

Mari Lynch
PO Box 3041 Monterey, CA 93942-3041
(831) 375-6278
Business, since 1981: www.finewordworking.com
Public service, since 2009: www.bicyclingmonterey.com

October 8, 2013

Dear Mayor Gunter and Council Members Barrera, Castañeda, Craig, De La Rosa, Lutes, and McShane:

Thank you for catching the vision of Salinas youth and helping them make their dream reality on October 6, the inaugural date of Ciclovía Salinas.

That's another score for the City of Salinas—having Monterey County's first Open Streets, and one of still only a dozen such locations in all of California. I am a resident of rural Monterey County, since 1981, and I am among the many county residents and others who look forward to more Ciclovía Salinas dates to come!

It is my pleasure to acknowledge you on BicyclingMonterey.com, www.bit.ly/SalinasRocks, as well as in the Twittersphere and elsewhere, not least of all, in everyday conversations with others.

This summer, on the last day of their visit, I met on the peninsula some tourists from Miami who spend two months in Monterey County every year. The wife is an avid booklover, and we talked literature. When I asked if they'd been to the National Steinbeck Center, the response was, "No, our hotelier tells us not to go to Salinas, that it's dangerous." I offered that on their next visit, I would be happy to take them to Salinas, to show them not only the Steinbeck Center but other places in Salinas that I love.

Ciclovía Salinas is a fantastic way to help break down tourism barriers and extend a warm welcome to new visitors to Salinas neighborhoods. (See the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Center blog, <http://www.bit.ly/SeeSalinasOct6>.) Among multiple benefits of Open Streets already reaped in other cities are improved health, environment, community relationships, violence prevention, and more, including economic boosts to local businesses. These benefits are in store for Salinas, too, as it embraces future Ciclovía Salinas dates.

Frank Yohannan, CEO of Sea Otter Classic—now in its 24th year and bringing in an estimated \$20M annually to Monterey County's economy—stated that just as "Sea Otter Classic gets people from the community and beyond to come out and enjoy recreation, likewise growing awareness of the importance of physical activity means Ciclovía Salinas has a similar potential to benefit businesses. While this will first be most noted in immediate neighborhoods, as word spreads that a city has regularly scheduled Open Streets, these can become a significant contributor to the local economy."

Salinas businesses can take advantage of Ciclovía Salinas dates to increase revenues. Using what other cities have learned, this increase can happen more quickly. To inspire their own creative ideas, businesses may wish to refer to resources such as those found on the national Open Streets Project site, e.g., <http://openstreetsproject.org/blog/2013/10/07/ciclavia-boosts-sales-for-local-businesses/> and <http://openstreetsproject.org/blog/2013/10/02/making-it-easy-for-businesses-to-benefit-from-open-streets/>.

Thank you again for your unanimous vote of confidence in this initiative of Salinas youth. By affirming the value of their ideas, and trusting their dedicated work, you have shown that their local government welcomes innovations. You have strengthened their resolve to make their city an even better place, by proving that they have much to contribute, as partners of City officials.

Sincerely,
Mari Lynch

cc: Ray Corpuz, City Manager
Gary E. Petersen, Public Works Director
Kelly McMillin, Chief of Police
Jeffrey H. Weir, Economic Development
Steven Macias, Oldtown Salinas Business Association
José Martínez-Saldaña, Salinas United Business Association
Paul Farmer, Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
Ana Gabriela Ibarra, Andrea Manzo, Carmen Gil, José Eduardo Huerta, Manuel Guadalupe Ontivero,
Maritza Cárdenas, and Natalie Oliver - the Ciclovía Salinas Committee