

Mayor Donaldson Report

Below is a summary of board meetings I attended:

**Transportation Agency for Monterey County
(TAMC)**



September 24, 2025

TAMC Board Receives Presentation on the Road Charge Pilot Program

The Transportation Agency's Board of Directors received a Caltrans presentation on the Road Charge Program. The program is one of the alternative funding mechanisms that allows drivers to support road and highway maintenance based upon how many miles they drive, instead of how many gallons of gas they use. Instead of paying the state's gas tax, which disproportionately impacts those who cannot afford more fuel-efficient vehicles, everyone would pay a per-mile fee for how much they use the road, regardless of what kind of car they drive.

In December 2023, the Legislative Analyst's Office released a report stating that the state's gas tax revenues are projected to drop by \$6 billion over the next decade. Senate Bill 339 (Wiener, Statutes of 2021) required the Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee to develop design recommendations for the Road Usage Charge pilot program that will test mileage-based revenue collection as an alternative to the gas tax system.

The Road Charge Program has completed several pilot programs to determine viability including the California's 2017 Road Charge Pilot Program, piloting more than 5,000 vehicles; the California Four Phase Demonstration, testing how road charge could work with usage-based insurance, ridesharing, electric vehicle charging stations, and autonomous vehicles; the Public/Private Roads Project, testing the ability of current GPS technology to differentiate when a car is driving on a public versus private road; and the Road Charge Collection Pilot, testing and evaluating issues with billings and payments of money to the State.

Lauren Prehoda, from the Caltrans Road Charge Program, reported that the analysis of the Road Charge Pilot Program is now underway with a final report to be released in 2026. A study session will be scheduled for the Board at a future date to discuss alternatives to the gas tax and the impacts on Monterey County residents.

Transportation Agency Will Request Construction Manager/General Contractor Delivery Method for the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor Project

The TAMC Board of Directors received a presentation on the complexity of the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor project due to the scale, environmental considerations, right-of-way constraints, and the need for phased implementation based on available funding for the project aimed at converting the corridor into a full freeway.

The eight-mile segment of US Highway 101 between Salinas and Chualar functions as an expressway with eleven at-grade intersections and two interchanges. These at-grade crossings pose significant safety risks, particularly for agricultural vehicles and local traffic attempting to cross or merge onto the highway. The corridor also experiences congestion due to a mix of local, regional, and interregional travel, and lacks adequate frontage roads to support safe and efficient local circulation.

Given these challenges, the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) delivery method was recommended over the traditional Design-Bid-Build approach. In the Design-Bid-Build model, the project is fully designed before a contractor is selected through a competitive bidding process. This linear structure limits the contractor's ability to provide input during design, often leading to unforeseen issues during construction, change orders, and delays. In contrast, CM/GC allows the construction manager and general contractor to be brought on board during the design phase. This early collaboration enables the team to identify and mitigate risks, optimize construction staging, and propose cost-saving innovations before construction begins.

Under CM/GC, Caltrans, as the project owner, will negotiate a guaranteed maximum price with the contractor prior to construction, providing greater cost certainty. The method also offers flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, such as shifts in funding availability or environmental permitting requirements. This is particularly important for a project like US 101 South of Salinas, which is expected to be delivered in phases and funded through a combination of state, federal, and local sources.

After a thorough discussion following the presentation, the Board agreed that the CM/GC method offers a more responsive and collaborative framework to ensure successful project delivery for the US 101 South of Salinas project and authorized the Transportation Agency's Executive Director to request that Caltrans use the Construction Manager/General Contractor delivery method for improvements in the US 101 South of Salinas Corridor project. Caltrans District 5 Director, Scott Eades, indicated that Caltrans would begin pursuing this delivery method for the project.

North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan & Participatory Budgeting

Project Update

TAMC staff provided an update on the North Monterey County Safe Routes to Schools Plan and Participatory Budgeting process.

The North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan is a collaborative effort led by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Monterey County Public Works, the Health Department, Ecology Action, and the Center for Community Advocacy.

Over a two-year planning process, the team identified barriers to safe access for ten public schools across North Monterey County, including Pajaro, Las Lomas, Prunedale, and Castroville, and developed recommendations for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements. These recommendations aim to reduce traffic congestion and promote healthier transportation options like walking, biking, carpooling, and bus use. Community engagement played a key role, with students, parents, and school staff participating in assessments, mapping, and surveys to highlight safety concerns.

Steering Committee members presented their recommendation for projects on North Monterey County Unified School District (NMCUSD) property to the district's Board of Directors on August 14, 2025, and their recommendation was approved by the Board. Steering Committee members will present their recommendations for projects that would be implemented by the County of Monterey to the Board of Supervisors on October 14, 2025. If the project list is approved by the Board of Supervisors, the funding agreements for both NMCUSD and the County of Monterey will be on the agenda at the October 22, 2025 TAMC Board meeting for consideration.

The North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan was funded through a \$665,092 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant and \$126,683 of Measure X Safe Routes to School Program funds. The projects selected through the Participatory Budgeting process are funded by \$781,500 in Regional Surface Transportation Program reserve funds and \$218,500 in Measure X Safe Routes to Schools funds, for a total of \$1 million.

Monterey One Water (M1W)



September 29, 2025

Special Acknowledgements

- Proclamation recognizing Stormwater Awareness Week, September 22-26, 2025

Informational Items

- Dave Ceppos presented on the Department of Water Resources Facilitation of Support Services (DWR FSS) assessment for the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP)
- Update on reconciliation process with Monterey County Water Resources Agency and Monterey One Water, presented by General Manager Ara Azhderian and Executive Officer Paul Sciuto
- Received Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Grants and Funding Update from Yohana Vargas
- Director Smith reported on his attendance at the 2025 California WaterReuse conference, September 21-23, 2025, where Monterey One Water received the Large Recycled Water Agency Award

Board Actions:

- Adopted Resolution 2025-14, revising records retention schedule, authorizing destruction of certain agency records and rescinding previous Resolution 2024-22.
- Approved a change order with Energy Link in the amount of \$118,784.86, associated with the Gardener Denver Gas Compressor Repair Contract.
- Approved an increase to the contract with Larry Walker Associates for NPDES services for the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply project in the not to exceed amount of \$280,376.00.
- Approved a contract amendment with MWH Constructors for a reduction of construction management services fee for the Injection Wells Phase 4 Project, in the not to exceed amount of \$500,000.
- Approved a contract amendment with MWH Constructors for additional construction management services for the Advanced Water Purification Facility Expansion Project in the not to exceed amount of \$748,331, plus a 5% contingency.
- Approved a Professional Services Agreement with RSI Security for Cybersecurity Plan Development and Implementation, as part of the state and local Cybersecurity Grant Program, in the not to exceed amount of \$176,475.
- Approved authorizing the Executive Officer to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Wildan Financial Services for a wastewater rate, capacity and comprehensive fee study and cost allocation plan, in the not to exceed amount of \$137,180.
- Adopted Resolution No. 2025-15, approving the statement of investment policy, delegation of investment authority to the Director of Finance/Treasurer and investment strategy and benchmark.
- Adopted Resolution No. 2025-16, authorizing an update to the procurement policy solicitation threshold

Kim Shirley's Council Report for Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Friday, September 19th- ReGen Monterey Board Meeting- Although ReGen has a lot of projects going on right now, only one item was ready to be covered during this board meeting. After passing the consent agenda, our discussion focused on adopting the revised "Guiding Principles" that had been discussed at a previous board meeting. The changes weren't substantial. The biggest edit was within the "Rate Policies" portion, where it's noted that ReGen would aspire to have 80% of operating costs funded by member agency tip fees and 20% covered by non-member waste contracts (the previous draft was shooting for 100% covered by member agencies). It was also noted that we'd make efforts to negotiate out-of-district contract rates that were comparable to member agency rates.

Overall, with over 100 years left of our landfill life, we're still well within the "greater than 75 years of capacity" where we can make our landfill space available to external parties. As a reminder, once we have 50-75 years of capacity, then we limit our disposal services only to Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, and SLO county customers. At that stage, we'd also start to pursue options for future landfill capacity, including onsite expansions or new disposal site identification. Once we're at 50 years or less, then the landfill is only for member agencies.

Saturday, September 20th- California Coastal Clean Up Day- Thank you to Sustainable Del Rey Oaks, who collaborated with Sustainable Seaside and Seaside High School to staff a table at the beach at the end of Canyon Del Rey. My husband, Kevin Raskoff, also joined in by bringing grabbers, buckets, and students from his Environmental Club at Monterey Peninsula College. After wandering for a couple of hours, Kevin and I picked up almost 20 pounds of trash, including hundreds of cigarette butts (I mainly walked the street and the parking lots near the beach). It felt great knowing we were preventing this trash from washing into the ocean, but my hard work actually paid off in dollars, when I found the "trashure" box that had been hidden under one of the bushes (it was so cute, I just had to open it...forgetting that it could be a possible prize). I ended up with a \$50 Visa card that I used to take Kevin to lunch, so it really turned out to be a lovely volunteer gig.

Tuesday, September 23rd- City Council Meeting- We started off our meeting with a few public comments. The first was from Patrice Vecchione, who spoke about her newspaper editorial that criticized the city's response to the request from the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) to care for the plant reserve, which contains the endangered plant Seaside's Bird's-Beak. After much delay, the city denied CNPS the ability to pull invasive plants that could harm the endangered plant. Patrice also spoke about the trees that were cut down on public property behind her house and how upsetting it was to see these large trees taken down without any warning or explanation. She explained that these two

instances showed a lack of regard for both residences and our land. Her comments have led me to follow up on both of these topics.

Additionally, we had Cecilia Carrasco and Helen Birdsong, both residents at The Oaks, talk about the importance of our no-smoking in multi-unit housing ordinance. They talked about the rise in their insurance costs and becoming a firewise community. Unfortunately, they also shared that they're having a difficult time with one condo owner who has received many complaints for continuing to smoke. Their HOA has been following the protocol in issuing letters and reaching out to support this owner with information on quitting smoking. They're additionally looking to the city to help with enforcement or even to help educate, but no one had returned their calls. These comments have also led me to follow up on this issue.

Our last public comment was from Gary Kreeger, who, upon noticing that Blue Pearl Veterinary was no longer in Stone Creek, felt that it was time for the city to look at a vacancy tax or find some way to encourage businesses to fill these empty spaces in the Stone Creek shopping center. He also mentioned that the way the city handled the CNPS situation made the city look bad.

Our one discussion topic for the night was discussing the possibility of a new memorial bench policy. Our city manager had given us some suggestions based on policies from other cities, mainly Pacific Grove. We talked about charging a fee so that the city wouldn't incur any additional costs. The city would also decide on the placement and final approval of the language on the bench plaque. Overall, the entire council was happy with this idea and directed staff to create a policy to bring back at a later date.

Tuesday, September 30th- "Beyond the Bridge: A Solution to Homelessness"

Screening and Panel Discussion- I attended this movie screening, which showed the work of two guys (Don Sawyer-Producer/Director and Tim Hashko-Cinematographer/Editor- <https://asolutiontohomelessness.com/>) who set out to see if they could find a solution to homelessness that could be replicated in areas across the country. And (spoiler alert), they did! Turns out, when you bring all the stakeholders to the table (really everyone- government on all levels, businesses, non-profits, educators, etc.) and have them collaborate to implement a housing first approach that provides permanent housing with services, that treat unsheltered people as people, you can find success! Milwaukee and Houston were two cities that had found at least an 80-90% success rate in moving people off the streets. This really was an inspirational movie, and the panel discussion afterward gave us examples and ideas for how this might be implemented in Monterey County. I know Del Rey Oaks doesn't have a lot of resources or space to help with this situation, but it did make me even more interested in going back to our Housing Element and looking at our programs, making sure we're implementing everything we can to help solve the crisis of housing. Thanks go to the Community

Foundation for Monterey County and Dorothy's Place for sponsoring this event. Thank you for shining a light on this important topic!

Wednesday, October 1st- ReGen Monterey Financial Committee- Besides the usual consent agenda, we only had one big discussion topic that took up our entire meeting, and that was the topic of our landfill gas and how best to utilize it.

Since the 90's we've been taking our landfill gas and converting it into electricity, which fueled all of our electricity needs and provided extra that we'd feed back to PG&E. A couple of years ago, we collaborated with M1Water and engaged in a feasibility study to look at our resources and how best to use them. Turns out, taking our methane gas and converting it to renewable natural gas and feeding it into a pipeline would be much more profitable than creating electricity. Given that we realized our ability to partner with M1W was limited, we decided to move forward with a second feasibility study to analyze how best to use our landfill gas.

Currently, the consultant is looking at three scenarios. The first would be converting all of our landfill gas to electricity. The second would be to convert all of our landfill gas to renewable natural gas and have ReGen pay for all the infrastructure needed for that transition. The third scenario is to convert all of our gas to renewable natural gas, but use a contract with a developer who pays for the infrastructure. In reality, it's not going to be any of these scenarios, but some hybrid version that allows us flexibility, resilience, doesn't break the bank, yet provides a much higher return on our almost limitless methane gas. It really is a fascinating discussion (so many variables to think about!), and I appreciated the staff bringing us in on this topic early so we can begin to understand our next steps (more research) before it comes back to the board.

Wednesday, October 1st- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Meeting- This was not a long meeting, but we accomplished a lot. The first new business item was approving our budget for the next fiscal year. We have a budget committee that approves these budgets first, so there wasn't much discussion. Probably the biggest change was approving an increase in our administrative cost so we could make sure to have enough to cover the training and additional hours for our new administrative officer that we'll be hiring in November.

The second item was approving the replenishment assessment costs for 2026. This is basically how much we would charge a producer for overproduction of water. To come up with a cost, we take into consideration the cost of all of the sources and potential sources of water that go or would go into our basin and divide by the total acre-feet/year that those sources would provide. Interestingly, we calculate desalination water even though that's not part of our current water portfolio. Cal Am wasn't able to give us a current estimated cost, so we went off the older 2021 cost of \$6,147/acre-foot (AF). That is at least 1/3 more

expensive than our other sources, and I can only imagine how much that price will have risen since 2021.

Our last big item for the day was approving our final draft of our Seawater Intrusion Response Plan. I was pleased with the edits that they brought back to the board. The plan is clearer and conveys the urgency we'd need if we indeed had to declare our basin as seawater intruded. Given that Part 1 of the Plan needs to be executed prior to any seawater intrusion declaration, we'll no doubt be talking about this more next year when we begin to execute the steps to look at wells that have the greatest risk after we finish our basin modeling.

Thursday, October 2nd- Pure Water Monterey Expansion Ribbon Cutting- I was honored to attend this historic event as Monterey One Water celebrated the completion of the expansion portion of Pure Water Monterey. This project, which takes wastewater from four sources (municipal wastewater, ag drainage water, food industry processing water, and stormwater), treats it for discharge, but instead of discharging it, cleans it further so it can be injected and stored in the Seaside Groundwater Basin. This additional water will provide Cal-Am water users with the additional water they've been seeking, which will hopefully allow the Cease and Desist order from the State to be removed. It's been a long road to get to this place, so the joy was palpable! The super fun flash mob, which erupted during the presentations, also helped (my first!). Monterey One Water does know how to celebrate!

Wednesday, October 8th- Seaside Basin Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee- Today's meeting did not cover big topics of discussion. Essentially, we approved the initial request for services for our various hydrogeologic consultants that we'll need as we begin 2026. We also received an update on the work towards a Seaside Basin Groundwater model. Our consultant has been working with the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency as they develop a larger regional model and a seawater intrusion model. The assumption is that with this work, they'll be able to provide our basin with some information that could be used as we develop our own model for our basin. With that, we should be getting an update on model recommendations sometime in early to mid-2026. Lastly, we received an update on the geophysical imaging work that was done near the sentinel well #4, which is the well where we've seen increased conductivity, which could be an indication of seawater intrusion. They had only preliminary conclusions, which show there may be an indication of seawater intrusion in the area, but it did not show any indications of intrusion to the east of that location. We'll be getting their final report at our December meeting, along with our usual annual Seawater Intrusion report, so stay tuned!

Monday, October 13th- Monterey-Salinas Transit Board Meeting- Please see the MST board highlights in our agenda packet.

**Council Report from Councilmember John Uy
October 28, 2025 Meeting**

I. Council Report: Pilipino-American Solidarity Association (PASA) Picnic in Del Rey Oaks on September 13, 2025

I had the honor of joining neighbors, families, and friends at the PASA Picnic in Del Rey Park last September 13, 2025, in Del Rey Oaks, CA. It was a joyful celebration of the Filipino-American community and a reminder of what makes Del Rey Oaks such a special place: we show up for each other, we learn from one another, and we make room for everyone at the table.



From the first hello to the last goodbye, the park was alive with the sights, sounds, and flavors of culture and community. The spread of Filipino-American food was both delicious and welcoming, shared family-style, just the way community should be. Laughter carried across the lawn as kids and adults jumped into Pinoy games and friendly contests, creating new memories and friendships along the way.

What stood out most to me wasn't any single activity, but the spirit of the day: hospitality, gratitude, and pride. Our diversity is one of Del Rey Oaks' greatest strengths. When we gather like this, when we share stories, recipes, and traditions, we build a city where everyone feels seen and valued. Events like the PASA Picnic are more than festivities. They are living lessons in belonging.



I want to thank PASA for organizing an inclusive and family-friendly celebration, and to acknowledge the many volunteers, community partners, and neighbors who gave their time, talent, and resources to make it possible. Your efforts turned a beautiful Saturday into something meaningful for our whole city.



As your council member, I remain committed to supporting community-led events that bring us together, strengthen our connections, and showcase the rich tapestry of cultures that call Del Rey Oaks home. Together, let's keep building a welcoming Del Rey Oaks where every neighbor belongs and every tradition has a place to shine.

II. Council Report: AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting – October 8, 2025

The AMBAG meeting on October 8th was canceled in advance, not at the last minute. The AMBAG office routed attendance ahead of time and confirmed that, with many elected officials traveling to the League of California Cities conference in the Los Angeles area, the Board would not reach a legal quorum. Calling the meeting off early was the right move. Thank you to AMBAG staff for responsibly forecasting attendance and avoiding a hollow meeting, and to residents for staying engaged. Professional development, like the League conference, helps local leaders bring back tools and partnerships. Pairing that with strict open-meeting compliance is how we protect the integrity of our regional decisions.



I'm proud to represent Del Rey Oaks at the AMBAG table.

III. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD) Board of Directors – October 14, 2025



Our SCSD meeting last October 14, 2025, was about the basics that matter most to every household and business in Seaside, Sand City, and Del Rey Oaks: **reliable sewer service, strong prevention, and careful stewardship** of your dollars. Here’s what we advanced and why it matters to you.

What we acted on

- **Kept operations steady and safe.** We received the September Operations Report showing **no sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs)**, continued proactive jetting/video work, and mapped flushing to reduce risk across the system. That’s quiet success—the kind you should expect from essential infrastructure.
- **Protected pipes before problems happen.** We received our **Quarterly Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) inspection report**. Staff inspected dozens of food-service establishments; where grease levels exceeded the standard, education and quick re-inspections were scheduled. Prevention beats cleanup—every time.
- **Funded the work responsibly.** We approved the April–June 2025 expenditures and a **drawdown of \$765,118.70**—routine, transparent funding to cover already-incurred costs for maintenance, safety, and service delivery.
- **Accelerated field responsiveness.** We adopted a resolution to **award the 2025 General Engineering On-Call contracts (not-to-exceed \$1,000,000 annually)** to three qualified contractors, with the District Engineer authorized to issue task orders. This lets us move fast on repairs and spot projects without sacrificing competitive pricing or oversight.

Why this matters on your block

- **Fewer emergencies, faster fixes.** On-call contracts mean we don’t wait weeks to mobilize a crew when a line fails or a manhole needs work.
- **Clean streets, healthy creeks.** Ongoing flushing, inspections, and FOG enforcement keep wastewater where it belongs—in the pipes—not in our neighborhoods or waterways.
- **Predictable, transparent finances.** Routine approvals and clear reporting keep the District stable and accountable, which helps avoid costly surprises.

Gratitude and standards

Thank you to our District team for disciplined maintenance and to local businesses cooperating with FOG best practices. As Chair, I'm holding us to three standards: **prevention first, response without delay, and full transparency** in how we spend every dollar.

I'm honored to serve as your Chair. Our commitment is simple: **quiet, reliable service you don't have to think about because we do.**
