

Final Report for

# Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Conceptual Plan

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Prepared for

Prepared by



Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)  
55 Plaza Circle  
Salinas, CA 93901



**Kimley»Horn**  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vast majority of jobs and housing in Monterey County are located in the City of Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula, and yet there are few transportation routes connecting these areas. The most travelled route is Highway 68, which suffers from peak congestion and barriers to roadway widening. The second most travelled route is Highway 1 via Imjin Parkway, Reservation Road and Blanco Road, which also experiences peak hour congestion. The Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan was developed in response to the need for a regional route through the former Fort Ord area that will increase roadway capacity by prioritizing high quality transit, bicycling and walking as viable alternatives to driving.

### Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan is to:

- Preserve a multi-jurisdictional corridor
- Plan for regional high quality transit
- Provide a regional bicycle route that will serve users of all ages and abilities
- Improve pedestrian safety, particularly in urban areas
- Identify improvements that will minimize impacts to the environment, sensitive habitat lands and prime agricultural lands
- Provide conceptual corridor designs
- Estimate the cost of implementation and identify potential sources of funding
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders and the community to shape future transportation options to meet their needs.

### Partner Agencies

The development of the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan was a collaborative effort of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County and several partner agencies:

- County of Monterey
- City of Salinas
- City of Marina
- Monterey-Salinas Transit
- Fort Ord Reuse Authority
- California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB); and,
- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments.

These agencies came together to develop criteria to achieve the plan goals, identify a preferred corridor alignment that would enhance their local transportation networks and determine the types of treatments that would make transit, bicycling and walking more attractive. These Partner Agencies will continue to work together to secure funding and implement the plan consistently across jurisdictional boundaries.

### Phase I: Preferred Alignment

The first phase of the planning process focused on determining a preferred corridor route based on an analysis of opportunities and constraints and input from stakeholders and the greater community.

The major opportunities and constraints identified include:

Constraints	Opportunities
Impacts to sensitive habitat lands through the former Fort Ord area	Urban areas with potential for transit-oriented development
Impacts to prime agricultural land	Popular regional destinations such as academic institutions, downtowns, and major employment centers
Impacts to CSUMB's campus core	Ability to fill gaps in existing bicycle and pedestrian networks
Cost of bridgework to cross the Salinas River	
Cost of widening Reservation Road Between East Garrison Road and South Davis Road	

Through the public engagement with partner agencies, interest groups and members of the community, the Transportation Agency formed a recommendation for a preferred corridor alignment (see Figure ES-1). The recommended corridor alignment begins at the proposed Monterey Branch Line Light Rail station at 8th Street, providing access to future transit and bicycle connections to Peninsula cities, and continues along 8th Street to 9th Street. From 9th Street the corridor continues up 2nd Avenue through the Dunes development area to Imjin Parkway. The corridor stays along Imjin Parkway to Reservation Road and down Reservation Road to East Garrison Drive. This route provides direct access to regional shopping and entertainment, academic institutions, health care, resources for veterans, and housing. To better serve the East Garrison development and avoid the costly curve on Reservation Road, the corridor turns down East Garrison Drive from Reservation Road. From East Garrison Drive the corridor heads east on Sherman Boulevard, down Sloat Street to Watkins Gate Road and back out to Reservation Road via Watkins Gate Road. From the East Garrison Development the corridor continues on Reservation Road to Davis Road. At the intersection of Davis Road and Blanco Road, the corridor shifts East on Blanco Road and accesses Salinas and the Intermodal Transit Center via W. Alisal Street and Lincoln Avenue.

Although Blanco Road is not a part of the long-term regional multimodal corridor, it is recommended that it serve as an interim multimodal corridor until the Reservation Road and South Davis Road sections are developed.

### Phase II: Conceptual Design

The second phase of the planning process was focused on developing the preferred conceptual roadway design features along the recommended corridor route. Enhanced transit, bicycle and pedestrian treatments were considered to provide attractive alternatives to driving.

**High Quality Transit** - The corridor will provide a high quality transit route designed to be competitive with the automobile. Between Marina and Salinas, high quality transit will take the form of bus service that arrives every 15 minutes, makes fewer stops, provides more amenities at bus stops, and serves popular destinations. Proposed features include transit priority at signalized intersections, bus-only lanes on 2nd Avenue and Imjin Parkway in Marina, a separate busway along Imjin Parkway between Imjin Road and Reservation Road, longer distance between stops, and transit stops with attractive amenities.

**Enhanced bicycle facilities** – To provide a safer and more comfortable connection between the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail on the coast and major population center Salinas, the corridor will provide enhanced bicycle facilities along the entire route. These enhanced bicycle facilities will offer physical barriers that provide more separation between fast-moving motor vehicles and bicyclists. The presence of both “on-road” and “off-road” facilities along the majority of the corridor will provide options for bicyclists of all ages, speeds and abilities. Proposed bicycle facilities include: bicycle lanes on Lincoln Avenue and buffered bicycle lanes along W. Alisal in Salinas, a two-way protected bicycle path connecting the East Garrison development and Salinas, and separated multiuse paths and buffered bicycle lanes in Marina.

**Safer Pedestrian Treatments** – Improved pedestrian facilities will provide safer access to and from high quality transit stops and support walking along the corridor. Proposed improvements include separate multiuse paths, sidewalks, lighting, and crossing enhancements such as bulb-outs and pedestrian refuge medians.

### Near-Term Actions

The Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan sets a long-term vision that will take decades to implement. Improvements will need to be made incrementally over time and as funding becomes available. However, there are several actions that can be taken in the near-term to jump-start projects along the corridor.

**Memorandum of Understanding** - a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed to signed by all Partner Agencies to memorialize the new alignment of the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor and provide conceptual assurance that the plan is supported by all Partner Agencies. This Memorandum of Understanding will replace all previous agreements referencing a multimodal corridor between Marina and Salinas through the former Fort Ord Area.

**Policy Amendments** - To assure that new development supports the corridor, local planning documents must be amended to reflect the preferred alignment, accommodate the proposed conceptual design and provide opportunities for transit-oriented development. These changes will constitute minor amendments to General Plans, Specific Plans and Zoning Codes and will likely require some level of environmental review.

**Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage** – The Transportation Agency has budgeted funds to develop a regional bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding plan and sign program. The Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor will be identified as a regional route in the Wayfinding Plan and appropriate signage will be designed.

**West Alisal Road Diet & Lincoln Avenue Improvements** – In 2014, the Transportation Agency awarded the City of Salinas Regional Surface Transportation Program funds to design the West Alisal Road Diet and Lincoln Avenue improvements consistent with the conceptual plans in the Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Plan and Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan. Design work will begin in Spring 2015.

**South Davis Road Bridge and Widening Project** – The County plans to widen South Davis Road (south of Blanco Road) from two to four lanes and construct a new bridge over the Salinas River. The County has included the proposed Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor conceptual designs for South Davis Road as an alternative in the environmental review documents for the project. Environmental review will conclude in summer 2015 and a preferred project alternative will be selected by the Board





of Supervisors. The Transportation Agency will support the project alternative that is consistent with the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor Plan.

**Coordination with Developments Under Construction** – The Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor passes through the Dunes development in Marina and the East Garrison development in the County. Both developers were consulted throughout the planning process to determine how to best incorporate multimodal features in the corridor. Minor modifications to designs will be required to accommodate the proposed Multimodal Corridor, these changes will be reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding and signed by the County of Monterey and City of Marina.

### Related Projects

Through the planning process, several projects came to light that have the potential to enhance the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor. Although the following projects and concepts could not be fully explored during the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor planning process, they merit further study:

**East Alisal Street Corridor Study** – The East Alisal corridor study will identify improvements for transit, bicycling and walking in one of the lowest income and highest transit ridership corridors in Monterey County. The City of Salinas has applied for a Caltrans planning grant to conduct this study.

**Highway 68 Corridor Study** –The Highway 68 Corridor study will evaluate current and future travel patterns between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula and the feasibility of State Route 68 improvements.

**Fort Ord Recreational Trail and Greenway** – The Fort Ord Recreation Trail and Greenway (FORTAG) proposes two connected regional loop trails totaling 28 miles, most of which is in the former Fort Ord area. These trails will improve access to recreational areas and open space from the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor.

**2nd Avenue Extension and Improvements** – The City of Marina plans to extend 2nd Avenue from Imjin Parkway north to Reindollar Avenue. The 2nd Avenue extension will provide a critical link for transit, bicyclists and pedestrians between the Multimodal Corridor and Downtown Marina. As the existing sections of 2nd Avenue develop, there are opportunities for

**Monterey Branch Line Busway** – Monterey-Salinas Transit is proposing to build an express busway adjacent to the railroad tracks in or along Highway 1 and the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way. The busway will connect to the Marina-Salinas Multimodal Corridor at 8th Street, providing unhindered bus travel from Marina to Downtown Monterey.

**Cal State University, Monterey Bay Master Plan Update** – The University is updating its campus master plan and supports improved transit, bicycle and pedestrian access plan. Parallel routes and access to the Multimodal Corridor can be an important feature of this update.

Figure ES-1: Preferred Alignment

