

 Salinas Valley  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# BUSINESS JOURNAL



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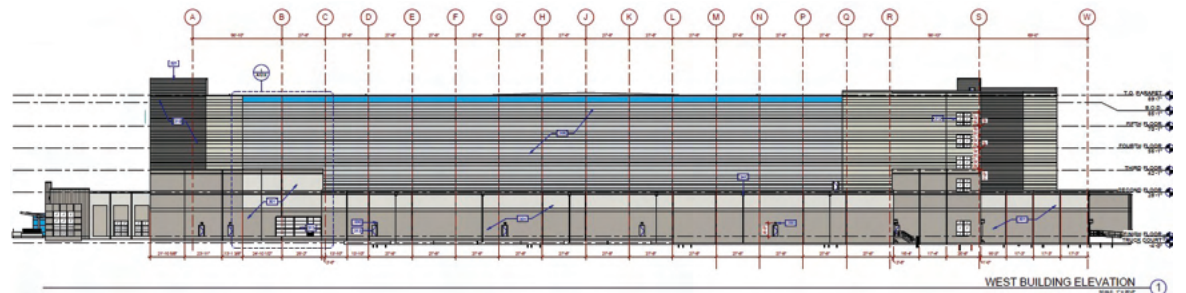
## Salinas Has a New City Manager, and He Wants to Hear From You

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**O**n March 19, 2024, the Salinas City Council appointed René Mendez as the new City Manager and approved an employment agreement with him. May 28 was his first day on the job.

The City Manager is the city's chief administrative official. Section 7.1 of the Salinas City Charter (the "Constitution" of the city) gives the City Council authority to appoint and dismiss a City Manager. After the Salinas City Council dismissed the previous City Manager on Oct. 3, 2023, the Assistant City Manager Jim Pia then served as Interim City Manager (for the second time in four years) while the city council sought a permanent replacement.

Based on community surveys and internal employee surveys conducted in late 2023,  
**MANAGER** see page 6



## Revealing What the Public Never Knew About 'Project GOAT' Amazon Warehouse Plan

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**A**t the direction of its Government Relations Committee, your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce submitted a request for public records on May 8, 2024 to the City of Salinas. It stated that "Since February 2022, rumors have circulated (and currently circulate) in the business community about internal discussions between the City of Salinas and owners of land parcels within the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan concerning a proposed logistics warehouse."

The request also stated that nothing about the warehouse has been seen in any official city document available to

the public. It stated that the Chamber needs to determine on behalf of its members, if the rumor has any validity. And it indicated that the Chamber desires to acquire relevant documents and prepare an analysis for the benefit of its members, if the rumor is true.

On June 14, the City of Salinas sent your Chamber of Commerce about 165 documents related to the Amazon warehouse. Here are some revelations from the documents:

-The first sign that something was happening at the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan area was a grant deed from Uni-Kool (the owner of the parcel

now owned by Amazon) to California Water Company in June 2020.

-By January 2021, documents had been submitted to Monterey County for consolidation of individual Uni-Kool parcels (Parcel E and Parcel F) in the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan area.

-The first references to Amazon and its warehouse developer Scannell are in documents dated Sept. 1, 2021 and Sept. 2, 2021. These documents refer to a request from Amazon/

**WAREHOUSE PLAN** see page 6



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## SALINAS VALLEY HEALTH BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTED

# ALLEN RADNER, MD PRESIDENT/CEO



The Board of Directors announced that after an extensive recruitment process, they selected Allen Radner, MD, as President/CEO of Salinas Valley Health. Dr. Radner has successfully served in the interim role since December 1, 2023.

With three decades of service at our healthcare system, including clinical care and multiple leadership roles, Dr. Radner has a deep understanding of our community's evolving healthcare needs.

*Congratulations to our seventh President and CEO, Dr. Allen Radner.*

“ We have a bright future ahead and I look forward to this new chapter in our legacy of leadership in Monterey County. I am confident in our continued ability to grow in meeting the expanded needs of our diverse community. ”

- Allen Radner, MD  
President/CEO



Scan the QR code to learn more or visit  
[SalinasValleyHealth.com/in-the-news](https://SalinasValleyHealth.com/in-the-news)



[SalinasValleyHealth.com](https://SalinasValleyHealth.com)

Salinas Valley Health consistently earns awards and recognitions for high quality.







## “Pinnacle Bank helps feed our dream.”

Steve Wotherspoon and Pinnacle Bank helped us purchase the old Hacienda Hay & Feed property so we could bring back one of Carmel Valley's most beloved businesses. We're thrilled to partner with local friends and family who truly understand and support our vision.

**- Briana Lackey and Doug Steiny**  
**Hacienda Hay & Feed**

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# Charting a Course for the Future: Engaging Members in Our Strategic Executive Search

By Jennifer Williams, SVCC Board Chair

The Board of Directors is making progress on its strategic executive search. We are committed to keeping the Chamber's members informed about our work to find a new CEO and encourage you to reach out with questions. Please watch for regular updates through e-news, social media, and meetings so you can remain involved and be assured that your interests remain our top priority. We need your insights and wisdom during this season of change and beyond. Rest assured, we will provide opportunities for you to share with us the qualities you deem essential in our future CEO.

The Chamber's Executive Committee and Board members are working every day to maintain operational stability and provide continuity in leadership. We are pleased to have the continued work of an empowered and engaged staff, including Jasmine Bhardwaj, Marketing & Member Services Manager; Gabe Lopez, Membership Development Director; Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison; and Mac McDonald, Business Journal Editor.

The staff is ensuring that the Chamber's programs and services, such as networking events, training sessions, advocacy efforts, and business resources, remain uninterrupted. Please join us for one of our ribbon cuttings or mixers. We need your involvement in the Chamber's activities to foster our collective strength and enduring stability! Mark your calendars for the Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Kickoff & Chamber Mixer at the California Welcome Center coming up on July 25.

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce continues to be a leader on public policy issues in the Salinas Valley. Kevin, who writes about city, county and occasionally state government, has written six articles for this edition of the Business Journal. He's providing the business community and the public with exclusive background and perspectives on important

issues, including the planned Amazon warehouse that may end up transforming the Salinas Valley for generations to come. This month he also reports on the new Salinas City Manager René Mendez and the short-term and long-term outlook for the City of Salinas budget.

We've also reviewed the results of the 2024 membership survey, and we heard you. We are reimagining the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce to be responsive to your wants and needs, beginning with a renewed focus on providing more networking opportunities, better communication, such as reminding members of the benefits of Chamber membership through our established electronic communications, featuring local businesses in the Business Journal on a

recurring basis, and providing more business-focused educational opportunities (like how to use artificial intelligence to support your business goals).

In response to suggestions from the membership and the public at-large for more information about how the Chamber decides to influence public policy and elections, Kevin has begun writing a new monthly column reporting on the activities of the Chamber's Government Relations Committee. He also contributed an article explaining how the Chamber's Candidate Review Committee and Board of Directors make decisions to endorse candidates for public office.

We look forward to sharing some of this summer's most exciting Salinas events with all of you, including the Food & Wine Festival celebrating the bounty of the Salinas Valley and Monterey County on Aug. 3 featured in this issue of the Business Journal!



“  
We need  
your  
involvement”

## 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- **Chair - Jennifer Williams**  
Natividad Foundation
- **Chair Elect - Leonard Batti**  
Taylor Farms
- **Vice Chair, Events - Amy Gibson**  
Wescom Credit Union
- **Vice Chair, GRC - Aaron Johnson**  
JRG Attorneys at law
- **Vice Chair, Finance - Tom Moran**  
Goodwill Central Coast
- **Vice Chair, Membership - Starla Warren**  
Monterey County Housing Inc.

## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Brent Fogg** - Granite Construction
- **Brenda Granillo** - California Water Service
- **Mark Kennedy** - Green Rubber Kennedy Ag
- **Clement Miller** - Salinas Valley Health
- **John Narigi** - WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca
- **Colby Pereira** - Braga Fresh Family Farms
- **Amy Salmina** - Coast & Valley Properties
- **Tony Sanchez** - Spiffy Clean Services
- **Hugh Walker** - Stonebridge Homes

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- **Peter Kasavan** - SPARC
- **Matt Huerta** - Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
- **Kevin Dayton** - SCCIA

## LEGAL COUNSEL

- **Matt Ottone**

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- **Gabriel Lopez**  
Membership Development Director
- **Jasmine Bhardwaj**  
Marketing & Member Services Manager
- **Bryan Cabello**  
Digital Marketing Specialist
- **Cesar Chavez**  
Digital Marketing Specialist

Info@SalinasChamber.com | 831-751-7725

## CHAMBER PRIORITIES

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



# Why Do We Hold on to Things? The Answer Lies in the Psychology of Clutter

By Goodwill Central Coast Staff

**W**e see it all around our homes — objects strewn about or wedged into drawers, bulging boxes stowed in storage, rarely worn clothing hanging in dusty wardrobes.

It's called clutter and it seems to have a life of its own, multiplying without much effort on our part.

Clutter is anything that we don't need, want or use that steals our time, energy or space — often destroying our serenity in the process. For decades Goodwill Central Coast has turned clutter into community gold by transforming donations into local jobs. Yet donating to GCC is more than just an act of charity; it is a powerful way to help remove obstacles to employment while supporting sustainable practices that keep thousands of tons of trash out of landfills.

## Emotional and psychological barriers

It seems counterintuitive that it's so difficult to let go of things we no longer need or use, but the answer lies in the psychology of clutter.

Clutter is more than just physical stuff taking up space around us. It's also a manifestation of our emotions, beliefs and behaviors. We simply fear throwing things out. We think we might need it, fix it or wear it again. We don't want to be wasteful or ungrateful. We don't know what to keep and what to discard. We don't know how much is enough.

One of the primary reasons we hold onto clutter is sentimental attachment. Objects can hold memories and emotions, and getting rid of them can feel like we're getting rid of a part of ourselves. Fear

is another reason we hold onto clutter, fear of letting go, fear of the unknown and fear of loss.

Clutter can also serve as a form of protection or security. We hold onto things because they provide us with a sense of comfort or familiarity. Additionally, some of us hold onto clutter because we feel guilty about getting rid of something we've spent money on, or we hold onto things "just in case" they might need them in the future.

Decluttering is not merely eliminating, but gradually transforming our space so that we surround ourselves only with an expressed purpose. It means turning something useless into something useful; creating more leisure and space; eliminating distractions and simplifying our lives.

Following are tips for overcoming the emotional and psychological barriers to decluttering:

- **Start small:** Instead of tackling the entire home at once, start with one small area or category of items, such as a single drawer or closet.
- **Be mindful:** Pay attention to your emotional responses when going through your things. Ask yourself why you're holding onto a particular item and whether it's serving a positive purpose in your life.
- **Practice gratitude:** Instead of focusing on what you're getting rid of, focus on what you're keeping and why you're keeping it. Take time to appreciate the things that bring value to your life.
- **Give your clutter new life:** Instead of boxing up and storing clutter, or throwing it away, consider donating items to

Goodwill Central Coast. The nonprofit turns donations into life-changing programs that transform lives in three counties (Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo).

## What to donate

Deciding what to donate can sometimes be challenging, but Goodwill Central Coast accepts a wide variety of items, including clothing and accessories, household items, furniture, functional electronics, books, media, toys, games and collectibles in good or new condition. Each and every donation matters for the following reasons:

- Donations help fund GCC's job training and employment programs that equip individuals with the skills and confidence they need to secure meaningful employment — fostering independence and self-sufficiency.
- By donating items instead of discarding them, you are helping to reduce waste and promote recycling. This sustainable practice conserves natural resources and minimizes the environmental footprint, contributing to a healthier planet.
- Donated items sold in GCC's stores help support a wide range of community programs, including educational initiatives, financial literacy workshops, and support services for veterans and individuals with disabilities.
- Donations help create and sustain hundreds of jobs within GCC, boosting the local economy.

## Making donations more interactive

Donating to Goodwill Central

Coast is not just a transaction; it is an opportunity to engage with your community and contribute to a meaningful cause. Beyond taking items to GCC's donation centers, here are some ways to elevate the donation experience:

- **Donation drives:** Organize a donation drive with friends, family, or colleagues. Set a goal, collect items together, and make it a fun, collective effort. This not only increases the impact but also builds a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose.
- **Special events:** Participate in special donation events hosted by GCC. These events often feature themes, contests, and activities that make the donation process enjoyable and rewarding.
- **Educational tours:** Arrange for a tour of a facility to see firsthand how your donations are processed and how they support our mission. Understanding the journey of your donations can deepen your connection to the cause and inspire continued support.
- **Volunteer opportunities:** Combine your donations with volunteer work. Volunteering at a donation center or retail store can provide a deeper understanding of our operations and the impact of your contributions.

Donating to Goodwill Central Coast is a simple yet powerful way to make a positive impact on the community and the environment. Your contributions support essential programs, create jobs, and promote sustainability. For more on GCC and its mission, visit [www.ccgoodwill.org](http://www.ccgoodwill.org). 🌱

## MANAGER - from page 1

the City Council determined which leadership skills and experiences were considered to be most important for a City Manager in Salinas. You may have filled out a survey when the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce posted an announcement in the Nov. 21, 2023, "Word to the Member" electronic bulletin that encouraged business representatives to participate.

Mendez fulfilled the requirements sought by the community. He most recently served as the City Manager for the City of Watsonville. Many Salinas residents know him from his 17 years as City Manager in the City of Gonzales and his leadership on the

Operations Committee of Central Coast Community Energy (3CE — formerly known as Monterey Bay Community Power). He was also the co-chair of Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) when it was founded in 2015.

On June 4, the Salinas City Council held a special meeting to receive a State of the City address from Mayor Kimbley Craig, followed by remarks from Mendez. He chose to introduce himself to the community with his remarks made in both English and Spanish.

Mendez told the audience that he regarded the City Manager position as an honor and a great responsibility. He expressed his love for the Salinas Valley, describing residents as people who work hard, innovate,

and accomplish great things daily despite challenges. He acknowledged the "amazing youth" who are part of this industrious and productive culture.

To "move Salinas forward for the benefit of all," Mendez wants to make sure annual budgets are balanced while residents receive quality services. He wants to see improvements to deteriorating infrastructure and looks forward to advancement of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan and completion of major road improvements on Williams Road and Boronda Road. He is determined to fill the 86.5 personnel vacancies in city government (as of June 4), starting with the Police Chief. There will be a community survey to determine what characteristics

residents want in a police chief.

Finally, Mendez said he looked forward to meeting people, listening to them, and growing to understand the needs, vision, and aspirations of the community. He encouraged residents to call his office at (831) 750-7201 about city business or even call him on his cell phone at (831) 580-7149. (His cell phone number is on his business card.)

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce looks forward to opportunities for members to meet Mendez and collaborate with him to advance the Chamber's official vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families and businesses succeed via economic growth and opportunity." 🌱

## WAREHOUSE PLAN - from page 1

Scannell for city staff to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) for "our proposed user at the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center (Harden Ranch)." The reference to Harden Ranch is not explained and it does not appear in any other documents.

- The Acting City Manager signed the Non-Disclosure Agreement "for the benefit of Scannell Properties, LLC and its Affiliates" on Sept. 2, 2021. Other city staff that knew about the proposal at this time were the Senior Economic Development Manager and the City Attorney.

- The City of Salinas Planning Department began working in earnest on planning review for the warehouse in September 2021. Also in September 2021, documents were being drafted to prepare for extension of Dayton Street through Parcel D of the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan area to Harris Road.

- As early as October 2021, four months before the first rumor went public about the warehouse, the project had been code-named "Project GOAT."

- On Oct. 12, 2021, a law firm representing Uni-Kool submitted an application to the City of Salinas asking for an amendment to the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan to remove a footnote indicating that "Wholesale Distribution" land use listed under "Warehousing Sales and Services" only applies to uses that are "agriculturally-related or serve the agriculture industry." It argued that "the proposed Amendment may be approved administratively by the City Manager or designee" because it wouldn't result in any "new or intensified 'significant' environmental impacts not previously analyzed that would change the character of the project."

- In a letter dated Oct. 26, 2021, City Manager Steve Carrigan approved the amendment removing the footnote. The letter was

copied to the City Attorney and the Community Development Director, Carrigan's letter gave this rationale:

"Since the Specific Plan was adopted in 2010, 'Wholesale Distribution' has significantly changed with the rise of e-commerce, globalization, and more recently challenges in the supply chain and labor shortages created by the pandemic. The agriculture industry has also significantly changed since 2010, such that the original basis upon which the Specific Plan was originally adopted may no longer be relevant; more substantive non-administrative amendments may be necessary in the future to more usable for contemporary industries and business operations. This minor amendment is necessary to allow more flexibility to 'Wholesale Distribution' without having to restrict distributors that may not be exactly aligned with footnote (b). The development regulations for 'Wholesale Distribution' remain the same and the associated Ag-Industrial Specific

Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzed 'Wholesale Distribution' and its environmental impacts with no distinction whether it was agriculturally related."

- A funding agreement signed by the City of Salinas Community Development Director with Scannell on Oct. 27, 2021, specifically referred to "negotiations with Uni-Kool Partners to purchase 73 acres identified as Parcels D and E in the Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan" because "the Developer plans to build a warehouse and robotic sortation facility with a building footprint of approximately 635,000 square feet and a height of 110 feet."

- On Dec. 14, 2021, the Salinas City Council voted 7-0 for a resolution that declared Garrett Street in the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan area as "unnecessary for the present and prospective use" of the city, removed Garrett Street from the city's street network, and





the city council or the public revealed it was for the Amazon warehouse. The city council also approved a contract for an analysis of the EIFD. Apparently this analysis is actually meant to show the economic benefits of the Amazon warehouse.

During city council consideration of the EIFD, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce supported it with the expectation that the EIFD was for expansion of the Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment and Conveyance System to allow new and expanded agricultural processing facilities. However, the Chamber also warned the city council to check to see if the EIFD was actually for a resurrected Amazon warehouse proposal.

-The City of Salinas received a letter from Scannell on Nov. 14, 2023, stating that an "industrial sortation and distribution facility that handles a wide range of goods with 5 floors, including a maximum building height of 110 feet consisting of a maximum total floor area of 3,424,698 square feet" does not need rezoning, a conditional use permit, or variance. If this interpretation was accurate, it would mean the warehouse can be granted a ministerial permit from City of Salinas staff without the need for a city council vote or public review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

-On Dec. 14, 2023, the City of Salinas Community Development Director responded with a letter stating that the claim of the warehouse only needing ministerial approval is questionable, and more information would be necessary.

-A series of emails leading up to a meeting on Jan. 25, 2024 between Scannell representatives and City of Salinas officials indicated that Scannell was "dropping our pursuit of the EIFD" and would "pivot away from the challenges of getting the EIFD approved and focus on a re-introduction of the Amazon development team with the City Planning, Engineering, and Economic Development teams."

-In the next few months, the City of Salinas Community Development Department continued working on the new Amazon applications for permits.

-A March 26, 2024, development review application to the City of Salinas indicated the warehouse will be five stories with 3,080,787 square feet of floor space. This number is confirmed in other subsequent planning documents.

-The EIFD is back! On May 26, 2024, representatives of Scannell, Uni-Kool, and the City of Salinas met to discuss use of the Enhanced Infrastructure Funding District (EIFD) to borrow \$70 million for infrastructure construction at the Ag-Industrial Center

Specific Plan area. A Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (CFD) would also be established. The County of Monterey would need to be involved. Construction of the warehouse could start earlier than the first quarter of 2025 if the developer could be reimbursed from the EIFD funds after it starts.

-A June 7, 2024 email revealed that a draft study from a consulting firm about the feasibility of borrowing \$70 million through the EIFD found that "100% EIFD participation from both City and County and the formation of a CFD would be required to generate the future debt service to support a bonding capacity of \$70M." It was also revealed that "the City is proposing Sept.

19 for a joint city/county meeting to discuss EIFD participation."

-An email dated June 13, 2024 revealed that Scannell representatives had a meeting with City of Salinas staff on June 12 about their continued claim that the warehouse only needs ministerial approval and does not need environmental review or the city council to vote on anything.

-An email dated June 13, 2024 indicated that the City of Salinas is tentatively arranging to introduce Amazon to the public at two community meetings at Sherwood Hall: on Thursday, Aug. 22 at 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday, Aug. 24 at 10:30 a.m.

Now you know. 🌿



**Salinas Valley**  
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**If you own a business in California, it's mandatory to update your CA and Federal Labor Law posters every year. Don't miss out on this requirement. Order your updated posters through the Chamber to stay compliant with the law changes coming up this July.**

For questions or for any purchases, contact our Membership Development Director, Gabe Lopez  
831-751-7725 / Gabe@SalinasChamber.com



# Change Lives

## HELP SUPPORT THE 2024 CHILDREN'S SHOPPING TOUR

*Dear Valued Community Member,*

We have the power to change lives and have done so for over 70 years with the tradition of the Children's Shopping Tour.

Each year, children are selected by participating schools and teachers based on need, ensuring that our support reaches those who need it most. On the day of the Shopping Tour, children are paired with volunteer chaperones, who receive a gift card for the shopping spree. Generous stores offer one-day discounts, maximizing the impact of each donation.

It has often been said that "it takes a village" and it does. Without your generous donation, this long tradition for our underserved youth would not be possible. We are proud to continue presenting this important Salinas holiday tradition that has positively impacted thousands of children throughout the years.

Children are our future. Nothing brings more joy than making sure our kids are provided with all the things they need to be successful in life. This means basic necessities such as clean, sturdy clothes.

This year's event will be held at the Northridge Mall on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024, from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Please help us continue to support underserved children in our local community by mailing a check to: SVCC Foundation at 119 E. Alisal St., Salinas, CA 93901. We are a 501(c)(3) and this donation is tax-deductible. Our tax ID # is 77-0071744.

Your donation of any size will help us produce the 2024 Children's Shopping Tour to purchase clothing for children in need. We are also seeking volunteers to assist with this most heartfelt annual event. To volunteer, please visit: [www.salinaschamber.com/childrens-shopping-tour](http://www.salinaschamber.com/childrens-shopping-tour).

For further information, please contact Greg Hamer at (831) 224-3694 or via email [gregor.hamer@gmail.com](mailto:gregor.hamer@gmail.com).

Thank you in advance for your generous support!

*Greg Hamer*

CST Chair  
Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation



Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation's annual holiday tradition, the Children's Shopping Tour, will be from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024, at the Northridge Mall in Salinas. Donations and volunteers are still needed for this important and joyful holiday event.







# MEMBER NEWS

**WEST COAST  
COMMUNITY BANCORP**



## West Coast Community Bancorp, 1st Capital Bancorp Announce Agreement to Merge

West Coast Community Bancorp, the holding company for Santa Cruz County Bank, headquartered in Santa Cruz, and 1st Capital Bancorp, the holding company for 1st Capital Bank, headquartered in Salinas, jointly announced today that they have entered into an agreement and plan of reorganization and merger, pursuant to which 1st Capital Bancorp will merge with and into West Coast Community Bancorp in an all-stock transaction valued at approximately \$63 million, or \$10.78 per FISB share, based on the closing price of \$29.94 for West Coast Community Bancorp shares on May 20, 2024. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including regulatory approvals and shareholder approval from both parties. Both Boards of Directors of West Coast Community Bancorp and 1st Capital Bancorp have unanimously approved the transaction, which is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2024. The directors of West Coast Community Bancorp and 1st Capital Bancorp have entered into agreements pursuant to which they have committed to vote their shares in favor of the transaction. At closing, Krista Snelling, President and CEO of the Bancorp and Bank, will lead the combined franchise.

Highlights of the Announced Transaction:

- At nearly \$3 billion in pro forma assets and 10% deposit market share in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties (on a combined basis, based on FDIC data as of June 30, 2023), the Bank is well-positioned for continued success as the leading community business bank in a vibrant market area.
- The transaction enhances the Bank's profitability, diversifies the Bank's client base, deepens and extends the Bank's market reach, and better positions the Bank to profitably deploy the technology and services that will enhance the client experience and provide both product diversification and additional growth opportunities.
- SCZC expects to realize approximately 20% annual EPS accretion following full realization of operating efficiencies.



## Eden Valley Care Center Expresses Gratitude for Community Support

While Mother's Day has come and gone, the spirit of celebration and appreciation lingers at Eden Valley Care Center, thanks to the generous support of their community partners, the Soledad Police Department. Eden Valley, a leading senior care facility in Soledad, extended its heartfelt appreciation to the Soledad Police Department for their recent donation of orchids to the resident mothers. This thoughtful gesture brought joy and warmth to the hearts of the residents, extending the Mother's Day celebrations well beyond the holiday itself. The partnership between Eden Valley and the Soledad Police underscores the importance of community support in uplifting the spirits of the elderly and fostering a sense of belonging. By collaborating with local organizations like the police department, Eden Valley continues to create meaningful experiences for its residents, enriching their lives and enhancing their well-being. "We are immensely grateful to the Soledad Police Department for their generosity and kindness in making this beautiful gesture possible," said CEO Ida Lopez Chan. "Their support exemplifies the spirit of community and reinforces our commitment to providing exceptional care and creating moments of joy for our residents." The orchid donation not only brings aesthetic beauty to the living spaces but also serves as a reminder of the unwavering support and compassion of the community. Eden Valley remains dedicated to nurturing a culture of gratitude and appreciation, ensuring that every resident feels valued and cherished. As the celebrations continue beyond Mother's Day, Eden Valley looks forward to fostering continued partnerships with community organizations like the police department, enriching the lives of its residents and strengthening the bonds within the community. Additionally, in celebration of National Skilled Nursing Care Week and National Nurses Week, a few orchids left over from the donation were presented to Eden Valley's amazing Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) as a token of appreciation for their dedication and hard work.



**Rancho Cielo  
Youth Campus**

## Rancho Cielo Secures \$1.5 Million YouthBuild Grant to Bolster Culinary and Construction Programs

Rancho Cielo has been awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the Office of Workforce Investment's Division of Youth Services, administered through its YouthBuild program, which spans over 40 states and comprises over 200 programs and serves over 5,000 youth annually. Among the California recipients of this grant, Rancho Cielo stands tall as the sole Central Coast representative. With this funding infusion, Rancho Cielo is poised to boost its Drummond Culinary Academy (DCA) and Construction & Sustainable Design Academy, amplifying their impact on our students' education. Rancho Cielo CEO Chris Devers expresses deep gratitude for this collaboration with the Department of Labor. "Through this public-private partnership with the Department of Labor, Rancho Cielo will be able to expand the DCA and realize our culinary dreams in the pastry arts," Devers said. "We'll also be able to serve more students and prepare more students for jobs, specifically in pastry." The YouthBuild grant follows a recent congressional allocation of \$1 million, based on U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren's (D-CA) recommendation. These funds are already earmarked as seed money to construct a state-of-the-art pastry kitchen as part of an overall expansion of our DCA program. The funds will also go to Rancho's Construction & Sustainable Design Academy, propelling the program towards supporting project-based work like housing accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which aligns with the ethos of responsible stewardship, environmental consciousness and the Hayward Healthy Home Score. Adds Devers: "The Hayward Healthy Home Score initiative equips students with the skills necessary for the construction jobs of tomorrow while prioritizing the creation of homes that are conducive to human health and harmonious with the environment."





# MEMBER NEWS



## Monterey Regional Airport Moves Long-Term Parking

Monterey Regional Airport's Long-Term Parking Lot is on the move. Effective June 14, MRY opened a relocated Long-Term Parking Lot to make way for constructing new airport safety enhancement projects. The relocated Long-Term Parking Lot entrance is located immediately before the airport's existing long-term lot entrance. The relocated lot will offer the same number of parking spaces, and travelers will walk the same number of footsteps along a clearly marked pathway between the relocated lot and the terminal building. "Monterey Regional Airport is undergoing a metamorphosis, making it necessary to move long-term parking to a new location," said Michael La Pier, Executive Director of Monterey Regional Airport. "The existing long-term lot will undergo construction to make way for a replacement passenger terminal and adjacent aircraft parking apron. We are committed to keeping Monterey Regional Airport easy, convenient and hassle-free for departing and arriving travelers, and thank them for their patience during construction." The signage on Olmsted Road, the airport's primary access roadway, will guide travelers to the relocated long-term lot entrance. Airport personnel were onsite and available for the first few days of the lot relocation to answer any questions that customers had. The relocated long-term lot will be fully automated, allowing customers to pay with a credit or debit card at the lot exit. Travelers requiring accessible parking and electric vehicle-charging stations can continue to use MRY's Short-Term Parking Lot, located next to the terminal, at the posted rates: [montereyairport.com/parking](http://montereyairport.com/parking). While the similar number of parking spaces will be offered in the relocated long-term lot as the existing long-term lot, travelers living close to the airport are encouraged to consider using taxis, rideshares, or be dropped off and picked up at the terminal during the current peak summer travel season through Labor Day weekend. This will ensure parking spaces are available for those traveling to MRY from farther distances. Relocating the long-term lot is one of several facility and operational changes—including a replacement terminal building—that airport users will experience as they travel through MRY over the next few years.



## Coastal Kid's Home Care Announces 10th Anniversary of Touch-A-Truck Celebration

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 of 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—our area's only provider of in-home medical, social service and therapy visits to children living with illness and injury in our community. A day of fun for kids and kids at heart to climb and explore their favorite trucks and other vehicles. Join in the festivities on Aug. 25, 2024, from 12-4 p.m. at the Salinas Rodeo Grounds to explore more than 50 vehicles, food trucks, raffles and other entertainment. This year is extra special as CKHC celebrates its 10th anniversary.



## Bay Federal Announces David Torres as the Credit Union's Newest Assistant Vice President

Bay Federal Credit Union announced the promotion of David Torres to Assistant Vice President of Home Loan Sales. In recent years, Torres has been instrumental in leading both Bay Federal's team of local Home Loan Consultants and Bay Federal members through the challenges of the regional housing market. He has steadied the ship from a refinance boom driven by historically low interest rates to a challenging purchase market for first-time buyers. Meanwhile, Torres has continued to develop new talent at the credit union and bring in exciting applications and servicing tools to support borrowers. As Assistant Vice President of Home Loan Sales, Torres will continue to lead Bay Federal's Home Loan Consultants, support its Financial Service Officers and the branch network, and focus on new and innovative ways for members to finance the homes of their dreams. "I've always really enjoyed the satisfaction of assisting our members in achieving their homeownership goals," Torres said. "This new role will allow me to leverage even greater opportunities for our members and navigate the market at a much higher level." Before joining Bay Federal in 2014, Torres had many years of experience in mortgage banking. He joined the credit union as a Home Loan Consultant before becoming the Home Loans Manager in 2019. Torres holds a bachelor's degree in economics from San Jose State University and serves as a board member for Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay. He resides in Santa Cruz with his wife and three children. When Torres is not making dreams come true at the credit union, Torres is coaching his children's sports teams.



## Bay Federal Promotes Holga Nugent to Assistant Vice President

Bay Federal announced the promotion of Holga Nugent to Assistant Vice President of the Member Service Center. Nugent joined the Credit Union in November 2021 during a particularly unique post-pandemic era. Nugent immediately recognized the imperative for expansion and efficiencies at the Credit Union's Member Service Center. She made remarkable contributions supporting staffing, developing improvements to wait times, and establishing a new level of member service. Her recent advancement into a leadership role has resulted in an energized sense of morale for her team and exceptional quality of service for members. "My ongoing goals encompass fostering a culture of collaboration, driving operational efficiency through process optimization, and empowering our talented team with ongoing training and development initiatives," said Nugent. "Together, we'll continue to elevate the member experience to new levels of delight!" Before joining Bay Federal, Nugent obtained nearly 10 years of professional experience in the credit union industry. Her higher education background includes a collegiate soccer career at Concordia University, where she attained a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise and Sports Science, before receiving her Master of Arts degree in Leadership and Organizational Studies from Azusa Pacific University. She continues to dedicate time to developing her process improvement expertise and has gained six Sigma professional certifications. When she's not working, Nugent enjoys spending time with her family, including her adorable baby girl.

# Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Showcases Local Food, Wines and Art on Aug. 3

## Event Kicks Off July 25 With Chamber Mixer at California Welcome Center in Salinas

By Mac McDonald, Salinas Valley Business Journal

If you can't wait until the 13th annual Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival on Aug. 3, get a sneak preview of the food, wines, and atmosphere at the festival's kick-off event and Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Mixer on July 25, in Salinas.

The event will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, July 25, at the California Welcome Center – Salinas, located at 1A Station Place (Amtrak station). The event not only sets the stage for the festival in August, but allows fellow food and wine enthusiasts to network, enjoy a glass of local wine or a local brew and soak in the vibrant atmosphere. It's the perfect opportunity to connect with friends, colleagues, and clients in a relaxed and enjoyable setting.

There is no fee to attend the mixer, but you're encouraged to pre-register so the Chamber can get a headcount for the event. Register at: <https://business.salinaschamber.com/ap/Events/Register/wZFqqwvUeCxv>.

For more information on the event, contact the Chamber's Jasmine Bhardwaj by phone at (831) 751-7725 or email at [jasmine@salinaschamber.com](mailto:jasmine@salinaschamber.com).

As for the festival itself, this is its 13th year, with record-breaking attendance the last two years, and voted The Monterey Herald's "Salinas Valley Reader's Choice" as one of the Top 3 favorite local events — just above the California International Airshow and just under the California Rodeo Salinas.

The festival, set for 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 3, at Oldtown Salinas / Salinas City Center, is dedicated to increasing the popularity of



locally grown and crafted food and wine, bringing the community together as well visitors to experience and celebrate the tastes and sounds of the Salinas Valley, while raising funds to support local worthwhile and important community nonprofit organizations. The event also features local art and artists as well as entertainment.

"It has a really nice community vibe," says Krishna Patel of Duda Farm Fresh Foods and the festival's Finance Director. "Now that the area has been revamped and revitalized, people like to go down there. It's a very busy day, very vibrant and energetic. This festival has always been a lot of fun."

Salinas' Main Street (100 – 200 blocks) will be filled with wine tasting stops, food sampling stations, live music, artist/artisan vendors, and the opportunity to experience world-class wines, craft beers, and gourmet foods. Admission to the main festival is free. Purchasing a ticket includes wine and beer tastings along with samplings of culinary delights from

local chefs, caterers, and restaurants.

Patel says a ticket gets you a lanyard, wristband and plate so vendors can serve ticketholders tastes of wine, beer and food. The event entry is free, but a ticket allows the holder to partake of the food and beverages.

Some of the wineries include De Tierra, Morgan, Blair, Talbott and Jackson Family Wines. Brewers include Steel Bonnet, Alvarado Street Brewery, Other Brother and Firestone Walker. Food purveyors include The Steinbeck House, Schoch, Spontaneous Confections, Chamoy Bros., Sabor Latin Fusion, Kleinfeldt Family BBQ and Mia Fusion Cuisine.

Tickets are \$90 through July 19, \$100 after July 19 and through Aug. 3, or \$70 for U.S. military veterans and active duty personnel. To purchase tickets, go to

<https://www.squadup.com/events/salinas-valley-food-wine-festival-2024>.

For more information, go to [salinasvalleyfoodandwine.com](http://salinasvalleyfoodandwine.com), call (831) 770-7507, or email



[salinasvalleyfoodandwine@gmail.com](mailto:salinasvalleyfoodandwine@gmail.com).

Patel said there will be about a dozen breweries, 17 food vendors and 20-22 wineries, plus two bands on opposite ends of the street, about 15-20 art, jewelry and other vendors. She expects tickets to sell out.

"It always sells out," she says.

"Last year we sold 1,000 tickets, we have 1,100 on sale this year, 500 set aside for sponsors and about 100 for volunteers. We used to donate to one nonprofit, but this year we'll spread the money out a little to more local groups."

The festival is an event of Ye Old Main Street Foundation Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Patel has been with the festival since 2018 and was assured that she was putting her volunteer efforts into a very worthwhile event by one important person.

"Last year my Mom came out for the first time and she told me 'This is the best thing I've ever seen!'" she says.

Hard to argue with Mom. 🌿



# Compass Church presents 'At the Movies' Sermon Series

By Pastor Todd Anderson

**S**tarting the weekend of July 6-7 we have a new sermon series called "At the Movies." Jesus spoke in parables and short stories throughout his ministry, and I'll be following his example by taking today's most inspirational movies and using them as parables. I'll pull Biblical truths out of some of the best movies and talk about how that can help impact your life.

We added another service to accommodate the growth that Compass Church has been experiencing. So, each weekend in July



we have three services you can attend, including Saturday at 5 p.m. And, of course, there is always Sunday morning at both 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. With summer in full swing, we wanted to give as many options as possible for you to make

it to church.

For the whole month, we have great movies! So bring the whole family. We'll have the popcorn, candy, and save you a seat.

(Due to copyright laws, this series can only be experienced in person and will not be available online for streaming or playback.) 🌿



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For more information: [www.salinaschamber.com](http://www.salinaschamber.com)

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# Chevron Public Affairs Rep Leaving Monterey County — A Tad Bittersweet

By Mac McDonald, Salinas Valley Business Journal

**A**ndrea Bailey, a six-year resident of Monterey County and an active participant in local government, business, education, and nonprofit arenas, is pulling up stakes and will be moving back to the Bay Area for a new position with Chevron. But she won't be going into unfamiliar territory.

That's because Bailey is moving back to where it all started for her, both working in nonprofits, the corporate world and growing up. She was raised in Dublin in the East Bay, where her parents still live in the house she grew up in, went to local schools, attended Ohlone College in Fremont, got a doctorate in clinical psychology at UC Berkeley, and started her career, 12 years in marketing/advertising and 15 years in the nonprofit sector, before joining Chevron in 2009.

So, it will be a homecoming for her, but one that is a little bittersweet.

"This (Monterey County) feels like home to me, so it's really sad for me to move," she said. "I've made so many great friends and met some great business associates. I would have never thought that I'd be living in Monterey County, but it was an exciting move. It really feels different than the Bay Area. It's big, but it feels small, and everyone's so connected and there's so much history. It's going to be hard to leave."

When she arrived in Monterey County in 2018, it didn't take her long to hit the ground running and become part of the community and the nonprofit, business and educational arenas.

By the end of 2018, she had become a member of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce board of directors, serving as its chair in



Chevron executive and former chair of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Andrea Bailey, was awarded the Hartnell College Foundation's 2024 Leadership Award at the foundation's "Party in the Library" event.

2020 and terming out in 2023. In addition, she currently sits on the following boards: Salinas Valley Leadership Group, Hartnell College Foundation (Executive Committee), Boys and Girls Clubs of Monterey County (Executive Committee), NAACP Monterey County Chapter (Executive Committee), Fresno Chamber PAC, Fresno Council of Business Sponsors and the Foundation @ Fresno County Office of Education. She is also co-chair of the Hartnell College President's STEM Task Force and a former member of the Hartnell College President's Strategic Planning Task Force. Prior to her move back to the Bay Area sometime in October, Bailey will, "with great sadness,"

need to resign from her positions on the boards.

When asked how she found the time to do her work and serve on all the boards and committees (she was on eight committees at Hartnell alone!), she was very direct.

"It's just something I do. The work is very meaningful to me and I love being of service," she says. "Every board I sat on, everyone was all-in, they were all active members. It's a passion of mine. I feel rewarded."

Prior to joining Chevron, where she's been the Senior Public Affairs Representative for the San Joaquin Valley Business Unit in Monterey and Fresno counties as part of the Corporate Affairs team, she spent 15 years in the nonprofit sector,

including an eight-year stint with the American Red Cross, where she became the CEO for Contra Costa County. She started her own firm, The Nonprofit Development Group, which provided consulting services to nonprofit organizations. After closing her business, she took a position with a homeless shelter, the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program, as their Deputy Director. That's when Chevron came calling.

And to the average person, going from working with nonprofits to a global corporation such as Chevron may seem a huge, almost disconnected leap, but it made perfect sense to her.

**CHEVRON** see page 16



# TRANSFORM YOUR CLUTTER INTO **COMMUNITY IMPACT**



## *Why do we hold onto things?*

Clutter is more than just stuff; it's emotional baggage. Goodwill Central Coast turns your unwanted items into jobs and community support.

Decluttering can be hard, but start small, be mindful, and practice gratitude. Donate to GCC to help create jobs, reduce waste, and support local programs.

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**Visit [www.ccgoodwill.org](http://www.ccgoodwill.org)**  
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Goodwill Central Coast builds lives, families and communities by helping people with employment needs become successful, supported by innovative enterprises that preserve earth's resources.



# CHAMBER NEW MEMBER PROFILES

## Graves Elementary School District

Graves Elementary School District (GESD) provides a positive, vibrant and inspiring environment where students are valued and encouraged to succeed in becoming life-long learners. GESD's vision is to encourage the development of the whole student. Their aim is to support learners in becoming curious, reflective, and critical in their thinking as global citizens. GESD is committed to providing an educational program that develops students' curiosity and creativity; to developing responsible and engaged learners; to fostering tolerance, respect, and acceptance of others; to building each student's resilience and self-esteem; to providing a curriculum that is rich and relevant and allows all students to succeed; to promoting a strong, supportive partnership between home, the school, and the wider community; and to having high expectations of ourselves and others.

*Gravesschool.net, Mross@gravesschool.net, (831) 422-6392.*



## Navigator Schools

Navigator's mission is to equip students to be learners and leaders in high school, college and beyond. We develop top-tier teams of educators who continuously improve and innovate schools that deliver phenomenal outcomes for all students, regardless of their circumstances. We envision a future where every student at Navigator Schools emerges as a confident, compassionate and curious individual. Our aim is to cultivate learners who are not just academically proficient, but are also socially responsible and globally aware. We seek to empower our students to be leaders, thinkers, and innovators, ready to make meaningful contributions to society and to face the challenges of tomorrow with resilience and optimism.

*Navigatorschools.org, Kirsten.carr@navigatorschools.org, (831) 217-4880.*



## Remedy Spa

The Remedy Spa team is a well-oiled machine that is passionate about making a positive difference in your day, confidence and body. Our goal is to provide exclusive treatments and modalities that improve circulation, inflammation, daily living, and transcend the standards of aging gracefully. From athletes to busy moms to world travelers, Remedy will provide an escape that allows anyone to experience "next-level disconnect" in order to return to homeostasis, balance, and rejuvenation of the face and body. Be treated — book your spa service today!

*Remedyspa.net, Sara@remedyspa.net, (831) 574-8511.*



## Youth on Course

Youth on Course, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was established in 2006 to break down financial barriers and bring diversity to the world of golf. Our core purpose is simple, yet transformative: to provide young people with access to life-changing opportunities through golf. The groundbreaking program began when a junior golfer passionate about the game, but unable to afford greens fees, walked into Poppy Hills in California and with excitement played the first round of golf underwritten by the Morton family, paying homage to their patriarch, Tom Morton. What sets Youth on Course apart is our unwavering commitment to subsidizing rounds of golf at \$5 or less for youth. Being privately funded enables us to facilitate this subsidy, resulting in millions of rounds played — an extraordinary testament to our dedication to making golf an accessible activity for the next generation. In recent years, our organization has experienced rapid growth, proudly extending membership to nearly 200,000 youth aged 6-18. This inclusive community enjoys access to golf at more than 2,000 courses across the United States, Canada and Australia.

*Youthoncourse.org, Moe@youthoncourse.org, (360) 601-5607.*



## CHEVRON - from page 14

She's particularly proud of the work she had been doing with the Hartnell College Foundation and Hartnell College President's STEM Task Force. STEM education refers to an approach to learning that incorporates science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"Education is key for us at Chevron," she says. "We're a company of engineers, chemists, physicists, scientists, etc., so it's important for us to invest in STEM

education and support the workers of tomorrow. Being on the STEM task force and working collaboratively to create a STEM pipeline, that was one of the greatest pleasures of my time here."

In fact, Bailey was recently awarded the Hartnell College Foundation's 2024 Leadership Award at an event called "Party in the Library." Here are some of her remarks after being presented the award:

"Receiving this award from Hartnell College means a lot to me. I started my educational career at a

community college while married, working and raising a family. It was a tough journey, but I did it," she said. "And when I look at, talk to, and observe Hartnell College students, I see me. I was that student. An adult learner, eager to set an example for my children, working full time and burning the midnight oil studying. Hartnell College is a path forward and an incredible opportunity for a lifetime of success for their students."

In her speech, she thanked the "many amazing people, community

organizations and businesses that are all working to make a difference in Monterey County."

"The experience has been highly rewarding, on both a personal and professional level," she continued. "Thank you for sharing your friendship, your wisdom, your love, your guidance and your time. I have truly loved my time here and I am thankful to this community for embracing me and welcoming me as one of your own. I have so many wonderful, special memories that I will forever cherish." 🌿





# RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



## Grand Opening of Milla Legal Document Services

Milla Legal Document Services celebrated the grand opening of their new location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce. Specializing in self-help legal services, Milla Legal Document Services is excited to embark on this new journey and serving the local community with expert assistance in various matters whether it be living wills and trusts, name changes, deed preparation, and more. The event featured networking opportunities, guided tours of the new office space, and delicious local hors d'oeuvres, wine, and beer.



## New and Prospective Member Orientation

New and prospective members attended our quarterly SVCC Member Orientation to learn more about Chamber membership, ways to get involved, and how the Chamber can help them achieve their marketing goals. Vice Chair of Membership Starla Warren, Board Member Amy Salmina, Vice Chair of Events Amy Gibson, Ambassadors Brent Calvin, Carla Rocha, and Oscar Mora, along with Chamber staff, were on hand to welcome and connect with the attendees.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Kickoff & Chamber Mixer**

*Thursday, July 25, 5:30– 7:00 p.m.*

*California Welcome Center Salinas, 1 Station Place, Salinas*

Are you a lover of food and wine? Join us for the Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Kickoff & Chamber mixer that is a kickoff to the main event taking place on Saturday, Aug. 3. It is an event for people to meet, network, and enjoy a glass of wine or one of your local brews before the main celebration. Invite your friends, coworkers and clients. The Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival is embedded deep into the Salinas Valley culture and brings our community and visitors together to participate, experience, and appreciate the sights, sounds, and tastes of the Salinas Valley. Register at [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com).

- **Grand Opening and Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony with Chris Cain Law**

*Thursday, August 8, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.*

*6 W. Gabilan St., Suite 17, Salinas*

Join us for a grand opening and ribbon-cutting event with Chris Cain Law, an established Monterey County law firm. With over 12 years of experience as an attorney licensed to practice law in California, Chris has a proven record of fighting aggressively for the rights of his clients. Chris currently handles immigration, criminal defense and traffic matters in Monterey County. The office offers free consultations, either in person or over the phone. Come network, celebrate, and learn more about Chris Cain Law's services.

**RSVP at [salinaschamber.com](http://salinaschamber.com)**



## Explaining the Chamber's Candidate Endorsement Process

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**T**he Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is now preparing for one of the most challenging tasks of the organization: the general election candidate endorsement process. It happens every two years.

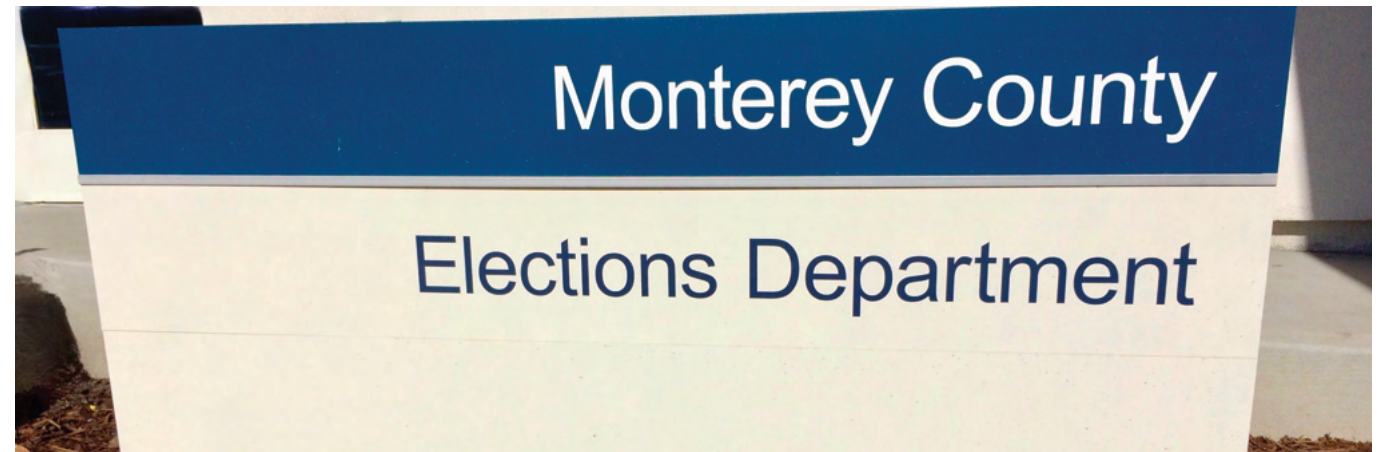
A truly fair and meaningful endorsement process requires a lot of work and can generate negative opinions about the Chamber. Nevertheless, there is no plan for the Chamber to stop making endorsements.

Through the endorsement process, the Chamber gets to know the character of new candidates and understand their policy interests and priorities. For incumbent candidates, the Chamber gets to review, evaluate, and discuss their voting records and their constituent service while in office. In exchange, candidates and incumbents get to know more about the Chamber and its policy positions.

Endorsements are reported with explanations to Chamber members and the public. They serve as a guide to voters who want to know which candidates are more likely to consider the interests of businesses when making decisions as elected representatives of the people.

### The Role of the Candidate Review Committee

Section 6.2 of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce authorizes the Board of Directors to establish committees not already designated in the bylaws. The Board has the authority to define the mission and



responsibilities of those committees and appoint committee chairs. For at least the past twelve years, the Board has established a Candidate Review Committee to prepare endorsements for each election year.

The committee chair is assigned in the bylaws to appoint committee members. This is done in consultation with the Board of Directors, the President & CEO, and the Government Affairs Liaison. Committee members are expected to understand the Chamber's vision and mission, be knowledgeable about local public policy, and have a reputation for fairness and thoughtfulness.

As volunteers, their time is limited. At the same time, their responsibilities are substantial:

- Review the Monterey County Elections Office final list of declared candidates and decide which offices are legitimately competitive — in other words, the races that have more than one credible candidate.

- Identify dates and times when Candidate Review Committee members are available for sets of interviews.
- Invite candidates for an interview and schedule them.
- Develop candidate questionnaires (individualized for each office), send the approved questionnaires to candidates, and remind candidates to submit the completed questionnaires. (Note that the preparation of meaningful questionnaires requires comprehensive knowledge of which issues are current and important for the Chamber at each government.)
- Prepare questions to ask during each interview.
- Ask follow-up questions in a graceful but firm manner during interviews when candidates evade questions or give inaccurate or uninformed answers.
- Perform additional background research on candidates when necessary.

- Prepare an endorsement recommendation report for submission to the Board of Directors.
- Publish an article listing and explaining the endorsement decisions in the Business Journal and write a press release.
- Inform candidates about their endorsements or the decision not to endorse them.
- When appropriate, respond to candidate and public criticism of the endorsements, including attacks on the Chamber and its leaders and employees/contractors.
- Keep the process fair and free of inappropriate influence.

Are you interested in having the Board of Directors consider you for appointment to the Candidate Review Committee? It simply requires that you or your employer or organization is a Chamber member. For more information, contact Government Affairs Liaison Kevin Dayton at [kevin@salinaschamber.com](mailto:kevin@salinaschamber.com) or at (831) 869-6592. 🌱





# What's Your Chamber's Government Relations Committee Talking About This Month? July 2024

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**Y**our Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee had 19 members at its most recent meeting on Wednesday, June 12. The Committee discussed the following issues:

**1** In the fall of 2024, the Chamber will host a "Salinas Valley Speaks" event at which mayors, city managers, and/or economic development directors will participate in a panel discussion about plans and priorities for economic growth and job creation. Governments represented at the event will be the cities of Salinas, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, King City, and the unincorporated areas of South County (District 3 of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors). Contact the Chamber if you're interested in being an event sponsor or otherwise being involved with this event.

**2** Reportedly, the Salinas City Council will vote at its June 25 meeting for an ordinance that will limit landlords' annual percentage increase in rents to 2%, regardless of the inflation rate or any other market conditions. The Chamber opposes this proposal, which will likely result in numerous unintended negative impacts on housing, including withdrawal of existing rental units from the market and the discouragement of future rental units entering the market through new construction or conversion

from housing currently occupied by owners.

**3** The Chamber has requested public records from the City of Salinas related to planning and development of a massive Amazon warehouse in South Salinas. (On June 14, the City of Salinas provided the Chamber with about 165 documents — see the article in this Business Journal titled "Revealing What the Public Never Knew About 'Project GOAT' Amazon Warehouse Plan.")

**4** The Chamber is monitoring references to a proposal for the Salinas City Council to impose a substantial new tax or fee on agricultural companies. In response to a request for public records, the City of Salinas responded that it didn't possess any documents that were not exempt from the California Public Records Act.

**5** The Chamber reviewed the balanced budget approved by the Salinas City Council on June 11 and the proposed tax increases on the November 2024 ballot that the Monterey County Board of Supervisors planned to consider on June 18.

**6** The Government Relations Committee voted to join the "Fix PAGA" coalition in support of a ballot measure to repeal the 2004 California Private Attorneys General



Act. Chamber members have been subject to lawsuits and lawsuit threats authorized under this law that do not seem legitimate, but instead appear to be schemes to get businesses to pay "settlement" agreements to avoid legal expenses.

**7** The Government Relations Committee continues to monitor two statewide efforts to reduce relentless criminal behavior that's occurring in some major California cities, such as San Francisco and Oakland. One is a ballot measure to repeal Proposition 47 (approved by voters in 2014) that changed certain low-level crimes from potential felonies to misdemeanors, and the other is state legislation that would create more of a distinction between organized retail theft operations and individual petty criminals who could truly benefit from substance abuse treatment under Proposition 47.

**8** Unsubstantiated and inaccurate rumors are circulating in Monterey County accusing

the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce of setting policy positions and candidate endorsements via a secretive, insider process in which powerful business and political leaders ensure pre-ordained outcomes. We suspect people who don't like Chamber decisions originate and spread these claims; nevertheless, the Government Relations Committee wants to tell the public how the Chamber's decision-making process actually works. This month's Business Journal includes this new monthly column ("What's the Government Relations Committee Talking About This Month?") and also an article titled "How Does the Chamber Decide Which Candidates to Endorse?"

Are you interested in joining the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee? It simply requires that you or your employer or organization is a Chamber member. For more information, contact Government Affairs Liaison Kevin Dayton at [kevin@salinaschamber.com](mailto:kevin@salinaschamber.com) or at (831) 869-6592. 🌱

# Salinas Valley Health Finds its New President/CEO In-House

Salinas Valley Health didn't have to look very far to find its new President/CEO.

Allen Radner, MD, who had been serving in the interim role since Dec. 1, 2023, and had been on the medical staff at SVH since 1994, serving 10 years on the executive team as the healthcare systems Chief Medical Officer, was named the new leader by the publicly elected Board of Directors during open session following a special board meeting on June 6.

"I am fortunate to have been a part of this community and this organization for many years," says Radner. "I understand the organization's rich history in Monterey County and our deep commitment to provide quality care to everyone in our community. It is my honor to lead our team in meeting the challenges that lie ahead and making the most of the opportunities before us."

Radner, who becomes the seventh leader of the institution, succeeds previous President/CEO Pete Delgado, who retired in November 2023, after a decade at the position.

Shortly after Delgado's announcement, the Board engaged WittKieffer, a nationally recognized recruitment firm to assist in the recruitment process and its CEO Search Committee, which was comprised of diverse community stakeholders.

"This decision was made after an extensive process," says Victor Rey, Salinas Valley Health Board of Directors President. "As a public district hospital it was our due diligence to conduct a thorough search to select the right person to lead the future of the organization and support our community's health needs. The Board feels confident about the selection process and our final decision, determining Dr. Radner the most qualified leader to meet our ambitious goals moving forward."

Radner has played a pivotal role at Salinas Valley Health over the past two decades, expanding access to care and addressing critical and cultural community health needs.

He has been instrumental in helping achieve and maintain exceptional patient safety and clinical quality metrics including a four-star CMS rating and 10 consecutive Leapfrog patient safety "A" grades.

He has also held various leadership positions at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital, Natividad Medical Center and Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. In 2019, he became Chief Executive Officer of Salinas Valley Health Medical Clinic, a network of primary and specialty care clinics serving Monterey County.

"We have been able to recruit and align physicians to grow an impressive network of primary and specialty clinics that have significantly increased access to care for people in our region," he says. "We have gone from serving just a few hundred patients to having more than 600,000 patient encounters every year in our clinics. Salinas Valley Health has always been known for the quality of care it delivers and it remains a cornerstone of my focus on operations as the new president/CEO."

Radner earned his medical degree from Rush Medical College in Chicago, completed an internal medicine internship and residency



Dr. Allen Radner, new President/CEO of Salinas Valley Health in Salinas.



Salinas Valley Health, located at 450 East Romie Lane in Salinas, employs more than 2,000 people and has a medical staff of more than 300.

at University of California, San Diego and continued on to complete his infectious diseases fellowship at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

He is board certified in internal medicine and infectious diseases by the American Board of Internal Medicine. Radner also serves as Clinical Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine for the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine; Medical Director of the Natividad Immunodeficiency and Infectious Diseases Clinic; and as Monterey County Tuberculosis Controller.

Radner was also named the 2023 Salinas Valley Chamber Citizen of the Year for his long commitment to the Chamber and community and was honored to be recognized by the Chamber.

While admitting that healthcare is facing a very challenging environment right now — especially in Monterey County where 75% of the population is government-insured and the reimbursements rates don't cover the costs of actually providing the care, he believes access to quality care is critical.

"We have made great strides seizing opportunities to better serve our community with services and outreach programs, focused on prevention and engaging families in their

health and wellness. Blue Zones Project Monterey County, which we co-sponsor with Taylor Farms and Montage, is just one example," he says. "Salinas Valley Health also has some important needs and opportunities to expand our own infrastructure to better serve our growing and diverse population. I'm excited to explore those possibilities with our community partners and the community itself."

Salinas Valley Health was founded in 1953 as Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System, serving individuals and families throughout the Salinas Valley, Monterey Peninsula, and surrounding region. Salinas Valley Health employs more than 2,000 people and consists of a network of resources and collaborations, which include a 263-bed acute care medical center; primary, specialty, and urgent care clinics; a mobile clinic; and community-based health and wellness programs.

"Our commitment to provide quality care, locally delivered, to everyone is as strong now as it was when we first opened our doors," says Radner. "I personally take pride in that legacy and take the responsibility seriously."

For more information on Salinas Valley Health, go to: [www.salinasvalleyhealth.com](http://www.salinasvalleyhealth.com).





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# Salinas City Council Approves a Balanced Budget After All But Future Budget Projections Look a Little Shaky, Unless the City Finds New Revenue Sources

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**O**n June 11, 2024, the Salinas City Council voted 7-0 for a balanced budget. It was approved with minimal controversy, praise for city staff, and cautious optimism about the future.

Two months earlier, staff had warned the council's Finance Committee that a \$20 million budget deficit had materialized in the city's preliminary draft Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget. This amount comprised more than 14% of the previous Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget. It had not been expected.

But staff was confident they could devise a balanced budget. They even claimed they could do it without cutting city services. And in the end, they did.

The final approved budget included a 13-page introductory letter from Jim Pia, the current Assistant City Manager, on behalf of René Mendez, the new City Manager. As Interim City Manager, Pia coordinated the budget with the Finance Department and city department heads, while collecting community input and taking city council direction. He summarized the budget achievement in the first page of his letter:

The budget maintains levels of service for the community while (1) acknowledging inflationary impacts, (2) recognizing stagnant revenues, and (3) absorbing new unfunded state and federal mandates. The proposed budget considered City Council and Administration priorities, recent community outreach and surveys, other departmental and organizational priorities, and forecasts to future revenues and expenditures.

City Councilmembers praised staff for developing a budget that



The Salinas City Council unanimously approved a balanced budget on June 11, 2024.

kept the City of Salinas focused on the council's established goals and priorities, especially their efforts to improve quality of life for residents "through maintaining parks, traffic calming/traffic safety for all users, thoughtfully planning street and sidewalk repairs, and prudent fiscal management, among other items."

Also impressing the City Council was the continued maintenance of the city's Economic Contingency Reserve. Twelve percent of general funds dedicated to ongoing operating expenditures are again set aside to "provide ample resources in the event a recession or other event that may affect the City."

There was only one last-ditch public campaign to change the budget. A science group oriented toward student learning had received line-item funding from the city budget in the past. It was not selected this year for funding among

the applications from community organizations for funding under the city's new Community Sponsorship policy. This group brought numerous young people to the meeting who asked the city council to add funding to the budget for their organization. Despite this pressure to add funding, the City Council and staff held firm in their decision to approve the budget as is. However, staff told the city council that they would review the budget situation in the coming months and look for opportunities to provide funding to additional community groups.

### Three Strategies Used to Balance the Budget

Balancing the budget is an art as well as a science, and a few city councilmembers and a representative of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce pointed out the art at the May 21 meeting, when the city

council first reviewed the budget.

The first strategy was to direct city departments to prepare a status quo budget, without new or expanded programs. This required discipline, as inflation and other economic conditions have significantly increased costs of vendor contracts. The Community Development Department was able to prepare a budget in conjunction with a structural reorganization.

The second strategy was to assume that numerous vacant city positions would remain vacant for the next fiscal year. This lopped \$4.8 million from budget expenditures. At the June 11 meeting, the city council made only one amendment to the proposed budget: they classified those positions as vacant rather than eliminated. If economic conditions change and more revenue comes in, those vacancies can be filled without the need for council reauthorization.



The third strategy was an exercise in rosy optimism. Certain special enterprise funds for the city consistently run annual deficits and have to be backfilled from the general fund. But the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget was prepared as if revenue for those special funds would suddenly and miraculously equal expenditures.

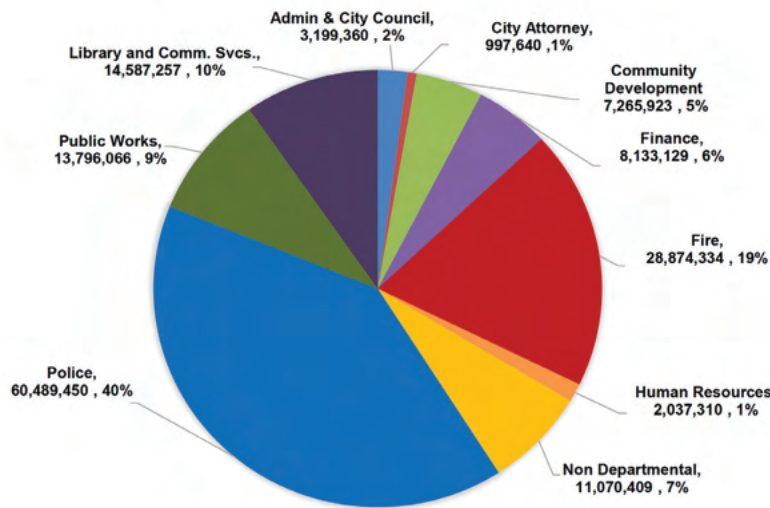
This strategy is risky, but it may compel city staff and private parties interested in these enterprise funds to develop innovative plans to eliminate the chronic deficits. For example, the city's Downtown Parking Fund loses money every year. If the city established a public-private partnership for a Downtown Parking Management District — as envisioned in the 2015 Downtown Vibrancy Plan — an outside party would have vested interest to increase revenue from parking while making parking more convenient and more pleasant for downtown workers and visitors.

### The City Could Obtain More Revenue from Economic Development

Although the budget is balanced for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, increasing budget deficits are expected in future years. More revenue will be needed.

Councilmembers recognize that encouraging major businesses to come to Salinas or expand their existing facilities in Salinas would be a positive, constructive way to increase revenue.

Mayor Kimbley Craig noted that the city has hired two full-time personnel and one part-time worker for economic development activities. (In recent years, the City of Salinas didn't have anyone dedicated to business recruitment and retention.) Some councilmembers remarked on the city's new Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) that would help fund expansion of the industrial wastewater treatment and conveyance system for agricultural processing in South Salinas.



The pie chart shows department allocations for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General, Measure E and G Funds Operating Budget (excluding transfers out). It totals \$172,971,278, which is a 0.7% increase from Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

### The City Could Also Obtain More Revenue from Higher Taxes and Fees

Some councilmembers also focused on the city's ways of collecting revenue. Councilmember Anthony Rocha observed that the city has strong dependence on sales tax revenue, which can vary greatly from year to year based on economic conditions. This tax model causes havoc to government budgets in recessions.

Some city councilmembers have spoken favorably about enacting changes to business fees. One recent example of a city that did this is the City of Tracy, where the method of calculating business fees was changed in 2022. As a result, an agricultural business that had paid a \$2,000 annual fee had to pay \$300,000 in the following year. A gas station that had paid \$600 in annual fees had to pay \$36,000 in the following year. As businesses in Tracy threaten to relocate their taxable operations to somewhere nearby, outside of city limits, the Tracy Chamber of Commerce is lobbying to ease this dramatic change for businesses. But the new influx of revenue is alluring for elected officials who see opportunities to improve quality of life with it.

### Resurrecting Budget Recommendations in "The Salinas Plan"

Staff informed the city council at the June 11 meeting that strategies to avoid future budget deficits will include implementation of recommendations in "The Salinas Plan." Produced by an outside organization, this comprehensive advisory document was presented in its original form to the city council at its Dec. 4, 2018 meeting. It included 32 recommendations on how to maintain a balanced budget while preserving services. It also addresses ways to improve housing conditions and housing supply for residents.

At their March 21, 2023 meeting, the city council received "The Salinas Plan Refresh" and evaluated the status of the 32 recommendations. The refresh added six new recommendations. At that time, the city had fully implemented seven original recommendations, outright rejected four recommendations, and was at various stages of implementing the other 21 recommendations.

Also, the Salinas Plan refresh document warns that expiration of the Measure G sales tax in 2030 would be "devastating to the City's ability to continue current operations and increase investment in City facilities and infrastructure." Staff informed the city council on April 9, 2024 that Measure

G funds 107 city positions. The City of Salinas has been polling residents about their knowledge of Measure G and their interest in extending it.

### Putting the City's Eggs in One Revenue Basket with An Amazon Warehouse

Overshadowing the fiscal future of the City of Salinas is the issue that everyone is talking about: the massive Amazon warehouse apparently coming to the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan area in South Salinas. "We cannot put all our eggs in the Amazon basket," Craig warned the city council (and the public).

It is true that the warehouse could provide significant tax revenue, enough to ease worries about the city's projected budget deficit and generate extra funding for new and expanded programs and projects. But at what cost?

The community is beginning to consider the implications. At the June 11 city council meeting, representatives of Building Healthy Communities, the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 5, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521 expressed concerns during general public comment about the Amazon warehouse and the lack of transparency for the public about it.

Labor union officials have a primary objective to get a commitment from Amazon not to resist union organizing efforts at the warehouse. Nevertheless, their comments about traffic impact and lack of housing for 2,000 potential workers are valid. Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce has proposed specific opportunities to Amazon representatives for community collaboration that would allow the company to introduce itself to the Salinas Valley as an asset and partner rather than a problem.

If Amazon does establish operations in the City of Salinas, the budget situation may be very different for the city when the City Council approves the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget in June 2025. 🌱

# Celebrate Summer in the Salinas Valley

By Jasmine Bhardwaj, Chamber Staff

As summer unfolds, the Salinas Valley becomes a hub of exciting activities and festive celebrations. From the patriotism of the 4th of July to the vibrant local mixers and thrilling rodeo, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Independence Day is a key highlight of the summer season. Cities come alive with parades, family gatherings, and spectacular fireworks. Our Chamber member, TNT® Fireworks, is the largest distributor in the U.S. Thousands of non-profits nationwide use TNT® Fireworks stands as their primary fundraising, including our local Chamber member educational institutions and non-profits. Be sure to visit one of our Chamber members having fireworks booths this year.

Also, don't miss this year's biggest event on the Central Coast — Celebrate America! On July 4th, 2024, the Salinas Sports Complex will host the largest fireworks display in Monterey County. The festivities will kick off at 2 p.m. with carnival games, bouncy houses, a trackless train, and more. There will be multiple food trucks, vendors, and a festival stage for local entertainers to delight the crowd. To cap off the night at 9 p.m., the city will enjoy a 20–25-minute best-in-class fireworks display.

From July 12-14, MotoAmerica Superbike SpeedFest at Monterey is taking place at the iconic WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca. This event promises a weekend packed with high-speed thrills as the nation's top superbike racers embark on this legendary track. Whether you're a motorsport enthusiast or looking for an unforgettable experience, the MotoAmerica Superbike SpeedFest is the place to be. The kickoff will be on Thursday, July 11, in Salinas, with an opportunity to meet



the riders.

One of the summer's most anticipated events is the California Rodeo Salinas. This 114th anniversary features exciting rodeo competitions, lively parades, and a festive carnival atmosphere. Whether you're a rodeo fan or looking for family-friendly entertainment, the California Rodeo Salinas events are not to be missed.

Mark your calendar for July 25 and head to the California Welcome Center in Salinas for the Salinas Valley Food and Wine Kickoff Mixer. For 13 years, the Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival has been dedicated to increasing the popularity of locally grown and crafted food and wine. This kickoff is an event for people to meet, network, and enjoy a glass of wine or one of your local brews before the main celebration.

To stay up to date on member happenings, visit [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com). 🌿





# AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT CARLA ROCHA ARTISTIC HANGUPS



Born and raised in Lima, Peru, Carla moved to Salinas in 1982. She was studying for the Highway Patrol when an accident left her bedridden. She looked to a previous job, working in photo technology, as a jumping-off platform to work again. Carla went to work at Frame Source in 1991 but was lured away in 1993 to work with Carol and Armand Minnie at Artistic Hangups. She served as framing manager until 2009, when she purchased the business from the Minnie family. She has been active with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce as a member of the Chamber Ambassadors. In more than 15 years, she has been able to double her business and serve in various capacities in the community. She is most proud of her time with the Alisal Rotary Club, where she has served on the board of directors and volunteered as part of several community projects.

## McDonald's Restaurants of the Salinas Valley would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2024 Raymond H. Costa Family Scholarship



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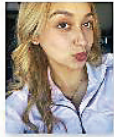
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# Does Wide Use of Semaglutide Mean the End of Obesity?

By Spenser Smith, Lab Manager, ARCpoint Labs

There are a few moments in the history of medicine where a single discovery changes the lives of millions. In 1928, Dr. Alexander Fleming's discovered penicillin in a contaminated petri dish, revolutionizing the treatment of bacterial infections and saving millions from disease.

Before the 1920's, type 1 diabetes was a virtual death sentence until the advent of insulin for diabetes management in a Toronto lab. Today, an estimated 529 million people worldwide live with managed diabetes. Vaccination was developed in the west between 1776 and 1977, though arguably it was a rediscovery of a technique known in China for centuries.

Today there are no shortage of miracle cures and promised medical revolutions, and most do not live up to the hype. Yet semaglutide, also known as GLP-1 agonists or under brand names such as Wegovy or Ozempic, could represent a transformative step forward in the management of metabolic disorders and the epidemic of obesity in the U.S.

Semaglutide is also the center of a great deal of controversy. Unfortunately, it is outside the scope of this article to grapple with all the complexities that it presents. In this article, I hope to explain some of the laboratory testing tools available to people who are currently using semaglutide, considering using it, or who are trying to maintain the weight loss they may have achieved with semaglutide in a healthy and sustainable manner. But first, we should be clear on what semaglutide is, and why it is so important to approach treatment with it so carefully and thoughtfully.

Semaglutide is a medication that was originally developed to help people with type 2 diabetes manage their blood sugar levels. It's a type

of drug called a GLP-1 Receptor Agonist, which works by affecting the hormones produced by the pancreas. During early testing, many patients noticed that they were also losing weight while taking the medication, which led scientists

to investigate its potential for weight loss. Semaglutide is now the first drug approved since Saxenda in 2014 to treat chronic weight management in overweight and obese adults.

The promise of an actually effective weight loss drug is obviously appealing. To individuals who may have struggled to lose and keep off weight in the past, it offers hope of a way to achieve their goals. For public health, it is just as promising. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared obesity a global epidemic, with at least 2.8 million people dying each year due to being overweight or obese. In 2016, chronic diseases caused by obesity and being overweight cost \$480.7 billion in direct healthcare costs in the U.S. alone, plus an additional \$1.24 trillion in indirect costs due to lost economic productivity.

So clearly, a drug that can help address this \$2 trillion healthcare emergency has generated a large amount of interest. But there is no such thing as a miracle drug, and

semaglutide has attracted an equal share of controversy. For one, it is

expensive, ranging from \$800 to \$1,500 a month, though some insurance can bring the cost down to \$100 or less. There are compounded versions of the drug available at some independent

pharmacies, though these are not FDA-approved and there are concerns about the purity and safety of some of these formulations.

Additionally, while Wegovy has been approved as a weight-loss medication with acceptable risks of side effects, semaglutide was developed to treat medically significant insulin resistance. Use of semaglutide medications "off-label" for purely cosmetic weight loss has proliferated on social media, leading to concerns about unregulated medical advertising and body image issues, especially for young people exposed to relentless messaging through influencers or societal expectations.

Still, ARCpoint Labs of Salinas and Monterey Bay was founded on the principle that individuals should be empowered to take control of their wellness and healthcare. Semaglutide offers the strongest hope in a generation for many people who struggle with weight loss, and holds the promise for incredible gains in human health and dignity, if

pursued responsibly.

I want to be clear that ARCpoint Labs does not offer any access to medications of any kind, nor do we recommend or endorse any medications. The best way to see if semaglutide is for you, as always, is to speak with your doctor. But for those who are interested, or who have begun treatment, ARCpoint Labs is proud to offer our new semaglutide monitoring panel. This panel, in addition to other medical blood tests on our extensive lab menu, is available directly to clients, no outside doctor's order required.

Before starting treatment with GLP-1 agonists, doctors typically conduct several baseline tests, and patients can seek these tests themselves while considering semaglutide, or during treatment. These tests have been compiled into our new semaglutide panel, which consists of the following tests.

Establishing baseline fasting blood glucose and A1C levels is vital, as these measurements provide a reference point for evaluating the drug's effectiveness in controlling blood sugar. Additionally, since GLP-1 agonists are partially excreted through the kidneys, assessing kidney function through tests such as serum creatinine and estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) is critical to ensure the kidneys can handle the medication.

Liver function tests are also essential, as they help determine if the liver is functioning correctly. This is particularly important since some metabolic drugs can affect liver function. Given that GLP-1 agonists have been associated with thyroid C-cell tumors in rodents, assessing thyroid function through tests like TSH, T3, and T4, is prudent.

Once treatment begins, periodic





# Navigating an Even More Concentrated Market

By **Bill Hastie**, Hastie Financial Group

**W**hen asked how the market did today, most people would think that most of the stocks in a particular index either advanced or declined. For example, if the Dow went up 100 points, most would assume the majority of the 30 stocks in the Dow gained on the day. But this has not been the case since early 2023. In 2023, it was the Magnificent 7 that drove the majority of market performance. This year, the “Mag 7” has been reduced to only five stocks, and year-to-date have driven nearly 60% of market performance. So, what was considered a concentrated rally last year has become even more concentrated this year. What’s more, the average S&P 500 stock has lagged the performance of the index by 10.7%, the largest underperformance since 1990.

How does the individual investor manage their portfolio in an environment where market performance is being largely driven by such a narrow group of stocks? The knee-jerk response is to just own those five stocks. But it is a much more complex issue which creates a challenge for investors who are seeking the best performance while maintaining a prudently diversified investment portfolio.

A deeper understanding of investment risk helps to determine the best course of action for the individual investor. First, there are two types of investment risk, systematic (market) and unsystematic (idiosyncratic). Systematic risk is the easiest to deal with in a portfolio, as it is the risk inherent in the overall market. This risk is always present in a portfolio and cannot be diversified out of the portfolio.

Unsystematic risk is the risk inherent in a particular stock, industry or sector. Unlike systematic risk, unsystematic risk can be reduced (but never eliminated) by adding additional stocks to the portfolio, i.e., diversifying the portfolio. But if the lion’s share of investment performance is coming from the same five stocks, owning just those five stocks will mean that the unsystematic risk of the portfolio is sky-high. Enter the risk measure of “standard deviation” — the sum of systematic and unsystematic risk.

As stocks are added to the portfolio in an effort to reduce the overall risk of the portfolio (standard deviation), over the last two years investors have experienced a reduction in portfolio performance by diluting the stellar performance of those five stocks. So, what does the individual investor do who is

seeking maximum return while remaining consistent with their risk tolerance?

This challenge becomes a balancing act for the investor to assess the potential risk and the potential return and determine how much risk is acceptable. By focusing on the standard deviation of a portfolio, the investor can determine how concentrated they wish to be in large cap stocks (the top earning asset class over the last two years), and specifically the top five stocks. In the current market, the more diversified the portfolio, most likely, the lower the portfolio performance until the investment markets return to a more normal state. 🌱

*Bill Hastie, MBA, is a financial advisor at locally owned Hastie Financial Group, and can be reached at [william.hastie@hastiefg.com](mailto:william.hastie@hastiefg.com).*

## Semaglutide - from page 26

monitoring is necessary to track progress and detect potential side effects. Regular monitoring of HbA1c and blood glucose levels helps determine the effectiveness of the medication in controlling blood sugar levels. Ongoing assessment of kidney function ensures that the medication does not negatively impact renal health, while periodic testing of liver enzymes is necessary to detect any hepatic side effects early.

Regular monitoring of thyroid function helps identify any changes, which is crucial for early detection of potential complications. Additionally, tests for lipase and amylase levels are important to monitor pancreatic function, as there is a small risk of pancreatitis with GLP-1 agonists. Since weight loss is a significant benefit of GLP-1 agonists, tracking

weight and BMI helps assess the drug’s effectiveness in this regard. As testing continues during the course of treatment, the results of these testing datapoints and their changes over time can also help to adjust the dosing of semaglutide to an optimal level.

After discontinuing GLP-1 agonists, monitoring should continue to ensure that any changes or side effects are promptly addressed. Additionally, the weight lost with semaglutides can be hard to keep off. One study found that 18% of people who lost at least 5 pounds while taking semaglutide regained all of their weight within a year, and some even gained more. Another study found that patients regained two-thirds of their weight loss on average within 12 months of stopping. Periodic testing with the semaglutide panel can catch changing biochemistry early, hopefully aiding

the patient in knowing if their body is reverting to pre-treatment patterns so that they can address that in real time with targeted strategies, and see if the strategies are working with follow-up testing.

Periodic medical testing while on GLP-1 agonists offers several significant benefits. First and foremost, regular monitoring helps detect side effects early, allowing for timely intervention and preventing serious complications. By tracking blood glucose levels and other parameters, doctors can adjust dosages or switch medications to ensure optimal therapeutic outcomes. Ongoing tests provide data that help tailor treatment plans to individual patient needs, improving overall health outcomes.

Furthermore, knowing that their health is being closely monitored can provide patients with confidence and reduce anxiety related

to potential side effects. Early detection of issues leads to prompt treatment, reducing the risk of long-term complications and improving quality of life.

Although semaglutides hold incredible promise, their true benefits to individuals and society will only be realized if they are deployed in a responsible manner. People should be educated about their benefits and drawbacks, and those who need them the most should have access to them. This is true on the individual level, as well.

Knowledge is power, not only knowledge of how semaglutide (or any weight management strategy) works, but also knowledge of how your body is individually responding to it, in real time. ARCpoint Labs is proud to offer the semaglutide panel to anyone in Monterey County and beyond, allowing our clients to take charge of their wellness today. 🌱

# Labor Unions Maneuver to Control Jobs Related to Amazon Warehouse

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Labor unions have a major interest in the planned five-story, 3,080,787-square-foot Amazon warehouse in South Salinas. Hundreds of construction workers will be needed to build it. Operations and maintenance may result in 2,000 or more jobs. Union officials want workers represented by unions to hold these jobs. But different unions are using different approaches to achieve that goal.

## Building Trades Unions Are Positive About the Warehouse

Under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), construction companies have an option to sign a special “pre-hire” agreement with unions that establishes the terms and conditions of work for building trade workers before the project starts. The rationale for this legal exception to other unionization procedures in the NLRA is that construction workers are hired on a project-by-project basis rather than as permanent employees.

Under a pre-hire arrangement, often called a Project Labor Agreement, workers do not choose to sign cards for unionization or vote in an election for union representation. They go to the union hiring hall and get dispatched to the job with union representation under terms and conditions already established in the Project Labor Agreement.

This provides important context for how construction unions initially responded to the rumor of a massive Amazon warehouse coming to Salinas. The first outside party that requested information from the City of Salinas about the warehouse was a South San Francisco law firm, Adams, Broadwell, Joseph & Cardozo. On Jan. 20, 2022, this law firm submitted a request for public records related to “all pending applications in the possession of the City of Salinas for proposed warehouse and industrial projects of 100,000 square feet or more.” Adams Broadwell Joseph

& Cardozo typically works on behalf of unions that represent MEPS construction trades (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Sprinkler Fitters).

On Jan. 21, 2022, the Weinberg Roger & Rosenfeld law firm based in Emeryville submitted a public records request to the City of Salinas on behalf of the Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties Building and Construction Trades Council. This is an umbrella group for all construction union locals representing workers in the two counties. The records sought were “related to any planned, proposed, or contemplated development project located at the intersection between Abbot Street and Harkins Road in Salinas.”

On Jan. 25, 2022, the Oakland law firm of Lozeau Drury requested the City of Salinas to provide “immediate access to public records related to the project known as Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Specific Plan.” This law firm frequently works on behalf of the union that represents laborers.

What was the purpose of these requests for information about the project? On behalf of construction unions, the law firms of Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo and Lozeau Drury engage extensively in aggressive and relentless objections to the adequacy of environmental review required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for construction projects. (The Weinberg Roger & Rosenfeld law firm also objects to environmental reviews of proposed projects on behalf of unions, but generally it focuses more on labor law than environmental law.)

Sometimes these law firms will later withdraw their objections while declaring that the developer has responded to its environmental concerns. These withdrawals seem to correlate with a decision by the project owner or developer to sign a Project Labor Agreement.

By April 2022, the warehouse proposal was suspended, but Amazon resurrected it two years later. Once again, construction

unions were interested. On May 6, 2024, the Government Affairs Director for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 234 asked for records “regarding any past, present, or future development of an Amazon Distribution Center within the City Limits or sphere of influence of the City.”

On June 13, 2024, KSBW broadcast a lead story at 6:00 p.m., “Central Coast Labor Unions Debate Proposed Amazon Facility for South Salinas.” In an interview, the CEO of the Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties Building and Construction Trades Council made positive remarks about the warehouse and hoped for collaboration with Amazon: “I think this would be great for our local community, it’s an economic engine that’s needed, we always need jobs. We’re here to work with everyone, the community, the city of Salinas and also with Amazon. So please come and see us — we’re here, our doors are always open, we’re here to start a conversation, a dialogue, and break bread together.”

With this magnanimous approach, it appears the local Building and Construction Trades Council is confident it can get Amazon and its developer Scannell to commit to hiring construction companies with a union workforce, perhaps through a Project Labor Agreement. To make sure that conversation happens, they can pressure Amazon with the threat of hiring law firms to object to environmental review, thus causing costly and lengthy delays for the project.

## Service Unions Are Negative About the Warehouse

Meanwhile, representatives of the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 5, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521 objected at the June 11 Salinas City Council meeting to the secretive process for the planning of the Amazon warehouse. On June 12, the Monterey

Bay Central Labor Council, an umbrella group for all unions (including building trades), issued a press release announcing it “strongly opposes Amazon’s distribution center in the City of Salinas.”

The press release accused Amazon of a “well-documented history of anti-union stance (sic), substandard working conditions, low wages, employee monitoring, and environmental concerns.” In the June 12 KSBW news story that cited Building Trades Council support, the Central Labor Council had the opposite view: “We all know Amazon is a bad employer. They have a reputation of not treating their workers well.”

Unions in the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council such as UFCW and SEIU are trying to organize operations and maintenance workers at other Amazon warehouse operations in California. Another union trying to organize Amazon workers elsewhere is the Teamsters.

Presumably, what these unions want from Amazon for the Salinas warehouse is a “labor neutrality agreement” or some other arrangement that will prevent the company from providing opposing viewpoints or engaging in other legal activities meant to discourage unionization. If union organizers can distribute and collect signatures on cards from 50% of workers that indicate they want the union as their exclusive representative for collective bargaining, then Amazon would have to begin negotiating with the union. Amazon would not be able to exercise its right to have a secret ballot election administered by the National Labor Relations Board.

Like the building trades unions, the various service unions have the threat of objecting to environmental review for the warehouse if their political opposition and negative public relations campaign does not bring Amazon into a conversation. Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce will be watching, reporting, and explaining these strategic maneuvers between Amazon and local labor unions. 🌱





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# NON-PROFIT EVENTS

## **Alzheimer's Association — Salinas Caregiver Support Group**

*July 3, 12:30 – 2:00 p.m., 1130 San Vicente Ave., Salinas*

If you have a family member who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia disorder, a caregiver support group can offer you an opportunity to find out more about available community resources, learn from others who are going through similar experiences, and obtain additional educational materials. Alzheimer's Association's Salinas caregiver support group meets monthly, on the first Wednesday of each month, without a fee. In partnership with: Harden Foundation, this program is funded in part by Hospice Giving Foundation, Community Foundation for Monterey County, and Monterey Peninsula Foundation, host of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am

## **First Friday at ArtWorks @Salinas**

*July 5, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m., 262 Main St., Salinas*

Join ArtWorks @Salinas next month for the new exhibition, "Glaze, Stain, Pour: Embodied Alter-Tales," featuring the captivating work of Dani Torvik at ArtWorks @Salinas. The opening reception will be held on Friday, July 5. Invite a friend and don't miss the chance to meet the artist and explore their mesmerizing artwork. You can also enjoy pieces from the studios of Deborah Good, Kenji Tanner, Ekaterina De La Torre, and Shagufta Khan. ArtWorks @Salinas welcomes visitors Fridays through Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Plan your visit and immerse yourself in a world of creativity and inspiration!

## **California Rodeo Carnival**

*July 12-21, 3:00 – 11:00 p.m., 295 Sun Way, Salinas*

The Carnival will be back in town for the 2024 California Rodeo Salinas, presented by Joy-Per's Shoes & Clothing. The carnival will be open from 3:00 to 11:00 p.m. daily starting Friday, July 12 through Sunday, July 21. Admission is \$5 and an unlimited-ride wristband is \$35 at the gate (plus fees). Parking is also \$5. Admission tickets can be purchased at the carnival gate. The carnival is located at 295 Sun Way in Salinas — don't miss your chance for rides and more!

## **Kiddie Kapers Parade**

*July 14, 3:00 – 3:45 p.m., Salinas City Center, Salinas*

Thousands of people line the streets of the Salinas City Center to watch over 1,200 children ride on floats, bikes, in wagons and more as a kick off to Big Week and the California Rodeo Salinas. The children in the parade are grouped into eight divisions for judging. The divisions are Playground Floats, Cowboys and Cowgirls, Strollers & Wagons, Community Groups, Costumed Kids & Pets, Dance & Drill Teams, Group Floats and Rolling Riders (skates, rollerblades, scooters, skateboards, bikes and trikes — helmets required). Everyone is encouraged to wear western clothing. Judging for Kiddie Kapers Parade is done by parade volunteers and first through third places

are awarded in each category. At the parade's announcing stand, the division winners will be recognized. The first-place winner in each division receives a cash prize. There are two first-place winners in the Cowboys & Cowgirls Division, one boy and one girl. These two winners get to ride at the front of the Parade in special cars. All other division winners walk at the front of their division behind a huge banner. First-place winners in each division receive a handsome award ribbon. Each entrant gets a commemorative ribbon, a crisp \$1 bill and coupons from local merchants.

## **ASI Big Week Swing Party with Swing Lessons and Cowboy Brownies**

*July 16, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., 100 Harvest St., Salinas*

Joins ASI for a Big Week Swing Party with swing lessons and cowboy brownies with ice cream and toppings. Dance lesson is from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The Social Dance runs from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Non-dancers are welcome to come enjoy the entertainment.

## **Rancho Cielo — Annual Veggie Box & BBQ Event**

*Aug. 19 – 23, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas*

Rancho Cielo's Veggie Box & BBQ fundraiser makes a huge impact in helping sustain the vocational training for Rancho Cielo students while also feeding families in need. Purchase boxes for yourself or donate boxes to families in need via the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County, Salvation Army Salinas, the Food Bank of Monterey County and Second Harvest Food Bank. The week-long event concludes with a delicious barbecue lunch prepared on-site by volunteers and the Rancho Cielo culinary team. Lunches are available by pre-order only and sell out fast. Enjoy the beautiful grounds or take it to-go. The Veggie Box and BBQ Fundraiser has grown bigger than ever thanks to the support of the generous community — from local business sponsors and agricultural donors to individuals and groups volunteering to help.

## **Blue Zones Project Monterey County – Hike and Wine**

*Aug. 11, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 37500 Foothill Road, Soledad, CRU Winery*

Join Blue Zones Project for an eight-part hiking series through the picturesque vineyard trails of Valley Farm Management and CRU Winery, where you'll breathe in the fresh air and soak in the natural beauty that surrounds Soledad. This hike is not just about exercise; it's about fostering connections, embracing nature, and cultivating a sense of well-being. After the hike, you'll have the opportunity to wine taste at CRU Winery with two-for-one tastings and 10% off bottle purchases for hike participants. Participants are also more than welcome to bring their own snacks to enjoy a little picnic afterwards. Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot today and be part of this enriching journey towards a healthier, happier you. Comfortable clothes and walking shoes are recommended. And don't forget your water! This month's hike will be lead by CRU Winery. Hike is easy-to-moderate, with some inclines, 2-4 mile routes; 45 minutes to 1-hour walk.

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