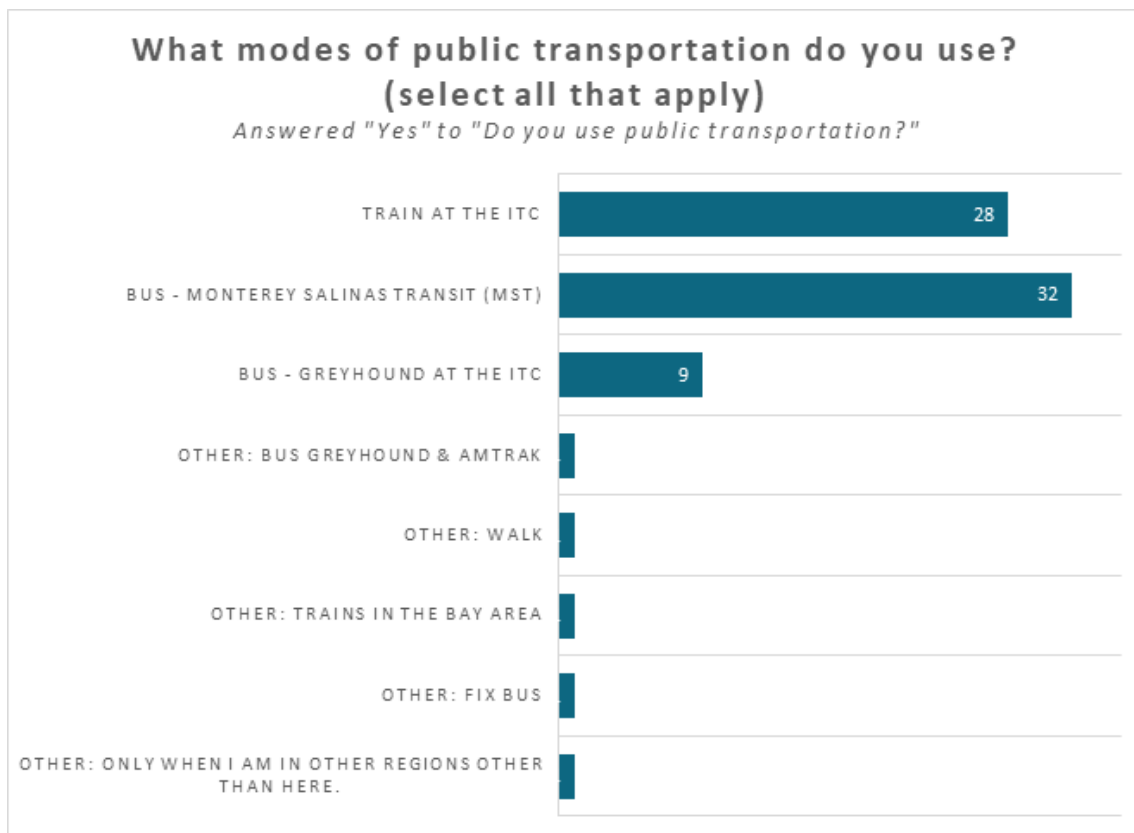
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Public Transportation Usage and Improvements in the ITC Area:

In the public transportation usage and improvements in the ITC area of the survey, 32% of respondents reported using public transportation while 68% reported not using it at all. Public transportation use was described as daily or weekly use while some individuals used occasionally or rarely from the 32% of respondents who use public transportation. Respondents who frequently use public transportation had clear preferences in the transportation modes that are currently used. Frequently used transportation options used are Monterey Salinas Transit (MST), which was the most popular, and the train at the ITC being the second most popular mode of transportation, and Greyhound listed third.



Respondents also identified specific improvements to the ITC area that would make them more likely to choose public transportation:

- **Better Connectivity:**
 - 58% of respondents want improved schedule coordination and clearer navigation tools to create a smoother, more connected public transportation experience, especially between key hubs like the ITC and Salinas Transit Center.
- **Increased Frequency of Service**
 - 52% of respondents emphasized the need for more frequent transit service to reduce wait times and better accommodate riders with varying schedules.
- **More Convenient Locations**
 - 39% of respondents called for better accessibility by placing transit stops nearer to where people live, work, and shop, making public transportation easier to use.
- **Increased Safety Measures**
 - 31% of respondents want improved safety and cleanliness on public transit, suggesting more lighting, security, and maintenance to make the system feel safer and more comfortable.
- **Reduced Fares**
 - 24% of respondents stressed the need for more affordable fares, recommending discounts and free ride incentives to make public transit more accessible and appealing.

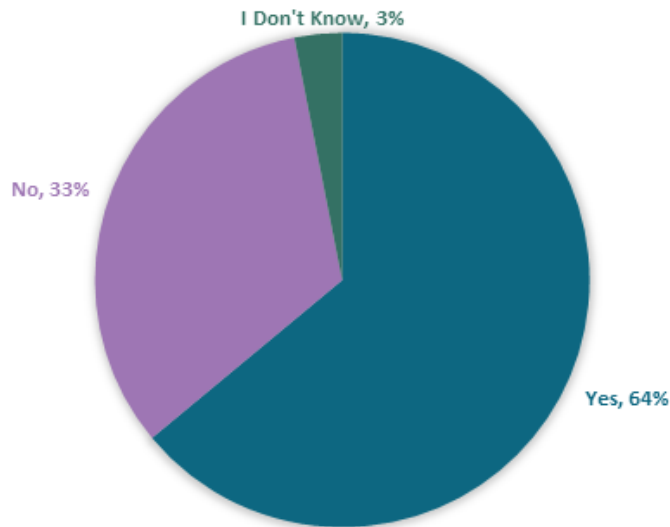
Overall, respondents are open to increased public transit use if key issues are resolved, suggesting targeted improvements could boost overall ridership and satisfaction.

ITC Area Activities and Amenities:

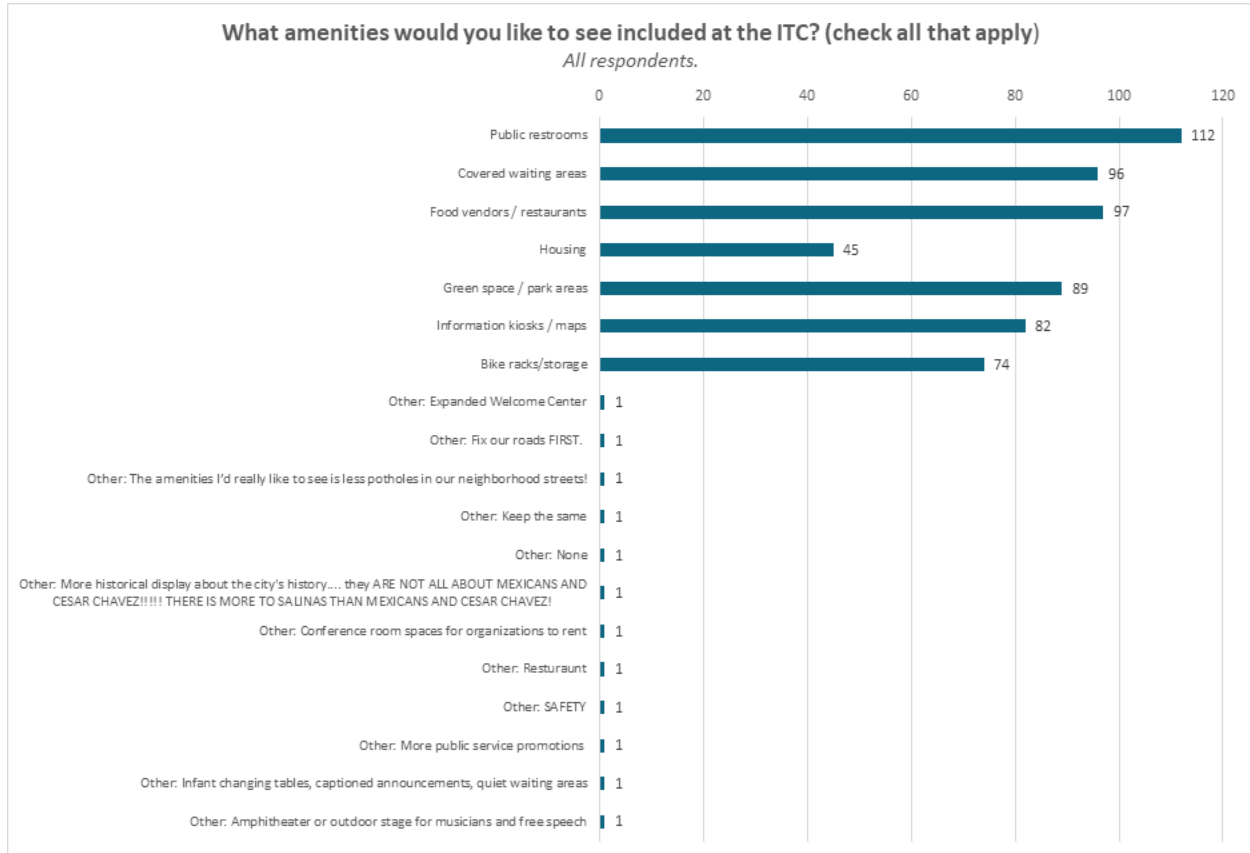
The majority of survey respondents (64%) are familiar with and have attended events or visited attractions in the ITC area, including the First Mayor's House, local museums, and the Amtrak/Greyhound station.

Have you ever visited any of the museums, attended an event, or other activity at the ITC?

All respondents.



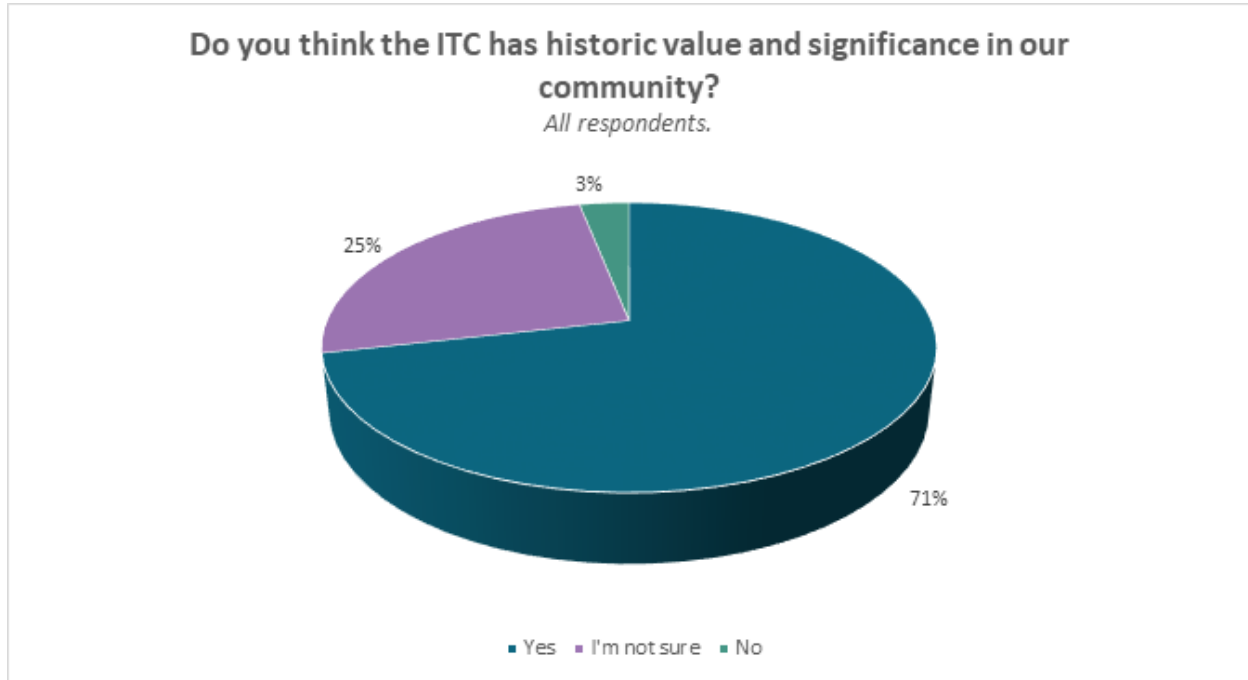
Respondents expressed strong support for practical improvements like public restrooms with infant changing tables (70%), covered waiting areas (60%), information kiosks (51%), and bike storage (46%). There was also considerable interest in adding food vendors and restaurants (60%), more green space and park improvements (55%), and holding community events such as farmers' markets (71%), concerts (62%), and seasonal celebrations (58%). Although only 28% supported housing development, the city would need to conduct additional outreach regarding the idea of housing in the ITC area to assure it is a viable option. Existing green spaces like the Bataan Memorial Park should be enhanced and better connected to the ITC through signage and safe crosswalks.



In summary, respondents support enhancing the ITC area with practical amenities, green space improvements, community events, and better utilizing public space.

Historical Significance and Heritage Preservation:

Respondents highlighted the importance of preserving historic buildings at the ITC, including the train station, Monterey and Salinas Valley Railroad Museum, First Mayor's House, and the Southern Pacific Freight Depot, where the California Welcome Center is located. These sites are seen as vital to Salinas' cultural and historical identity, especially its ties to the railroad and agriculture. Stakeholders want the ITCMP to balance historic preservation with improvements in safety, accessibility, transportation, and tourism transforming it into a vibrant, inclusive hub that reflects Salinas identity and supports community and economic growth.



Conclusions and Next Steps:

The survey findings show strong community interest in improving the ITC area by addressing key issues such as transportation connectivity, service frequency, safety, reduced fare prices, and accessibility.

Next steps include evaluation of California Welcome Center expansion, enhancing signage and branding of the ITC and developing engaging historical exhibits that foster community pride, provide educational opportunities, attract tourist, and boost the local economy.

Additional improvements to the ITC should include practical amenities such as restrooms, food vendors, green space, and community events. Expanding public transportation options and accessibility like train services to cities like Monterey and San Francisco is also a priority. Efforts should also focus on improving connections to bike lanes and walkable areas, and enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities, seniors, and children. Emphasizing safety around the ITC through cleanliness, security, and upkeep is also essential.

The City's professional services agreement with Harris and Associated ended December 31, 2024, before additional work on the existing conditions analysis could be completed. City staff will continue working on the existing conditions analysis and recommendations for a future ITC Master



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Plan, with the goal of having the existing conditions analysis and recommendations completed by the end of 2025.