

ROAD SAFETY IN MONTEREY COUNTY:

WHERE TO REPORT A PROBLEM



Source: Photo of Fern Canyon Road, near Carmel Highlands, posted 2/13/25 on Monterey County Facebook page. The road was subsequently closed.

SUMMARY

From time to time, all drivers in Monterey County have observed safety and maintenance issues with the roads. Should they wish to report a potentially hazardous condition, it is not always obvious which entity they should notify to express their concerns. Roads in Monterey County are owned and maintained by different jurisdictions, most often with overlapping responsibilities. Processes for road improvement projects and traffic safety are lengthy, complicated, and not easily understood. The public is often confused about which entity to contact regarding traffic safety concerns or road maintenance, and even

how to submit customer service requests. Each entity uses a different interface for gathering data regarding traffic safety and maintenance concerns. Forms to request service can be found on most entities' websites but replies to the citizens filing the complaints are inconsistently handled.

The 2024-25 Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) received a complaint from a citizen regarding a major injury accident where the motorist was attempting a legal crossing of the road centerline into a highly trafficked driveway. A vehicle traveling in the same direction failed to stop and hit the stationary car. This resulted in hospitalization and surgery for the complainant. The CGJ examined the citizen inquiry and follow-up processes for these entities:

- Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Monterey County Public Works Division (MCPWD) within the Public Works, Facilities, and Parks Department (MCPWFP).

Researching options for addressing this complaint, the CGJ discovered the public is largely unaware of where and how to submit a request for road improvements and traffic safety concerns. In its findings, the jury identified inconsistent reporting options and a lack of updated traffic collision information. This report will include the following recommendations:

- Publish information regarding the role of TAMC, Caltrans, and MCPWD.
- Update the collision map on TAMC's website thereby improving the public's awareness of challenging conditions and dangerous intersections.
- Inform the public about *Monterey County uConnect*, a mobile device app providing information on a wide variety of topics, including reporting road and traffic concerns in the unincorporated areas of the County.

These simple measures will better inform the community and provide citizens with a sense of partnership with entities in improving our roads and highways.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) began to investigate road safety and maintenance in Monterey County after receiving a complaint regarding a left-turn lane on a State highway in Monterey County. There is no left-turn pocket at that location, just the road centerline that has been the scene of multiple accidents. The investigation revealed that road safety projects such as the construction of turn lanes, protective turn pockets, traffic signals, or roundabouts are lengthy and complex processes. These projects involve private property issues, engineering studies, environmental impact, cooperation between jurisdictions, sufficient funding in a time of scarce resources, public hearings, hiring of skilled contractors, and, finally, breaking ground and beginning construction.

Many factors go into prioritizing which projects are funded. These include data regarding collisions and incidents. This information is difficult for the public to locate and compile. Other considerations include grant awards, state funding, and voter approval of measures to fund jurisdictional improvements.

The CGJ also found confusion regarding which entity is responsible for which roads within Monterey County and how best to contact the correct public organization (State or local) regarding a road safety or maintenance concern.

The following entities are responsible for traffic safety in Monterey County and collaborate closely with local municipalities to complete of traffic projects. Each entity will be examined in further detail in later sections of this report.

TAMC

TAMC, Monterey County's regional transportation planning agency, is a State-designated agency responsible for financial and logistical planning of transportation projects. The mission of TAMC is to "develop and maintain a multimodal transportation system that

enhances mobility, safety access, environmental quality, and economic activities in Monterey County”. TAMC is not responsible for road repairs or physical road enhancements. (tamcmonterey.org, Feb. 16, 2025)

Caltrans

Caltrans is responsible for more than 50,000 miles of highways and freeways in California. It also provides inter-city rail services, airports, and hospital heliports, and collaborates closely with local agencies. According to the Caltrans website, “Caltrans carries out its mission with six primary programs: Aeronautics, Highway Transportation, Mass Transportation, Transportation Planning, Administration and the Equipment Service Center. Caltrans’ vision is to achieve a thriving and connected California.” (dot.ca.gov, Feb. 16, 2025)

Monterey County Public Works Division

The mission of MCPWD is to promote economic vitality and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Monterey County by providing safe and efficient public roads, bridges, and public facilities. MCPWD is responsible for road repair and construction of physical road enhancements on County roads. (countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-i-z/public-works-facilities-parks/ public-works)

TAMC, Caltrans, and MCPWD, including each city within the county of Monterey, is the focus of this report, which includes the following information:

- How to submit a concern or a complaint
- Where to find up-to-date information about projects
- How to access mobile apps available for the unincorporated areas of Monterey County and two other cities within the county

METHODOLOGY

The Civil Grand Jury investigated road safety and maintenance in Monterey County. The CGJ interviewed knowledgeable representatives of several different entities and departments responsible for the topics under investigation. In addition, the CGJ gathered and analyzed internal documentation provided by some representatives. Jurors made field visits to relevant locations of interest to gain firsthand insights.

DISCUSSION

Many entities are responsible for road safety and maintenance in Monterey County. The chart below indicates which entity is responsible for which types of roads and services:

Entities Responsible for Road Maintenance and Repair

Entity Name	Area of Responsibility	State or Local Agency
Public Works Department of each city	Road safety and maintenance within the various municipalities of Monterey County	Local - City
Monterey County Public Works Division (MCPWD)	Road safety and maintenance in the unincorporated areas of Monterey County (see list of areas below)	Local - County
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	Road safety and maintenance of State Highways in Monterey County including Hwy 1, Hwy 101, Hwy 68, Hwy 156, State Routes 218, 183	State
Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)	Planning and funding major road improvement projects within Monterey County	Local - County
California Highway Patrol (CHP)	Ensuring traffic laws are enforced on California roads. Also collects collision data utilized by other entities	State

MCPWD is responsible for providing services to the following unincorporated communities:

- North County: Pajaro, Moss Landing, Las Lomas, Aromas, Elkhorn, Castroville and Prunedale
- Salinas Valley: Boronda, Spreckels, Toro Park, East Garrison, San Benancio, and Corral de Tierra
- Coastal Area: Carmel Valley, Cachagua, Big Sur
- South County: Chualar, Pine Canyon, Lockwood, Bradley, San Lucas, San Ardo

Del Monte Forest is supported by Pebble Beach Corporation Road Department.

Public Works Departments within Each City in Monterey County

Each of the 12 incorporated cities in Monterey County has its own public works department responsible for the safety and maintenance of that city's roads. Many cities utilize an online portal on their websites for the public to submit information or concerns regarding traffic safety and maintenance issues. The table below identifies each city, its public works department website and phone number, and how to submit a request for service or report a problem.

How to Request Service or Report a Problem Regarding Road Safety and/or Road Maintenance

City Name Public Works Department Phone Number	The Website Home Page has a Link to Service Request Form?	Mobile App Available to Request Service or Report a Problem? (Y/N)
Carmel (831) 620-2070	Yes -- Link to the Form Click: Report a Problem	No
Del Rey Oaks (831) 713-0171 (831) 394-8511 (emergency/safety issues)	No. It is on the Public Works page. Link to the Form	No

Gonzales (831) 675-5000 (City Hall) (outside of city business hours call (831) 755-5111)	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Service Request"	No
Greenfield (831) 674-2635	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Report a Concern"	No
King City (831) 386-5927	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "How Do I"	No
Marina (831) 884-1212	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Service Requests"	No
Monterey (831) 646-3920	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Service Requests"	No
Pacific Grove (831) 648-5722	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Service Request"	No
Salinas (831) 758-7421	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Report an Issue"	Yes The mobile app is called <i>SalinasConnect</i>
Sand City (831) 394-3054	No	No
Seaside (831) 899-6825	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "SeeClickFix"	Yes The mobile app is called <i>SeeClickFix*</i>
Soledad (831) 223-5176	Yes -- Link to the Form Click "Report an Issue or a suggestion"	Yes The mobile app is called <i>It's Happening in Soledad</i>
Monterey County (831) 755-4925	No	Yes The mobile app is called <i>Monterey County uConnect</i>

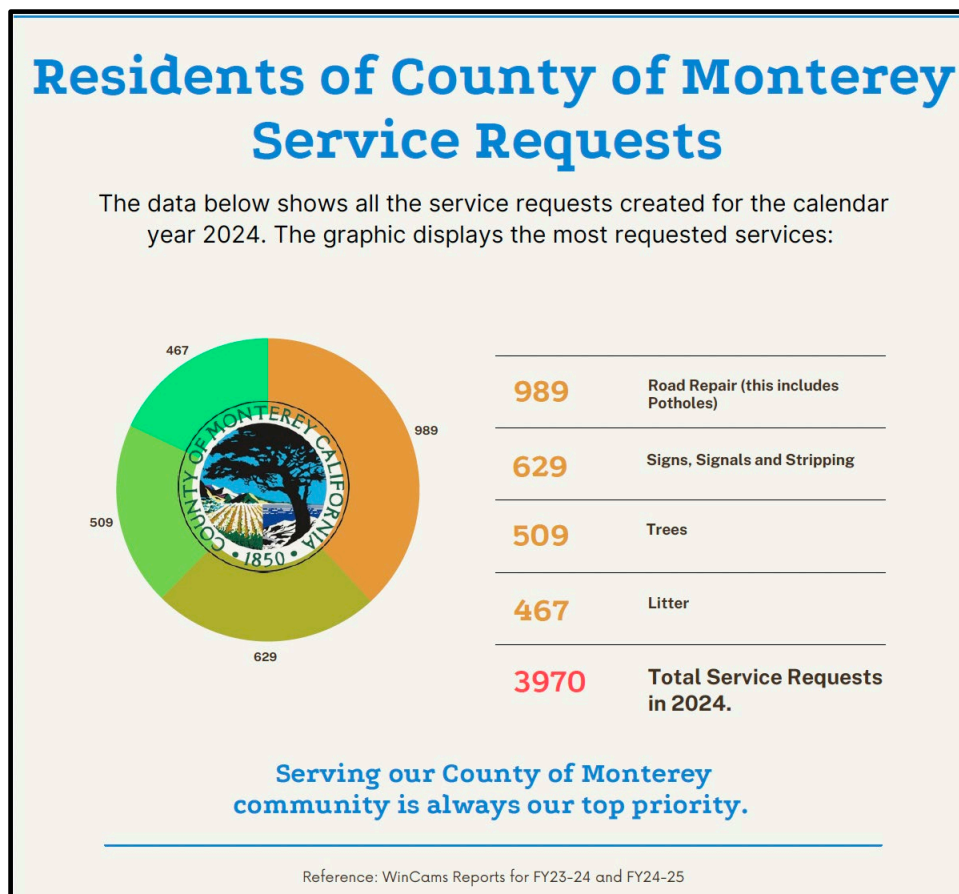
Note: the links in this table were accurate as of March 20, 2025, and are shown in the Bibliography at the end of this report.

**SeeClickFix is only available to cities that subscribe to this third-party service.*

Monterey County Public Works Division (MCPWD)

According to the Monterey County website, the Monterey County Public Works Division (MCPWD) provides services to ensure reasonable and safe road development, plan for future needs, manage infrastructure and County facilities, and protect natural resources. Several divisions exist within MCPWD. The Public Works Division includes Divisions of Road and Bridge Engineering, Stormwater and Floodplain Management, Traffic Engineering, Road and Bridge Maintenance, and several other divisions. Members of the public who have a road traffic safety or maintenance concern regarding a road in the unincorporated areas of the County must call or email a request for service or call 911 in case of an emergency. MCPWD receives 3,000 to 4,000 customer service requests annually and logs them into a database.

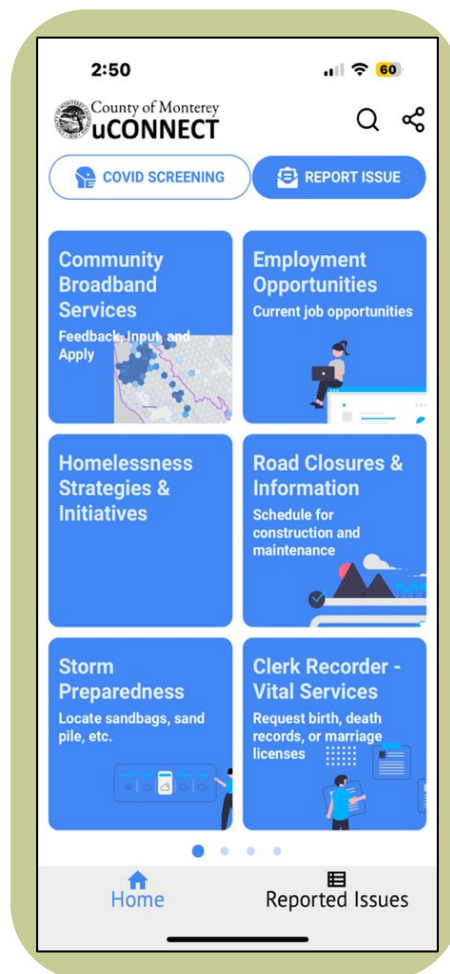
Monterey County Service Requests, Calendar Year 2024



Source: Monterey County Public Works, Facilities, and Parks Department

Mobile Apps for Reporting Traffic Safety and Maintenance Concerns

The CGJ identified three entities that utilize apps that can be downloaded to mobile devices: Cities of Soledad and Salinas as well as Monterey County. The *Monterey County uConnect* app may be used for reporting many different issues and has a wealth of other information in addition to reporting a concern.



Home page of *Monterey County uConnect* app

Source: Monterey County Public Works, Facilities, and Parks Department

The home page of the app has a “Report Issue” button that opens a dropdown menu listing a range of issues related to road maintenance concerns in the unincorporated areas of the County including dead animals, debris removal, flooding, guardrail, illegal

parking, potholes, road repair, sign/signal/stripping, streetlights, and tree/weed removal. The app is an easy way for the public to report an issue while traveling in the unincorporated areas of the county. However, there is no reference to the *Monterey County uConnect* app on the MCPWD website. Further, it is not easy to find information about the *Monterey County uConnect* app on any of the County departments' websites.

The Cities of Soledad and Salinas mobile apps function in a way similar to the Monterey County app for reporting road safety and maintenance issues.

Another app available for download to mobile devices is called *SeeClickFix*. The app, developed by an outside vendor, works with many municipalities throughout the U.S. to manage citizen reports regarding road safety and maintenance issues. The City of Seaside uses *SeeClickFix* as a mobile app and has incorporated it into its website. The CGJ is not aware of other vendors offering similar services. Many cities use the 311 referral system to report road safety issues. It functions similarly to the 211 system available in Monterey County for requesting information regarding social services.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

According to its website, Caltrans manages more than 50,000 miles of California's highway and freeway lanes, provides inter-city rail services, permits more than 400 public-use airports and special-use hospital heliports, and works with local agencies. Caltrans carries out its mission with six primary programs: Aeronautics, Highway Transportation, Mass Transportation, Transportation Planning, Administration, and the Equipment Service Center. California is divided into 12 districts, Monterey County is in District 5 along with San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara Counties. A total of 888 Caltrans employees are assigned to District 5.

Caltrans has a comprehensive customer service request portal on its website that is monitored and tracked. During the three-year period from February 2022 to February 2025, a total of 1,063 Customer Service Requests were received regarding State

highways in Monterey County according to documentation provided by Caltrans. The CGJ found that requesting parties routinely receive feedback regarding their inquiries.

Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)

TAMC is the state-designated regional transportation planning agency for Monterey County. It provides long-range planning and projections of future needs. TAMC's mission is to develop and maintain a multimodal transportation system that enhances mobility, safety, access, environmental quality, and economic activities in Monterey County. TAMC achieves this by preparing extensive plan documents, with public input, and by applying for, receiving, and disbursing funds for transportation projects countywide. It does not "own" any roads in the county but works collaboratively with multiple jurisdictions who do own them.

Many factors go into prioritizing which projects are funded. Collision data is just one tool used to determine road safety improvement projects. Up-to-date information regarding collisions in Monterey County is difficult for the public to obtain because multiple agencies collect and analyze such data often in different ways. One such source is the Statewide Integrated Traffic Record System (SWITRS) that utilizes information gathered by the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Data are updated quarterly, most recently in December 2024, and is viewable on the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) published by UC Berkeley. One of the most comprehensive Collision Data Maps for Monterey County residents may be found on TAMC's website, yet it has not been updated since 2018.

In 2023, it was announced that TAMC would receive \$640,000 in federal funding to develop a Monterey County Vision Zero Plan, a comprehensive county-wide safety action plan developed in collaboration with partner agencies and other stakeholders to promote coordinated solutions to reduce fatalities and injuries due to traffic collisions in Monterey County. This funding could be used to update the Collision Data Map on TAMC's website so that the public can find information regarding collisions in areas of interest.

According to officials at TAMC, its website receives few visits, and public participation at its meetings is sporadic. The Contact Us page invites the public to request meeting agendas, and the Public Outreach page invites the public to complete a survey asking questions about how people would prefer to be informed about TAMC's activities. Only one response was received during the last two years. For the form to be more useful to both TAMC and the public, the survey could be expanded to include a section providing the opportunity to submit a concern about a road and/or traffic safety issue.

Public involvement is essential for the planning, safety, and maintenance of roads. Monterey County residents and visitors benefit when it is easy for them to participate and report unsafe conditions.



A Curve in Carmel Valley Road

Source: Image by Parker Siebold, Monterey County Weekly

FINDINGS

It is unclear to the public which entity to contact with concerns regarding traffic safety, road maintenance, and/or road development projects, leading to confusion and frustration for the public.

- F1. The cities of Del Rey Oaks and Sand City do not have links to an online service request on the home pages of their websites, making it difficult for citizens to report an issue.
- F2. Sand City's online public complaint form is tailored to complaints against a business or person. There is no separate service request form for reporting road safety or maintenance issues.
- F3. The City of Pacific Grove appears to have a mobile app, but it is not available at the Apple App Store.
- F4. The purpose of the *SeeClickFix* button on the home page of the City of Seaside's website is unclear.
- F5. MCPWD does not have an online "Request for Service" form on its website for road safety and repair issues, making it more difficult for the County residents to report a problem.
- F6. The availability of the Salinas, Soledad, and *Monterey County uConnect* mobile apps are largely unknown to the public, rendering them of little use.
- F7. The Collision Data Map on TAMC's website was last updated in 2018 and does not provide up-to-date information for Monterey County residents.
- F8. TAMC's outreach survey could be made more useful to TAMC and the public by incorporating a section where the public may report unsafe traffic or road conditions.
- F9. Caltrans, TAMC, and the Monterey County Department of Public Works collaborate effectively with local municipalities to complete road and traffic projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The cities of Del Rey Oaks and Sand City add a link to the online service request form to the home pages of their websites by 7/31/25.

- R2. Sand City amend its public complaint form to include requests for service regarding road safety and maintenance issues by 9/30/25.
- R3. The City of Pacific Grove activate its mobile app on the Apple Store by 9/30/25.
- R4. The City of Seaside rename the button on the home page from *SeeClickFix* to “Report an Issue” and reference the availability of the *SeeClickFix* mobile app by 7/31/25.
- R5. Monterey County create a direct link to an electronic “Request for Service” form on its website for road repair or safety issues by 10/31/25.
- R6. Monterey County and the cities of Salinas and Soledad promote their service request apps by prominently displaying information regarding their availability on the Public Works webpages, on other relevant pages of their websites, and through social media by 12/31/25.
- R7. TAMC update the Collision Data Map to include data from 2018 to the present on its website by 12/31/25.
- R8. TAMC expand the public outreach survey on its website to solicit public feedback and invite questions from the public regarding its plans and projects as well as traffic and road safety concerns by 9/30/25.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

The following responses are required pursuant to Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05:
From the following governing bodies within 90 days of the publication of this report:

- Monterey County Board of Supervisors
 - Findings: F5-F6, F9
 - Recommendations: R5-R6
- Del Rey Oaks City Council
 - Finding: F1
 - Recommendation: R1
- Pacific Grove City Council
 - Finding: F3
 - Recommendation: R3
- Salinas City Council
 - Finding: F6

- Recommendation: R6
- Sand City Council
 - Findings: F1-F2
 - Recommendations: R1-R2
- Seaside City Council
 - Finding: F4
 - Recommendation: R4
- Soledad City Council
 - Finding: F6
 - Recommendation: R6
- Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)
 - Findings: F7-F9
 - Recommendations: R7-R8

INVITED RESPONSES

From the following individuals:

- Director, Monterey County Public Works, Facilities, and Parks Department
 - Findings: F5-F6, F9
 - Recommendations: R5-R6
- Executive Director, TAMC
 - Findings: F7-F9
 - Recommendations: R7-R8

DISCLAIMER

Two grand jurors recused themselves from all meetings and discussions regarding this report and abstained from voting for its approval.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Civil Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury.

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS

Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CGJ	Civil Grand Jury
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CSR	Customer Service Request
MCPWFP	Monterey County Public Works Facilities and Parks Department
MCPWD	Monterey County Public Works Division
SWITRS	Statewide Integrated Traffic Record System
TAMC	Transportation Agency for Monterey County
TIMS	Transportation Injury Mapping System

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Caltrans Customer Service Request Portal

<https://csr.dot.ca.gov/>

Monterey County IT Department Webpage regarding *Monterey County uConnect*

<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-i-z/information-technology/uconnect>

Caltrans Facts, 2024

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/research-innovation-system-information/documents/caltrans-fact-booklets/caltransfacts2024-a11y.pdf>

California Crash Reporting System (CCRS)

<https://data.ca.gov/dataset/ccrs/resource/f775df59-b89b-4f82-bd3d-8807fa3a22a0?filters=County%20Code%3A27>

SeeClickFix App Information

https://pria-academy.org/ICT/pdf/Primer_SeeClickFix.pdf

Safewise Website Regarding 311 Service

<https://www.safewise.com/blog/what-is-311/>

Open311

<https://www.open311.org/learn/>

211 Service in Monterey County
<https://211montereycounty.org/>

Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) fatalities by county
<https://tims.berkeley.edu/summary.php>

TAMC Collision Data Map 2013-2018
<https://www.tamcmonterey.org/collision-data-map>

County and City Public Works Service Request Links Referenced in the “Report a Problem” Table

County of Monterey
<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-i-z/public-works-facilities-parks>

Carmel
<https://ci.carmel.ca.us/contact>

Del Rey Oaks
<https://www.delreyoaks.org/publicworks/page/public-works-service-request>

Gonzales
<https://gonzalesca.gov/service-request-form>

Greenfield
<https://ci.greenfield.ca.us/FormCenter/Miscellaneous-8/Citizen-Request-Form-76>

King City
https://www.citizenserve.com/Portal/PortalController?Action=showGeneral&ctzPagePrefix=Portal_&installationID=367

Marina
<https://www.cityofmarina.org/requesttracker.aspx>

Monterey
<https://www.mymontereyportal.org/submit-service-request>

Pacific Grove
<https://pacificgroveca.qscend.com/311/request/add>

Salinas
<https://salinasca.qscend.com/311/request/add>

Sand City
<https://www.sandcity.org/contact-us/public-complaint-form>

Seaside

https://seeclickfix.com/web_portal/LzEcqTL3af2AJMmzXZWivD28/report/category

Soledad

<https://www.cityofsoledad.com/report-issue/>