



County of Monterey

Item No.27

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: ORD 26-003

April 21, 2026

Introduced: 4/2/2026

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: Ordinance

a. Receive a status update on Ordinance No. 5443, adding Section 12.28.013 to Title 12 of the Monterey County Code to prohibit oversized vehicle parking at all times with tow away authorization on Railroad Avenue on both sides from the centerline of Salinas Road easterly to its end, and Allison Road on both sides between Railroad Avenue and San Juan Road, in the unincorporated area of the County of Monterey; and

b. Provide direction to staff. (ADDED VIA ADDENDA)

CEQA Action: Categorically Exempt.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

a. Receive a status update on Ordinance No. 5443, adding Section 12.28.013 to Title 12 of the Monterey County Code to prohibit oversized vehicle parking at all times with tow away authorization on Railroad Avenue on both sides from the centerline of Salinas Road easterly to its end, and Allison Road on both sides between Railroad Avenue and San Juan Road, in the unincorporated area of the County of Monterey; and

b. Provide direction to staff.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

On March 10, 2026, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 5443, to add Section 12.28.013 to Title 12 of the Monterey County Code to prohibit oversized vehicle parking at all times with tow away authorization on Railroad Avenue on both sides from the centerline of Salinas Road easterly to its end, and Allison Road on both sides between Railroad Avenue and San Juan Road, in the unincorporated area of the County of Monterey, and find that the adoption of this ordinance is categorically exempt per California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15301(c) and Section 15308 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. There were concerns expressed about the status of the unhoused individuals living along the subject road, and concerns about the influence the City of Watsonville's (sometimes referred to as "City") ordinance which became effective on March 13, 2026, just 3 days after the March 10 County Board meeting, might have in Pajaro. Given these concerns, the Board directed staff to report back in 30 days on the status of unhoused individuals on Railroad Avenue, on discussions with the City of Watsonville and Santa Cruz County, and further explore expansion of the prohibition limits of the ordinance throughout the community of Pajaro. With this information, the Board indicated it would give direction to staff on whether to continue implementing the ordinance by making it effective through installation of the signs, or otherwise.

With regard to a status update on homeless individuals and their conditions, the most recent census, taken on March 19, revealed 9 RVs remaining on Railroad Avenue. County of Santa Cruz and Community Action Board (CAB) of Santa Cruz County outreach workers attempted weekly engagements with the RV occupants. However, they were unsuccessful in making contact with the vast majority of the households. Outreach workers identified two open slots at the nearest safe parking program in the City of Watsonville, County of Santa Cruz, where the 24-ft size limit disqualified the households actively engaged. Business cards were left on the windows, doors, and windshields of vehicles with failed contact attempts. One household with a senior citizen and a minor child is enrolled in the County of Santa Cruz' housing navigation program.

County staff is continuing to explore a Safe Parking Program for the North Monterey County. Though County staff has located potential sites, a designated and prepared location has not been developed as of the writing of the Board Report for the April 7, 2026 Board meeting. Recently, staff learned that the property located at 2 Lewis Court, Pajaro, has closed escrow and is no longer available. Recognizing that, County staff are searching for other locations.

With regard to discussions with the City of Watsonville and the County of Santa Cruz, the County of Monterey's County Administrative Office (CAO), has held initial discussions with representatives of, and coordinating with, Santa Cruz County and their Office of Education.

With regard to the status update on oversized vehicles in Pajaro, staff conferred with law enforcement partners. Information is still coming in, as of the time of writing this Board Report. It appears it is still very early since the City's ordinance and subsequent enforcement became effective on March 13, 2026. At the time of writing this report, oversized vehicles generally remain limited to Railroad Avenue, and more research needs to be performed to determine if there has been an increase in unhoused individuals' oversized vehicles on Railroad Avenue.

Background

At the February 10, 2026 Board Meeting, staff reported that: In response to community concerns, Supervisorial District 2 prepared Board Referral No. 2025.11 seeking to adopt an ordinance to prohibit oversized vehicles parking on the entirety of Railroad Avenue, establish a tow-away zone, and authorize the immediate removal of vehicles that violate this no-parking restriction. Railroad Avenue is a County maintained road in the Pajaro community, an unincorporated community in North Monterey County, south of the City of Watsonville. It is Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) staff understanding from the Board Referral, that roadside parking of oversized vehicles on Railroad Avenue has created a consistent and increasing public health and safety concern for the community and businesses of Pajaro, particularly regarding unhoused persons living in oversized vehicles along Railroad Avenue without appropriate services, disruptions for residents and businesses, crime, traffic hazards caused by parked vehicles blocking travel lanes, and the illegal dumping of trash and refuse.

On November 4, 2025, PWFP provided the Board of Supervisors a preliminary analysis report in response to said Board referral. The Board added Allison Road for consideration, due to the proximity to commercial agricultural operations and corresponding food safety concerns. The Board also indicated the need for a Safe Parking Program in North Monterey County, as a location for

unhoused individuals who would be displaced, and directed staff to explore options to facilitate a Safe Parking Program.

For months, the staff of the CAO-Homelessness Strategies and Initiatives Division, Health Department-Environmental Health Bureau (EHB), Monterey County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) Vehicle Abatement, California Highway Patrol (CHP), Housing and Community Development (HCD), Office of the County Counsel and PWFPP have been contending with complaints of illegal dumping/litter, oversized vehicles parking and causing health and safety issues, parked campers and other issues including potential food safety issues in this area of Pajaro. Much of this same team has been working to identify a Safe Parking Program in North Monterey County. The proposed ordinance would add Section 12.28.013 to Chapter 12.28 - STOPPING, STANDING AND PARKING of Title 12 - VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC of the Monterey County Code.

Based on the feedback and research conducted by staff, a new section of Title 12 of the Monterey County Code must be established to achieve the objectives of the Board Referral's request. Staff proposed an ordinance to add this new section. The ordinance also codified the definition of an "oversized vehicle" because a definition does not exist in State law (the California Vehicle Code).

The ordinance is for the protection of the public peace, health, safety and welfare of County constituents and visitors in the Pajaro community.

At the February 10, 2026 Board meeting, the Board approved waiving the first reading and setting March 10, 2026, at 10:30 AM, to consider adoption of the ordinance. Some public comments on the proposed ordinance were received at the February 10, 2026 meeting, including additional direction from the Board. That additional direction included: a status report on the timeline of connecting the unhoused to services and resources; and, exploring expansion of the No Oversized Vehicle parking ordinance into all of the Pajaro community, given the recent actions taken by a neighboring municipality, the City of Watsonville. It was reported at the February 10, 2026, Board Meeting, that the City of Watsonville was considering an ordinance that was stricter than the County's proposed ordinance. The City adopted its ordinance on February 10 which became effective on March 13, 2026.

Staff reported on these updates at the March 10, 2026 Board Meeting. Staff reported that with regard to the status: On any given day, there are approximately twelve to fifteen oversized vehicles parked with people experiencing homelessness occupying them as their primary means of housing. The Board of Supervisors directed the Homelessness Strategies and Initiatives Division to deploy homeless street outreach teams to engage with individuals and families that would be impacted by the recommended ordinance and identify possible solutions for homelessness status. Though County staff is exploring a Safe Parking Program and has located potential sites, a designated and prepared location has not been developed as of the writing of the Board Report for the April 7, 2026 Board meeting. Additional direction on March 10 was to explore the expansion of the No Oversized Vehicle ordinance. Since the first reading of the ordinance, County staff has further conferred with law enforcement. While data was limited since the previous Board meeting, there was concern that a neighboring jurisdiction (City of Watsonville) has enacted an ordinance stricter than this proposed County ordinance. There was also consensus among law enforcement to expand the ordinance to

more roads in Pajaro. Staff also reported that the City of Watsonville’s ordinance would become effective on March 13, 2026, so there was not much data as to the effect the City’s ordinance may have on the Pajaro community. At the time, staff proposed that the Board adopt the ordinance with the current prohibition limits and continue to monitor the conditions as part of an incremental approach. Should conditions in the future necessitate expansion of the prohibition limits, staff will return to the Board to provide an update and seek direction at that time.

This ordinance is one component of a broader County strategy that includes continued pursuit of a Safe Parking Program and coordination with service providers to connect unhoused individuals to shelter, sanitation, and housing resources.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

PWFP staff have been working with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), Office of the County Counsel, Monterey County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), County Administrative Office (CAO) - Homelessness Strategies and Initiatives Division, Health Department - Environmental Health Bureau (EHB), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and others. The Office of the County Counsel has approved the ordinance as to legal form.

FINANCING:

Adoption of this ordinance requires the posting of appropriate signage. These traffic control devices will be funded by the Road Fund. The cost to install the necessary signage is estimated at \$6,000. Sufficient funds are available in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Recommended Budget for the Road Fund 002, Appropriation Unit PFP004 to finance this work.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

The adoption of the ordinance is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the California Code of Regulations (CCR) sections 15301(c) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines because the action will involve negligible changes to existing County regulations that govern existing County highways and streets and the action is for the protection of the environment.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

The recommended action supports the Board of Supervisors’ Strategic Plan Goals for Well-Being and Quality of Life, and Safe and Resilient Communities. These services will enhance the County’s transportation safety and accessibility, improving the quality of life for County residents.

- Well-Being and Quality of Life
- Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- Safe and Resilient Communities
- Diverse and Thriving Economy
- Administrative

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Attachments:

Attachment A - Board Referral No. 2025.11

Attachment B - Ordinance No. 5443

Attachment C - Location Map