

Car Week: GIS Collaboration Promotes Safety, Helps Thousands Navigate Major Events

OVERVIEW: The Monterey County Car Week Special Events map came to fruition as a result of a community need and to ensure life, health, and safety regulatory permit protocols were met and communicated to the public.

CHALLENGE: Each year, various car week event applicants were coming into the Permit Center to complete applications for various permits related to their Car Week events. Year after year, the number of Car Week events seemed to grow exponentially, bringing in nearly 100,000 visitors. We began noticing that some events were set to occur on the same date(s) and sometimes the same venue, or, within a couple of miles of each other. Specific areas of concern were Carmel Valley Road and Highway 68 traffic congestion. During our reviews, along with the inter-agency reviews, predominately law enforcement, there began a growing concern regarding the need for traffic plans, resources, types of required regulatory permits, number of attendees and cars, noise levels, emergency services, etc. There were also occurrences of independent travel and tourism websites listing some or part of the events, while other events were left off, added to, or contained conflicting event details. Constituents became very concerned and called to find out more information about the events and the areas impacted by events.

SOLUTION: In order to stay in front of these concerns and create a process by which all events could follow, the Monterey County Housing & Community Development (HCD) Permit Center, formerly known as the Resource Management Agency, created the Special Events Task Force forum chaired by Freda Escobar, Special Events Permit Coordinator. This monthly County and multi-agency collaboration encouraged the event applicants and the public to attend and provided a platform to discuss all Car Week events. During these meetings, the organizer was given the opportunity to showcase their event, to ask questions of other interagency representatives regarding permitting, and address questions and concerns from the public.

INNOVATION: From these meetings it was decided that in order to ensure visiting guests and residents were well informed and protected, the Permit Center would use current technology and innovation to create our own Car Week Special Events Map webpage. In 2018, working with our GIS analysts, we created this tool as a way of informing and engaging visitors, residents, and agencies and ensure transparency on

permitted events, providing continuously updated information and communication. The map was also designed to be used by mobile devices for ease of use.

Permit status, event details, addresses, event information, parking, ticket sales were among the details listed. Events within City Limits did not require Monterey County permits, and were listed as such, while the permit status for events in the unincorporated areas of Monterey County were listed as Monterey County Permits in Process, or, Monterey County Permits Issued. In 2019, we were able to add a layer of traffic to our map so visitors, residents, and agency partners could choose their routes and avoid the heaviest traffic, and we linked to Public Works Road Traffic Advisories, Closures & Information page. In 2021, in addition to the traffic layer and public works page, we partnered with Caltrans to add live traffic cameras to the map so visitors and agency-wide partners could click the various web cam arrows and see a live traffic stream and plan their drive. We also added a layer directly to the map for road construction areas.

RESULTS: Our website was mentioned on the local and bay area television channels and newspapers in order to get the word out to the public. This year, the website was embraced by CHP, and Monterey County Sheriffs, and was utilized by all additional law enforcement agency partners in order to stay connected and continuously review event details, traffic, etc. We received recognition from a local station in Washington DC regarding the outline and the useful navigation tools on the website, more specifically, the mobile friendly web version. In the days leading up to Car Week through August 26th, the Car Week Special Events map received 18,318 views.

REPLICABILITY: We have used this website as a template for all other events throughout the County, and even though we tailored it to fit our needs, other counties could incorporate this technology for public service to inform visitors, residents, interagency and law enforcement partners of traffic advisories, traffic cams, construction, road closures & information, and of course, event information.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:

<https://montereyco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Shortlist/index.html?appid=37c1954139d741e6bcd858c6ebab0cb2>

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