



Salinas Valley
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS JOURNAL



Leadership Training Is Everywhere — Strong Leadership Isn't
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Alebrijes y Nahuales Exhibition Comes to Salinas

By Colleen Bailey, CEO/President SVCC

In late October 2025, a delegation from the City of Salinas traveled to its Sister City, Guanajuato, Mexico, to attend the internationally renowned Día de Muertos Festival.

During the visit, the delegation met with Romain Greco, Executive Director of the Cervantino Festival—one of Latin America's most prestigious and influential arts festivals.

At that meeting, Greco extended an invitation for Salinas to host Alebrijes y Nahuales: Fantastical Animals of Mexico, a celebrated exhibition featuring eight monumental sculptures created by master artisans from Oaxaca.

The exhibition offers a striking visual experience while honoring the deep tradition of

EXHIBITION see page 8

Salinas Infrastructure Summit Introduces Intriguing Ideas for Financing and Construction

By Colleen Bailey, CEO/President SVCC



Salinas Council Chambers



The City of Salinas Infrastructure Summit was held on June 5 at One Main Street in Downtown Salinas.

On Friday, June 5, the City of Salinas hosted an all-day "Infrastructure Summit" at One Main Street in Downtown Salinas (where the National Steinbeck Center is located). Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce partnered with the City to identify

speakers, promote the summit, and sponsor the official reception afterwards.

Open to the public, the summit was meant to inspire attendees to consider how "collaboration can unlock the infrastructure our community needs for sustainable growth, housing, mobility, and quality

of life." A dozen speakers and panelists proposed several traditional and innovative options for the city to pay for infrastructure construction. There was a special focus on transportation projects and water and wastewater projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE see page 5



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Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market — Opportunity for Community Building

By Leonard Batti, SVCC Board Chair

On July 1, your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce officially assumed ownership of the Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market. Founded in 2000, the market has grown into the largest farmer's market in Monterey County, featuring approximately 90 vendors and attracting between 2,000 and 3,000 shoppers each Saturday.

Located on the 300 block of Main Street at City Center, the market operates year-round, rain or shine, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., making it one of only a handful of year-round markets in the county.

Since its inception, the market has been owned by the Oldtown Salinas Foundation and has been the passion project of Joel Panzer and Frank Savino. Together, they have built the Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market into what it is today. The market will now operate under the Salinas Valley Chamber Foundation, a nonprofit organization. The Chamber Foundation has retained Abrava Consulting, led by Brett Reed, who has successfully managed the market for several years alongside Jerry Lami of West Coast Farmers Markets. The Chamber extends its sincere appreciation to Jerry for his years of leadership and the many contributions he has made to the market's success.

When considering whether to assume responsibility for the market, your Chamber Board discussed whether doing so aligned with our mission, "to build a strong local economy by promoting sound government and an informed membership and community," and, more importantly, our vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families, and businesses succeed through economic opportunity and growth."

As we learned more about the many businesses that have progressed from operating under a tent at the farmers' market to opening brick-and-mortar locations throughout the city, and the thousands of shoppers the market attracts each week, we recognized an opportunity not only to support local entrepreneurs but also to strengthen an event that brings our entire community together.

The Chamber Foundation recognizes that building a stronger community requires strategic partnerships. With that in mind, your Chamber has identified organizations that can help enhance the success and impact of the Farmer's Market.

One such partnership is with ALBA, the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, an organization that provides farmer education, organic farm incubation, and workforce development. This collaboration will expand ALBA's presence at the market, giving the organization greater visibility while

allowing emerging organic farmers to explore selling directly to consumers and determine whether farmers markets should become part of their long-term business model. It also provides these farmers with an opportunity to generate income while increasing the community's access to locally grown organic produce.

In addition, we're partnering with Hartnell College's Californians for All College Corps program, a fellowship that provides eligible students with up to \$10,000 for completing 450 hours of community service and training during the academic year.

Participants also receive a monthly living stipend and an education award upon completion. These students will assist with the day-to-day logistics of operating the market, including vendor setup and teardown, placement of safety barriers and directional signage, waste and recycling management, and other operational needs.

We're also excited to partner with the Arts Council for Monterey County to add even more vibrancy to the market. To promote First Fridays and support the local arts community, the Arts Council will offer monthly arts programming at the market.

This partnership will provide local artists with opportunities to showcase their work and gain exposure while giving visitors the chance to participate in hands-on art experiences.

Having the Chamber Foundation own the Farmer's Market allows your Chamber to retain and reinvest 100 percent of the market's proceeds into charitable programs that benefit our community.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation serves as the philanthropic arm of the Chamber, supporting initiatives such as the Junior Chamber of Commerce leadership program, the Career Pathways Program, which promotes access to quality, well-paying jobs throughout the Salinas Valley, the Children's Shopping Tour, now celebrating its 75th year, and now the Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market itself.

If you haven't yet experienced the market, I invite you to visit City Center on a Saturday morning. I can almost guarantee you won't leave hungry. More importantly, you'll be reminded of the vibrant, diverse, and entrepreneurial community that makes the Salinas Valley such a special place to call home. 🌿



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CHAMBER PRIORITIES

CREATING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY • PROMOTING THE COMMUNITY • PROVIDING NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES • POLITICAL ACTION • REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT

Your Chamber observed four major themes at the summit. These are listed below.

FOUR SUMMIT THEMES

1 Infrastructure improvements are essential for the future economic prosperity of Salinas and for expansion of high-quality careers for current and future Salinas residents.

In his opening speech, Dennis Donohue continued his ongoing focus as Mayor of Salinas on why ambitious, intelligent, and capable young people who grow up in the Salinas Valley leave the area, even if they would prefer to remain here or return here. They see few job options that would allow individuals and families to have a comfortable standard of living in this expensive place. “We lose future entrepreneurs, homeowners, innovators, community leaders, and business owners,” Mayor Donohue said.

Your Chamber sees this happening. Demographic data confirms it.

Can the City of Salinas do anything to reverse this trend? Infrastructure improvements, combined with other economic development strategies, may encourage quality employers to establish operations or expand their existing operations. Infrastructure improvements would also encourage construction of new housing units.

2 Infrastructure improvements in Salinas are expensive.

Costs of construction materials and equipment are higher than ever. A shortage of workers in both professional construction services and the building trades has increased the cost of labor. State and local laws and regulations add costs at each stage of an infrastructure project.

For infrastructure projects, “time is money.” In California, public and private parties spend many years

— sometimes, decades — between a decision to pursue a project until actual completion and operation. Developers must consider the cost of environmental review and obtaining permits.

3 Costs of infrastructure improvements exceeds the amount available from governments.

While multiple speakers urged the City of Salinas to be aggressive about seeking federal and state grants and low-interest loans, the process is highly competitive. A representative for U.S. Sen. Adam Schiff reported that federal funding for transportation projects is trending downward. A Caltrans (California Department of Transportation) representative and a Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) representative acknowledged that their agency budgets cannot meet the region’s transportation infrastructure needs.

The Infrastructure Summit was meant to inspire attendees to consider how ‘collaboration can unlock the infrastructure our community needs for sustainable growth, housing, mobility, and quality of life.’

4 Voters want infrastructure improvements and maintenance but may not necessarily want to pay for them.

The City of Salinas Infrastructure Summit occurred three days after voters in Monterey County rejected all three ballot measures proposed by city councils to raise taxes. Voters in the City of Monterey have approved several tax increases in the past 10 years, but on June 2,

they rejected the latest proposed sales tax increase. Voters in the cities of Gonzales and Soledad rejected proposed parcel taxes to pay for city emergency response programs.

Chamber members have been complaining about continual increases in local taxes and fees. Some members also question if local governments are effectively spending money generated by existing taxes and fees. It’s possible that City of Salinas voters may be leery about approving the upcoming November 2026 ballot measure to renew the City of Salinas

Measure G sales tax.

OPTIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING

Under these conditions, what can the City of Salinas do to pay for infrastructure improvements?

Option #1 - Get More Federal and State Money

On occasion, the City of Salinas obtains federal and state grants and loans for infrastructure improvements. But is the city doing enough to take advantage of every opportunity?

Your Chamber suggests that the Salinas City Council request and review a table showing all of the city’s grant and loan applications in the last 10 years to public and private entities and the outcomes of those applications. Such a table could perhaps help city leaders to determine if the city should make systematic changes to its process of seeking grants and loans for infrastructure projects and programs.

Option #2 - Raise Taxes and Fees for Infrastructure

Few people like to pay taxes. But infrastructure is not free. Someone has to pay for it.

Monterey County voters have shown willingness to support sales taxes that fund infrastructure. In 2016, voters approved Measure X, a county sales tax administered by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) to provide funding for regional and local street and highway projects. Measure X was the fifth attempt since 1988 to convince voters to approve a regional transportation tax.

With that county sales tax in place, Monterey County and its 12 cities have been able to pay for more transportation projects. They also expanded their ability to acquire federal and state matching grants at a level competitive to the state’s big urban counties, including acquiring funding from the Senate Bill 1 tax increase



approved by the state legislature and Governor Jerry Brown in 2017. Ten years after voters approved Measure X, improvements in the condition of Monterey County streets and highways are visible and objectively measurable.

In the City of Monterey, voters approved Measure P in 2014 and then Measure S in 2018 to impose a “Street Infrastructure Rehabilitation Transactions and Use Tax.” Sales tax revenue is used to “address significant deferred maintenance by fixing streets, sidewalks, and potholes.” And in the County of Monterey, voters in November 2024 approved Measure AA, which will fund upgrades to streets, parks, recreational facilities, libraries, and water and sewer systems.

On the state level, the state is anticipating a decline in gasoline tax revenue — the basis of the state’s current funding structure for highway construction and maintenance. Zero-emission vehicles (such as electric vehicles), fuel-efficient vehicles, and changes in personal driving behavior are reducing gasoline consumption and reducing tax revenue.

A representative of a transportation organization funded by construction companies and building trades unions advocated at the summit for a tax on vehicle owners based on the number of miles driven. But as some Monterey County elected officials have noted, this “Vehicle Miles Travelled” (VMT) tax will disproportionately increase taxes for rural residents who commute long distances to job centers (such as Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula).

Option #3 - Alternative Construction Project Delivery Methods

In a traditional “design-bid-build” process, a government contracts with professional service firms to design a project, and then it contracts again to build that project with the construction company

City of Salinas Annual Debt Repayment Schedule: New Police Station and New Gabilan Library

Year	New Gabilan Library			New Police Station		
	Principal Paid	Interest Paid	Debt Service (Total Repayment Amount)	Principal Paid	Interest Paid	Debt Service (Total Repayment Amount)
2018	-	\$334,260	\$334,260	-	\$917,811	\$917,811
2019	-	\$786,494	\$786,494	-	\$2,159,556	\$2,159,556
2020	\$370,000	\$786,494	\$1,156,494	\$2,640,000	\$2,159,556	\$4,799,556
2021	\$385,000	\$774,194	\$1,159,194	\$2,775,000	\$2,027,556	\$4,802,556
2022	\$395,000	\$761,369	\$1,156,369	\$2,910,000	\$1,888,806	\$4,798,806
2023	\$415,000	\$743,806	\$1,158,806	\$3,060,000	\$1,743,306	\$4,803,306
2024	\$430,000	\$725,306	\$1,155,306	\$3,210,000	\$1,590,306	\$4,800,306
2025	\$450,000	\$706,181	\$1,156,181	\$3,370,000	\$1,429,806	\$4,799,806
2026	\$470,000	\$686,119	\$1,156,119	\$3,540,000	\$1,261,306	\$4,801,306
2027	\$490,000	\$665,119	\$1,155,119	\$3,715,000	\$1,084,306	\$4,799,306
2028	\$515,000	\$643,244	\$1,158,244	\$3,905,000	\$898,556	\$4,803,556
2029	\$535,000	\$620,244	\$1,155,244	\$4,100,000	\$703,306	\$4,803,306
2030	\$560,000	\$596,306	\$1,156,306	\$4,260,000	\$539,306	\$4,799,306
2031	\$585,000	\$571,244	\$1,156,244	\$2,695,000	\$368,906	\$3,063,906
2032	\$610,000	\$548,456	\$1,158,456	\$2,785,000	\$284,688	\$3,069,688
2033	\$635,000	\$524,694	\$1,159,694	\$2,880,000	\$194,175	\$3,074,175
2034	\$655,000	\$499,956	\$1,154,956	\$2,980,000	\$100,575	\$3,080,575
2035	\$685,000	\$474,444	\$1,159,444	<i>Last Payment Owed in 2034</i>		
2036	\$710,000	\$447,756	\$1,157,756			
2037	\$735,000	\$420,094	\$1,155,094			
2038	\$765,000	\$394,681	\$1,159,681			
2039	\$790,000	\$367,663	\$1,157,663			
2040	\$820,000	\$336,888	\$1,156,888			
2041	\$855,000	\$304,938	\$1,159,938			
2042	\$885,000	\$271,625	\$1,156,625			
2043	\$920,000	\$237,138	\$1,157,138			
2044	\$955,000	\$201,288	\$1,156,288			
2045	\$995,000	\$164,075	\$1,159,075			
2046	\$1,030,000	\$125,300	\$1,155,300			
2047	\$1,070,000	\$85,150	\$1,155,150			
2048	\$1,115,000	\$43,450	\$1,158,450			
<i>Last Payment Owed in 2048</i>						
TOTAL	\$19,830,000	\$14,847,973	\$34,677,973	\$48,825,000	\$19,351,830	\$68,176,830

When the City of Salinas borrowed money via bond sales for the new Police Station and new Gabilan Library, it agreed to pay that borrowed money back to bond investors, with interest, over many years.

(and its selected subcontractors) that submits the lowest responsible bid.

In the past 30 years, the State of California has authorized alternative ways for governments to award contracts for public works projects. In a “design-build” process, a government awards one contract that incorporates both design and construction. This collaboration tends to reduce project costs and also reduces time between idea and completion.

Current trends in design-build project delivery include “Progressive Design Build” (PDB), “Construction Manager / General

Contractor” (CM/GC), and/or “Construction Manager at Risk” (CMAR). The City of Salinas used “Progressive Design Build” (PDB) for construction of the new police station and the new El Gabilan Library, and it will use PDB for the upcoming Lake Street Lift Station project. Salinas Valley Health has used “Progressive Design Build” (PDB) for projects.

State law allows governments to use subjective criteria for prequalifying contractors and awarding contracts under design-build project delivery. The lowest responsible bidder does not have to win the contract. For this reason, alternative

project delivery methods require a high level of integrity and accountability in the selection process in order to prevent cronyism, favoritism, and corruption.

Option #4 - Innovative Financing Methods for Construction Through Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)

How was the City of Salinas able to afford to build the Salinas Police Service Headquarters (the new Police Station) and the new El Gabilan Library in the late 2010s? The city used a financing method categorized as a type of “Public-Private Partnership” (P3).

In 2016, the Salinas City Council created a California nonprofit public benefit corporation called “Salinas Public Facilities Inc.” that has only one member — a private non-profit development firm called Public Facilities Group. Then, Salinas Public Facilities Inc. borrowed money to build these two projects by selling “lease-revenue bonds” to investors.

When a non-profit entity issues (that is, sells) tax-exempt bonds on behalf of a state or local government in this kind of arrangement, it is called “63-20 financing,” that is done by issuing “63-20 bonds.” (The name originates with a 1963 U.S. Treasury ruling that established criteria for such arrangements.) Investors get their principal paid back over time with interest, and that interest is exempt from federal and state taxes.

Salinas Public Facilities Inc. borrowed \$48,825,000 via lease-revenue bonds to build the new police station and must pay back \$68,176,830 in debt service (principal and interest) to bond investors by 2034. It borrowed \$19,830,000 via lease-revenue bonds to build the new El Gabilan Library and must pay back \$34,677,973 in debt service to bond investors by 2048.

The City of Salinas “leases” the projects from Salinas Public Facilities Inc. and pays the leases using Measure E and Measure G sales tax revenue. Then, the lease payments are used by Salinas Public Facilities Inc. to pay back principal, with interest, to bond investors.

Is there potential for the City of Salinas and non-profit entities or private companies to enter into more P3 type-arrangements for infrastructure projects? Your Chamber has ideas about how P3s could encourage development of hotel and hospitality projects and provide the City of Salinas with much more Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue. Contact Colleen Bailey at (831) 751-7725 or at colleen@SalinasChamber.com if you



Your Chamber was one of numerous parties involved in the City of Salinas Infrastructure Summit on June 5.

are interested in participating in this project.

Option #5 - Tax Increment Districts (TIDs)

Under TIDs, taxing authorities (such as cities and counties) designate a specific geographic area as a special district for infrastructure development. Property taxes assessed for that district at that time are established as a standard base rate. As the property is developed and its value goes up, the base rate remains the same for the taxing authorities, while the “incremental” increase in tax assessments is diverted to a separate fund. Then, that fund is used to pay directly for infrastructure projects in that district and/or pay back money borrowed for such projects.

In 2023, the City of Salinas created a specific type of Tax Increment District (TID) called an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD). The California legislature authorized EIFDs following the 2012 dissolution of California’s redevelopment agencies, including the Salinas Redevelopment Agency.

Your Chamber expected this

EIFD would help finance improvement and expansion of the city’s Industrial Wastewater Treatment and Conveyance System to serve agricultural processing facilities. In a letter to the city council, your Chamber stated that it “supports the formation of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) to fund backbone infrastructure at the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center (SAIC), provided that development within the EIFD conforms to the Economic Development Element of the General Plan.”

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors must approve the City of Salinas EIFD. It approved an EIFD for the City of Gonzales in 2021, but has not acted to approve the Salinas EIFD.

Option #6 - Value Capture Zoning®

Earlier issues of the Business Journal have reported that the City of Salinas has adopted 15 “specific plans” since 1988 for land use. The keynote speaker at the Infrastructure Summit — Larry Kosmont of Kosmont Companies — argued that state laws allowing

“density bonuses” to developers should spur cities and counties to abandon specific plans and instead adopt new zoning strategies to make money from these laws.

Density bonuses allow higher numbers of units and smaller numbers of parking spaces and are meant to entice developers into including more affordable units in their projects. Kosmont encouraged the City of Salinas to take advantage of density bonuses and consider using a “Value Capture Zoning®” strategy, trademarked by Kosmont Companies.

“Value Capture” is the concept of municipalities adopting financing strategies to obtain more revenue when property values increase following infrastructure improvements. Common methods for value capture in California are developer impact fees, community benefit districts (such as the Salinas Downtown Community Benefit District), or tax increment financing (as described above). Kosmont Companies proposes expanding the value capture concept to zoning.

INFRASTRUCTURE see page 15



EXHIBITION - from page 1

Mexican magical realism. Curated by Carlo Magno Pedro, the exhibition features works by Angélico Jiménez, Efraín Fuentes, Margarito Melchor, María Jiménez, Giovanni Melchor, and Constantino Blas, with project direction by Romain Greco.

Averaging 15 feet in height, these whimsical, larger-than-life sculptures are equipped with strategically placed solar lighting, allowing their intricate craftsmanship to be appreciated both day and night.

Alebrijes y Nahuales has toured internationally, appearing in major cities such as Paris, New York, and Chicago, and has drawn significant public attention at every stop. Notably, the exhibition attracted more than two million visitors during its 2025 installation at Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco.

In partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, and funded by the Salinas Public Arts Commission, the City of Salinas will bring this extraordinary exhibition to Salinas with a grand opening on July 31, at Northridge Mall, which will host three of the eight

sculptures.

On Aug. 7, an exhibition of an extensive collection of Alebrijes from Oaxaca will open at One Main Street as part of the Arts Council for Monterey County's First Friday programming and thanks to a partnership with Hartnell College Foundation and the National Steinbeck Center. This exhibition will be curated by JC Gonzales, the Founder and Artistic Director of Urban Arts Collective. The exhibition's closing ceremony will occur on Sept. 4.

The exhibition is expected to serve as a powerful driver of cultural tourism while celebrating and elevating the heritage of Salinas' largest demographic—residents with roots in Mexico. The exhibition run (July 31–Sept. 4, 2026) will include educational programming, interactive activities for all ages, and abundant opportunities for photography and community engagement thanks to a variety of organizations across Salinas.

For more information, including a map of the exhibition sites and planned activities, please visit: Salinaschamber.com/alebrijes-y-nahuales. 🌿

Alebrijes y Nahuales has toured internationally, appearing in major cities such as Paris, New York, and Chicago. . . attracting more than two million visitors during its 2025 installation at Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco.

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TO
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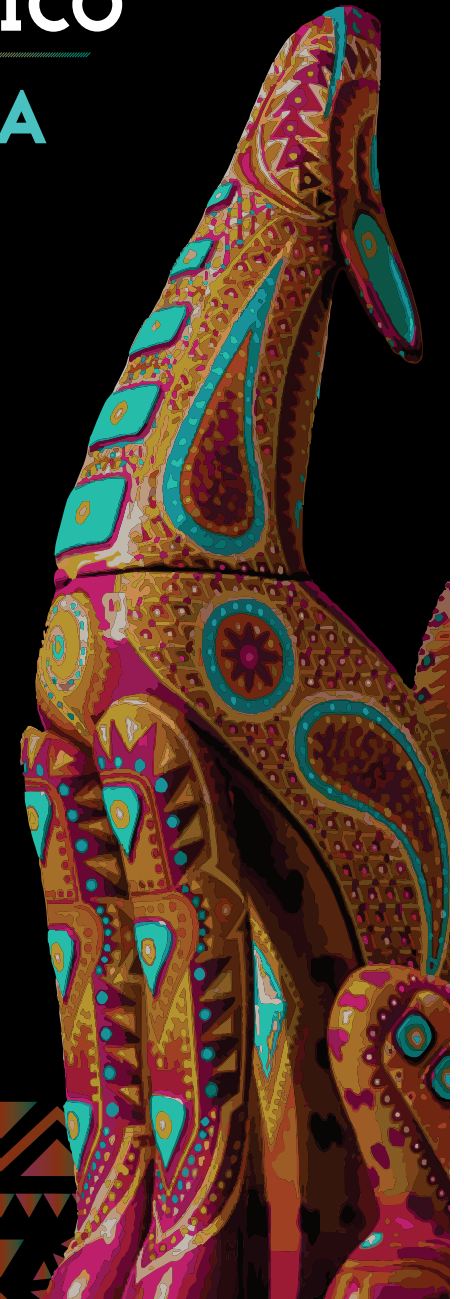
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The Legacy We Build in the Summer

By Dr. T.K. Anderson, Senior Pastor, Compass Church

When I was a kid, summer had a certain smell to it. It smelled like fresh-cut grass, sunscreen, barbecue smoke, and whatever had been sitting too long in the backseat of the family car. If your family ever took a summer road trip without air conditioning, you know exactly what I'm talking about. That was not a vacation. That was sanctification. But I loved it. Some of my best childhood memories were not expensive. They were not complicated. They were not carefully scheduled with color-coded spreadsheets and online reservations. They were simple. A picnic. A backyard sprinkler. A ballgame at Wrigley. A drive to somewhere that felt far away, even if it was only an hour down the road. A cooler packed with sandwiches. A dad who insisted he knew where he was going. A mom who quietly knew he did not.



Graduations. Weddings. Milestones. Awards. But more often than not, legacy is built in the small moments we almost miss.

It's built around the dinner table, the road trip, the walk after sunset, or while sitting in a lawn chair watching kids run around with sticky fingers and unlimited energy. It's built when we put down the phone, look someone we love in the eye, and remind them they matter.

The Bible tells us in Psalm 127:3, "Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him." That verse is a beautiful reminder that family is not an interruption to the life we are trying to build. Family is one of the greatest parts of the life God has given us.

And summer gives us a gift. It gives us a change of pace.

Now, let's be honest. Summer is not always restful. Sometimes it feels like we replace one kind of

busyness with another. School is out, schedules shift, travel plans get expensive, and somebody always forgets to pack the one thing everyone needs. Usually, me.

But even in the middle of all that, summer invites us to slow down long enough to remember what matters most.

Jesus understood the importance of rest. Mark 6:31 says, "Then Jesus said, 'Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.'" If Jesus needed time away, we probably should not pretend we are stronger than He was.

Time with family is not wasted time. It is legacy time.

Some of the strongest families I know are not strong because everything is perfect. They are strong because somewhere along the way, they learned to be present. They

learned to laugh together. They learned to forgive quickly. They learned to create memories, even when life was busy, messy, and unpredictable.



We often assume legacy is built in the big moments. Graduations. Weddings. Milestones. Awards. But more often than not, legacy is built in the small moments we almost miss.'

So, this July, I hope you will take the trip. Eat the watermelon. Watch the sunset. Let the kids stay up a little later. Call your parents. Visit your grandparents. Sit on the porch. Tell the old stories. Make a few new ones.

Because years from now, your family may not remember every detail. They may not remember what you bought them. They may not remember the schedule. But they will remember how they felt when they were with you.

They will remember the laughter, warmth, love, and legacy.

My prayer for you this month is simple.

Lord, I pray for every person and every family reading this today. In the middle of a busy summer, would You give them moments of true rest and restoration? Help them slow down, breathe deeply, laugh freely, and love intentionally. Strengthen marriages. Heal strained relationships. Bless parents, children, grandparents, and friends. May this summer not just be filled with activity, but with memories that become part of a lasting family legacy. In Jesus' name, amen.

May God bless you and your family this July. 🌿



MEMBER NEWS



Arts4MC Announces the 2026/2027 Monterey County Youth Poet Laureate

The Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) is proud to announce Anton MacLachlan of Pacific Grove High School as the 2026/2027 Monterey County Youth Poet Laureate (YPL). Anton officially begins his one-year term on July 1, during which he will participate in countywide events, promote poetry and literacy, and receive a \$1,000 honorarium.

Applicants for the Youth Poet Laureate program submitted a resume, statements on civic engagement and social justice, and five original poems. A distinguished panel of judges evaluated submissions based on content, theme, voice, structure, and community impact.

This year's panel included Dr. Chrissy Hernandez, poet and professor; Marie Boucher, Monterey County Poet Laureate; and Jesus Valenzuela, Community Schools Coordinator for Steinbeck Elementary School in Salinas.

In addition to Anton's recognition, Arts4MC acknowledges runner-up Asia Bonney of Carmel High School and Merani Navarro Delgadillo of North Monterey County High School. Honorable Mentions were also awarded to Alina Milet Alvarez Lepe of North Salinas High School, Victoria Nuñez-Lazaro of Big Sur, and Emory Teta of York School.

"Our youth carry powerful stories, perspectives, and creativity that deserve to be heard," said Jacquie Atchison, Executive Director of Arts4MC. "The Youth Poet Laureate program creates opportunities for young people to share their voices, inspire empowering conversations, and strengthen community through storytelling, creativity, and connection."

Throughout his term, Anton will collaborate with current Monterey County Poet Laureate Marie Boucher, to organize and participate in events and presentations that promote poetry, spoken word, and youth expression throughout the county.



First Tee – Monterey County Names Paulina Valdez as Marketing Manager to Advance Youth Development Mission

First Tee – Monterey County has appointed Paulina Valdez as Marketing Manager, strengthening the organization's commitment to expanding its reach and deepening community understanding of its youth development mission.

Valdez brings more than a decade of global experience in brand strategy, creative direction, and marketing execution, with a career rooted in connecting organizations to their audiences through meaningful storytelling and high-impact campaigns.

"Paulina understands that marketing, when done well, is about connection and purpose," said Nathan Nuñez, Director of Development for First Tee – Monterey County. "Her ability to translate our mission into compelling, authentic storytelling will help more people understand the impact of our programs and why investing in young people matters."

Valdez's experience spans the United States, Mexico, and Europe, where she has led creative direction, developed brand identities, and produced marketing campaigns for a range of organizations and industries. Valdez studied Art and Technology at Monterey Peninsula College and holds a bachelor's degree with honors from Universidad Anáhuac in Querétaro, Mexico.

For more information about First Tee – Monterey County, visit firstteemontereycounty.org or contact Paulina Valdez at pvaldez@firstteemontereycounty.org.



Monterey Regional Airport and United Airlines Launch Nonstop Service to Chicago

It was a fun and festive celebration welcoming new nonstop flights between Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) and Chicago on United Airlines over Memorial Day weekend. Guests included U.S. Rep. Jimmy Panetta; MPAD board members; airline administrative staff and flight crew members; Monterey region tourism representatives; regional city council members and mayors; local chambers of commerce representatives; MRY administrative staff; and local residents and business owners. Chicago was previously the No. 1 requested destination by Monterey region locals and visitors.



The California Rodeo Salinas Honors Seven Scholarship Recipients

The California Rodeo Salinas is proud to recognize seven outstanding scholarship recipients for 2026. This program was developed with Hartnell College in 1986 and recently transitioned to the Community Foundation for Monterey County. The Rodeo is proud to assist these students, who eagerly pursue educational opportunities, with most planning to return to this community and contribute in the future. The Rodeo extends special thanks to Esther Figueroa and the Community Foundation for Monterey County and the California Rodeo Salinas' Scholarship Advisory Committee for helping select this year's impressive group of students. Recipients include Laura Elizabeth Hodges, a USC occupational therapy student and longtime Rodeo volunteer; Keegan Marie Naval, a nursing student balancing school, work, motherhood, and extensive volunteer service; and Brayden Michael McVay, a Fresno State Ag Business major active in FFA, community service, and Rodeo maintenance projects.

Also honored were Erick Joshua Oviedo Terrazas, a Hartnell civil engineering student balancing rigorous STEM coursework with multiple jobs while supporting his family; Citlalli Garcia, a nursing student passionate about improving healthcare access for underserved communities; Jake Patrick McTighe, a Cal Poly accounting student and Rodeo Banking Committee volunteer with more than 400 hours of community service; and Bailey Ryan Casarez, an aspiring animal science major whose leadership in FFA and dedication to cattle care impressed the scholarship committee.

The California Rodeo Salinas congratulates all seven recipients and looks forward to seeing the positive impact they will continue to have on their communities and careers.



Hartnell College Commencement Will Highlight Record-Breaking Growth and Historic First Bachelor's Degrees

Hartnell Community College District celebrated the academic achievements of the Class of 2026 during its commencement ceremony on Friday, May 22, 2026, at Rabobank Stadium. The ceremony included the official conferring of degrees by Superintendent/President Michael Gutierrez and honored more than 2,347 students who petitioned to graduate, marking the largest graduating class in the college's 105-year history.

This year, the college awarded more than 2,120 degrees and more than 1,460 certificates of achievement, reflecting continued growth in student success and completion.

"For the first time in Hartnell's history, we are celebrating graduates earning bachelor's degrees, marking a significant milestone for our institution," said Gutierrez. "This commencement represents achievement, opportunity, and the impact community colleges have in our communities."

By the numbers: Class of 2026 Highlights:

- More than 2,120 degrees awarded
- More than 1,460 certificates of achievement awarded
- 65 valedictorians earned a perfect 4.0 GPA
- 1,013 students are graduating with honors
- Seven students will become the first in Hartnell history to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Respiratory Care

Among this year's graduates was 17-year-old dual-enrollment student Valeria Beltran, the college's youngest graduate, who is earning an associate degree in general studies summa cum laude. Hartnell's oldest graduates this year are both 67 years old.



'80s Neon, a \$100,000 Hole-in-One Challenge, and a Mission to Support Foster Youth: The 3rd Annual K&D Classic Returns

K&D Landscaping is celebrating 40 years on the Central Coast by bringing an '80s theme and a \$100,000 hole-in-one challenge to the 3rd Annual K&D Classic. Set for Friday, Aug. 28, 2026, at Seascape Golf Club in Aptos, 100% of the tournament's proceeds will directly benefit CASA of Monterey County. CASA of Monterey County trains community volunteers to advocate for children navigating the foster care and juvenile justice systems. These volunteers step in to support vulnerable youth through the court system, ensuring they have a consistent adult in their corner. To honor the company's 1986 founding, the event will embrace a full 1980s theme. Golfers are encouraged to wear neon, headbands, and windbreakers, with prizes awarded for the best individual and team costumes. The tournament also features a \$100,000 prize for a hole-in-one on a designated hole, offering a high-stakes moment for the field. The day runs as a shotgun scramble and includes lunch, a sit-down dinner, swag bags, drink tickets, and competitive payouts. Additional contests include the longest drive, closest to the pin, and fastest round. Registration is open with limited spots available. Tickets are \$175 per golfer. To register or explore sponsorship opportunities, visit EventCaddy.





Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our July renewing Members. Please help keep the Salinas Valley strong by doing business with companies that support the Chamber.

Member Name	Member Since	Member Name	Member Since
California International Airshow	1982	StoneBridge Homes, Inc.	2019
CLA CliftonLarsonAllen LLP Salinas	1982	West Coast Community Bank	2019
Central Valley Seeds Inc	<i>*40 Years*</i> 1986	Looking for Space	2021
Monterey County Business Council	1997	Spiffy Cleaning Services	2021
Monterey Credit Union - Monterey	2000	Swenson Builders	2021
Interim Inc	2002	Monterey Touring Vehicles; Classic Car Rentals & Experiences	2022
Naturipe Berry Growers	2003	Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects	2022
DataFlow Business Systems	<i>*20 Years*</i> 2006	MPWMD	2023
Ag Land Trust	2008	Paper Tacos®	2023
Salinas City Elementary School District	2008	Silva Injury Law, Inc.	2023
Girls Inc of the Central Coast	2012	Comerica Bank	2024
McWherter's Jewelers & Gemologist LLC	2014	Digital NEST	2024
California Strawberry Commission	2015	Elevo Learning	2024
Holiday Seed Company	2015	American Energy Partners	2025
MommieRazzi Photography	2015	Ames Family Trust	2025
Door to Hope	<i>*20 Years*</i> 2016	Carlito's Crispn' Chicken & Bar	2025
IMPOWER Inc	2018	Cre's BBQ & Soul Food	2025
Ocean Mist Farms	2018	Hidden Hills Ranch	2025
Balance Physical Therapy & Human Performance Centers	2019	M.I.D Moving and Storage Inc.	2025
Planet Fitness	2019	Mike's Auto Sales	2025
Salinas Union High School District	2019	Tactical Flow Meter	2025

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VISIONARY AND STAKEHOLDER MEMBERS





Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our June renewing Members. Please help keep the Salinas Valley strong by doing business with companies that support the Chamber.

Member Name	Member Since	Member Name	Member Since
KSBW 8 (NBC) · Central Coast ABC · Estrella TV Central Coast	1970	Monterey County for Energy Independence	2021
Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss - Salinas	1983	Wonder Wood Ranch	2021
Salinas Valley Health	1984	Carmel Realty Company	2022
Natividad Medical Foundation	1993	Universal Staffing Inc.	2022
Taylor Fresh Foods	1997	Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association	2023
Costco Wholesale Corp	1999	Arbon Equipment Corporation	2023
iHeartMedia - KDON-KPRC-KOCN-KTOM-KION	1999	Benitez Security Services, Inc.	2023
AquaBlue Skin & Body Spa Inc	2003	CAL Property Management	2023
Bay and Basin Insurance Agency	2010	Jay Nolan Community Services	2023
Monterey County Sheriff's Advisory Council	2011	Youth on Course	2024
Greenfield Village, LLC	2014	BNI Central Coast Connection	2025
Lowell Farms	2015	Church Brothers Farms	2025
Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino *10 Years*	2016	EB5 Investors Magazine	2025
Earth Systems Pacific	2017	Ippolito International LP	2025
Grupo Flor/East of Eden	2017	Live For Ross	2025
LC1 Productions	2017	MET Multiservices	2025
HUB International Insurance Services	2018	Monterey Peninsula Surgery Center	2025
Portola Hotel & Spa	2018	Salinas Valley Tire	2025
El Pajaro Community Development Corporation	2019	Skin by Karina	2025
Mag One Media	2021	True Organic Products	2025

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VISIONARY AND STAKEHOLDER MEMBERS 





CHAMBER NEW MEMBER PROFILES

Nurbli LLC

Nurbli LLC is a trusted interpretation services platform offering on-site and on-demand access to professionally vetted interpreters for schools, nonprofits, and community organizations—with particular expertise in indigenous and underserved languages, including Triqui, Mixteco, and Spanish. Through their mobile app, staff can reach an interpreter in moments, ensuring vital information reaches every family regardless of language or literacy level. Founded after the 2023 Pájaro floods revealed how emergency alerts were failing to reach non-English-speaking families, Nurbli exists to ensure every family can understand and be understood—regardless of language. *Nurbli.com, benito@nurbli.com, (831) 774-1837*



Antone Mercurio LLC

Antone Mercurio LLC specializes in comprehensive financial planning for individuals, families, and business owners. Their approach combines investment management, retirement planning, and estate strategies, working closely with clients' attorneys and CPAs to create cohesive financial solutions. Their philosophy is simple and straightforward: financial advice is part numbers, part hospitality. Every client deserves both strategic expertise and exceptional service. Specialties:

- Retirement planning & consulting
- Investment management
- Estate planning
- Business owner solutions
- Risk management
- Tax-efficient strategies

The Financial Advisors of Antone Mercurio LLC are Registered Representatives and Investment Adviser Representatives with/and offer securities and advisory services through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. Fixed insurance products and services are separate from and not offered through Commonwealth. Antone Mercurio CA Insurance Lic# 0B68606. Francisco Arevalo CA Insurance Lic# 4215987. 2100 Garden Road, Suite A203, Monterey. *Antonemercurio.com, francisco@antonemercurio.com, (831) 717-3158*

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Brent Eastman Insurance Services Inc

Since 1985, Brent Eastman has been committed to providing superior insurance products and services to the Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito County regions. BEI is one of the largest employee benefit brokerage firms in the Central Coast area. BEI is an independent insurance brokerage specializing in employee benefits and was established in 2005. This independence and local ownership provides immediate decision-making authority that enables their firm to provide a high level of service to a diversity of clients. *Bretheastman.com, sam@bretheastman.com, (831) 320-4829*



Jenseregos.ai

Jenseregos.ai helps mid-market and enterprise leaders adopt AI strategically, ethically, and with confidence. Founder Jen Seregos works directly with C-suite and executive teams to build AI adoption roadmaps, design custom automation, and turn AI from a source of anxiety into a competitive advantage. The work runs on one principle: technology should give people their humanity back, not take it away. *Jenseregos.ai, jen@athena-digital.com, 831-521-1501*



MBAIA (Monterey Bay AI Association)

The Monterey Bay AI Association (MBAIA) is the region's hub for workforce AI literacy and ethical AI adoption. A membership-based association serving Monterey Bay businesses, nonprofits, public agencies, and educational institutions, MBAIA delivers education, credentialing, and a peer community for organizations navigating AI in the workplace. MBAIA is the first regional chapter of The AI Literacy Association. *Mbaia.org, jen@athena-digital.com, (831) 521-1501*



Accessible Support!

Counseling Service



Since 1957, Family Service Agency of the Central Coast has strengthened the community by providing compassionate counseling for people of all ages, identities, and backgrounds navigating life's challenges.

Please reach out for support if you are experiencing depression, anxiety, grief, job loss, parenting stress, relationship concerns, family conflict, or other difficult life circumstances.

Our Service:

- ✓ Bilingual counseling services
- ✓ Affordable counseling for people of all ages, identities, and backgrounds
- ✓ Accepts Medi-Cal through Central California Alliance for Health and Medicare
- ✓ Low-cost sliding scale fee available

Contact Us Now!



Our Phone
(831) 423-9444



Our Website
fsa-cc.org

July Shaping Up to be One of Most Exciting Months of the Year in Monterey County

July is bringing a full slate of summer fun around the Salinas Valley, with something for every kind of fan, family, and visitor. From celebrating the 250th birthday of America and world-class motorcycle racing to California's largest rodeo, live soccer, and community watch parties, the month is shaping up to be one of the most exciting times of the year to get out and enjoy the region.

The month begins with celebrations across the county. Compass Church's Celebrate America event returns to the Salinas Sports Complex on Saturday, July 4,

offering a free family-friendly celebration with food trucks, carnival rides, bounce houses, live entertainment, and a patriotic program.

The evening will conclude with the largest fireworks displays in the county, making it a family-friendly way to celebrate Independence Day close to home.

South County will also be celebrating in classic Salinas Valley

Whether cheering for the men's football club, supporting the Sirens women's club, or gathering with friends to watch the World Cup, soccer continues to be a community connector in Monterey County.

King City's annual fireworks show is scheduled for the evening of July 3 at the Stampede Grounds at the Salinas Valley Fairgrounds, followed by the July 4th parade through downtown King City the next morning. Together, these long-standing events continue to bring residents, businesses, and families together in the heart of the valley.

For those on the coast,

Monterey's Fourth of July festivities will offer a full day of celebration, including the annual parade through Old Monterey, the Big 4th of July Celebration and Backyard Food Fest at Colton Hall, and a variety of family activities throughout the historic downtown area. Monterey County Pops! will also help set the tone for the holiday weekend with live patriotic music, adding another festive option for residents and visitors.

The following weekend, racing fans can head to WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca for the

JULY see page 25

INFRASTRUCTURE - from page 7

For example, the City of Salinas would create a land use zone in an area already identified for future housing in its current 6th Cycle Housing Element but outside an existing specific plan area. The city would assign favorable density conditions in this zone to give housing developers an opportunity to make more money. Then the city would grant the density zoning to itself and put it in an account called a "Development Opportunity Reserve" — a concept also trademarked by Kosmont Companies. Finally, the city would sell its density zoning to housing developers and use proceeds from that trade to pay for infrastructure.

Option #7 - Borrowing Money from the Community Rather Than Wall Street

Institutional banks, pension funds, insurance companies, and wealthy individuals are major buyers of municipal revenue bonds. They're not buying bonds issued by the City of Salinas because they

love Salinas; they buy them because the interest earned is tax-exempt and the investment is relatively low risk.

But what if the City of Salinas borrowed money from institutions and people in Salinas, so that returns on investment would stay in Salinas rather than going to Wall Street? One speaker at the Infrastructure Summit proposed an "impact finance" or "community capital" project to do that.

Under this model, local foundations, corporations, wealthy residents, and even other governments could lend money directly to the City of Salinas. They would be willing to accept a potentially lower rate of return than they would expect from routine types of investments.

To some extent, this investment idea is already exercised in Salinas. Notably, Taylor Fresh Foods has purchased and renovated Downtown Salinas properties with the expectation that the investments may have a low rate of return or may even lose money at times.

Your Chamber of Commerce

and local foundations and companies are investigating the feasibility of this kind of financing in Salinas. Contact Colleen Bailey at (831) 751-7725 or at colleen@SalinasChamber.com if you are interested in participating in this project.

While not mentioned at the Infrastructure Summit, several U.S. municipal governments have considered programs for smaller investors to engage in impact finance, specifically through blockchain technology to issue "microbonds." In 2024, the City of Quincy, Mass. became the first U.S. municipality to sell tax-exempt municipal bonds when it used blockchain technology to borrow \$10 million for street and sidewalk improvements. The City of Berkeley has also considered issuing blockchain microbonds.

Locally, in the mid-2010s a former Monterey city councilmember encouraged the city to consider issuing blockchain microbonds, which did not happen. However, he was able to get the ComCap community capital national conference to be held in the City of Monterey

in 2017. Perhaps some Business Journal readers attended that conference nine years ago and would support implementation by the City of Salinas of impact financing and community capital ideas.

An Option Not Considered at the Conference

Your Chamber is aware of another option supported by some community members: do not raise or spend any additional money to build new, expanded, or improved infrastructure. Instead, limit infrastructure construction solely to maintaining what is already built.

This option would supposedly improve quality of life by naturally perpetuating the city's slow population decline, inhibiting economic development, and limiting taxes. While some residents may believe in "no-growth" or "de-growth" as desirable visions for the region's future, the Chamber believes it would hinder the Chamber's official vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families and businesses succeed via economic growth and opportunity." 🌱



Salinas Valley
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PRESENTS

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RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Member Orientation

New and prospective members attended the Chamber's quarterly Member Orientation, where they learned how to maximize membership benefits, get involved in Chamber programs and events, and explore opportunities to promote their businesses. Attendees left with valuable resources, gained insight into Chamber offerings, and had the opportunity to ask questions and connect with fellow members.



Lunch and Learn with MCSC Women's Business Center and Pacific Community Ventures

Patti Fox, Director of MCSC Women's Business Center highlighted a variety of no-cost services available to entrepreneurs, including business development workshops, business planning courses, and one-on-one consultations with experienced business advisors. Their partner, Pacific Community Ventures, shared information on funding opportunities, resources, and support programs designed to help small business owners in underserved communities grow and succeed.



California Rodeo Salinas & Monterey Regional Airport Chamber Mixer

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the California Rodeo Salinas & Monterey Regional Airport Joint Chamber Mixer. We partnered with the Monterey Peninsula Chamber for an evening of networking, community connection, and excitement as we kick off the countdown to Big Week. The California Rodeo Salinas is one of the top 10 professional rodeos in the U.S. and the largest in California, and gives back over \$700,000 each year to local nonprofits.



Lunch Connect with The Valley Restaurant and Catering

Members gathered at The Valley Restaurant and Catering for a Lunch Connect, enjoying an informal and relaxed networking opportunity during the lunch hour. Attendees introduced themselves and their businesses, and built new professional connections while supporting a local member business.



Junior Chamber Mixer at Monterey Bay FC

Junior Chamber members enjoyed an exciting evening of networking and soccer at the Junior Chamber Mixer hosted during a match with Monterey Bay FC. Attendees had the opportunity to build relationships, connect with fellow professionals, meet the players, and enjoy the game in a fun atmosphere. We extend our sincere gratitude to Monterey Bay FC for their hospitality and for providing a memorable experience for our members.



Getty Images

Quantifying Local Progress in Planning for New Housing

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

This issue of the Business Journal includes an exclusive table showing the progress of the 12 cities in Monterey County and the County of Monterey (within unincorporated county areas) toward their Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals. These goals for the cities and the county are defined in their 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Housing Elements, which are part of their General Plans.

Your Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison compiled this information for Business Journal readers and the public by obtaining the Housing Element Annual Progress Reports produced by the 13 Monterey County governments. These reports are submitted each year to the California Department of Housing and Community

Development (HCD).

The Business Journal table shows the number of residential building permits issued by each local government for each completed calendar year, with the permitted units categorized by affordability for income categories (Very Low-Income, Low-Income, Moderate-Income, and Above Moderate-Income). These numbers are found in Table B of the Annual Progress Report. Note that permits do not

necessarily mean the residential units will be built and occupied in the end.

Housing Elements and Annual Progress Reports are public documents that should be easily accessible on the websites of the cities and the county. They are excellent primary source documents for the public to get comprehensive and accurate information about the status of housing and housing development in the cities and the county.

to the RHNA goals in the Housing Element.

Housing Elements and Annual

California law requires every city and county to plan adequately for the housing needs of the community for all income levels. To determine if a city or county is making a credible effort toward this end, HCD compares the number of issued permits

Progress Reports are public documents that should be easily accessible on the websites of the cities and the county. They are excellent primary source documents for the public to get comprehensive and accurate information about the status of housing and housing development in the cities and the county.

Your Chamber of Commerce supports the construction of more residential units for households of all income categories in Salinas, the Salinas Valley, and Monterey County. Obviously, this continues to be a challenge. However, this table shows successes in some local jurisdictions for some types of housing.

Let your city council members or county supervisors know that you saw this table and that you care about increasing the supply of housing for ordinary households. 🌱

Cities + Unincorporated County	Income Category	Goal for Units	2023 Projection Period (6/30-12/14)	2023 (12/15-12/31)	2024	2025	2026 through 2031	Total Units for Cycle	Shortfall of Units	% of Units Achieved
CARMEL	Very Low	113	0	0	0	0	-	0	113	0%
	Low	74	0	0	0	0	-	0	74	0%
	Moderate	44	0	0	0	0	-	0	44	0%
	Above Moderate	118	0	0	22	23	-	45	73	38%
	Total	349	0	0	22	23	-	45	304	13%
DEL REY OAKS	Very Low	60	0	0	0	0	-	0	60	0%
	Low	38	0	0	2	2	-	4	34	11%
	Moderate	24	1	0	1	2	-	4	20	17%
	Above Moderate	62	0	0	0	1	-	1	61	2%
	Total	184	1	0	3	5	-	9	175	5%
GONZALES	Very Low	173	0	0	0	0	-	0	173	0%
	Low	115	0	0	0	0	-	0	115	0%
	Moderate	321	0	0	0	0	-	0	321	0%
	Above Moderate	657	1	0	1	18	-	20	637	3%
	Total	1,266	1	0	1	18	-	20	1,246	2%
GREENFIELD	Very Low	101	28	0	0	0	-	28	73	28%
	Low	66	72	0	0	0	-	72	-6	109%
	Moderate	184	15	3	23	38	-	79	105	43%
	Above Moderate	379	0	0	1	13	-	14	365	4%
	Total	730	115	3	24	51	-	193	537	26%
KING CITY	Very Low	97	0	0	0	0	-	0	97	0%
	Low	63	1	0	4	0	-	5	58	8%
	Moderate	178	0	0	0	0	-	0	178	0%
	Above Moderate	364	29	0	59	50	-	138	226	38%
	Total	702	30	0	63	50	-	93	609	13%
MARINA	Very Low	94	0	0	0	0	-	0	94	0%
	Low	62	0	0	0	0	-	0	62	0%
	Moderate	173	0	0	0	51	-	51	122	29%
	Above Moderate	356	48	7	134	97	-	286	70	80%
	Total	685	48	7	134	248	-	437	248	64%
MONTEREY	Very Low	1,177	0	0	0	0	-	0	1,177	0%
	Low	769	0	0	0	5	-	5	764	1%
	Moderate	462	0	0	0	5	-	5	457	1%
	Above Moderate	1,246	6	1	37	67	-	111	1,135	9%
	Total	3,654	6	1	37	77	-	121	3,533	3%
PACIFIC GROVE	Very Low	362	6	0	1	2	-	9	353	2%
	Low	237	6	0	5	4	-	15	222	6%
	Moderate	142	6	0	5	11	-	22	120	15%
	Above Moderate	384	2	0	0	3	-	5	379	1%
	Total	1,125	20	0	11	20	-	51	1,074	5%
SALINAS	Very Low	920	4	0	0	0	-	4	916	0%
	Low	600	2	0	0	0	-	2	598	0%
	Moderate	1,692	0	0	0	0	-	0	1,692	0%
	Above Moderate	3,462	141	1	221	221	-	584	2,878	17%
	Total	6,674	147	1	221	221	-	590	6,084	9%
SAND CITY	Very Low	59	0	0	0	0	-	0	59	0%
	Low	39	0	0	0	0	-	0	39	0%
	Moderate	49	0	0	0	0	-	0	49	0%
	Above Moderate	113	1	0	0	0	-	1	112	1%
	Total	260	1	0	0	0	-	1	259	0%
SEASIDE	Very Low	86	0	0	0	0	-	0	86	0%
	Low	55	0	0	0	0	-	0	55	0%
	Moderate	156	0	0	0	33	-	33	123	21%
	Above Moderate	319	44	0	8	27	-	79	240	25%
	Total	616	44	0	8	60	-	112	504	18%
SOLEDAD	Very Low	100	0	0	0	1	-	1	99	1%
	Low	65	0	6	0	2	-	8	57	12%
	Moderate	183	0	18	0	2	-	20	163	11%
	Above Moderate	376	0	0	12	70	-	82	294	22%
	Total	724	0	0	12	75	-	87	637	12%
UNINCORPORATED COUNTY	Very Low	1,070	0	0	0	4	-	4	1,066	0%
	Low	700	45	0	44	4	-	93	607	13%
	Moderate	420	0	0	0	6	-	6	414	1%
	Above Moderate	1,136	68	5	119	179	-	371	765	33%
	Total	3,326	113	5	163	193	-	474	2,852	14%
GRAND TOTAL	Very Low	4,412	38	0	1	7	-	39	4,373	1%
	Low	2,883	126	6	55	17	-	181	2,702	6%
	Moderate	4,028	22	21	29	148	-	54	3,974	1%
	Above Moderate	8,972	340	14	614	769	-	968	8,004	11%
	Total	20,295	526	41	699	941	-	2,207	18,112	11%

All Monterey County Jurisdictions Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Progress Report Through 2025 defined in 2023-2031 Housing Element (6th Cycle), compiled by jurisdiction.



What's Your Chamber's Government Relations Committee Talking About This Month?

JULY 2026

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee had 20 members at its meeting on Wednesday, June 10, as it continues to pursue your Chamber's official vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families and businesses succeed via economic growth and opportunity." Here's what they discussed:

1 Committee members informally discussed the city council's decision on June 2 to add the designation "Salinas City Heritage Park" to the Salinas Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC). Heritage Park includes four properties: the Salinas Amtrak Train Station (formerly the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot), the California Welcome Center/Salinas City Regional Heritage Center (formerly the Southern Pacific Freight Building), the First Mayor's House, and the Monterey and Salinas Valley Railroad Museum (formerly the Railway Express Agency).

However, there are concerns about "scope-creep." The State of California is encouraging mixed-use, multi-story housing development near transit centers, and the City of Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Plan and 6th Cycle Housing Element identifies parcels around the ITC as a potential location for such density development. It would be regrettable if a party used the city's historic park designation as an argument against a project during environmental review

that would be required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This proposed name change occurs at a time when Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) is considering a move of its Downtown Salinas transit center at the intersection of Salinas Street and Central Avenue to the ITC. Under this vision, numerous kinds of transit would eventually convene in one centralized Downtown location. These transit options include the future Caltrain commuter light rail extension between the San Francisco Bay Area and Monterey County, Amtrak rail service, MST buses, Greyhound and other private buses, bicycles and other personal transportation devices, pedestrian access, and ridesharing services.

The ITC is one of three proposed new locations for the MST Downtown Salinas transit center. Also under consideration are the parking lot between Church Street and Lincoln Avenue and a site on John Street where Chase Bank and Starbucks are now located. There is also an option of not moving the transit center at all.

2 At their meeting on June 2, the Salinas City Council voted to put a measure on the Nov. 3 ballot for Salinas voters to consider renewing the Measure G sales tax (Transaction and Use Tax). Measure G was originally approved on Nov. 4, 2014, when 62% of City of Salinas voters agreed to a 1.0% sales tax measure that extends for

15 years, from April 1, 2015 to April 1, 2030.

Repeating observations made at previous meetings, the committee noted that the Chamber may need to play a leadership role in the upcoming election campaign to support the renewal of Measure G. Time is short to begin developing and promoting a fact-based argument to support Measure G renewal. Ideally, the campaign to renew Measure G would include community meetings in neighborhoods throughout the city, precinct walking with campaign materials, and a comprehensive explanation of Measure G in the Business Journal and other Chamber communications.

There's a danger that Salinas voters will reject renewal of the Measure G sales tax in November, even though Measure G provides a substantial portion of the city's tax revenue. Voters rejected all three tax increases that were placed on the June 2 ballot by city councils in Monterey County. It is unknown how many other tax increases the State of California or other local or regional governments will place on the November ballot for Salinas voters to consider.

In addition, recent polls show notably less support among Monterey County voters for tax increases compared to past years. This may be a result of financial pressure on household budgets, lower tolerance for the seemingly endless parade of ballot measures for taxes, and perception that California local



governments may lack sufficient accountability for how they spend public money.

3 Committee members who attended the City of Salinas Infrastructure Summit on June 5 reported that speakers and panelists at the event presented meaningful and creative ideas for financing future city infrastructure projects. Attendees also appreciated the networking opportunities for business and community leaders who are interested in infrastructure financing and construction.

Now that the summit has happened, the key will be convincing public officials, private business owners and community leaders to investigate the ideas and try to implement the most promising among them. Your Chamber will focus on determining the feasibility of options for "impact financing" or "community capital," in which local entities would provide funding to the City of Salinas for infrastructure improvements that benefit the community.

See the article "Salinas Infrastructure Summit Introduces Intriguing Ideas for Financing and Construction" in this issue of the Business Journal.



4 The City of Salinas has organized an invitation-only meeting on June 12 to discuss how the city will address traffic impacts related to the Amazon distribution facility in South Salinas. The city contracted with a traffic consultant to produce a plan, which committee members have not yet seen.

5 Many Monterey County leaders are waiting to see what the City of Salinas will propose regarding conditions for its future participation in the Joint Powers Agreement for Monterey One Water (M1W), the regional wastewater recycling agency. More than half of the agency's wastewater comes from Salinas.

6 The Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGS) and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) held a joint workshop on May 18 about water projects. At this meeting, board members and staff of the two agencies discussed feasibility studies for projects that could fulfill state requirements to sustain Salinas Valley Basin groundwater aquifers under the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Infrastructure solutions are expensive, and there are conflicts over who should pay for the infrastructure.

7 Multiple water agencies in Monterey County participated in a joint workshop on May 20 concerning the future of the "Deep Aquifer." This is the groundwater aquifer in the Salinas Valley Basin that's located approximately 900 feet below ground level, underneath the more commonly used 180/400 Foot "Pressure" Aquifer at approximately 180 feet and 400

feet below ground level. Water officials are concerned that seawater intrusion that already compromises the quality of water in the 180/400 Foot Aquifer may also occur in the Deep Aquifer.

8 On May 19, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors approved a draft "Community Climate Action & Adaptation Plan" for public comment. The comment period on the plan opened for 60 days, starting about an hour after the committee concluded its meeting.

At a meeting of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors on May 19, staff estimated the average annual "Near-Term Implementation Cost" (2026-2030) of the plan as \$16.7 million. Implementing the plan will also require 12 1/2 full-time employees.

The Board of Supervisors is struggling to balance its budget, and committee members wondered where the county will obtain this funding. It's possible that a member of the Board of Supervisors will end up proposing that certain parties pay a special tax or fee to pay for implementation of the plan.

9 The committee was reminded of the Chamber's upcoming Salinas Valley Speaks event on Aug. 6 at Braga Ranch in Soledad. This event will feature "an essential conversation on the state of healthcare in our region" with a panel of CEOs from Mee Memorial Healthcare System, Natividad Medical Center, Montage Health, and Salinas Valley Health. Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez will be the moderator of the panel. A major topic will be how local health care systems are responding to federal, state, and local policy decisions impacting healthcare delivery.

10 The City of Salinas Community Development Department is advertising for a new position: a Chief of Planning to "lead key planning, permitting, and environmental review functions during a transformative period of growth and revitalization." According to the job description, the Chief of Planning will "oversee advanced and current planning divisions, guide major initiatives such as General Plan and Zoning Code updates, Climate Action planning, and large-scale residential and mixed-use developments, while mentoring staff and improving organizational processes." Committee members were optimistic that the right person in the position could play an important role in improving Permit Center performance.

11 As directed by the Chamber Board of Directors, the Government Affairs Liaison is working with a board member to develop a proposal for Chamber co-sponsorship of a candidate forum in fall 2026 for local elected offices (most likely Mayor of cities in the Salinas Valley and/or Salinas Mayor and City Council).

12 Committee members discussed Assembly Bill 1548 (AB 1548), which would establish a three-county regional government called the "Monterey Bay Area Stewardship Authority." It would be authorized to collect and allocate "public and private funds for purposes of restoring, enhancing, protecting, engaging in long-term stewardship, and improving access for the enjoyment of natural and working lands in the Monterey Bay region and along the region's shoreline."

Eventually, a tax (probably a flat parcel tax on properties) would

be placed on the ballot in these three counties (Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito) to provide a public funding stream for this regional agency to buy and improve properties.

There are valid arguments that can be made for this bill. The bill sponsor (Trust for Public Land, based on San Francisco) purchased Monterey County land in 2001 near Bixby Bridge (the 1,255-acre Brazil Ranch, now owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Los Padres National Forest). In 2016, Trust for Public Land purchased 140 acres of the former Rancho Cañada Golf Club in Carmel Valley. In 2024, Trust for Public Land arranged a purchase with Big Sur Land Trust for Ferrini Ranch, near Toro Park on the Highway 68 corridor.

However, committee members were alarmed that the bill's authors and the bill sponsor apparently have not contacted Monterey County local governments or any of the county's business organizations about the concept. Perhaps this was an inadvertent oversight by AB 1548 supporters as they strategize to get this bill through the legislature and signed into law. It would be a shame if supporters of AB 1548 were quietly advancing this bill because they plan to use public funds to acquire specific land parcels that undermine future projects.

The Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison has produced a list of more than a dozen proposed projects in North County, the Salinas Valley, and the Monterey Peninsula that could be complicated or hindered with carefully targeted land purchases. These projects are related to housing, water supply, hospitality, agriculture, transportation, mining, and energy. 🌱



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Chamber Liaison to Downtown Farmer's Market Passionate About Empowering Local Commerce

Brett Reed is an accomplished executive, partner, and entrepreneur with over 40 years of comprehensive leadership experience, including a proven track record of managing diverse teams of over 60 people.

His diverse professional background features more than 30 years in the building, loan, and real estate industries, alongside more than 15 years operating a dedicated consulting firm for small businesses.

Currently, Brett serves as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Soledad Chamber of Commerce, where he built the Chamber's official website. Deeply integrated into the regional business community, he also serves as the Chamber Liaison for the Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market.

In this role, Brett has driven significant digital growth, establishing the market's Instagram presence to nearly 7,000 followers and successfully acquiring the standalone domain salinasfarmersmarket.com as soon as it became available.

Brett brings a suite of specialized, data-driven tools to his organizational roles. He specializes in



Brett has driven significant digital growth, establishing the market's Instagram presence to nearly 7,000 followers and successfully acquiring the standalone domain salinasfarmersmarket.com as soon as it became available.



Brett Reed, the Chamber's liaison to the Downtown Salinas Farmer's Market.

utilizing databases and form-building to streamline operations, and he has implemented immediate-response broadcast SMS networks to provide vendors with critical weekly reminders, and public announcements.

Passionate about empowering local commerce, Brett also provides additional training and advice to vendors on building their social media presence, including developing online training videos.

Bringing a strong understanding of local politics, Brett maintains a strict, non-partisan approach to public-facing community work. He is a Certified QuickBooks Advisor with experience utilizing Xero accounting platforms, combining technical financial management with robust community leadership. 🌱

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT ISAAC HERNANDEZ



Isaac Hernandez currently serves as an Account Executive at iHeartMedia, where he works with businesses to develop strategic advertising and marketing solutions. His professional journey reflects a strong work ethic, commitment to personal growth, and passion for building meaningful relationships within the community.

Isaac began his career in the hospitality industry, working in luxury hotels throughout the Monterey Peninsula. He started as a bellman at Sanctuary Beach Resort before advancing into front desk roles at Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa and Carmel Valley Ranch. He later joined Bernardus Lodge & Spa as an Event Coordinator, where he further developed his skills in client service, event management, and communications. While working full time, Isaac also pursued higher education, attending Monterey Peninsula College and later California State University, Monterey Bay, where he earned his Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). Following graduation, Isaac transitioned into the media and advertising industry with iHeartMedia, where he continues to grow his career and help local businesses connect with their audiences.

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Leadership Training Is Everywhere — Strong Leadership Isn't

Most organizations are training leaders. Far fewer are building leadership systems that actually work.

By Jill Russell, SPHR, TPO Principal

Let's start with some hard facts. People Grow. Employers benefit.



Today's employers can no longer afford to treat developing leaders casually or inconsistently or view this foundational responsibility as occasional training or a stand-alone event.

Successful business owners and executives understand that developing leaders is as important to long-term success as sales, operations, customer service, innovation, and other core business priorities.

It is the capability, confidence, and consistency of their people that defines their competitive edge, not simply strategy, technology, or market position.

Developing leaders is about instilling consistency, accountability, communication, and confidence throughout the organization.

Because confident leaders produce:

- better decisions
- more engaged teams
- healthier workplace cultures
- stronger regulatory and HR compliance practices
- more predictable and consistent operational outcomes

Confident Leaders, Positive Outcomes

In our experience working with small to large employers across industries, the biggest challenge is not a lack of effort. It is a lack of alignment.

Supervisors, managers, and leaders are often working hard without a clear line of sight into big-picture

priorities, leadership expectations, and operational goals.

Without that clarity, leaders can struggle to know:

- what success looks like
- what they should prioritize
- how their role contributes to broader organizational goals
- whether they are truly helping accomplish those goals

As priorities blur, even capable leaders can become reactive rather than focused — spending more time putting out fires than focusing on the work that drives meaningful progress.

LEAP starts there

LEAP (Leader Enrichment Action Plan) helps employers clarify priorities, reinforce leadership expectations, and build a practical plan for strengthening the capabilities, confidence, and consistency of their people.

From there, leadership development becomes more planned, practical, and sustainable across teams and leadership levels.

Whether leaders are emerging, experienced, or expanding their responsibilities, they want to communicate well, lead effectively, support their teams, and feel confident in their role.

Through LEAP, we help you transform what can feel like a large and complicated challenge into a practical Leader Enrichment Action Plan that creates alignment, reinforces priorities, and supports leaders at every level.

The result is not only greater operational consistency across teams and stronger overall performance. Leaders themselves begin to feel more supported, more



GETTY IMAGES

accomplished, more engaged, and more invested in the success of their teams and the broader mission.

After more than 35 years working alongside employers, TPO's experts have seen the powerful impact consistent leader development can have on workplace culture, operational consistency, employee confidence, retention, and long-term success.

That experience led to the development of:

LEAP — Leader Enrichment Action Planning

LEAP is TPO's approach to helping employers strengthen, support, and develop leaders at every level. Grounded in current HR best practices and real-world leadership, LEAP helps employers:

- develop emerging leaders
- support current leaders
- sharpen advancing leaders

All are designed to support today's operational challenges and business goals.

What This Means for Your Business

By taking a more planned approach to developing leaders, you will likely begin to see:

- better communication across teams
- increased accountability and follow-through
- more confident decision-making
- improved operational consistency
- greater readiness for future leadership roles

A Local Resource for Salinas Valley Employers

As part of TPO's long-standing partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, LEAP is now being introduced to Chamber members with preferred introductory pricing.

Built from decades of experience working alongside employers across industries, LEAP helps organizations strengthen leaders in ways that create greater clarity, confidence, consistency, and support throughout. 🌱

Jill Russell, SPHR, is the Principal and Co-Founder of TPO The HR Experts, celebrating 35 years of helping employers strengthen leaders and teams through trusted HR consulting, training, and workplace investigations. For more information, visit tpohr.com.

MotoAmerica Superbike Speedfest at Monterey, July 10–12. The event brings high-speed motorcycle racing, open paddock access, and family-friendly attractions to one of the most iconic tracks in the country. With children 12 and under admitted free with a paying adult, it's a budget friendly summer outing for families.

July also marks the return of Big Week in Salinas. The California Rodeo Salinas will take place July 16–19 at the Salinas Sports Complex, continuing the city's most beloved tradition.

Before the rodeo performances begin, the annual festivities will include the Rodeo Carnival, the Big Week Kick Off Concert



Monterey Bay F.C. Union's Sam Gleadle, left, celebrates with Adrian Rebolgar after scoring a goal during a game against Colorado Springs at Cardinale Stadium on May 28. (Raul Ebio/special to The Pajaronian.)

featuring country superstar Miranda Lambert on July 11, and PRCA Xtreme Bulls on July 15. From bull riding and barrel racing

to parades, music, and community gatherings, Big Week remains one of the signature celebrations of Salinas' heritage and spirit.

Soccer fans have plenty to enjoy this summer. Monterey Bay FC has July home matches at Cardinale Stadium, including Las Vegas Lights FC on July 11 and Orange County SC on July 25.

The undefeated Monterey Bay Sirens have helped build momentum for women's soccer locally, bringing more energy and visibility to the sport across the region. Whether cheering for the men's club, supporting the Sirens, or gathering with friends to watch the World Cup, soccer continues to be a community connector in Monterey County.

World Cup excitement is part of the local July calendar. The Salinas Regional Soccer Complex hosts free, family-friendly World Cup

watch parties, including coverage during the final rounds on July 18 and 19.

With live matches on a big screen, food and drinks available for purchase, community vendors, giveaways, and a tailgate atmosphere, the events offer Salinas residents a local place to experience the global energy of the tournament.

From 4th of July fireworks and family festivals to superbikes, rodeo, and soccer, July is a reminder of how much there is to celebrate in and around the Salinas Valley. Whether you are planning a family outing, hosting guests, or looking for a new summer tradition, this month offers countless ways to connect with the community and enjoy the best of the season. 🌿

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Beyond Medicine: Salinas Valley Health Celebrates Culture, Creativity, and Connection

By Chris Haubert, Salinas Valley Health

At Salinas Valley Health, healing is taking on a new dimension — one shaped by creativity, culture, and a sense of community.

Under the leadership of Salinas Valley Health President/CEO Allen Radner, MD, the medical center has revitalized its corridors and waiting rooms, featuring artwork from local students.

The program includes pieces by students from California State University, Monterey Bay, Hartnell College, and Rancho Cielo. More than a simple exhibition, the initiative highlights the rich diversity and stories of the Salinas Valley while strengthening connections between healthcare, education, and our community.

“We had very little art in the facility. Our corridors were clean, but lacked visual interest,” said Radner. “I saw an opportunity to make the space more inviting and I wanted to do something high-quality and local. When you look at the walls now, the transformation is truly remarkable.”

The project’s vision was straightforward yet impactful: foster an environment that feels welcoming and human during life’s most challenging moments. Leaders at Salinas Valley Health recognized that patients, families, and staff all benefit from spaces that inspire comfort, reflection, and hope.

Art can be both reflective and inspiring,” Radner said. “We believed its presence here would add genuine value during some of the most difficult periods in people’s lives.”

Currently, about two dozen pieces are displayed throughout the medical center, including the Emergency Department hallway, Radiology Department, ICU waiting area, Heart Center entrance, and main lobby. Each piece tells a unique



Dayanara Silva, a Cal State Monterey Bay student and former NICU patient at Salinas Valley Health alongside her twin brother, describes her artwork “93905” on display at the medical center.



“Is This Your Card?” by Giovanni Sebastian Vasquez of Hartnell College displayed at Salinas Valley Health.



More than a simple exhibition, the initiative highlights the rich diversity and stories of the Salinas Valley while strengthening connections between healthcare, education, and our community.

story — some deeply personal, others exploring themes of identity, heritage, resilience, and belonging. Collectively, they form a visual narrative that captures the spirit of the Salinas Valley.

For student artists, the experience offers more than public recognition. Their work gains deeper purpose as they contribute to a restorative setting and share personal experiences with others.

Among them is Dayanara Silva of CSU Monterey Bay, who, along with her twin brother, was born at Salinas Valley Health and spent time in its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. This early connection adds special significance to her participation in the initiative.

“I was raised in an immigrant family and am proud of my heritage,” said Dayanara. “The tapestry of my life is part of how I present my art. I am so grateful for the chance to share my work in a place where it can connect with people in a healing environment.”

The initiative was celebrated at a recent reception that brought together students, families, educators, healthcare staff, and local supporters. The event demonstrated how collaboration between local institutions can create meaningful experiences that benefit the area as a whole.

What started as a pilot project has already surpassed expectations. With many walls still open, the medical center intends to further expand the collection and offer more opportunities for student artists to participate.

By showcasing regional talent, Salinas Valley Health has established more than an art display—it has built a living gallery of community expression. The initiative highlights how care extends beyond the physical, embracing emotional and cultural well-being while investing in the voices and talents of the people it serves.

Scan the QR code to see more of the student art on our website. 🌱



“Metamorphosis of the Heart” by Ximena Lucio of Rancho Cielo on display at SVH.



Scan for more student art at Salinas Valley Health.

Common Roadblocks to Completing a Financial Plan

By **Bill Hastie**, Hastie Financial Group

Most people agree that a financial plan provides peace of mind seeing a carefully drafted path to achieving their goals. Virtually every aspect of their financial life is reviewed and recommendations provided seeking to help maximize the return on their investments at their acceptable risk level, reduce risk exposure of their lives and assets, and reduce exposure to undue taxation.

A completed financial plan can provide significant peace of mind, but getting the plan to completion can be quite challenging. We will discuss some of the most common roadblocks and how to best overcome them.

The dreaded financial planning questionnaire

It's not unusual for financial advisors to experience a client who is highly motivated to retain the advisor to draft a comprehensive financial plan. After signing a planning contract and receiving the required disclosures, the advisor provides the client with an extensive questionnaire.

Typically, this type of questionnaire seeks both quantitative and qualitative information about the client. Quantitative information includes family and other personal data, assets owned, debts and other items that usually appear on the client's balance sheet — and is usually the easiest information to gather.

Qualitative information, on the other hand, includes the client's financial and personal goals, timing of achieving those goals, and other topics such as guardianship of minor children in the event of the parents' premature death.

Needless to say, this information is far more challenging to gather because it deals with feelings, values and emotions, and can be the number-one deterrent to completing the financial planning process.



Marital disagreement

Because this process is extremely personal, some topics addressed may bring up issues on which the couple does not agree. For example, determining guardianship of minor children should the couple pass away together can be a serious hot button issue. This is a critical aspect of the couple's estate planning which is an extremely important part of the overall financial planning process. Additionally, determining custodianship of assets left for the benefit of the children can create the same type of hot button issue.

Disorganization

One of the many benefits of the financial planning process is becoming very organized with regard to assets, documents, etc. But to complete the planning questionnaire, there must already be some degree of organization. When the clients don't know what assets they have or where to locate them, the planning process comes to a stop. Getting an understanding of what assets and liabilities are involved is a critical beginning step towards plan completion.

The solution

One way to avoid the financial planning process from stalling at the questionnaire is to first meet with the financial advisor and discuss the planning process and what it entails, especially the qualitative data that will be needed. This provides the client with the time to make many decisions about their future before beginning the financial planning process. This can help prevent delays in completing the financial planning process. 🌱

Bill Hastie, MBA, CFP®, CIMA®, AIFA®, is a Financial Advisor and Managing Partner with locally owned Hastie Financial Group and can be contacted at william.hastie@hastiefg.com.

'One of the many benefits of the financial planning process is becoming very organized with regard to assets, documents, etc. But to complete the planning questionnaire, there must already be some degree of organization.'


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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Lunch Connect with Raising Cane's**

Wednesday, July 1, 12:00– 1:30 p.m., 900 Northridge Mall, Salinas

Join us on Wednesday, July 1, from 12 – 1:30 p.m. at Raising Cane's for our Chamber Lunch Connect series — a great opportunity to meet fellow Chamber members, network in a relaxed setting, and enjoy a delicious meal. Don't miss this fun way to connect with your business community and support member restaurants!

- **CHISPA Announces Mills Ranch Groundbreaking Ceremony**

Wednesday, July 15, 10:00 a.m., Site F, 260 Legacy Drive, King City

CHISPA has announced that construction has officially begun on Mills Ranch Apartments in King City. After several years of planning and assembling the necessary financing, this important affordable housing development is now underway.

Mills Ranch Apartments will provide 40 affordable two- and three-bedroom apartments across five parcels within the Mills Ranch Subdivision. Thirty of the apartments will be reserved for farmworker families, helping address the critical need for affordable housing in South Monterey County.

Funding for the project includes a construction loan from U.S. Bank, tax credit equity from National Equity Fund, funding from the State of California, Central California Alliance for Health (the Alliance), and the City of King City. Upon completion, Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation will serve as the permanent lender. RSVP at SalinasChamber.com.

- **Ribbon-Cutting Celebration: Salinas Valley Chamber Foundation Assumes Management of the Salinas Farmer's Market**

Saturday, July 25, 9–10 a.m., 300 block of Main Street, Salinas

Join us as we celebrate an exciting new chapter for one of our community's most cherished traditions! The Salinas Valley Chamber Foundation is proud to officially assume management of the Salinas Farmer's Market. We invite community members, business leaders, and supporters to join us in celebrating the occasion and for honoring Oldtown Salinas Foundation's years of service. This special ribbon-cutting ceremony marks the Foundation's commitment to supporting local agriculture, fostering economic vitality, and creating a welcoming community destination for families and visitors alike. Come meet local growers, community leaders, and market vendors as we commemorate this important milestone and recognize the partnerships that make the Salinas Farmer's Market a cornerstone of our region.

- **Business After Hours: K&D Landscaping — 40th Anniversary Ribbon Cutting**

Thursday, July 30, 2026, 5 - 7 p.m., 62 C Hangar Way, Watsonville

Join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, Pajaro Valley Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, and the Santa Cruz Area Chamber for Business After Hours on July 30 from 5–7 p.m. at K&D Landscaping in Watsonville. Network with fellow business professionals, enjoy a relaxed evening of conversation, and experience a unique behind-the-scenes look at a local business. The evening will also include a special 40th anniversary ribbon cutting celebrating K&D Landscape's milestone year. Help us commemorate this exciting achievement while building connections with the Chamber's vibrant business community. We look forward to celebrating with you!

UPCOMING EVENTS



- **Salinas Valley Speaks**

Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m., Braga Ranch, 33750 Moranda Road, Soledad
Join us for an essential conversation on the state of healthcare in our region. Today, the region faces a new healthcare challenge: significant funding reductions that are placing increased financial pressure on hospitals and healthcare systems. These cuts are contributing to compressed operating margins, reduced services, heightened pressure on commercial healthcare rates, and the potential closure of critical facilities, particularly in rural communities. In response, this year's Salinas Valley Speaks program will bring together the CEOs of all four regional healthcare systems - Salinas Valley Health, Montage Health, Natividad, and Mee Memorial Healthcare System — for an important discussion on how their organizations are adapting to these evolving funding realities. Together, they will share strategies for innovation, sustainability, and regional collaboration aimed at ensuring the Salinas Valley continues to lead the way in delivering strong health outcomes for its communities. The event will begin with a casual mixer to connect community members and professionals, followed by a moderated panel discussion led by Monterey County District 3 Supervisor Chris Lopez. For ticket pricing and more information, visit SalinasChamber.com.

- **Lunch Connect with The Steinbeck House**

Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026, 12– 1:30 p.m., 132 Central Ave., Salinas
Mark your calendar for our upcoming Chamber Lunch Connect on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026, from 12–1:30 p.m. at The Steinbeck House. This gathering offers Chamber members and local professionals an opportunity to build new connections, strengthen business relationships, and enjoy lunch in one of Salinas' historic landmarks. Registration opening soon — save the date!

- **Lunch and Learn with TPO “The HR Experts”**

Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2026, 12-1 p.m., 119 East Alisal St., Salinas
In SVCC's 2026 Chamber Membership Survey, members highlighted that the workforce challenges affecting our business community the most this year are Wage Pressures & Total Compensation Expectations. In response, TPO “The HR Experts” and SVCC have teamed up to dive deep into these trends. Join us in-person or tune in via Zoom.

- **Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting for Mathnasium of Salinas**

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026, Open House from 4-7 p.m. Ribbon-cutting event from 5 - 6:30 p.m., 1534 Constitution Blvd., Salinas
Join us on Aug. 25 as we celebrate a special Grand Opening & Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Mathnasium of Salinas! Mathnasium delivers a proven, math-only curriculum, a customized learning plan for each student, and face-to-face instruction in an encouraging environment. As students head back to school, Mathnasium proudly supports the community by creating a space dedicated to learning, growth, and confidence in math. This event marks not only the opening of the center, but also their commitment to helping Salinas students start the 2026-2027 school year strong. Families, students, and community members are all invited to come together for an afternoon of celebration, connection, and fun. Enjoy light refreshments and engaging activities, meet the Mathnasium team, explore our learning environment, and learn how we help students build skills that last a lifetime.

RSVP at salinaschamber.com



SALINAS VALLEY SPEAKS

**AUGUST 6, 2026, 3:30–5:30 PM
BRAGA RANCH**



EMCEE

CHRIS LOPEZ
Monterey County
Supervisor District 3



RENA SALAMACHA
Mee Memorial
Healthcare system



**MIKE MCDERMOTT,
MD, MBA**
Montage Health



CHAD HARRIS, MD
Natividad



ALLEN RADNER, MD
Salinas Valley Health

**RSVP REQUIRED. FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO
PURCHASE TICKETS VISIT SALINASCHAMBER.COM**





NON-PROFIT EVENTS

First Fridays! — Salinas City Center Improvement Association

July 4, 5–8 p.m., Downtown Salinas in 100 – 300 blocks of Main Street

First Friday Salinas is a monthly tradition designed to transform Downtown into a consistent, positive space for community and culture to thrive. Come and enjoy an evening of local art, live entertainment, delicious food, and shops open late. Bring your friends and family to Salinas City Center and discover something new every First Friday of the month — you won't want to miss it!

Third Annual Sweetheart Soiree — California Rodeo Salinas

July 9, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Salinas Sport Complex, Salinas

After back-to-back sold-out events in 2024 and 2025, the California Rodeo Salinas is thrilled to welcome back the Sweetheart Soiree Cowgirl Luncheon for its third annual celebration on Thursday, July 9, 2026. This fan-favorite event will be held in the Exhibition Mall at the Salinas Sports Complex from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., bringing together cowgirls from across the region for an afternoon of connection, celebration, and western flair. The Sweetheart Soiree is more than a luncheon—it's a spirited celebration of the confidence, camaraderie, and unmistakable style of cowgirls. Guests can look forward to mimosas, music, and a vibrant, high-energy atmosphere that captures the heart of rodeo week. The event is proudly presented by Kaiser Permanente. With the past two years seeing quick sellouts, demand is expected to be high once again. This year, 300 seats will be available at \$100 per person. A limited number of donor opportunities and reserved tables will be offered to returning 2024 and 2025 table purchasers, who will receive early access via email. Tickets, if available, are on sale at carodeo.com. Beyond the fun, the Sweetheart Soiree continues to make a meaningful impact. A portion of event proceeds, including those from the always-popular silent auction, will benefit the California Rodeo Scholarship Program. By attending, guests are not only part of a memorable afternoon but also helping support local students in their pursuit of higher education.

California Rodeo Salinas

July 16-19, times vary, 1034 N. Main St., Salinas — Salinas Sports Complex

The California Rodeo Salinas will take place July 16-19, 2026, with two nights and two matinees (daytime) performances. The California Rodeo Salinas is one of the top 15 professional rodeos in the US out of over 600, and the largest rodeo in California. With over 115 years of tradition and a little bit of something for everyone, it's an event you don't want to miss. Not only are the top cowboys and cowgirls featured in the arena and on the track, but there are food and shopping vendors, saloons, and more. The whole family will enjoy this community event. Visit www.carodeo.com/events to learn more.

Rancho Cielo 11th Annual Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser

Aug. 24-28, Rancho Cielo Youth Campus, 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas

The beloved annual fundraiser makes a significant impact by sustaining vocational training for our students while also feeding families in need. From now until Aug. 21, you can purchase veggie boxes for yourself or donate them to families in need via the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County, Salvation Army Salinas, The Food Bank for Monterey County and Second Harvest Food Bank. Barbecue lunch starts at 11:30 a.m. and goes to 1 p.m. on Aug 28. Questions? Contact Jadrian Clausen at (831) 444-3501 or jclausen@ranchocieloyc.org.

Monterey Motorsports Festival

Aug. 15, 5-11 p.m., 2004 Fairground Road, Monterey

Monterey Motorsports Festival (MMF) is a premier car culture event taking place as the only Saturday night event during Monterey Car Week that blends automotive excellence with lifestyle, design, and community. MMF features a curated mix of hypercars, supercars, classic and modern vehicles alongside music, food, wine, and immersive brand experiences. Last year's festival featured a headline performance by Las Vegas DJ Dillon Francis, continuing MMF's tradition of high-energy music entertainment that complements the automotive excitement. Among its most anticipated attractions is Donut Island, where performance vehicles are showcased in motion — bringing automotive performance to life beyond static displays.

Alliance on Aging Special Car Week Tickets Available

Aug. 15, 5-11 p.m., 2004 Fairground Road, Monterey

Alliance on Aging will be part of the Monterey Motorsports Festival not just to celebrate incredible automobiles and Car Week culture, but to represent the thousands of older adults we serve throughout Monterey County. AOA has been given a limited number of special \$100 tickets, and 100% of every ticket purchased through Alliance On Aging stays local, helping fund critical programs including: senior peer counseling and emotional support services, elder advocacy through the Ombudsman Program, and resources that help older adults age with dignity and connection. Purchase directly through Alliance on Aging by stopping by or emailing npasculli@allianceonaging.org.

Touch-A-Truck Salinas

Sept. 13th, 2026, 12-4 p.m., Salinas Rodeo Grounds, Salinas

Touch-A-Truck is a fall tradition and the signature fundraiser for Coastal Kids Home Care. The event includes vehicles, food trucks, music, and more. Children and adults can climb into a fire engine, explore a bulldozer and climb behind the wheel a big rig. They can learn about CPR, build a toy vehicle, enjoy carnival games all while enjoying tasty treats. The event has grown from a small grassroots effort to an eagerly anticipated community event attracting over 1,000 kids and kids at heart. Proceeds from Touch-A-Truck benefit Coastal Kids Home Care — the area's only provider of in-home medical, social service and therapy visits to children living with illness and injury in our community.

**BE SURE TO VISIT THE CHAMBER WEBSITE
FOR UP-TO-DATE LISTINGS**

READY, SET, SUMMER!



QUALITY HEALTHCARE
DELIVERED LOCALLY
FOR EVERYONE

Summer's here! Check out these two unique educational opportunities.



ASTHMA CAMP

July 20-24 | Ages: 6 to 12 | FREE Camp*

Children with asthma have a unique opportunity to learn how to manage their condition while enjoying a fun and interactive camp environment.

The week is filled with outdoor adventures such as hiking, swimming, soccer and more. Campers learn about asthma triggers, the importance of their medications and how asthma affects their bodies (physician referral required).

To learn more, scan the QR code, call **831-759-1890** or email healthpromotion@SalinasValleyHealth.com.

Sponsored by Salinas Valley Health Medical Center and the Salinas Valley Health Foundation.

*Only \$10 registration fee

SalinasValleyHealth.com



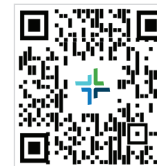
MEDICAL ADVENTURE CAMP

July 20-31 | Grades: 4th - 6th

This day camp, coordinated by the Salinas Valley Health Service League Volunteers, provides an up-close and personal look at the many disciplines in the medical field.

Established in 2001, Medical Adventure Camp introduces campers to medicine and health careers in a fun and interactive way. Student volunteers help guide the campers while medical center staff and physicians present the lessons and activities.

To learn more, scan the QR code, call **831-755-0772** or email volunteer@SalinasValleyHealth.com.



RELAY FOR LIFE OF The Salinas Valley



JOIN THE FIGHT. MAKE AN IMPACT.



SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

4-9 PM

Downtown Salinas City Center

IT'S FREE TO JOIN!

- FORM A TEAM.
- GET INVOLVED.
- BE THE DIFFERENCE.

LEARN MORE at
relayforlife.org/salinasca
831.621.5554



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