

MINUTES
OF THE
VISION SALINAS 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
May 31, 2023

WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENT: Alexis Mendez, Devon McCauley, Jose Luis Barajas, David Mack, Robin Lee, Alejandro Chavez, Jonathan De Anda, Natalie Flores, Rosa Gonzalez, Omar Perez, Xago Juarez, Dennis Donohue, Vicente Lara

ABSENT: Carissa Purnell, Jonathan Ordiano

STAFF: Lisa Brinton (Community Development Director), Jonathan Moore (Senior Planner), Monica Gurmilan (Senior Planner), Donovan Arteaga (Community Outreach Assistant)

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

(In-person): Has done research on Chinatowns in California. In 2005, HUD granted the city \$600,000 to revitalize/rebuild the Republic Café building in Chinatown (owned by city), but nothing was done. Community member would like more transparency in building funds.

(In-person): Felt that the public was not included besides the public comment period at the beginning. Would like to see if the public could be included more in Steering Committee meetings.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

- I. Receive presentation on the Salinas Broadband Master Plan
- II. Receive update on General Plan Update Outreach
- III. Review Draft Housing Element goals and policies

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Alexis Mendez called meeting into order and went over objectives of meeting. Monica Gurmilan began roll call. Robin Lee called for a motion to approve the notes from last Steering Committee meeting. David Mack seconded the motion.

Albert Chang gave a presentation on the Salinas Broadband Master Plan. Albert opened a discussion up regarding what questions the Public Works Department should begin asking the public as they start this project. Robin Lee raised a question about infrastructure. David Mack said he would not like to see the city become a utility provider and would not like to see “free Wi-Fi” in public areas like parks. Alejandro Chavez raised a question how current projects might interact with the Master Plan. Jose Luis recommended that the Master Plan consider where internet is heading in the future, so the infrastructure doesn’t quickly become outdated. Devon McCauley recommended that schools and community centers are used as central access points and increased capacity at schools as the city grows and schools transition to more online instruction. Albert gave a brief overview of the project timeline.

Monica transitioned to give updates on the General Plan Update Outreach. She gave an overview of the timeline. An update on the Public Safety Engagement. Robin asked a question if any feedback has been received regarding “dark skies” and public lighting. Robin asked about Dark Sky Ordinances. Monica gave an update on Housing Element Engagement.

Jonathan Moore transitioned to a review of the Draft Housing Element. Jonathan explained the five Housing Element Goals. Alejandro asked if ADUs can be counted in the RHNA numbers. Robin asked how the Housing Element would deal with PG&E’s lack of capacity to install infrastructure. Jose Luis asked if farmworker housing is prioritized. Devon asked how women are treated in farmworker housing projects. The group asked that Farmworker Housing, Senior Housing/Aging in Place is mentioned. Jose Luis asked if first-time homebuyer programs will provide opportunities to undocumented residents. Jose Luis asked if there were several individuals required to live in a home to qualify for the Rental Registry. Robin questioned who is responsible for code enforcement of H2A housing. She also raised that the City should not be in the business of building farmworker housing, it should be up to the agricultural businesses. Rosa Gonzalez asked how the City would explain to residents how the GPU can be used to help alleviate the current housing crisis. Jose Luis asked how revenue generation would be woven into the New Growth Areas. David raised concerns over the city eliminating or deferring impact fees (concerns over infrastructure maintenance, public services) for ADUs; and, if the City has looked into giving developers a break.

A suggestion was made that we circle back with CCA Ambassador's so they can circle back with the communities they reached. A comment arose regarding the need to look at the regional nature of the housing crisis.

Next Meeting:

- Dates: June 28, August
- No July meeting

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- I. Draft GPU Goals/Policies
- II. Draft Existing Conditions Report
- III. Draft Land Use Buildout Projections

ADJOURNMENT

Alexis adjourned the meeting.

Draft Housing Element Process Update

- Revised Housing Element Snapshot in English and Spanish
- Comment letters from:
 - Building Healthy Communities
 - LandWatch
 - Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
 - Monterey-Salinas Transit

City of Salinas Housing Element Update 2023-2031



WHAT IS THE HOUSING ELEMENT?



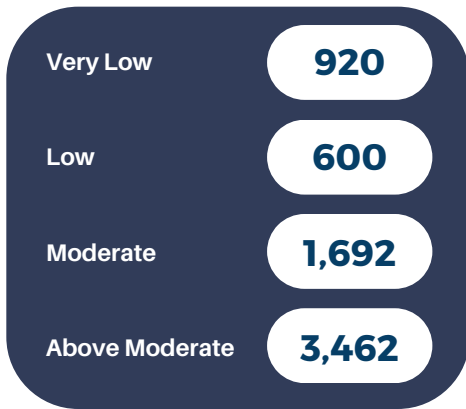
- Required part of the General Plan
- Establishes the City's goals and policies for addressing housing needs
- Updated every eight years. Must be reviewed and certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- Implements Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

CITY'S ROLE IN HOUSING

- Create the environment for housing production (rules, procedures, incentives)
- Housing programs
- Monitoring safety - code enforcement
- Grant/gap funding and special projects
- **But not a housing developer**

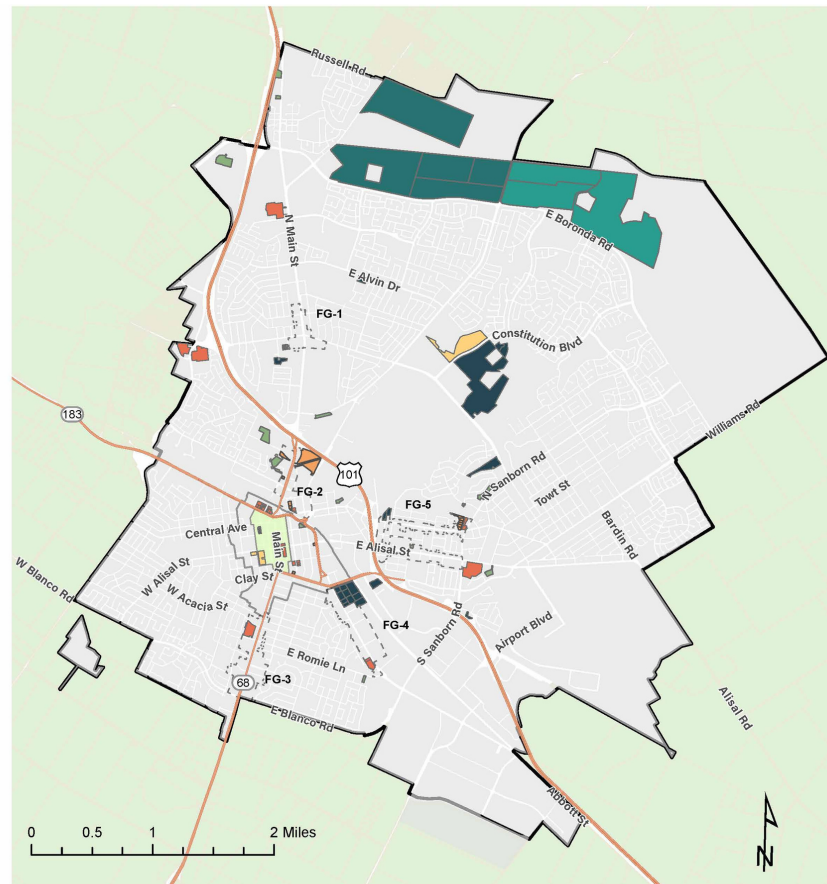
RHNA: *6,674

Salinas 2023-2031 RHNA by Income Level



*RHNA is the number of homes the City of Salinas is required to plan for. This number is triple what it was in 2015 because of the continued need for housing.

SITES INVENTORY



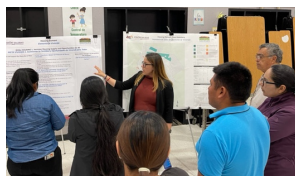
- West Area Specific Plan Sites
- Central Area Specific Plan Sites
- Pipeline Projects
- Vacant Residential Sites
- Underutilized Residential Sites
- Vacant Mixed Use Sites
- Underutilized Mixed Use Sites
- City of Salinas Boundary
- Downtown Core
- Downtown Neighborhood Area
- Focused Growth Overlays
- Monterey County Parcels

The Sites Inventory map shows the land available for potential development.

2023 HOUSING ELEMENT TIMELINE



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Following the adoption of the 2015-2023 Housing Element, the City has continued extensive bilingual community outreach.

- **(25)** Twenty-five community workshops exploring housing topics
- **(12)** Twelve AVP & Visión Salinas Housing Working Group Meetings
- **(4)** Four citywide budget meetings for 2023-2024 budget cycle
- **(40)** Budget pop-up activities for 2023-2024 budget cycle
- **(6)** Visión Salinas pop-up activities
- **(3)** Housing Element Workshops
- **(95)** Ninety-five house meetings facilitated by GPU Ambassadors reaching over three hundred and forty **(340)** residents in Spanish, Mixteco and Triqui.
- GPU Ambassadors presentations and community conversations reaching over one thousand two hundred **(1,200)** farmworkers.

*Ambassador Tool Kit

HOUSING



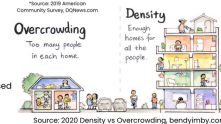
KEY INFORMATION

- Salinas has limited land availability particularly for housing developments.
- Salinas is surrounded by protected agriculture land.
- Housing/developments cannot be built on flood plains.
- Future Growth Area: Plans have been adapted for future housing developments.
- Available land = outside City limits
- **46%** of our current land use is dedicated to housing.
- **18.5%** of units = overcrowded (more than 1 occupant per room).
- Median home price November 2021 = **\$666,250***

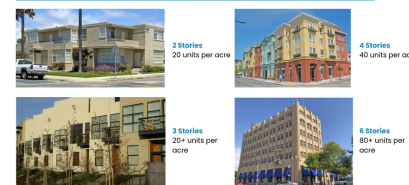
HOW CAN WE CREATE MORE HOUSING?

- Build out Future Growth Area
- Infill development and higher density housing

Infill development = building within unused & underutilized lands
High density housing = taller housing buildings



WHAT KIND OF HOUSING WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?



**GPU Ambassadors used a tool kit to facilitate discussion around housing and other topics.*

FEEDBACK INCORPORATED TO 2023-2031 HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS

GOAL 1: Increase Housing Supply and Opportunities for All.

- Housing diversity
- Assess developer fees
- Convert parking lots into housing
- Parking mitigation
- Mixed use development
- More multi-family housing, tiny homes
- Promote ADU construction
- High density housing
- Permit streamlining
- Parking
- Reduce parking requirements

GOAL 2: Provide Tenant Protections

- Anti-displacement policies
- Prevent gentrification
- Retaliation prevention
- Policies to keep landlords accountable
- Eviction protections
- Housing education- City's role, tenants' rights, landlord rights, homeownership, housing fraud
- Programs for landlords (financing) to make units ADA accessible, up to code, fix homes in poor conditions
- More homeowner relations/communication w/ City
- Rental housing inspections

GOAL 3: Access to Safe and Healthy Housing for All Residents.

- Promote adaptive reuse projects
- Rehab projects, retrofitting current stock
- Incentivize homeowners (loans) for home renovations
- Climate resilient housing: solar, water conservation
- Clean/remove toxic waste close to housing
- Collaborate with County, State and churches to provide housing services
- Address health and safety concerns
- Blight around homeless encampments



GOAL 4: Advance Housing Affordability and Opportunity at all Income Levels.

- Rent control, Rent stabilization
- Local preference policy
- Inclusionary lottery
- First-time homebuyer programs
- Education, trainings
- Homeless support
- Programs to reduce homelessness
- Housing for homeless
- Mental health support, rehab programs
- Donation stations, food banks, soup kitchens, more shelters
- Housing for people with disabilities
- Farmworker housing
- More control/coordination with H2A/temp worker housing
- Local preference for farmworkers
- Work with Ag companies to build housing
- Transit oriented development
- Housing for single moms, childcare
- Land Trusts
- Work with districts to create housing for staff

GOAL 5: Stabilize and Support Neighborhoods.

- Beautification programs
- Recognize your neighbor program
- Resources for undocumented residents
- Legal services for renters
- Redevelopment in underutilized sites
- Development on City owned land
- Code enforcement to mitigate resident concerns



SORT performs essential outreach and engagement, which consists of engaging unsheltered residents in six (6) encampment areas.

HOUSING SURVEY RECURRING THEMES

Apart from the cost, what other difficulties have you encountered with housing?

- Hostility and lack of response from landlords, high utility bills, lack of parking, lack of public space, lack of privacy, noise complaints, application cost, issues due to lack of credit history, lack of safety/lighting/security, difficulties renting due to undocumented status.

Have you felt discriminated against when seeking housing?

- Yes, because of my family size.
- Yes, because of my work, my income, my language skills, and my skin color.
- Yes, because of my legal status.

What type of housing services would you like to see?

- Low income housing programs, funds for maintenance of existing housing, security/safety, childcare, washer/dryer services, free internet, financial help, first-time homebuyer programs, programs for undocumented residents, support for utilities, tenant support.

KEY HOUSING ACTIONS

- **Prohousing Designation:** Funds will be used towards the development of affordable housing and First Time Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance Program.
- **Pre-approved ADU plans.**
- **Re-establish Low-Interest House Rehabilitation loans and grants.**
- **Supporting Renters:** rental assistance, rental registry program, Fair Housing services, etc.
- **Homeless Services:** Salinas Outreach Response Team (SORT), Project Homekey, SHARE Center, Encampment Resolution Grant, and more!
- **In-fill development and future growth areas.**

Ciudad de Salinas Actualización del Elemento de Vivienda 2023-2031



¿QUÉ ES EL ELEMENTO DE VIVIENDA?



- Parte requerida del Plan General
- Establece las metas y políticas de la ciudad para abordar las necesidades de vivienda
- Actualizado cada ocho años. Debe ser revisado y certificado por el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunitario del Estado (HCD)
- Implementa la Asignación Regional de Necesidades de Vivienda (RHNA)

EL PAPEL DE LA CIUDAD EN LA VIVIENDA

- Crear el ambiente para la producción de vivienda (reglas, procedimientos, incentivos)
- Programas de vivienda
- Monitoreo y aplicación de Códigos de Seguridad
- Financiamiento de subvenciones y proyectos especiales
- **Pero no es una constructora de viviendas**

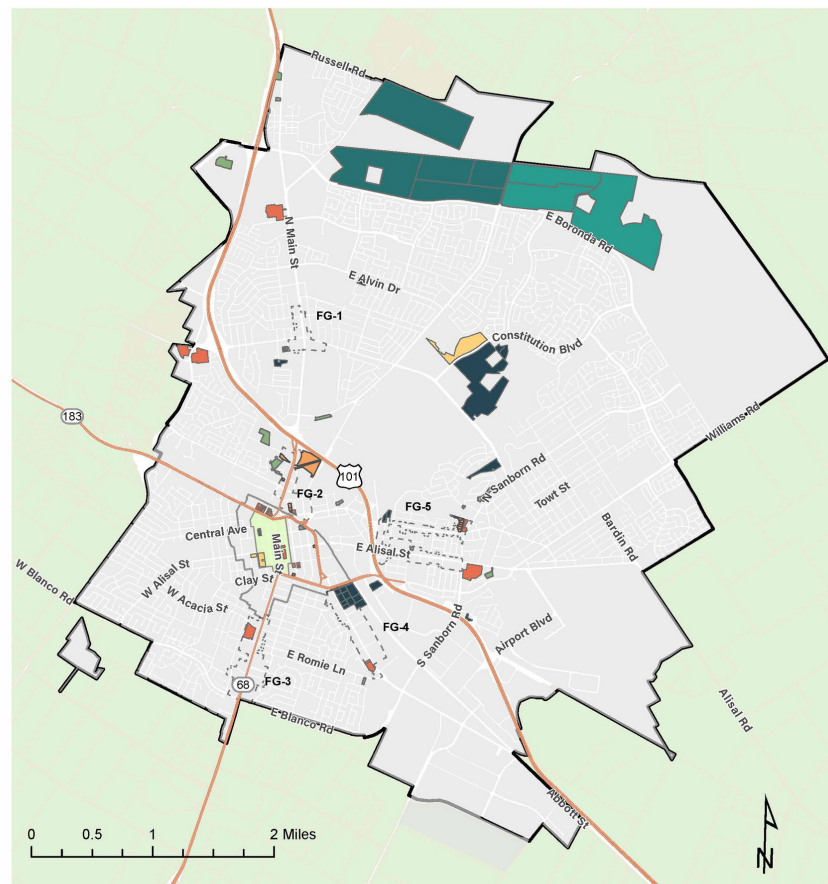
RHNA: *6,674

Salinas 2023-2031 RHNA por nivel de ingresos



***RHNA es la cantidad de viviendas que la Ciudad de Salinas debe planificar. Este número es el triple de lo que era en 2015 debido a la continua necesidad de vivienda.**

INVENTARIO DE SITIOS



- West Area Specific Plan Sites
- Central Area Specific Plan Sites
- Pipeline Projects
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El mapa del Inventario de Sitios muestra el terreno disponible para el desarrollo potencial.

CRONOLOGÍA DEL ELEMENTO DE VIVIENDA 2023

Mayo

Período de revisión pública de 30 días

Junio

Borrador enviado a HCD- 90 días para revisar

Sep-Oct

Revisión del borrador

Noviembre

Revisión de la Ciudad

Diciembre

Adopción en el Ayuntamiento

INVOLUCRAMIENTO COMUNITARIO Y COMENTARIOS



Después de la adopción del Elemento de Vivienda 2015-2023, la Ciudad ha continuado con un extenso involucramiento comunitario bilungüe.

- **(25)** Talleres comunitarios que exploran temas de vivienda
- **(12)** Reuniones del Grupo de Trabajo de Vivienda del AVP y Visión Salinas
- **(4)** Reuniones sobre el presupuesto de toda la ciudad para el ciclo presupuestario 2023-2024
- **(40)** Actividades interactivas sobre el presupuesto
- **(6)** Encuestas interactivas sobre Visión Salinas
- **(3)** Talleres del Elemento de Vivienda
- **(95)** Reuniones caseras facilitadas por los Embajadores del Plan General- involucrando a más de **(340)** residentes en español, mixteco y triqui.
- Presentaciones y conversaciones facilitadas por los Embajadores involucrando a más de **(1,200)** trabajadores agrícolas.

*Caja de herramientas de los embajadores

VIVIENDA

INFORMACIÓN CLAVE



- Salinas tiene una disponibilidad limitada de terrenos, particularmente para desarrollos de vivienda.
- Salinas está rodeada de tierras agrícolas protegidas.
- **Área de Crecimiento Futuro:** Se han adoptado planes para futuros desarrollos de viviendas.
- La vivienda no se puede construir en áreas de inundación.



- Terreno disponible = fuera de los límites de la ciudad
- El **48%** de nuestro uso actual de terreno está dedicado a la vivienda.
- **19.2%** de las unidades = congestionadas (más de 1 ocupante por habitación).
- Precio medio de vivienda- Nov 2023.
- *2019 American Community Survey, OCNes.com



Congestión

Demasiadas personas en cada vivienda



Densidad

Suficientes viviendas para todas las personas



*Los Embajadores del Plan General utilizaron una guía para facilitar las conversaciones sobre la vivienda y otros temas.

COMENTARIOS INCORPORADOS A LAS METAS DEL ELEMENTO DE VIVIENDA 2023-2031

META 1: Aumentar la oferta de vivienda y las oportunidades para todos.

- Diversidad de viviendas
- Evaluar las tarifas de las constructoras
- Convertir estacionamientos en viviendas
- Mitigación de estacionamiento
- Desarrollo de uso mixto
- Más viviendas multifamiliares, casas pequeñas
- Promover la construcción de ADUs
- Vivienda de alta densidad
- Facilitar el proceso de permisos
- Estacionamiento
- Reducir los requisitos de estacionamiento

META 2: Brindar protecciones a los inquilinos

- Políticas contra el desplazamiento
- Prevenir la gentrificación
- Prevención de represalias
- Políticas para responsabilizar a los propietarios
- Protecciones de desalojo
- Educación sobre vivienda: el papel de la ciudad, los derechos de los inquilinos, los derechos de los propietarios, el fraude de vivienda
- Programas para propietarios (financiamiento) para hacer unidades accesibles según ADA, arreglar casas en malas condiciones
- Más relaciones/comunicación con propietarios de viviendas con la ciudad
- Inspecciones de viviendas de renta

META 3: Acceso a viviendas seguras y saludables para todos los residentes.

- Promover proyectos de reutilización adaptativa
- Proyectos de rehabilitación, readequación de las viviendas actuales
- Incentivar a los propietarios (préstamos) para reformas de viviendas
- Vivienda resiliente al clima: energía solar, conservación del agua
- Limpiar/retirar los desechos tóxicos cerca de la vivienda
- Colaborar con el condado, el estado y las iglesias para brindar servicios de vivienda
- Abordar los problemas de salud y seguridad
- Quitar la basura de alrededor de los campamentos de personas sin hogar



META 4: Asequibilidad y oportunidad de vivienda avanzada en todos los niveles de ingresos.

- Control de renta, estabilización de renta
- Política de preferencia local
- Lotería inclusiva
- Programas para compradores de vivienda por primera vez
- Educación, capacitaciones
- Apoyo para personas sin hogar
- Programas para reducir la falta de vivienda
- Apoyo de salud mental, programas de rehabilitación
- Estaciones de donación, bancos de alimentos, comedores públicos, más albergues
- Vivienda para personas con discapacidades
- Vivienda para trabajadores agrícolas
- Más control/coordinación con H2A/vivienda para trabajadores temporales
- Preferencia local por los trabajadores agrícolas
- Trabajar con empresas agrícolas para construir viviendas.
- Desarrollo orientado al tránsito
- Vivienda para madres solteras, cuidado de niños
- Fideicomisos de tierras
- Trabajar con los distritos para crear viviendas para el personal.

META 5: estabilizar y apoyar a los vecindarios

- Programas de embellecimiento
- Programa Reconoce a tu Vecino
- Recursos para residentes indocumentados
- Servicios legales para inquilinos
- Reurbanización en sitios de bajo uso
- Desarrollo en terrenos propiedad de la ciudad
- Cumplimiento del código para mitigar las preocupaciones de los residentes



SORT realiza actividades de involucramiento comunitario esenciales, que consisten en involucrar a los residentes sin refugio en seis (6) áreas de campamento.

TEMAS RECURRENTE DE LA ENCUESTA DE VIVIENDA

Además del costo, ¿qué otras dificultades ha encontrado con la vivienda?

- Hostilidad y falta de respuesta de los propietarios, facturas elevadas de servicios públicos, falta de estacionamiento, falta de espacio público, falta de privacidad, quejas por ruido, costo de solicitud, problemas debido a la falta de historial de crédito, falta de seguridad/iluminación/protección, dificultades para alquilar debido al estatus de indocumentado.

¿Se ha sentido discriminado a la hora de buscar vivienda?

- Sí, por el tamaño de mi familia.
- Sí, por mi trabajo, mis ingresos, mis habilidades lingüísticas y el color de mi piel.
- Sí, por mi estatus legal.

¿Qué tipo de servicios de vivienda le gustaría ver?

- Programas de vivienda para personas de bajos ingresos, fondos para el mantenimiento de viviendas existentes, seguridad, cuidado de niños, servicios de lavadora/secadora, Internet gratis, ayuda financiera, programas para compradores de vivienda por primera vez, programas para residentes indocumentados, apoyo para servicios públicos, apoyo para inquilinos.

ACCIONES DE VIVIENDA

- **Designación Prohousing:** Los fondos se utilizarán para el desarrollo de viviendas asequibles y el Programa de Asistencia para el Pago Inicial para Compradores de Vivienda por Primera Vez.
- **Planes de ADUs preaprobados.**
- **Restablecer préstamos y subvenciones para la rehabilitación de viviendas a bajo interés.**
- **Apoyo a los inquilinos:** asistencia de alquiler, programa de registro de alquiler, servicios de vivienda justa, etc.
- **Servicios para personas sin hogar:** Salinas Outreach Response Team (SORT), Project Homekey, SHARE Center, Encampment Resolution Grant, ¡y más!
- **Rellenar áreas de desarrollo y crecimiento futuro.**



June 20, 2023

RE: Salinas Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element

Dear Mayor Craig and Members of the Salinas City Council:

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide comments on such a critical part of our City's development. Comments and considerations in this letter promote our goals to help achieve equitable economic development rooted in racial equity, anti-displacement practices and environmental justice.

Creating a more inclusive, resident-centered process is fundamental for establishing the way planning and decision-making happens in our communities. The outreach work for this Housing Element is the culmination of over a decade of community engagement. The Community Development Department's adoption of the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership and the mid-point evaluation of the planning process are strong examples of the City's commitment to addressing the systemic shifts necessary to ensure equity. Additionally, we thank the City for working with organizations like Community Center for Advocacy (CCA) and others; and for its various activities, including: holding 25 workshops to explore housing topics, having 12 AVP and Vision Salinas housing working group meetings; holding ninety-five house meetings facilitated by GPU Ambassadors reaching over 340 residents in Spanish, Mixteco and Triqui; and many pop-up activities for the 2023-2024 budget cycle and for Visión Salinas; and community conversations reaching over 1,200 farmworkers that call Salinas "home."

One of the key contributions brought about by the extensive community engagement performed through the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP) and the Chinatown Revitalization Plan (CRP) processes is that it highlighted the various housing needs and concerns of Salinas residents. These contributions by residents paint a picture of the Salinas that a significant portion of our community members are living in. The more recent community engagement efforts undertaken not only confirmed the concerns and housing needs previously reported, they show an intensification of them. Rents continue to rise and home prices have never been higher. Tenant vulnerability to evictions remains a chronic condition, making many individuals, including families with children, have to live in cars and motels. At the same time, landlord accountability to this, despite state laws such as AB 1482, seems elusive.

Overcrowding continues to be reported by many of our City's residents, particularly farmworkers. One of the darkest aspects of this overcrowding comes from families being forced to live with strangers or with distant relatives which leaves children vulnerable to abuse, with many cases of this having been reported in recent years.

The reality of a looming eviction hangs over the head of so many families that it strains the mind and weighs heavily on individuals and families causing mental health issues that manifest into physical health conditions, such as ulcers and disposition to strokes, among other severe impacts.

Our growing housing instability impacts the educational outcomes of students, and contributes directly to the drop out rate of children in our public schools. The stress of overcrowding and housing insecurity weighs heavily on students; it denies them a suitable place to study, and the aforementioned dangers deny young people the right to a safe and stable home in which to develop and grow.

Whether the strain of housing insecurity is felt in the day to day effort of going to work, going to school, and running errands; or whether it manifests in a sudden explosion of extreme behavior, the Salinas that so many residents live in is a far more challenging place that betrays the heart of this wonderful City composed of beautiful scenery and people, that we want all to live in. It is in this spirit that we submit this letter, in good faith that all voices will be heard and can contribute to this crucial process to better our City for everyone.

Our comments cover the five Housing Plan Goals that the City has identified as necessary for a successful Housing Element:

GOAL 1: Increase Housing Supply and Opportunities for All.

GOAL 2: Provide Tenant Protection.

GOAL 3: Access to Safe and Healthy Housing for All Residents.

GOAL 4: Advance Housing Affordability and Opportunity at all Income Levels.

GOAL 5: Stabilize and Support Neighborhoods.

1. Increase Housing Supply and Opportunities for All

As the City states in the Housing Element Draft, “Housing production for infill and new housing developments should come in a variety of housing types and support sustainability through design and location.” It is understood that the City can only directly develop on property it owns, which cannot satisfy the needed units, and we appreciate the City’s understanding that, given this, it will “play various roles to incentivize production and remove barriers for additional housing.” With this in mind, we propose the following:

- i. Affordable housing has consistently been identified as residents’ top concern throughout the outreach meetings held by the City and other partners. Thousands of households are on waiting lists for public housing citywide. More housing supply overall is needed, but especially new homes that serve, not only low and very low, but most importantly, the extremely low income residents, which is desperately needed. The RHNA numbers ascribed to Low and Very Low income residents are 600 and 920, respectively.

Given the City’s stated role in housing being to “Create the environment for housing production” and its first stated goal being to “Increase Housing Supply and Opportunities for All.” It is imperative that the City fulfill this role to its fullest potential to achieve this goal.

- ii. Due to the high percentage of Alisal residents renting housing (67.5% of households are renter occupied, versus 52.1% for the City, and 44.7% for the state, as detailed in Table 40 of the Housing Element draft), we share the City’s goal to increase multifamily housing, whose design standards we believe must also ensure more community gathering spaces and adequate transportation opportunities for our working families (AVP Goal LU 2). This will help reduce overcrowding and provide more affordable options.

- iii. We recommend the use of “Community Benefits Agreements” to all large scale projects (defined as \$5 million or larger in Total Development Costs) to ensure that housing or mixed use projects with commercial components invest in the neighborhood and not just the site that they are developing. We also recommend that “community benefits agreements” have local hiring provisions. These CBA’s should include partnerships with schools, and the improvement of parks and recreational facilities and or have amenities onsite that are available to the community at large. By facilitating CBA’s we can ensure that engagement between residents and City staff and public servants will happen, and that this engagement contributes to the culture of resident centered involvement.

- i. As the growing ag-tech industry continues to take shape, we understand that it will shift housing and educational opportunities. Given this, there is a necessity for a robust interactive platform between residents and City staff and planners to enable communities to not be adversely impacted, but rather be able to also prosper from the benefits that this growing industry promises to bring. Community Benefits Agreements will help to establish that platform.

2. Provide Tenant Protections

- ii. It is understood that the City is not a developer of housing, and that it is in the process of removing constraints. Given this limited role in new housing production, the City must make more investment into tenant protections to keep those currently housed in their homes. We learned during the COVID -19 Pandemic how critical this was to our overall health and safety and can never return to a time when these protections were an afterthought. We urge the City to work with property owners and tenants to provide education, technical assistance, and public information to help increase participation in existing housing programs. The City should provide housing education workshops on a quarterly basis in different parts of the City to ensure all residents have access to current information and legal services.

- iii. It is important to understand that to rent a home is to engage in a business. As with any business there are regulations in place to ensure ethical business practices, and the context in which a business takes place matters for the proper regulations to be in place. There is a very low vacancy rate in the City. The housing growth rate has been in the negative from 2013 - 2020, which is measured at -8.5% for Alisal (Table 40, p. 67 in the HE Draft). These conditions place a renter, who is a business owner, in an extreme advantage in relation to their “clients” (renters),

given that the product being rendered, housing, is a basic need. These conditions enable and incentivize a renter to maximize profits in an unhealthy, or skewed, marketplace. Efforts such as the rental registry help to provide an important educational piece to the renter-tenant transaction, which is beneficial to both parties because transparency and quality assurance are the hallmarks of any good business. This also benefits the City as a whole, as it supports a healthy business environment, and promotes the City as such.

3. Access to Safe and Healthy Housing for all Residents

- i. The 2016-2020 ACS reported a vacancy rate of 3.2%, including vacancy rates of 0.9% for for-sale housing and 1.8% for for-rent housing. This is well below a healthy vacancy rate — one which permits sufficient choice and mobility among a variety of housing units — is considered 2% to 3% for ownership units and 5% to 6% for rental units. Our renters, especially lower income and farmworkers, many of whom are undocumented face extremely overcrowded and unhealthy conditions and are not able to advocate for better conditions most of the time for fear of retaliation. The City must fully implement its Rental Registry Program and fully fund Rental Assistance and Legal Assistance Programs. If landlords are not making necessary improvements to maintain habitability and meet Fair Housing Laws then the City should work with local housing advocacy groups to implement additional code enforcement and fair housing protections. Code Enforcement must continue to be trained on strategies to avoid displacement, especially based on high occupancy. The memory of the house on John St. in which police found 50 beds for farmworkers in December of 2020 still lingers in the collective memory of the community. While this represents one of the extreme examples that we find out about from time to time, to even have a house with a fraction of that overcrowding is something that we want to have the capacity to prevent.
- ii. According to the Draft Housing Element, approximately 37.8% of the City's renter occupied units (8,138/ 21,530) were built before 1970 suggesting that these 50 year old housing units are likely in need of rehabilitation and should be among the primary targets for code enforcement.
- iii. There have been large scale H2A housing projects adjacent to the City that have helped with overcrowding. The City should study how this population is growing, or not growing, given the thousands of beds that have been created by the agricultural industry in the Salinas Valley. It is also important for the City to be clear, and to report out, how much more of this type of housing is planned, and if it will impact the City. To date, all H2A projects (i.e. Casa Boronda, Tanimura & Antle, and Harvest Moon) are designed for conversion to family housing, and we appreciate the City's work on this. Given the priority of family housing, we would like to underscore the importance in H2A housing developments to design for potential future conversion into family housing. The City should also encourage the Ag industry to support more family housing since the Salinas and Pajaro Valley Farmworker Housing Study 2018 found that a majority of their workforce are individuals who are part of households with children. The Ag industry can set

aside land, funding, and join local advocacy efforts to improve existing housing for their farmworker families.

- iv. Many people can't help but notice the great amount of empty rooms and beds at H2A facilities during the agricultural off season. There is a blatant irony in having so much vacancy in these housing facilities while there continues to be a great amount of people with housing needs. Understanding that the H2A housing vacancy is only for a segment of the year, the City should explore opportunities to work with the Ag industry and the County of Monterey to allow occupancy of vacant units for temporary housing during the off season.
- v. Parking is one of the primary concerns for Alisal residents, as mentioned in Goal 7 of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan. We applaud the City recognizing the connection between housing and transit/parking. The implementation of flexible parking standards goes hand in hand with future housing developments. Many residents are opposed to the idea of higher density because of parking concerns. Given this, we need to stress multimodal transportation opportunities especially in transit rich corridors in the Alisal and other areas of the City to encourage walkable neighborhoods and less reliance on vehicles wherever this is possible. This is mentioned in Goal 3 of the Housing Element Draft, which lists "Reduced parking and 'Parking mitigation'" as actions to take.

The above point is also exemplified in the Downtown Vibrancy Plan which proposes "bicycle and pedestrian facilities, on-street parking, transit stops, and intersection control and aims to stimulate investment in new development, specifically office/residential, mixed use, and retail developments, as well as a new City Hall, intermodal transportation center (ITC), and Taylor Farms headquarters."

Another example of alternatives to driving is explored by the Measure X Safe Routes to School program which is aimed at developing safer options versus driving the majority of children to school, educating children and the surrounding community on how to safely walk and bicycle, and encouraging children to use "active transportation" that will lead to a healthier lifestyle.

- vi. The need for open space was a recurring topic throughout the Alisal Vibrancy Plan community engagement, with a primary concern for our youth. We thank the City for moving the Carr Lake project forward, and acknowledge the work done by Big Sur Land Trust in this effort and the partnership with Monterey County. We ask the City to prioritize the build out of this regional park and ensure the local neighborhood, La Posada, is connected, and that these renters have access to resources to improve this older housing stock.

We thank the City as well as for the Soccer Fields at Constitution and the upcoming refurbishing of Cesar Chavez Park and Closter Park. Following this work, we would like to know what the next steps will be for creating more open space. Given that our population is very young, it is important to recognize this as a top priority within the Housing Element.

The 2019 Chinatown Revitalization Plan cites “open spaces” as necessary to support the well-being of its residents. The principles of *New Urbanism* that are guiding the development of the City’s Future Growth Area also include “accessible open spaces.” On the topic of “open space” we see two major components: Large areas, as mentioned above; and open spaces as understood on a project by project basis. To this latter aspect, we recommend that, along with maximizing density in a development, we want to maximize amenities that provide open spaces to our residents. Some of the types of spaces that residents report as being important include: gardening areas, barbeque spaces, tot lots for children, spaces for children and youth in which to do homework as well as to engage in after-school activities.

This has been a recurring point made by community members from various districts, as shown in a key takeaway listed in Appendix C 13 - C 17 in the Housing Element Draft. Regarding what they enjoyed most of their district, or what they felt was missing, was "open spaces" in a variety of contexts, such as open spaces for families, and for entertainment. These spaces also allow for celebrations and explorations of the multicultural identities in Salinas that continue to grow and contribute to its rich diverse community, such as celebrations for Juneteenth and Asian Heritage Month, among others.

4. Advance Housing Affordability and Opportunity at all Income Levels

- i. Landlords have taken advantage of the very low vacancy rate in Salinas by raising rents consistently above 5% and even over 10% in recent years well before the higher interest rates and construction cost increases during the pandemic. Long term residents including our local workforce live with the threat of displacement. We fully support HE Goal 4.1 Advance Rent Stabilization and further request that a specific timeline for implementation be established immediately. **There is no reason why a strong rent stabilization ordinance can not be enacted by the end of 2023.** The City can look at several other communities across the state who have implemented Rent Stabilization Ordinances and also take a cue from current state legislative efforts such as AB 567, Durazo: The Homeless Prevention Act. Our coalition of organizations and resident leaders across all districts in Salinas are ready to support bold action on this issue.
- ii. Promotion of housing opportunities in Salinas is critical so that residents can be ready and connect to opportunities as they arise. The City should establish an annual Affordable Housing Month and work with local and regional partners to present current and near term housing opportunities. Residents need to be connected to financial literacy and savings programs so they can be ready to purchase or rent new homes in the Future Growth Area, Downtown or the Alisal when they become available in the next few years. As an example, the primary developer of the Central Area Plan agreed to build affordable homes in each phase of their project and not just the end as other developers have done; these homes must be made available to eligible first time homebuyers.

- iii. New high quality, farmworker housing that is accessible to lower income families is our #1 priority in terms of new housing production. This housing must be amenity rich onsite and near shopping, schools and other services. BHC has worked with the City of Salinas, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership and others to ensure that the dramatic increase in H2A Housing in Monterey County does not impact our ability to create more housing for families. We see the value that good quality H2A housing can bring by helping to reduce overcrowding, however we do not know what the long term strategy is for these developments? What is the current need and projected demand for H2A housing? How many more H2A developments are planned in or near Salinas? How does this impact City infrastructure services like sanitation, water, streets, motel vacancies, neighborhoods? Are there plans to redevelop the large development sites such as Casa Boronda (75 units/ 600 beds) or Harvest Moon (150 units/ 1,200 beds) into family housing? It is highly recommended that the City commission a study to answer these important questions.
- iv. BHC has actively participated in the City's Housing Technical Advisory Committee. We see value in this diverse group and being able to advise the City's many housing related policies. However, the needs of renters is not always a priority for the TAC. We strongly recommend that the City establish a Renters Commission that focuses solely on issues impacting renters and helps the City to move its body of rental housing policies forward on a more expeditious timetable. The Commission would review and advise on tenant protections, legal and relocation assistance, and sites that are identified for rental housing—especially City owned land.
- v. It is also important to continue to invest in projects geared toward early childhood education. Alisal residents are sometimes unable to enter the workforce due to limited assistance with childcare services. This creates a challenge to earning income, which in turn creates a challenge to afford to pay the rent, to make the mortgage payment, or to save for a down payment to purchase a home. This, in effect, creates a barrier to housing, and leads to the “doubling up” or “tripling up” of families in one home.

Given the large number of residents working in agriculture, we recommend that the City continue to grow partnerships within the Ag industry to create childcare centers for their workers. Partnerships should also exist in the Alisal Union School District and its schools, as well as with other industries that would help to address this significant barrier to income generation, and therefore, housing.

5. Stabilize and Support Neighborhoods

- i. Residents in the Alisal Vibrancy Plan Economic Development Working Group expressed a strong need for additional office and retail space in Alisal's most popular corridors. The Neighborhood Mixed-Use Place Type can bring additional space for business and also offer additional housing opportunities.

- ii. Investment in infrastructure is vital in all areas of the City, and can truly impact a community's health. The lack of investment in the Alisal, for example, is most visible in regards to its infrastructure. BHC, advocating and supporting the Alisal Vibrancy Plan recommendations, has been helping to lead the work in the area of "Transportation and Infrastructure" by prioritizing the creation of mixed-use walkable corridors. This needs to happen throughout the City. We will continue to support this work and track the implementation of the major corridors, especially Williams St., East Alisal and East Market St. Investing in road repairs, safety measures for cyclists and pedestrians, improving parking management, and establishing a better connected and equitable multimodal transportation network are all necessary to ensure a healthy, safe and sustainable Salinas.

- iii. We support the City taking proactive steps "to reverse patterns of discrimination by investing in disadvantaged neighborhoods through implementing the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (including ANRSA), Chinatown Revitalization Plan, and Downtown Vibrancy Plan." And we would like to underscore the City's view of the importance of ensuring that these Plans "have the resources to reverse the effects of historic neglect."

In this Housing Element, the City sees that part of its effort to fulfill its duty to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) is to "facilitate the development of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan." The City's acknowledgement of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan, the Chinatown Revitalization Plan, and others, shows the City's intention to integrate the principles outlined in these Plans into the Housing Element. When the Alisal Vibrancy Plan was recertified by the City in 2020, it approved it with the following guiding principles: Economic Prosperity, Equity, and Diversity; Housing Opportunities for All; Healthy and Safe Community; Youth are the Future; Collaborative, Inclusive, and Engaged Decision-Making; Livable and Sustainable Community; Connectivity, Access and Mobility; A Community to Celebrate. We applaud this and submit this letter in support of the City's continued work under these principles.

This letter is an invitation to challenge our better selves, as a community built on the backs of farm labor, and to match the sweat equity that generations of farmworker families have provided, as they have sacrificed to provide for their children's future, and therefore, the future of us all, a city-wide community.

Luis **xago** Juárez

Neighborhood Organizer
Thriving Neighborhoods
Building Healthy Communities
510-967-8579

July 19, 2023

City of Salinas
200 Lincoln Ave.
Salinas, CA 93901

RE: [Salinas Public Review Draft Housing Element](#)

City of Salinas Housing Team:

LandWatch has reviewed [Salinas Public Review Draft Housing Element](#). We support the goal to eliminate constraints and make it easier to build housing to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). In particular we look forward to the implementation of Program 6, in which the City will implement Objective Design Standards to reduce approval time for housing projects.

LandWatch recommends the City add two additional policies to the Housing Element:

- Parking: The Housing Element should include a policy to minimize parking requirements and a program to review and reduce or eliminate parking requirements for development proximate to transit facilities. An implementing program should also review and require separate pricing for parking in rental units as an inducement to minimize car ownership and parking requirements.
- Local Density Bonus: The Housing Element should include a policy and implementing program to adopt a local density bonus that goes beyond the mandates of the State DB law. For example, the percentage bonuses could be increased at all levels of affordability and the number of concessions could be increased.

LandWatch opposes making the East Area Specific Plan a priority in the Housing Element because it is not needed to meet the 6th Cycle RHNA, and the housing element acknowledges that it is not likely to produce units during the 8-year planning period.

Set forth below are specific comments.

A. Housing constraints

Current by-right permitting unclear: Tables 44 and 45 indicate that by-right permitting only occurs for single family detached uses in low and medium density areas and that site plan review (SPR) is required for uses such as multiple detached, multifamily, and duplex units. However, the housing element states that site plan review is ministerial, implying that it is based on objective standards and does not involve discretionary determinations. (HE, p. 109.) If so, approval of uses such as multiple detached, multifamily, and duplex units would seem to be ministerial and therefore in

effect also “by-right.” This conclusion is supported by the housing element’s explanation that MFR is by right in higher density areas and SFR is by right in lower density areas. (HE, p. 111.)

However, the Housing Element also states that, in the approval process, staff determine whether MFR units are exempt from CEQA after completing the site plan review. (HE, p. 81.) This implies that there is some discretionary decision making for MFR approvals, because CEQA review is only required for discretionary decisions. If SPR is ministerial and it is the only review required for MFR, it is not clear how CEQA could be required. If there is some additional discretionary review required for MFR in the areas in which Table 45 identifies only SPR, e.g., a discretionary design review or a subdivision approval, this should be clarified in the section 4.1.7 discussing local processing and permit procedure, which does not mention design review. If not, the Housing Element should explain why any MFR in these areas that does not require subdivision would be subject to CEQA.

As discussed below, we encourage the City to provide ministerial approval for both development and design reviews for infill MFR projects based on objective development and design review standards.

B. Housing resources – site inventory

Over-reliance on Focused Growth and Underutilized Mixed Use sites for lower income units: Tables 58, 61, and 62 indicate that about 80% of the sites identified for very low and low income units are in Focused Growth Areas 2, 3, 4, and 5 (956 units) and only about 20% are in the Future Growth Area (410 units in the Central Area Specific Plan). Conversely, a disproportionate share of the sites for moderate and market rate units are identified in the Future Growth Area. Developing high density infill units in the Focused Growth Areas is a good idea. However, we suggest that the mix of affordable and market rate units should be roughly equal among all of the sites for several reasons.

First, concentration of affordable units in the Focused Growth Areas in the infill sites and market rate units in the more peripheral Future Growth Area sites is a recipe for segregation by income level and may not be consistent with affirmatively furthering fair housing. For example, the site inventory indicates that there are no moderate or market rate units planned in FG-2 and FG-5 where 469 units of affordable housing sites are planned. And there are only 226 moderate and market rate unit sites in the high density underutilized mixed use sites where 487 lower income units are sited. Conversely, only 410 lower income units are planned in the West and Central Area Specific Plans where 3,380 units of moderate income and market rate housing are sited.

Second, the prospects for actual development of the infill area Focused Growth Areas may be weaker than the prospects for development of the Future Growth Areas. For example, the test for “realistic capacity” for the lower income sites on the vacant mixed-use parcels (469 units) is based only on development standards (density, setbacks, etc.) and does not reflect any analysis of the likelihood that these vacant sites will in fact be developed over the next eight years.

C. Comments on implementing programs

Program 1, Provision of Adequate Sites for RHNA: As discussed above, the mix of affordable and market rate units should more nearly reflect the mix of income levels in the City's RHNA in the infill and Future Growth Area sites to reflect the AFFH commitment and to ensure that development of affordable units is not tied to the success of the Focused Growth Areas program.

The large majority (74.33%) of total RHNA units are being planned for the North of Boronda Future Growth Area. Resources should be allocated towards infill redevelopment to reduce sprawl.

Program 2, Financial Assistance and Gap Financing: Although the City is not in position to guarantee financing, the action proposed does not provide measurable objectives for success of the program. Almost all of the actions only call for the City to "explore" or "promote" or "discuss" something, and to do so without any timeline for completion. The program would benefit from identification of specific actions to be completed in a specific timeline. For example, the actions in this program could benefit by defining specific targets for leveraging funds, allocating federal pass-through funds, and exploring the development of a commercial/industrial linkage fee.

Program 4, ADUs: The third and fourth bullets in the action items conclude with the question, "Timeline?" Presumably this reflects incomplete drafting. At any rate, specific deadlines for these actions should be identified.

Program 5, East Area Specific Plan: The EASP is not needed to meet the RHNA, and the housing element acknowledges that it is not likely to produce units during the 8-year planning period. Accordingly, adoption of the EASP should not be a priority in the 6th Cycle. If the City chooses to pursue it, the EASP should equally balance affordable and market rate units and should not perpetuate the imbalance reflected in the WASP and CASP.

Program 6, GP, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates: The proposal to adopt Place Types and Objective Design Standards sounds like a beneficial movement toward streamlined development approvals. The Housing Element should clarify what is meant by "Objective Design Standards." Some jurisdictions and some statutory mandates distinguish objective development standards (e.g., height, setbacks, FAR, density) from objective design review standards (e.g., criteria for colors, facades, etc.). (See, e.g., SB 2295.) Both objective development and objective design review standards are essential to ministerial by-right permitting, which should be a key goal of Program 6 for qualifying sites.

Accordingly, Program 6 should be revised to call for revision of the GP and Zoning code to provide for ministerial permitting of residential units on infill sites that are not on environmentally sensitive lands. Infill could be defined "in an implementing ordinance using the language from Government Code Section 65913.4(a)(2) [SB 35] or Public Resources Code Section 21094.5(e)(1)(B) [CEQA infill exemption].

Ministerial permitting of residential projects in infill areas in Salinas is appropriate because CEQA review should be accomplished at the program rather than the project level. That is, CEQA review

should take place when the City amends its General Plan or zoning code, not when a developer comes to the City with a conforming project.

Environmentally sensitive sites, sites subject to gentrification, and historic sites should be excepted from ministerial permitting. These sites could be defined in an implementing ordinance using the language from Government Code Section 65913.4(a)(6), (a)(7), (a)(10) [SB35]. The City should continue to require discretionary review of development approvals at such sites.

Program 7, Reduce Fees and Housing Production Constraints: We support the intent behind this policy, particularly if it includes a focus on reducing fees for affordable units. To strengthen this policy, it would be beneficial to provide more objective and measurable standards to enable tracking progress. We suggest the following

- Annually review the City's planning and development fees to ensure they are appropriate and do not unduly constrain affordable housing development.
 - Objective and measurable standard: Conduct a comparative analysis of the City's planning and development fees with similar jurisdictions to determine if they are within an acceptable range. Use specific metrics such as percentage of total development costs or affordable housing project budgets to assess affordability impact.
- Update the impact fee schedule to reduce minimum net land area per unit requirements.
 - Objective and measurable standard: Evaluate the minimum net land area per unit requirements by considering factors such as average unit sizes, local market conditions, and density targets. Set a specific percentage reduction goal (e.g., 10% reduction) and track the progress toward achieving it.
- As funding permits, assist in gap financing affordable development by nonprofit developers to help offset the cost of development through deferred impact fees.
 - Objective and measurable standard: Allocate a specific amount of funding each year to support gap financing for nonprofit developers. Set a target for the number of affordable housing units to be created through this assistance program annually, and regularly evaluate the program's effectiveness in achieving this target.
- Periodically review the effectiveness of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and Density Bonus Program to implement revisions as appropriate to incentivize additional housing development.
 - Objective and measurable standard: Establish a review cycle (e.g., every three years) to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and Density Bonus Program. Use metrics such as the number of affordable units produced, the percentage of affordable units in new developments, and feedback from developers and housing advocacy groups to inform potential revisions. Estimate empirically the optimal percent of inclusionary units, i.e., the percent that maximizes the production of affordable units considering potential loss of

“filtering” units produced by market rate units.

- Continue efforts on streamlining and enhancing the efficiency of the planning and permit approval process as well as building inspection services. Additionally, continue supporting affordable housing developers through the entitlement and development process.
 - Objective and measurable standard: Track the average processing time for planning and permit approvals and set a target for reducing it by a specific percentage (e.g., 20%). Regularly survey developers to assess their satisfaction with the process and identify areas for improvement. Measure the number of affordable housing projects that receive support through the entitlement and development process. Implement a ministerial approval process using objective development and design review standards applicable to all infill residential projects not on environmentally sensitive lands and not requiring subdivision.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael DeLapa". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Michael DeLapa
Executive Director



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CEO, Community Foundation
Santa Cruz County

Matt Wetstein
Superintendent/President, Cabrillo College

Staff: Tahra Goraya, President & CEO

June 2, 2023

Salinas City Council
65 W. Alisal St.
Salinas, CA 93901

Subject: Support and Recommendations for Salinas 6th Cycle HE Draft

Dear Mayor Craig and Salinas City Councilmembers,

On behalf of the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP), I write to express our support and recommendations for the 6th Cycle Housing Element Draft made available to the public on May 12th, 2023. Policy recommendations in MBEP's forthcoming white paper, *Practical Housing Policy: Increasing Supply and Affordability for the 6th Regional Housing Needs Cycle*, guide our approach for evaluation. We find that City of Salinas' 6th Cycle Housing Element incorporates policies that are in line with our recommendations, which span the following six policy areas:

- Streamlining permitting
- Increasing allowable densities
- Impact fee reform
- Increasing funding sources for affordable housing
- Comprehensive pro-ADU policies
- Optimizing Inclusionary Housing Ordinances

The City of Salinas 6th Cycle Housing Element includes policies, both currently in practice and planned, that match all of our six recommendations. For example, programs 1, 5, 6, and 7 entail streamlined permitting through both state law and specific plans. Community and policy-makers can collaborate to create objective design guidelines and decide what types of development should be eligible for ministerial approval. MBEP encourages the City of Salinas to enable ministerial approval for development types that most effectively increase housing supply, especially those which create opportunities for lower income households to live close to jobs, public transit, and other critical public services and amenities.

Further, programs 5 and 7 in the Housing Element align with MBEP's policy recommendations by enabling fee reform and incentivizing ADUs and broader housing development types. The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, updated in 2022, offers flexible options for affordable housing in developments of 10 units or more. Specific Plans, Focused Growth Areas, New Urbanism Districts, and Overlay Districts allow for flexible densities and building types to accommodate needed development in designated areas of the city with common needs and growth patterns.

MBEP applauds the City of Salinas for achieving Prohousing Designation in April of this year, a feat achieved by only 22 jurisdictions in California. Several programs, including implementation of Prohousing Designation Program award funding, entail novel use of external and internal government funding sources for housing development. MBEP recommends that the City ensure adequate staffing and programs to fully leverage the funding granted by the Prohousing Incentive Pilot and other sources.

3180 Imjin Road, Suite 102
Marina, CA 93933 831.915.2806

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The Sites Inventory proposed by the City designates nearly 75% of RHNA sites – 4,960 of them – to the North of Boronda Future Growth Area, namely the West Area Specific Plan (WASP) and Central Area Specific Plan (CASP). The majority of these sites are for above moderate income (market rate) housing units, less than 10% are for very low and low income housing, and roughly 25% are for moderate income. According to the HCD’s Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Mapping tool, WASP and CASP are in areas of low and moderate resource and currently well outside the half mile radius of high quality transit. MBEP recommends that the City ensure these planned areas receive high quality service in proportion to demand as they develop, especially in areas developed with lower income housing and lower parking ratios. The City can establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with transit authorities well in advance of housing development in these areas to guarantee needed service that will increase public transit access and ensure reduced vehicle miles traveled. Such MOUs could ensure service to any other areas targeted for development, such as the Focused Growth Overlays radiating out from the Downtown Core and Neighborhood Area.

The Focused Growth Overlays, Downtown Core, and Downtown Neighborhood Area contain most of the Mixed-Use Vacant and Pipeline sites in the inventory, which contain or are targeted for roughly half of the lower income RHNA and fall in mostly low to moderate resource areas or areas of high poverty and segregation. These sites generally have access to high quality transit within the half-mile radius recommended for AFFH guidelines. One of the Mixed Use Underutilized sites, which are further from the downtown core and accommodate the rest of the lower income RHNA sites, is not inside the half-mile radius of high-quality transit. MBEP recommends that the City ensure all of the areas targeted for lower income housing have access to high quality transit as they develop, ideally through MOUs for demand-proportional service.

As most of the City of Salinas’ sites inventory falls inside existing low-moderate resource areas – or areas of high poverty and segregation such as the Downtown Core – MBEP would highlight the need for broad investment in attracting and incentivizing businesses and institutions to develop alongside housing for lower and moderate income households in the Mixed Use Vacant and Underutilized Mixed Use areas of the City. Having higher paying jobs in proximity to housing that serves a range of income levels will create a more vibrant community.

Finally, MBEP would recommend finding as many opportunities for streamlined, lower cost permitting as possible. Program 6 entails creating streamlined approval processes in alignment with SB35 and AB2162. Program 7 details reducing fees for housing development, streamlining, and deferral of fees for at least one affordable housing project annually. MBEP recommends even higher goals for deferment and reduction of fees and creating ministerial approval processes for many or all housing projects that integrate affordable housing using objective development and design guidelines to reduce risk and cost for developers. Every new avenue for carefully planned ministerial approval increases the speed at which the supply of housing – especially affordable housing – can be developed to meet RHNA goals and community needs.

MBEP applauds the City of Salinas in composing its draft 6th Cycle Housing Element and achieving Prohousing Designation. The City of Salinas demonstrates commitment to growth and community development that serves the entire city through this document – especially for historically underserved groups – while meeting the steep challenge of 6th Cycle RHNA. Salinas faces the same unprecedented need as much of California to create housing opportunities across income levels, especially for lower income community members. The City’s 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation of 6,673 homes – nearly triple that of the 5th Cycle – will require innovation and strong leadership by staff and other local officials. The Draft 6th Cycle Housing Element demonstrates a commitment to meeting this challenge.

Sincerely,



Tahra Goraya, MA, MPA
President & CEO



June 20, 2023

City of Salinas Community Development Department
C/O Jonathan Moore
65 W Alisal Street, Ste 201
Salinas, CA 93901

**RE: City of Salinas Draft 2023-2031 Housing
Element Public Review**

Dear Mr. Moore:

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) provides public transportation throughout Monterey County and operates an extensive bus network in the City of Salinas. MST aims to advocate and deliver quality public transportation as a leader within our community and industry. MST has reviewed the City of Salinas' Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element and would like to make the following comments.

MST is developing a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Study as a part of the planned SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit project. The study will identify land use policies and first-/last mile transportation strategies in five study areas, including the City of Salinas, to support development opportunities, increase transit ridership potential, and reduce vehicles-miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. The City's 2023-2031 Housing Element provides the City of Salinas with the opportunity to create policies to meet affordable housing and transportation needs.

MST recommends adding a policy under Goal 1 that encourages the development of high-density and mixed-use housing in areas served by public transportation and have safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. This recommended policy can further the City's goal to support sustainable housing developments through design and location.

MST also recommends adding an action under Goal 1 that encourages housing developers to incorporate transit into their designs by installing bus stop facilities on a developments site. Bus stop layouts and designs are evaluated using MST's Designing for Transit Guidelines (2020) and all bus stops should closely adhere to these guidelines to ensure adequate access pertinent to the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

As the City's Housing Element moves forward, we ask that the City of Salinas continue to coordinate with MST to ensure that public transportation is available to existing and future housing developments. If you have any questions about the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at movermeyer@mst.org or 831-264-5877.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Overmeyer".

Michelle Overmeyer
Director of Planning & Innovation

Advocating and delivering quality public transportation as a leader within our community and industry.

Transit District Members Monterey County • Carmel-by-the-Sea • Del Rey Oaks • Gonzales • Greenfield • King City • Marina • Monterey
Pacific Grove • Salinas • Sand City • Seaside • Soledad **Administrative Offices** 19 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Suite 200 Monterey, CA 93940

PH 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871) • FAX (831) 899-3954 • WEB mst.org

Draft Environmental Justice Element documents

- Draft EJ goals/policies/actions
- EJ engagement recurring themes
- SB 1000 checklist

DRAFT Environmental Justice Goals, Policies, Actions

SB-1000 Topic #1 Pollution exposure and air quality

Goal 1: Improve the quality of the built and natural environments to support healthy lifestyles & reduce health inequities

Policy	Actions
HEJ- 1.1: Adopt land use policies, programs, and decisions that improve environmental quality and reduce resident and worker exposure to toxins and pollution.	<p>HEJ-1.1.1: Improve air quality through proper planning for land use and development design that maintains air quality and reduces direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.</p> <p>HEJ-1.1.2: Support alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, and public transit, and develop bike- and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods to reduce emissions associated with automobile use.</p> <p>HEJ-1.1.3: Work with the State, agribusiness and agricultural worker organizations to ensure that agricultural use of pesticides and fertilizers do not negatively affect public health and safety.</p> <p>HEJ-1.1.4: Cooperate with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District to implement the Air Quality Plan.</p>
HEJ- 1.2: Ensure that sensitive land uses are not negatively impacted by hazardous materials or toxic air contaminant sources.	<p>HEJ-1.2.1: Work with responsible federal, state, and county agencies to decrease air pollution emissions occurring within the air basin.</p> <p>HEJ-1.2.2: Work with federal and state agencies to identify toxic disposal or leakage sites and pursue prompt cleanup.</p> <p>HEJ-1.2.3: Require that hazardous waste facilities and waste transfer stations comply with the Monterey County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.</p>

	HEJ-1.2.4: Ensure that hazardous materials used in residential, business and industry are properly handled and that information of their handling and use is available to residents, fire protection and other safety agencies.
<i>HEJ-1.3: Reduce disparities in life expectancy and diseases among different race/ethnicities and income levels.</i>	<p><i>HEJ-1.3.1: Work closely with the Monterey County Health Department to track trends and support targeted prevention and wellness programs throughout the life course.</i></p> <p><i>HEJ-1.3.2: Expand Access to Culturally Competent Medical and Mental Health Services.</i></p> <p><i>Action HEJ-1.3.3: Commit to a Health Approach that Integrates Both Mental and Physical Health.</i></p>

SB-1000 Topic #2 Public Facilities: Infrastructure, parks, community facilities, active transportation, roads and trails, and health-care facilities.

Goal 2: Provide and maintain a range of community services, programs, and institutional facilities to equitably meet the needs of the community.

Policy	Action
HEJ-2.1: Expand Availability and Access to High-Quality Childcare Services.	<p>HEJ-2.1.1: Increase Access to Childcare by Facilitating the Development of a Wide Range of Childcare Facilities.</p> <p>HEJ-2.1.2: Formalize and Maintain Partnerships to Improve Childcare Services.</p>
HEJ-2.2: Provide equitable access for all residents to a variety of well-maintained and high-quality parks, green space, and recreational opportunities that enhance quality of life.	HEJ-2.2.1: Strive to create development patterns that allow the majority of residents to be within one-half mile walking distance of a park, greenway, public plaza or recreation center (in more urbanized areas of the City). Establish a range of parks and open spaces, including tot lots, neighborhood parks, community parks, skate parks, sports fields and courts, organized sports complexes,

	<p>plazas/greens and/or greenways/parkways within all new neighborhoods, business districts, commercial areas, and especially in areas with low park level of service.</p> <p>HEJ-2.2.2: Integrate parks and green space into the neighborhood fabric to blur the boundary between neighborhood, sidewalk, and park perimeters. Parks and green space should be Safe, Accessible, and Reflective of the Community’s Culture and History for all Members of the Community to Enjoy.</p> <p>HEJ-2.2.3: Improve existing parks and recreational facilities in need of repair or upgrading to maintain high quality parks across the city.</p> <p>HEJ-2.2.4: Create a program to “Green Salinas Streets”.</p>
<p>HEJ-2.3: Strengthen the Capacity and Sustainability of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in the City to Provide Critical Services.</p>	<p>HEJ-2.3.1: Offer Capacity Building Training and Technical Assistance to Existing Community-Based Organizations.</p> <p>HEJ-2.3.2: Facilitate The Creation Of New Or Expanded Community-Based Organizations throughout The City.</p>

SB-1000 Topic #3 Promote healthy food access for EJ communities through programs and projects.

Goal 3: Ensure all Salinas’ residents have access to purchase and grow healthy, affordable, and culturally diverse relevant foods.

Policy	Action
<p>HEJ-3.1: Reduce hunger and food insecurity through government programs, community education, urban agriculture, and emergency food resources.</p>	<p>HEJ-3.1.1: Encourage healthy and culturally appropriate food retail establishments (including full-service grocery stores, farmers’ markets, fruit and vegetable markets and small markets where a majority of food is healthy) to locate in underserved areas of Salinas. Recognize food retailers and outlets in setting goals for local procurement.</p>

	HEJ-3.1.2: Promote and expand year-round access to sustainable, locally sourced food.
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SB-1000 Topic #4 Safe and Sanitary Homes

Goal 4: Ensure safe and sanitary homes.

Policy	Action
HEJ- 4.1:	

SB-1000 Topic #5 Physical Activity

Goal 5: Promote spaces for physical activity.

Policy	Action
HEJ- 5.1:	

SB-1000 Topic #6 Promote “Civil” or Community Engagement

Goal 6: Encourage Robust Civic Engagement and the Development of Resident Leaders Committed to Shaping the City's Future.

Policy	Action
HEJ-6.1: Create a Welcoming Environment to Nurture Effective Engagement.	HEJ-6.1.1: Ensure that Civic Engagement is Meaningful and Worthwhile. HEJ-6.1.2: Creatively consider how future City decisions and practices can intentionally reduce institutional discrimination based on race, ethnicity, country of origin, sex, age, socio-economic status, physical ability, sexual orientation, and religion, especially as it relates to civic engagement and City-wide unity.
HEJ-6.2: Build the Capacity of Resident Leaders to Fully Participate in City and Community Decision- Making.	HEJ-6.2.1: Provide community facilities that encourage and facilitate public participation and pride in the community, such as cultural and public gathering centers.

SB-1000 Topic #7 Improvements and Programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Goal 7: Improve existing and create new programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Policy	Actions
HEJ-7.1: Continue to provide needed social services to stabilize the homeless population.	HEJ-7.1.1: Expand physical and mental health services, such as substance abuse counseling and rehabilitation services through an interdisciplinary team for individuals experiencing homelessness. HEJ-7.1.2: Work with high utilizers of medical and homeless individuals to reduce emergency visits and calls to regional hospitals. HEJ-7.1.3: Help improve access to bathrooms and personal hygiene supplies for individuals experiencing homelessness.
HEJ-7.2: Reduce disparities in life expectancy and diseases among different race/ethnicities and income levels.	HEJ-7.2.1: Work closely with the Monterey County Health Department to track trends and support targeted prevention and wellness programs throughout the life course. HEJ-7.2.2: Expand Access to Culturally Competent Medical and Mental Health Services. HEJ-7.2.3: Commit to a Health Approach that Integrates Both Mental and Physical Health.

EJ Feedback Recurring Themes	
Pollution Exposure and Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support to control pollution in the parks • Clean trash and debris from waterways • Support sustainable/green transit (all-electric buses) • Stop pollution exposure caused by agriculture • Reduce noise pollution by loud/fast cars • Clean/remove dangerous toxic waste at locations where homeless people live
Public Facilities & Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated/protected bikeways • Spend money to add greenery to the Alisal • Green zones/spaces throughout the city • Clean sewers and drains to avoid floods • Better access (financial help) to youth sports leagues • Increase access to parks and improve playground/exercise equipment (open air gyms) • Fix sidewalks/crosswalks • Carr Lake restoration • Better access to health care facilities
Food Access and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more farmer's markets • Engage with Blue Zones Project to promote healthy diets • More grocery stores with healthy, fresh options • Healthier restaurants • Walkable access to healthy foods • Community gardens
Safe and Sanitary homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize neighborhood clean-ups • Find a way to help to homeless get into housing • Without basic/proper housing there are more negative effects on the city • A lot of overcrowding in housing • Need policies regarding inspections of rental units
Physical and Mental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events for families regarding health (for undocumented people and BIPOC) • Tiny homes, mental health services---Schilling area • Offer sports and recreation services to all residents to increase exercise • Support public health services for immigrants • Mental health facility for adults and youth • More access to mental health services for seniors and disabled population
Community Engagement, Improvements, and Programs for DACS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth volunteer programs—sports, clean-ups, community service, etc. • Create opportunities for the community to volunteer to help improve (plant trees, clean ups, etc) • Ensure engagement efforts reach all residents (ensure efforts are made to the East Side) • Consider zoom options for meetings (better accessibility)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More trash/recycle bins throughout neighborhoods to avoid littering
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rethink the budget and allocate resources using an equity lens.

Sources:

Budget Meetings

Budget Surveys 2022-2023

EJ Workshops

Existing Conditions Workshop

Land Use Meetings

Environmental Justice Checklist

Environmental Justice: The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (CalEPA)

Policy Objectives:

SB 1000 Policy Objectives



What should the EJ Element address?



**Policies
must
address:**



Draft Economic Development Element documents

- Draft ED goals/policies/actions
- ED engagement recurring themes

DRAFT Economic Development Goals, Policies, Actions

Goal ED-1: Support a diverse economy that provides jobs responsive to the future while promoting the continued economic success of the Salinas Valley as the premier center of agricultural productivity and technological advancement in the fresh food/produce sector.

Policy	Actions
<p>Policy ED-1.1: Encourage economic expansion and diversification in the high-tech sector and other industries that are ecologically compatible with Salinas and that promote stable, year-round higher paying employment opportunities.</p>	<p>ED-1.1.1: Promote training and educational opportunities to encourage a diverse and educated workforce and the upward mobility of the City's residents.</p> <p>ED-1.1.2: Maintain a competitive supply of sites for businesses and manufacturers associated with high technology and light manufacturing industries.</p> <p>ED-1.1.3: Undertake and maintain a comprehensive marketing program to change the misperception and false image of Salinas as being an unsafe place to visit, live and work.</p>
<p>Policy ED-1.2: Maintain and enhance Salinas and the Salinas Valley as the premier center of agricultural productivity and technological advancement in the fresh food/produce sector.</p>	<p>ED-1.2.1: Partner with the County and communities of Monterey County to facilitate growth of the agricultural cluster supply chain in Salinas and the Salinas Valley.</p> <p>ED-1.2.2: Invest in a coordinated program that attracts investment capital and research activity in agricultural technology to Salinas and the Salinas Valley.</p>

Goal ED-2: Enhance retail, entertainment, and tourism opportunities throughout the City.

Policy	Action
<p>ED-2.1: Enhance marketing, promotion, and branding efforts and develop a City-wide retail strategy to combat sales tax leakage.</p>	<p>ED-2.1.1: Promote the City's unique neighborhoods as cultural, arts, and shopping destinations.</p> <p>ED-2.1.2: Attract new retail development that will expand the variety and quality of goods and services for existing residents</p>

	<p>without harming existing, locally-owned businesses.</p> <p>ED-2.1.3: Develop a Branding and marketing strategy that promotes Salinas as a Cultural, Art, and Retail Destination.</p>
<p>ED-2.2: Enhance tourism opportunities by promoting Salinas’ history, cultural diversity, and positive attributes.</p>	<p>ED-2.2.1: Create destination-based and identifiable place-themed districts within the community for agriculture, business and technology, marketplace/shopping activities, tourism, entertainment, recreation, food and wine, cultural, and historic resources.</p> <p>ED-2.2.2: Support the creation of key cultural spaces to bring visitors to Salinas.</p>

Goal ED-3: Foster business creation, retention, expansion, and attraction to create a critical mass of economic activity across the city.

Policy	Action
<p>ED-3.1: Ensure that existing businesses have access to the resources and services they need to prosper and expand in Salinas.</p>	<p>ED-3.1.1: Develop and maintain a business retention and expansion program, including a menu of incentives and City services available to existing businesses to help facilitate growth and expansion.</p> <p>ED-3.1.2: Work with businesses that are not up to code to make improvements that ensure code compliance, health, and safety.</p>
<p>ED-3.2: Promote entrepreneurship and business innovation in Salinas to support new business development.</p>	<p>ED-3.2.1: Employ a Proactive Business Attraction Strategy to Add Complementary Businesses to the City.</p> <p>ED-3.2.2: Identify vacant and/or underutilized buildings that could be used as incubator spaces for innovative business models that nurture entrepreneurship and attract home grown businesses.</p> <p>ED-3.2.3: Leverage local agriculture, food, and non-profit resources to create entrepreneurial development, microlending, and job opportunities.</p>

<p>ED-3.3: Build Strong Relationships Between the City and Business/Commercial Property Owners.</p>	<p>ED-3.3.1: Continue Business Navigator positions as a Point of Contact in the City to Assist new and existing Businesses Through Regulatory Processes and to share knowledge of Accessible and Affordable Resources, training programs, and funding opportunities to Support Business Creation, Retention, and Expansion.</p> <p>ED-3.3.2: Continue Streamlining and Simplifying the Business Licensing and Permitting Process.</p>
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Goal ED-4: Narrow social and economic disparities in the City of Salinas.

Policy	Actions
<p>ED-4.1: Increase Access to Education and Vocational Training Programs to improve economic security.</p>	<p>ED-4.1.1: Partner with local and regional educational institutions and nonprofit organizations to increase the number of high school graduates, literate adults, and completed general education development (GED) or vocational programs to increase job readiness skills and opportunities. Integrate adult learning programming, such as GED courses and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, into vocational training and workforce development programs.</p> <p>Action ED-4.1.2: Encourage Educational Institutions and Workforce Development Programs to Expand and Create New Educational and Training Programming Based on Employer/Industry Needs.</p> <p>Action ED-4.1.3: Create or recruit new job training programs (e.g., JobCorps) to connect existing and future residents with job opportunities and to satisfy the needs of local industry.</p>
<p>Policy ED-4.2: Promote community safety and economic security by providing access to economic opportunities for all workers and households in the community.</p>	<p>ED-4.2.1: Acknowledge that individual income and wealth is the strongest predictor of health and well-being and strive to</p>

	<p>increase incomes among the lowest-income groups in Salinas.</p> <p>ED-4.2.2: Support organizations that assist the homeless, undocumented immigrants, displaced agricultural workers, the formerly incarcerated, and other marginalized populations find employment and become self-sufficient.</p> <p>Action ED-4.2.3: Seek to increase the number of professional-level jobs that offer family-supportive wages, paid sick days, and health care insurance, and protect worker safety, so college-educated residents can find appropriate jobs in their home city.</p>
<p>Policy ED-4.3: Empower citizens to take an active role in neighborhood revitalization.</p>	<p>ED-4.3.1: Promote the establishment of a system of neighborhood-level resident representation to empower/engage local neighborhoods in their own revitalization process.</p> <p>ED-4.3.2: In collaboration with neighborhood representatives and/ or other community groups and organizations, leverage the use of technology to promote low-cost, short-term activities that may lead to long-term economic change.</p> <p>ED-4.3.3: Support the emotional well-being of residents by creating safe opportunities for residents to connect with their neighbors, especially when they are from a different culture or background.</p>

Goal ED-5: Coordinate public and private investment along disinvested commercial corridors.

Policy	Action
<p>ED-5.1: Improve the Appearance and Cleanliness of the City and its Commercial Corridors.</p>	<p>ED-5.1.1: Establish a Consistent Corridor Maintenance Program and Tailored Design Guidelines to Improve Appearance, Create District Identity, and Increase Safety.</p>

	<p>ED-5.1.2: Incentivize Owners and Merchants to Invest in Property Maintenance and Improvements. The City will also Evaluate Potential Revenue Streams to Support Consistent Corridor Maintenance.</p> <p>ED 5.1.3: Establish and fund a façade improvement program that incentives alignment with City design guidelines/district identity.</p>
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Economic Development Feedback – Recurring Themes	
Industry Growth and Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract more tech jobs • Expand agriculture technology • Renovate old buildings for new uses • Attract higher paying jobs
Retail, Entertainment, and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood welcome signs • Beautification of business corridors in North and East Salinas, and Chinatown • New destinations to attract tourists • Destinations for youth and teens (mini-golf, go-carts, trampoline park, etc.) • More retail options—steer away from big box stores • Better entertainment (music venues/open spaces/nightlife/plazas) • Cannabis tourism • Focus on filling vacant space (or a vacancy tax) • Promote Salinas in a positive light
Workforce Development & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer education to develop skills (Agriculture, Technology, Coding, etc.) • Create year-round jobs (many agriculture jobs are only seasonal) • Job preparation trainings (job-search, interviews, resume, etc.) • Jobs/internships for youth to develop skills
Business Retention & Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small business support—loans, permits, programs, etc. • Clear/streamlined permitting process • More places for small businesses to sell products (flea market, farmer’s market, street fairs, etc.) • Expand corner stores to sell healthier/fresh options
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage entrepreneurship through seminars/workshops • Weave together arts and entrepreneurship • Promote local artists/businesses • Incubator/coworking spaces (other than food)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider parking availability • Small businesses need security/protection • Tax larger businesses/agriculture

Sources:

- Budget Meetings
- Budget Surveys 2022-2023
- Land Use Workshop
- Socioeconomic Working Group