

Eastside Parkway – Questions & Answers

This is not intended to be an all-encompassing document inclusive of all background information, history or detailed analysis of Eastside Parkway. It is only intended to serve as a guide to answering certain recurring questions about Eastside Parkway received by FORA staff.

1. What is Eastside Parkway and what is it intended to do?

The 1997 Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan (BRP) included a compilation of roadway segments that were analyzed/developed in concert with various State and local agencies and incorporated into a regional network by the Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC). Eastside Parkway (at that time called Eastside Road, renamed by the County of Monterey in 2009) is one piece of that roadway network. Also a piece of that roadway network was the Highway 68 Bypass Freeway and the Fort Ord Expressway, four-lane high-speed roadways intended to relieve congestion on existing facilities.

Since the adoption of the BRP, TAMC and FORA analyzed options to the Highway 68 Bypass Freeway and the Fort Ord Expressway that would serve the same amount of traffic and relieve congestion by building a smaller, less impactful roadway in conjunction with widening General Jim Moore Boulevard. This analysis led to the design of Eastside Parkway connecting, by way of Eucalyptus Road, to General Jim Moore. In its current alignment, Eastside Parkway is a *smaller and less impactful* alternative to mitigate former Fort Ord development.

Eastside Parkway links Inter-Garrison Road to Gigling Road and Eucalyptus Road. It is designed as a two-lane roadway to supplement the traffic capacity of existing Highway 68 and the Blanco Road/Reservation Road connections between Salinas/Highway 101 and the Peninsula/Highway 1. The commute route of Davis Road - Reservation Road - Inter-Garrison Road - Eastside Parkway will decrease traffic on the two existing connectors.

At the same time, the alignment of the Inter-Garrison Road and Eastside Parkway intersection encourages through traffic movement around the California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) campus, *protecting the campus from regional traffic* as noted in CSUMB recent planning work *and* at their request.

2. What will the alignment of Eastside Parkway look like when it's complete?

In 2005, at FORA's and FORA's land use jurisdiction request, TAMC undertook a Fee-Reallocation Study. TAMC concluded that FORA should assume lead agency status of Eastside Parkway and therefore fully fund the project at 100%. TAMC also concluded that an Eastside Parkway alignment to better serve traffic patterns would begin at Eucalyptus Road and terminate at Inter-Garrison Road.

This refined alignment of Eastside Parkway was developed over the course of five years by both staff and policymakers of the stakeholder jurisdictions: Monterey County, TAMC, City of Seaside, CSUMB, Monterey Peninsula College and Monterey-Salinas Transit. In an effort to lessen the environmental impact, preserve habitat corridors in the Habitat Management Plan/UC Natural Reserve and still meet mitigation requirements, the alignment was shifted from connecting with Blanco Road to the current alignment connecting Eucalyptus Road to Inter-Garrison Road. This alignment circumvents the CSUMB campus and redirects regional traffic around, rather than through, the campus.

Generally, Eastside Parkway will look like this: As Inter-Garrison Road enters the CSUMB housing area south of Schoonover Drive, it's a planned four lane facility. At the Schoonover Drive intersection, Inter-Garrison Road will continue into the campus as a two lane facility serving CSUMB. Through traffic, or traffic heading towards the Monterey Peninsula and destinations west, will continue on seamlessly to Eastside Parkway as a south-westerly extension from Inter-Garrison Road. Eastside Parkway will then continue as a two lane facility for about 3 ¼ miles from Inter-Garrison Road toward its intersection with Gigling Road and ultimately its terminus at Eucalyptus Road.

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3. When and how was the public informed of FORA's plan to build Eastside Parkway?

The roadway predates the 1997 BRP, and was included in the reuse infrastructure planning work that began in 1993. The BRP, and its accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR), included a roadway network intended to mitigate the impacts of development on the former Fort Ord originally published in mid-1996. Eastside Parkway was a key element of the roadway network. The BRP and its EIR were subject to a public review period and public hearings. The BRP and EIR were adopted at publicly held FORA Board meetings in 1997.

On March 23, 2005, the TAMC Board of Directors adopted the FORA Fee Reallocation Study, prepared by TAMC in conjunction with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. On April 8, 2005, the FORA Board of Directors adopted the FORA Fee Reallocation Study. This study reassigned FORA's contributions to roadway projects to ensure the regional roadway network met updated jurisdictional needs and to ensure that FORA was assigned adequate funding allocations. This study modified FORA's contributions. For instance, FORA's contribution to the Highway 68 Bypass Freeway was removed, while Highway 68 Operational Improvements (a new project) and Eastside Parkway and Eucalyptus Road (existing projects) received increased funding.

FORA's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) lists FORA's mitigations and places them in time based on available funding. The first CIP, separate from the baseline CIP that was included in the BRP, was adopted by the FORA Board in June 2001. In 2001, Eastside Parkway was programmed to begin in FY 2008/09 and be complete in 2010/11. However, as development projections are refined and revised every year, FORA adjusts the timing of roadway construction projects to meet development needs. The FY 2010/11 CIP programs Eastside Parkway, including over a year for design and environmental work, in fiscal years 2011 through 2015 and escalates the original \$6.4M project cost to \$16.4M in today's dollars. The CIP is updated every year and presented to the Board for approval at regularly scheduled public Board meetings – typically each Spring.

4. What Fort Ord developments does Eastside Parkway serve?

Eastside Parkway serves the overall development of the former Fort Ord and regional traffic mitigation requirements, not individual projects, as part of an approved roadway network. Eastside Parkway serves the entire Monterey Bay region as an alternate east-west route for traffic currently traveling Highways 1, 68 and 156. These existing highways currently operate at *failing* levels of service (LOS) at certain times of the day. Eastside Parkway would bring the LOS on these overly congested roads to within acceptable ranges.

5. If Fort Ord developments are not built, will Eastside Parkway still be necessary?

Yes. Both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and TAMC require the BRP mitigation provided by Eastside Parkway. Eastside Parkway is one piece of a full roadway network that was assumed for already approved development projects. It's important that the commitments made to those developments are maintained so that all mitigations can be achieved.

6. Will there be bike paths on Eastside Parkway?

Yes. Bike path and trail connection through the former Fort Ord roadway network is an important part of the design of each roadway. At TAMC's direction, Class II bike paths have been designed for Eastside Parkway which will provide yet another bike path connection in FORA's roadway network *and* a complete bike path from the northern end of Fort Ord to its southern end. Currently, no other funding mechanism for bike path or trail connections exists on the former Fort Ord outside of the CIP funded roadway network. Additionally, in working with the Fort Ord Recreational Users Group, equestrian uses are being considered in the design of under-crossings at topographically advantageous locations along Eastside Parkway.

7. How will Eastside Parkway be funded?

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Eastside Parkway is funded through the FORA CIP. The primary source of funds for the FORA CIP is the FORA Community Facilities District (CFD) Special Tax, which is a one-time special tax on former Fort Ord development. For additional details, you can access the current FORA CIP document by clicking on the following web address or copying and pasting it into your browser: <http://www.fora.org/Reports/081211%20rpt%20FORA%20CIP%20Report.pdf>.

8. Why was Eastside Parkway designed to go through open space and disrupt habitat areas?

Eastside Parkway does not traverse any parcels designated as “habitat.” Eastside Parkway is a much less impactful road than what was originally intended to achieve the same mitigation requirements. FORA voluntarily undertook a *design reassessment* to lighten the footprint and avoid the need for four-lane high-speed roadway as originally planned in the BRP. While a 1000'-wide right-of-way traversing the former Fort Ord parallel to Highway 68 is still held by CalTrans, neither the Highway 68 Bypass Freeway nor the Fort Ord Expressway are necessary to mitigate development of the former Fort Ord. The environmental impacts of building Eastside Parkway in its current alignment will be assessed in the project Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR will be prepared when enough CFD fees have been collected to allow scheduling the project for construction.