

2017

ANNUAL REPORT

MST TURNS

45



MST

MONTEREY-SALINAS TRANSIT

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MISSION

Advocating and delivering quality public transportation as a leader within our community and industry.

GENERAL MANAGER'S

MESSAGE

As we step into 2018, I would like to take a moment to share the accomplishments achieved by Monterey-Salinas Transit during the past year. In addition to providing safe, dependable, and affordable transportation services to the residents and visitors of Monterey County, we have taken great strides in making public transit in the Monterey Bay region more accessible and attractive.



This year we kicked off MST RealTime, a suite of high-tech tools that allow MST customers to plan trips and track the location of their next bus by voice, text, smartphone app, or Google Maps. We used our share of California Climate Investment Grant funds to provide free transit on weekends and holidays throughout the City of Salinas. Notably, we also began a partnership with Monterey-based Community Human Services to create a Safe Place within all MST buses and facilities. This helps at-risk youth and young adults receive shelter and services when needed.

A host of new mobility services funded by Measure Q were implemented during the year including lower fares for community members with disabilities who utilize the MST RIDES program, lower cost and more frequent trips to out-of-area medical facilities, taxi vouchers for veterans, and a new transit route to serve the recently opened Veterans Administration/Department of Defense Health Clinic.

The new year brings with it a new set of opportunities and challenges. In 2018, we look forward to moving into our new, upgraded operations and maintenance facility in Ryan Ranch, operating new all-electric buses in Salinas, and implementing even more services for veterans, seniors, and persons with disabilities with the help of Measure Q funds.

Rest assured, the hard-working men and women of Monterey-Salinas Transit will continue striving to provide the very best mobility and public transit services to Monterey County.

Carl Sedoryk
MST General Manager and CEO

MST UNVEILS CONVENIENT REALTIME TOOLS

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) is making transit more convenient and boosting customer satisfaction with a new suite of technological tools.

With MST RealTime, passengers can quickly and easily access stop-specific bus schedules by text, telephone, smartphone app, or online map. While the agency has had global positioning system (GPS) capabilities for 15 years, a recent system upgrade means it can now share that information with its customers. New phone and text options also extend up-to-the-minute information to individuals without smartphones, tablets, or computers.

Passengers using MST's RealTime tools spend less time waiting for buses, and that makes public transportation more attractive for daily use. In fact, 92 percent of riders report increased satisfaction with transit in regions that have electronically-accessible arrival information.



HOW IT WORKS

MST buses are equipped with GPS devices that share location details with the agency's vehicle tracking system. When a passenger requests arrival times, MST's systems draw on that GPS data. And, as buses reach stops along the route, these technological tools can predict whether vehicles will reach future stops early, on time, or behind schedule.

MST maintains an outstanding performance record, with more than 90 percent of its vehicles arriving within five minutes of scheduled times. While passengers should still arrive at stops at least five minutes before scheduled departures, real-time information takes the guesswork out of local travel—especially when factors like road construction cause unexpected traffic delays.

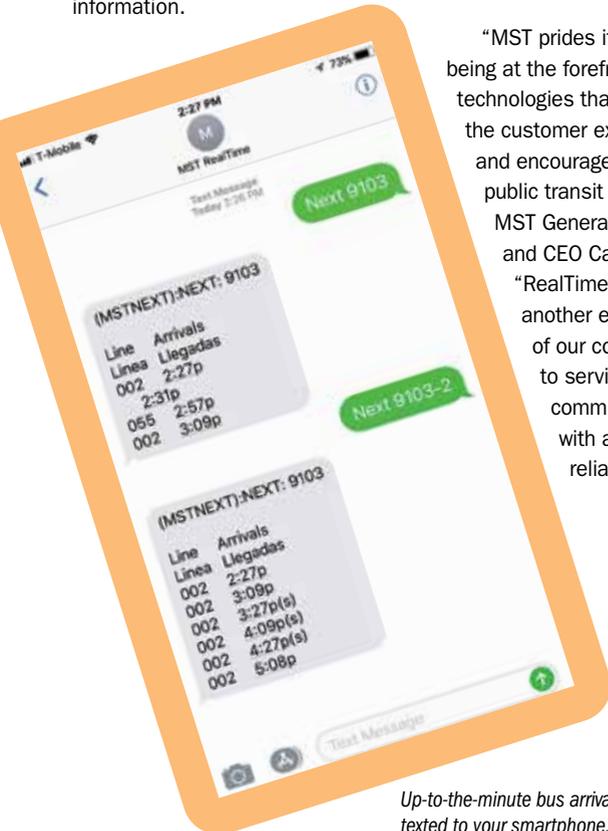
ON-THE-GO OPTIONS

MST RealTime enables passengers to access information in four convenient ways:

- 1) **TEXT** – To receive arrival information, passengers can text “Next” plus the four-digit code for their preferred stop to the number 25370. Adding a hyphen and specific line number after the stop code produces arrivals for that particular route. For example, texting “Next 9103-2” generates the next five to six estimated Line 2 arrivals at bus stop 9103.
- 2) **PHONE** – After a toll-free call to 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871), English and Spanish speakers simply follow the prompts to enter their stop number and receive arrival information. Passengers can also request departures scheduled later in the day, and assistance is available for passengers lacking their four-digit stop number.
- 3) **TRANSIT APP** – By downloading and installing the free, user-friendly Transit App, customers can plan trips, track arrival times, and set alerts reminding them to head to a stop when a bus is near.
- 4) **GOOGLE MAPS** – MST vehicle locations sync with mobile and desktop trip-planning tools available through Google Maps, making it easy to outline and compare route options.

Continued

“MST prides itself on being at the forefront of new technologies that enhance the customer experience and encourage continued public transit use,” says MST General Manager and CEO Carl Sedoryk. “RealTime is yet another example of our commitment to serving the community with advanced, reliable tools.”



*Up-to-the-minute bus arrival times
texted to your smartphone.*

MST UNVEILS CONVENIENT REALTIME TOOLS (CONT.)

ENHANCED RESOURCES

MST has invested in 40 solar-powered electric signs that share arrival information at its busiest stops, similar to some already in use. The agency also installed round RealTime signs at approximately 640 stops. Each provides a unique four-digit stop number and details on accessing arrival information. Stops without signs have stickers displaying the four-digit stop number.

A RealTime link at mst.org takes users to route lists with bus stop numbers, and passengers can also obtain those by calling MST customer service.

“OUR GOAL IS TO EMPOWER RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WHO CHOOSE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, AND HELP PASSENGERS FEEL MORE CONFIDENT AS THEY NAVIGATE TRANSIT OPTIONS.”

—Carl Sedoryk,
MST General Manager and CEO



SPREADING THE WORD

To promote its RealTime services, MST launched a campaign coinciding with the 2017 back-to-school season. MST shared information through targeted online advertisements, social media, television commercials, and English and Spanish radio ads. The agency ran a full-page *Monterey County Weekly* advertisement, and the newspaper also wrote about the Transit App and its features. In addition to spotlighting RealTime through its website and on-vehicle ads, MST published an informative brochure and made it available on buses and at customer information centers.

“Our goal is to empower residents and visitors who choose public transportation, and help passengers feel more confident as they navigate transit options,” Sedoryk says. “By providing clear, detailed information, we make the MST experience more welcoming and comfortable.”



Salinas-area MST passengers are enjoying free weekend fares through August 2018 thanks to California Climate Investment (formerly cap-and-trade) grant funding.

Support for the agency's "Ride the 40s on Us" initiative comes through the state's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, which offers operating and capital assistance for campaigns that cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility for disadvantaged communities. Past grants have funded MST vehicle purchases, including a new all-electric bus and route.

In addition to filling seats on weekends, when route demand is typically lower, the innovative program rewards loyal riders like Line 49 passenger William Pierce.

"It goes where I need to go and it's free!" he says.

MST Director of Planning and Marketing Lisa Rheinheimer reports a ridership increase on the "Ride the 40s" routes since the promotion started in September. She attributes the rise to both existing patrons and new passengers.

"Free fares give people who haven't tried public transit an easy way to start," she says.

MST's free "Ride the 40s on Us" fares are available for weekend and holiday trips on Lines 41, 42, 44, 45, and 49 through August 31, 2018. The free weekend and holiday fare also applies to MST RIDES ADA paratransit passengers who begin and end their trips within Salinas city limits.



"FREE FARES GIVE PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T TRIED PUBLIC TRANSIT AN EASY WAY TO START."

—Lisa Rheinheimer,

MST Director of Planning and Marketing

At-risk youth across Monterey County can access housing, food, counseling, and other resources through a new partnership between MST and Monterey-based Community Human Services, which administers the area's national Safe Place program.



Locally, Safe Place serves nearly 350 run-away and homeless young people each year, providing alternatives to individuals who might be vulnerable to violence, substance abuse, human trafficking, and other issues. Since June, MST buses and trolleys have served as mobile Safe Place sites—meaning that youth in crisis can request assistance from trained transit staff members who then connect them to Safe Place professionals and shelter, 24 hours a day.

The program is an extension of MST's commitment to passenger safety, and the agency is informing passengers of the new Safe Place partnership with decals on each bus, at customer service centers, and through interior bus advertisements. One 23-year-old in Salinas has already accessed Safe Place assistance through an MST driver.

"We are excited to be working with MST to expand our outreach efforts. This project will no doubt result in getting more vulnerable youth off the streets, and for that, we're very grateful to MST," says Robin McCrae, CEO of Community Human Services.

CaliforniaTransit
Association

OUR VERY OWN
CARL SEDORYK,
GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO,
ASSUMES A TWO-YEAR
LEADERSHIP ROLE AS
**CALIFORNIA
TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION CHAIR.**



RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

As transit agencies nationwide struggle to recruit and retain qualified coach operators, MST has launched a robust campaign to fill open driving positions across its nearly 300-square-mile service area.

“At a time of low unemployment, and with drivers retiring or moving to other regions, it’s increasingly challenging to find qualified candidates,” explains MST Assistant General Manager Hunter Harvath. “Monterey-Salinas Transit has been receiving state funds to expand public transit services that benefit the environment and better serve our community, but we simply don’t have the employees to add new routes.”

Kelly Halcon, MST Director of Human Resources/Risk Management, says that recruiting becomes an industry-wide challenge whenever the economy gains momentum. The issue is compounded if applicants fall short on basic requirements related to skills, service, and natural instincts.

“We have a keen focus on safety, and we test candidates for customer service skills early in the application process as well,” Halcon says. “We examine driving records, conduct background checks, and complete other assessments to determine which individuals would be the best fit for the position.”

In recent months, MST has reached out to a wider pool of potential applicants through partnerships with local economic development agencies and Monterey County’s One-Stop Career Centers. The agency holds job fairs with on-site testing opportunities and encourages current transit employees to refer qualified candidates. MST distributes job-related press releases and shares information through various social media channels, too, and links on the MST website provide at-a-glance information on open positions. Announcements on and inside of MST buses advertise job oppor-

“MONTEREY-SALINAS TRANSIT HAS BEEN RECEIVING STATE FUNDS TO EXPAND PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES THAT BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT AND BETTER SERVE OUR COMMUNITY, BUT WE SIMPLY DON’T HAVE THE EMPLOYEES TO ADD NEW ROUTES.”

—Hunter Harvath, **MST Assistant General Manager**

tunities, and destination signs periodically display “MST is Hiring” messages as buses travel throughout the region.

This spring, the agency also revitalized a popular 1993 television commercial originally designed to attract new riders. The catchy “Ride the Bus” campaign was updated to share a “Drive the Bus” message that features current MST employees.

“The commercial is still available on MST’s YouTube channel. It definitely generated social media shares and sparked conversations in the community,” says Halcon.

To simplify the application process and attract younger, internet-savvy candidates, she and her team have added an online application option for job seekers. She’s also been sharing stories about MST’s dedicated, engaged employees. The average length of service for MST drivers is 15 years, and the agency’s senior driver has been with the agency for nearly four decades.

“She started with us in 1979, and she has supported herself and her family through a career with MST,” Halcon says. “These are good jobs with solid, stable wages and opportunities for overtime, plus medical coverage, retirement benefits, two months of paid training, and other incentives. There’s no previous commercial driving training or experience required. All someone has to do is apply.”



SOUTH MONTEREY COUNTY

MILESTONES

MST celebrated 15 years of South Monterey County service by providing free Line 23 bus rides on May 4, 2017. The daylong promotion welcomed passengers between King City and Salinas, including stops in Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, and Chualar. MST team members also handed out gifts and awarded free monthly passes to a number of individuals at the Gonzales Shopping Center stop.

Gonzales Mayor Maria Orozco was pleased to include her city in the MST celebration.

“We’re happy to have MST be part of our community. Public transportation is important for those who don’t have a car, or don’t want to drive. There are a lot more services than before on how to get around with MST,” she says.

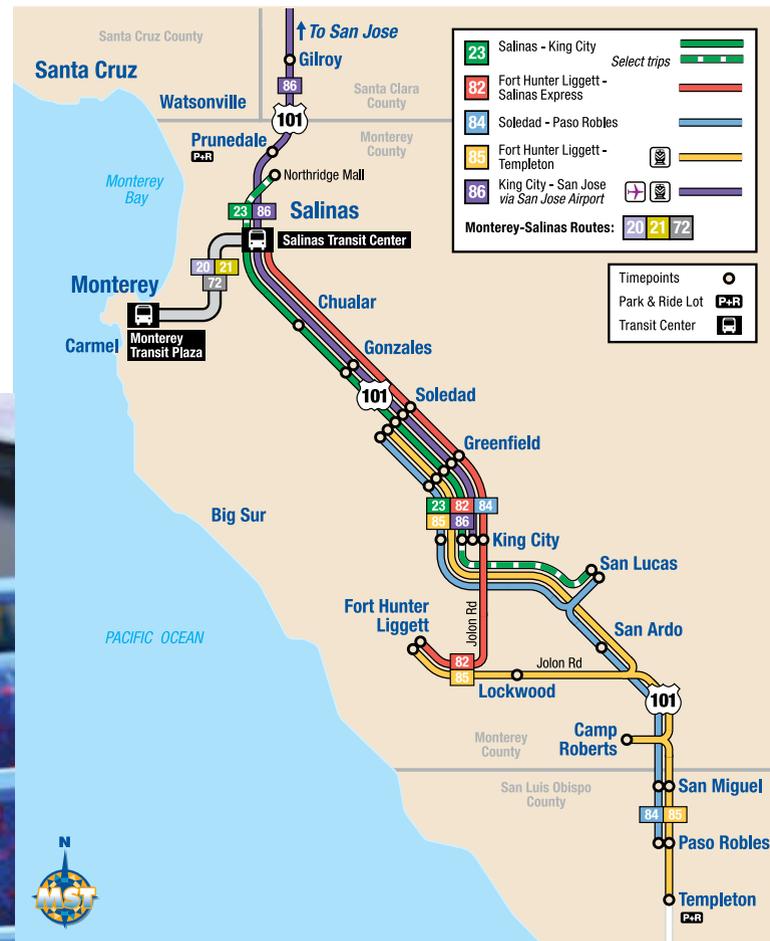
MST recently used a \$100,000 U.S. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program grant to study rural Monterey County service and promote routes through a targeted marketing campaign. The agency’s five South County lines currently serve the US 101 corridor between Templeton, in San Luis Obispo County, and San Jose, in Santa Clara County. Stops along the way include Paso Robles, San Miguel, Camp Roberts, San Ardo, San Lucas, King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, Chualar, Salinas, Prunedale, and Gilroy.

More than 2 million passengers have used MST’s South County buses since Line 23’s inception in 2002, which represents an average of more than 400 single-occupancy vehicles removed from Highway 101 each day.



“PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS IMPORTANT FOR THOSE WHO DON’T HAVE A CAR, OR DON’T WANT TO DRIVE. THERE ARE A LOT MORE SERVICES THAN BEFORE ON HOW TO GET AROUND WITH MST.”

— Maria Orozco, Mayor of Gonzales



MEASURE Q

UPDATES

In 2014, Monterey County voters overwhelmingly approved a 15-year, 1/8-cent local sales tax to expand essential transit services for seniors, veterans, and people living with disabilities. These Measure Q funds have supported several vital programs in recent months.



RIDES

Passengers who use MST's RIDES ADA paratransit services now pay the same fares as fixed-route customers, which represents a 50 percent reduction from the former cost per trip. Since the fare adjustment, MST has recorded a 15 percent increase in ridership.

SPECIAL MEDICAL TRIPS

MST has cut fares in half for its Special Medical Trips. The agency also doubled the number of days per month this service is available. In addition to the original pick up point at the Salinas Transit Center, upon request, MST will pick up residents in the communities of King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, and Chualar and transport them to medical facilities in San Francisco and the San Jose metro area.

LINE 61—MST'S FIRST "VETERANS SHUTTLE"

After polling veterans about the services they need most, MST created Line 61. The route links neighborhoods in Salinas and Marina with the new Major General William H. Gourley VA-DoD Clinic on the former Fort Ord, along with the Veterans Transition Center, Preston and Abrams park housing areas, The Dunes Shopping Center, and County of Monterey Integrated Health Care Services facilities.

VETERANS' TAXI VOUCHERS

Veterans can now acquire flexible, affordable taxi vouchers from local veterans services organizations. With the voucher, veterans pay a \$3 copay for each one-way personal taxi trip with a meter reading of up to \$17. MST covers the remaining costs.

FREE BUS PASSES FOR VETERANS

MST has partnered with esteemed veteran services organizations to nominate veterans in need of transportation assistance to receive free bus passes.

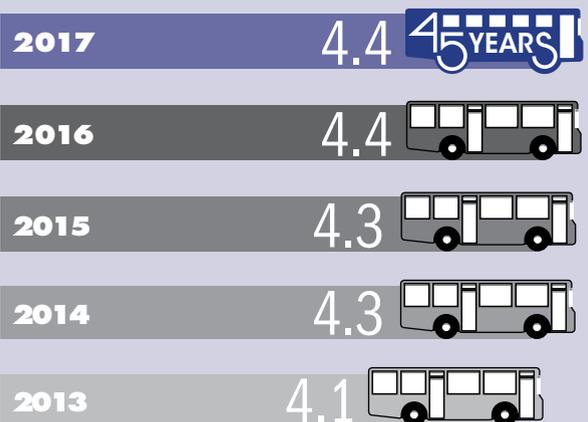
"WITH THESE MEASURE Q FUNDS, MST HAS EXPANDED VITAL SERVICES WHILE REDUCING FARES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO FACE UNIQUE CHALLENGES. SINCE MANY OF THESE PASSENGERS LIVE ON FIXED INCOMES, THE PROGRAMS HAVE AN ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL IMPACT ON THEIR MONTHLY BUDGETS AND THEIR DAILY LIVES."

—Cristy Sugabo,
Mobility Manager



2017 MST RIDERSHIP

Total Number of Passenger Boardings Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 (in Millions)



On April 28, 2017, California Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 1 (SB1), a landmark funding package that represents the biggest new state commitment to public transit in 40 years. SB1 will provide more than \$700 million to California's transit systems through gas taxes adjusted for inflation, enabling agencies to expand service, cut fares, replace vehicles, and decrease environmental impacts by enticing more drivers to park personal vehicles and use public transportation.

“We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make significant investments in transportation and mobility projects that have been neglected and underfunded over the last 20 years,” says MST General Manager and CEO Carl Sedoryk.

These new projects, paid for by SB1, will improve the health and safety of millions of Californians who depend on public transportation. Specifically, MST will be able to fund modernization projects including more zero-emission buses, upgraded facilities, and new transit services.

Unfortunately, there are well-funded efforts underway to qualify a ballot measure for November 2018 to repeal this new law that provides funding for these projects. MST is actively working with the state's other transit providers to protect these vital transit funds.

“Unless rejected, the repeal of SB1 will rob our local communities of the critical funding we desperately need to fix our roads, improve our transit services and facilities, and improve the quality of life throughout Monterey County,” says Sedoryk.

“WE HAVE A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS IN TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED AND UNDERFUNDED OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS.”

— Carl Sedoryk, **MST General Manager and CEO**



KEVIN ALLSHOUSE began his career at MST as a mobility specialist in June 2011. He was instrumental in establishing the MST Navigator program in 2011 while providing travel training to individuals with disabilities.



In addition to receiving multiple attendance and safety awards, Kevin has successfully administered the Accessible Taxi Lease and the Taxi Voucher programs for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. He also provides administrative support to MST's Mobility Advisory Committee.

In late 2016 and early 2017, Kevin was instrumental in establishing the Taxi ADA Certification Training (TACT) program, which provides training to local taxi cab drivers on Department of Transportation ADA service criteria requirements. Since the inception of that program, more than 70 local taxi drivers have received their TACT certification, which has improved the overall taxi services for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and veterans within our community. Kevin continues to administer the TACT program to ensure that driver certifications remain current and that all TACT-certified drivers continue to comply with MST's taxi voucher program rules and regulations.

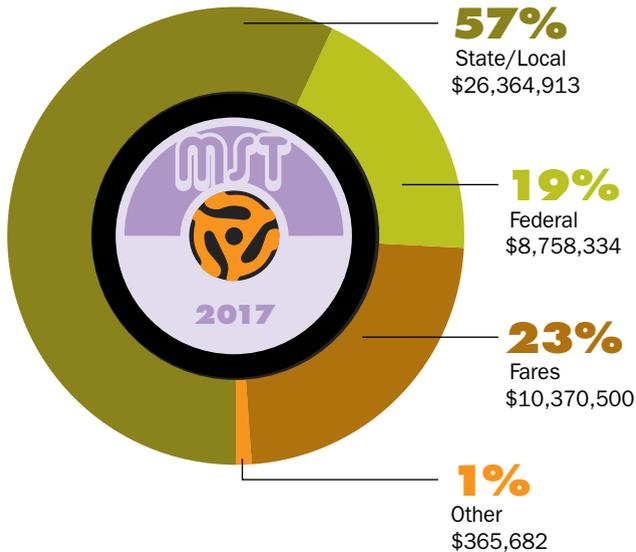
We are pleased to recognize Kevin for his excellent performance and his dedication to those who depend upon MST for safe, friendly, and reliable transportation services.

2017 EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

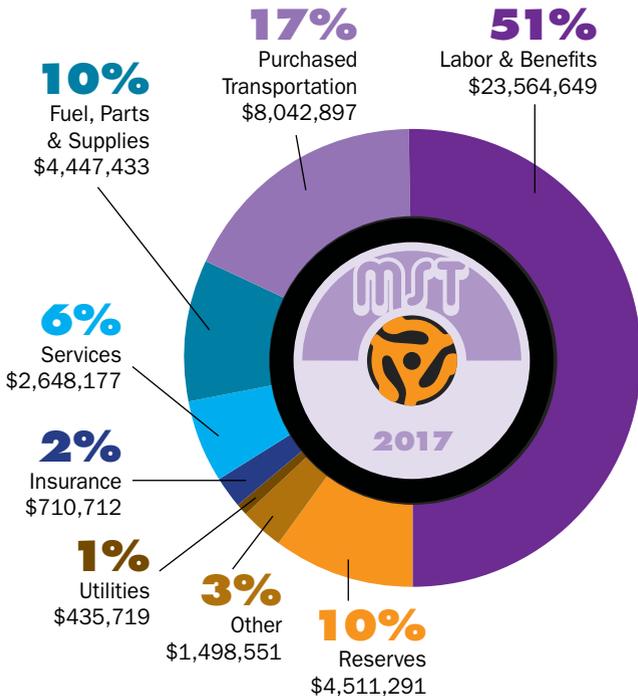
JANUARY	Jose De Jesus Ruelas
FEBRUARY	Isamar Velazquez
MARCH	Elvis Jones
APRIL	Fred Simkins
MAY	Deanna Smith
JUNE	Oscar Lemus
JULY	Honesto Costales
AUGUST	Kevin Allhouse
SEPTEMBER	Jarred Augusta
OCTOBER	Beronica Carriedo
NOVEMBER	Miriam Gutierrez
DECEMBER	Tim Minelli

FINANCIALS

OPERATING REVENUE \$45,859,429



OPERATING EXPENSES \$45,859,429



MST saved the following resources by using Pacesetter Gloss paper with 10% post-consumer waste:
 Renewable energy certificates—3 fully grown trees,
 1,911 gallons of water, 3.2 million BTUs of energy,
 203 pounds of solid waste, and 393 pounds
 of greenhouse gases*

* Calculations based on research by Environmental Defense Fund and other members of the Paper Task Force.



Printed on recycled paper
 with 10% PCW
 (post-consumer waste)

**2017 ANNUAL REPORT
 CONTRIBUTORS**

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- Randy Tunnell**, Photographer



**FOR EVERY \$1
COMMUNITIES INVEST IN
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION,
APPROXIMATELY \$4
IS GENERATED IN
ECONOMIC RETURNS.**

(American Public Transportation Association)

Population Served: **435,232**
 Service Area: **295 square miles**
 Fleet Size: **122**
 Operating Expenses FY 2017: **\$37,233,619**
 Capital Expenses FY 2017: **\$10,532,211**
 Passengers Carried: **4,262,312**
 Farebox Recovery Ratio: **26.6%**
 Stops in Service Area: **1,317**
 Revenue Miles Traveled: **4,572,297**
 Routes: **58**
 Employees: **250**

Fleet Size: **34**
 Operating Expenses FY 2017: **\$4,114,519**
 Capital Expenses FY 2017: **\$707,391**
 Passengers Carried: **132,769**
 Farebox Recovery Ratio: **11.7%**
 Revenue Miles Traveled: **976,231**



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www.mst.org



STRATEGIC GOALS 2018-2020

1) Develop and Maintain Adequate and Stable Long Term Revenues

Maintain public/private and public/public partnerships, fare-pricing strategies and revenue generation from the use of MST assets as a means to generate the revenue required to construct needed capital facilities, purchase vehicles, sustain current and future transit services, and maximize the value of MST services to the community.

Through education and advocacy, encourage policy makers and the general public to enact legislation at local, state and federal levels to provide sustained revenue sources that will support the future growth of Monterey County's public transportation system.

2) Provide Quality Transit and Mobility Management Services

Develop and implement services, infrastructure, and technologies to meet and exceed the expectations of customers and maximize the value of MST in the community. Continue to explore and implement new technologies and practices that enhance the overall customer experience, improve safety and sustainability, reduce costs, attract new customers, retain existing customers, and motivate employees.

3) Maintain board protocols and best practices to achieve effective and efficient board operations and board meeting management

Offer training and orientation for board members and provide concise reports that result in a well-informed, well-satisfied, participatory policy governance board.

4) Promote policies and practices that encourage environmental sustainability and resource conservation

Implement economically sound and environmentally-friendly resource conservation policies that reduce dependence on scarce natural resources and the potential for negative impacts on our environment.

5) Educate the public on MST services through promotion, communication and advocacy

Attract new riders and improve community support for MST by utilizing effective marketing, promotion, and communication techniques and by applying greater focus in meeting individual community and stakeholder needs.

6) Promote organizational values to maintain high quality relationships with MST employees, contractors, vendors, board members and community stakeholders

Promote individual and organizational safety, efficiency and effectiveness, and enhance the satisfaction of our customers, employees, partners, board members, and other key stakeholders.

7) Maintain industry leadership for like-sized agencies within California and the United States

Develop and implement programs and practices that distinguish Monterey-Salinas Transit as a leader with the public transit industry.

2017 **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

City of Salinas
Tony Barrera
CHAIR

City of King
Mike LeBarre
VICE-CHAIR

.....

County of Monterey
Luis Alejo

City of Carmel-By-The-Sea
Carolyn Hardy

City of Del Rey Oaks
Kristin Clark

City of Gonzales
Robert Bonincontri

City of Greenfield
Yanely Martinez

City of Marina
Frank O'Connell

City of Monterey
Dan Albert

City of Pacific Grove
Ken Cuneo

City of Sand City
Mary Ann Carbone

City of Seaside
David Pacheco

City of Soledad
Anna Velazquez

BOARD MEETINGS: Usually occur on the second Monday of each month, 10:00 a.m., Monterey-Salinas Transit Board Room, 19 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Suite 100, Monterey, CA 93940



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