
2024 Legislative Workshop

COUNTY OF MONTEREY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FEBRUARY 2, 2024





San Lucas Clean Drinking Water

Funding to provide a long-term reliable source of drinking water to meet the community's current and future needs.

San Lucas is a small, disadvantaged farming community located in unincorporated Monterey County approximately eight miles south of King City. The community water system (approximately 100 connections) is owned and operated by the San Lucas County Water District (District). The San Lucas Water Supply Project would address persistent water quality problems which have occurred since 2006. In 2011, a “do not drink” order was issued, and despite establishing an alternative well to serve the community, a second “do not drink” order was issued in 2016. The lack of safe, affordable drinking water for the community has also caused a nearly 20-year delay of a severely needed affordable housing project in San Lucas.

The County and the District are working with the State Water Resources Control Board to identify potential solutions to address the water quality issues. The County has been pursuing a project that would construct a new pipeline to tie into the Cal Water system on the east side of King City and deliver water directly to the District water distribution tank. The pipeline is anticipated to be approximately 7.8 miles long and run along the eastern side of Highway 101 and the railroad line.



Nacimientto & San Antonio Dams High Priority Safety of Dams Projects

A set of subprojects for Nacimientto and San Antonio Reservoir and Dam facilities to fulfill Federal and State regulatory requirements and provide flood protection and a sustainable water supply. – Current cost estimate \$192.5 million

Provides flood control, drought resiliency, groundwater recharge, environmental, and other benefits

- More than 418,000 acres supporting the County's \$11.7 billion agricultural industry
- Over 250,000 residents utilizing groundwater as the primary drinking water supply
- Reservoir operations provide a buffer against drought conditions to Salinas Valley water users

Fully operational facilities are critical for implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans

- MCWRA currently has self-imposed risk reduction measures in place reducing water storage at San Antonio Reservoir
- Without these projects these operational restrictions could become mandatory



San Antonio Dam Spillway

In September 2023, the Agency let a contract to conduct a feasibility study of the replacement of the San Antonio Dam spillway. The study is expected to be complete in February 2024 and will provide the basis for future design and permitting steps as well as updated cost estimates.

After the feasibility study, the Agency currently estimates design and permitting costs for the spillway replacement to be about \$3 million over a 2-to-3-year timeframe. The Agency currently plans to utilize a portion of the \$17 million in 2023-24 State Budget funding to support this work.

San Antonio Dam Low-Level Outlet Works

The Agency must secure an additional \$8.6 million over the next three (3) fiscal years to modernize the San Antonio Dam Low-Level Outlet Works. This project entails seven (7) sub-tasks laid out in an order of successive steps to ensure safety and efficiency. To achieve this goal, the Agency is seeking \$1.8 million in funding in fiscal year 2024-25, \$5.6 million in fiscal year 2025-26, and \$1.2 million in fiscal year 2026-27.



Nacimiento Plunge Pool Rehabilitation

In November 2023, the Agency let another contract to begin the design of the Nacimiento Plunge Pool Rehabilitation, and more specifically removal of the Plunge Pool rock outcropping. This work is expected to be complete by the Fall of 2024 and will provide the basis for future design and permitting steps, as well as updated cost estimates, to complete the Rehabilitation.

The Agency currently estimates full design and permitting costs to be \$1.1 million over a 2-to-3-year timeframe and the construction cost to be about \$17 million. The Agency currently plans to utilize a portion of the \$6 million in 2022-23 State Budget funding and the \$17 million in 2023-24 State Budget funding to support this work. The Agency has also applied for an additional \$5 million of funding assistance from the United States Department of Energy for the Safety of Dams Project at Nacimiento for this effort. The Rehabilitation Project is expected to be complete by 2028.



FEMA Reimbursements

Improve the FEMA Public Assistance Program, provide guidance to clarify expenses eligible for reimbursement, and expedite the grant award process.

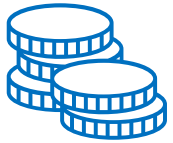
- The County is working with Cal OES and FEMA to recover costs of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, 2020 Wildfires, and 2021 and 2023 Winter Storms and is concerned that FEMA may reduce disaster reimbursement funding or change how events qualify.
- The County submitted millions of dollars in FEMA Public Assistance grant requests to recover disaster related costs. FEMA takes considerable time to review the applications. The County has waited over 2 years to recover approved costs for disaster response and recovery efforts.
- The process creates administrative burdens, dedicated staff/training to keep up with FEMA's ever-changing requirements. Clear and consistent guidance and policy interpretation is needed from FEMA, as changes lead to major difficulties in documenting and seeking reimbursement.
- The County has been working with Cal OES and FEMA towards reimbursement for costs related to non-congregate shelters (NCS) under FEMA Public Assistance following the 2023 Winter Storms and the COVID-19 Pandemic. NCS is an activity eligible for reimbursement under FEMA Public Assistance, and the County has spent several months working to clarify the guidance surrounding eligibility criteria. FEMA has continued to issue retroactive guidance for both disasters which contradict previously issued guidance and Public Assistance Policy.

FEMA Public Assistance (2019-2023)



\$125 M

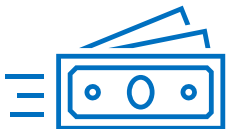
Eligible Response
Expenditures



\$88.7 M

-\$13.6M

Federal Cost Share
(Reimbursement)



\$4.2 M

Obligated

FEMA Reimbursements

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Disaster	Incident Name	Best Available Cost	Best Available Federal Share	Obligated
4683	2023 January Winter Storms	\$25,295,753.41	\$19,141,833.62	\$18,446.83
4699	2023 March Winter Storms	\$66,115,505.20	\$49,586,628.90	In Progress
4558	2020 Wildfires	\$1,820,702.54	\$1,737,358.28	\$1,737,358.28
4482	2020 COVID-19	\$31,766,407.87	\$18,214,534.05	\$2,385,919.00
4434	2019 Winter Storms	\$456,032.18	\$77,250.78	\$77,250.78
Total		\$125,454,401.20	\$88,757,605.63	\$4,218,974.89

Community Services Center – Seaside

Replace the current 11,000 sq. ft. social services facility at 1281 Broadway Ave., in Seaside with a new 4 story 60,000 sq. ft. community services center and parking facility.

The community center will house Social Services, the Family Justice Center, Monterey County Free Libraries, WIC and community resource spaces.

The goal is to introduce a new model for delivering county services that not only improves access to, and satisfaction with, services but also magnifies the outcomes associated with public services in a setting that benefits the broader community.



The Vision

The Community Service Center will be a one-stop location where residents can secure public benefits, employment services, adult services, and family and children's services.

Flexible workspaces that can be used as hoteling stations for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition classes, DSS eligibility assessments, Health Department services, and Behavioral Health services.

The Monterey County Free Libraries will include spaces for children's programming and family activities.

The Monterey County Family Justice Center will provide a safe and convenient location for victim advocate services.

Multipurpose community spaces and meeting rooms will be available for community-based organizations, resource classes, and hosting public forums.



Project Status and Goals

The County has invested \$3 million for the design, engineering, and environmental tasks. The total estimated construction cost is \$68 million, and the total estimated project cost is \$112 million.

The plan is to begin construction in winter 2027. The goal is to reimagine county-wide service delivery. We envision the Community Service Center as more than a social service location. This project will serve as a “hub”, or center, for a broad spectrum of community engagement activities that promote individual & family wellbeing for the entire community.





Homeless Funding Formulas

State and Federal partners need to identify a different means to assess community needs when allocating funds to address homelessness.

- The County is committed to efforts that address homelessness so that it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- Part of that commitment is advocating for adequate resources to support the homelessness response network that the County has created and has found to be successful.
- Federal and state funding formulas make it difficult to continue to implement services that are achieving success because allocations rely on population, poverty, and the biennial Point-in-Time (PIT) census.
- This means communities who are actively reducing their PIT counts can be inadvertently penalized because funding levels are dependent upon the performance of other communities.
- Support advocacy efforts to establish performance-based funding for countywide plans that meet metrics in reducing homelessness. Funded entities should be rewarded for aggressive goals and achieving success.

Legislative Proposal

Monterey County Veterans Home

The County will sponsor State legislation that permits the construction of a Veterans Home in Monterey County – preferably on or near the former Fort Ord.

The scope of the project, location and cost are to be determined in coordination with the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Proposal seeks to authorize legislation similar to SB 1234 (Johannessen) in 2002 that would authorize the State Public Works Board to issue lease-revenue bonds to finance acquisition, design, and construction of an additional Veterans Home in Monterey County, and to allow the State Department of General Services, on behalf of CalVet, to construct an additional Veterans Home. The legislation should also seek a continuous appropriation for its operation.

Federal legislative efforts are also needed to secure two-thirds of the costs for the acquisition, design and construction and a continuous appropriation for its operation through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).



CalVet Veterans Homes

CalVet has eight (8) Veterans Homes that offer affordable long-term care to Veterans who are age 55+, eligible spouses and domestic partners are eligible to apply for admission.

The age requirement is waived for disabled or homeless veterans needing long-term care.

Services range from independent living programs with minimal support to 24/7 skilled nursing and dementia care for veterans with significant clinical needs.

Four (4) of the Veterans Homes offer skilled nursing and dementia care, all of which have 2 to 5+ year waiting lists.

All the Veterans Homes are at a considerable distance from Monterey County with the closest in Fresno and Yountville (both 2.5 hours away) and Ventura (4 hours away).

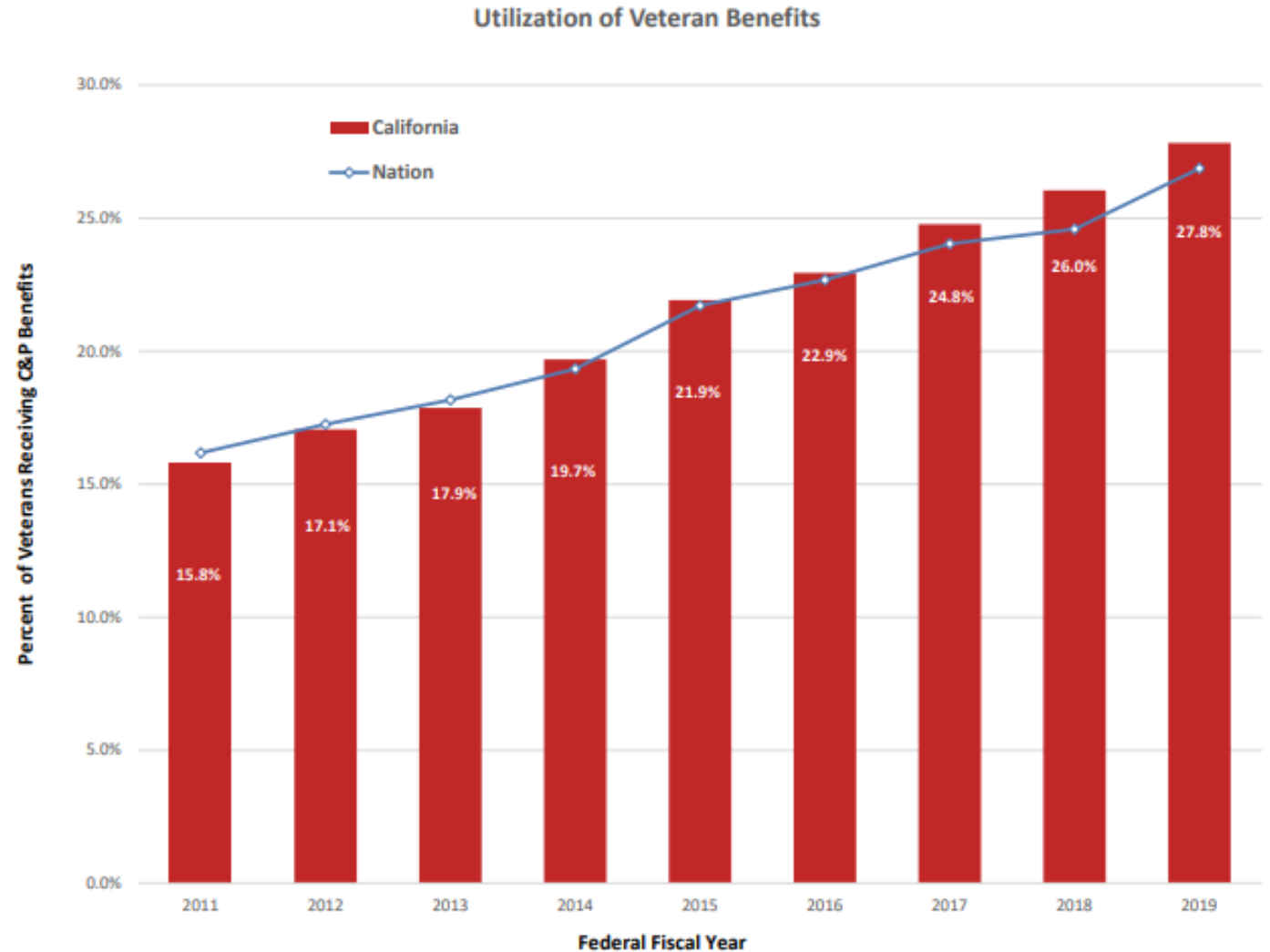
California Veterans

Largest Veteran population in U.S. - over 1.6 million

- 21,000 in Monterey County plus thousands of active and reserve military members
- 57,000 in Santa Clara County
- 10,000 in Santa Cruz County
- 17,800 in San Luis Obispo County
- 2,500 in San Benito County
- 108,000 collectively

Accessing VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) Benefits at greater levels than ever before-

- 15.8% in 2011 v. 27.8% in 2019
- Total - over \$8 billion in FY 2019



Farm Bill Reauthorization



Support reauthorization of the Farm Bill, including agricultural reforms that will improve health and protect the environment of all County residents through significantly strengthening federal nutrition programs, improving access to healthy food, promoting environmental stewardship and conservation, protecting our food supply, and robustly funding rural development initiatives based on best practices in coordination with local officials.

Update the Definition of “Rural”: Significantly, there has been discussion about updating the federal definition of “rural” in the new Farm Bill. For many programs covered in the Farm Bill, the adjusted gross income (AGI) is capped at \$900,000. However, this cap sometimes makes California farmers and ranchers ineligible because their income thresholds are higher, and because the calculation is based on gross numbers and not net numbers.

Funding for the USDA Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program – PL-566: This program provides technical and financial assistance to States, local governments and Tribal organizations to help plan and implement authorized watershed projects for the purpose of flood prevention, watershed protection, public recreation, public fish and wildlife, agricultural water management, municipal and industrial water supply, and water quality management. The Water Resources Agency has been working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to explore the potential eligibility for PL-566 funding to support the Interlake Tunnel Project.

Immigration Concerns

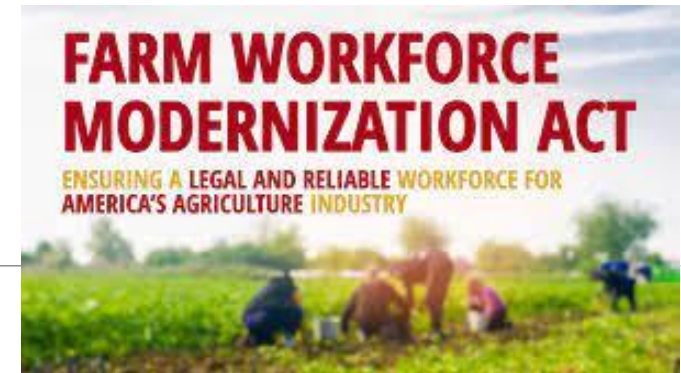
Farm Workforce Modernization Act

Current immigration policies make it increasingly difficult to meet the workforce needs of the local agricultural industry that is highly dependent on an adequate supply of immigrant labor.

The County is becoming increasingly concerned with labor shortages affecting the agricultural industry that threaten the economic vitality of the region. In California alone, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates losses attributed to labor shortages has cost farmers millions of dollars per year as fruit and other crops are left to rot in the field because of a lack of farmworkers to bring in the harvest.

The County believes the Farm Workforce Modernization Act strikes the right balance between the needs of workers and employers, as evidenced by the support it has garnered from over 300 agricultural groups, including the United Farm Workers and California Farm Bureau Federation.

Support the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, which would establish a program for agricultural workers in the United States to earn legal status through continued agricultural employment and contribution to the U.S. agricultural economy; reform the H-2A program to provide more flexibility for employers, while ensuring critical protections for workers; and establish a nationwide E-Verify system through which agricultural employers would electronically verify the employment eligibility of their workers.



Monterey County Bike and Skate Park

Construct a regional Bike and Skate Park serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties.

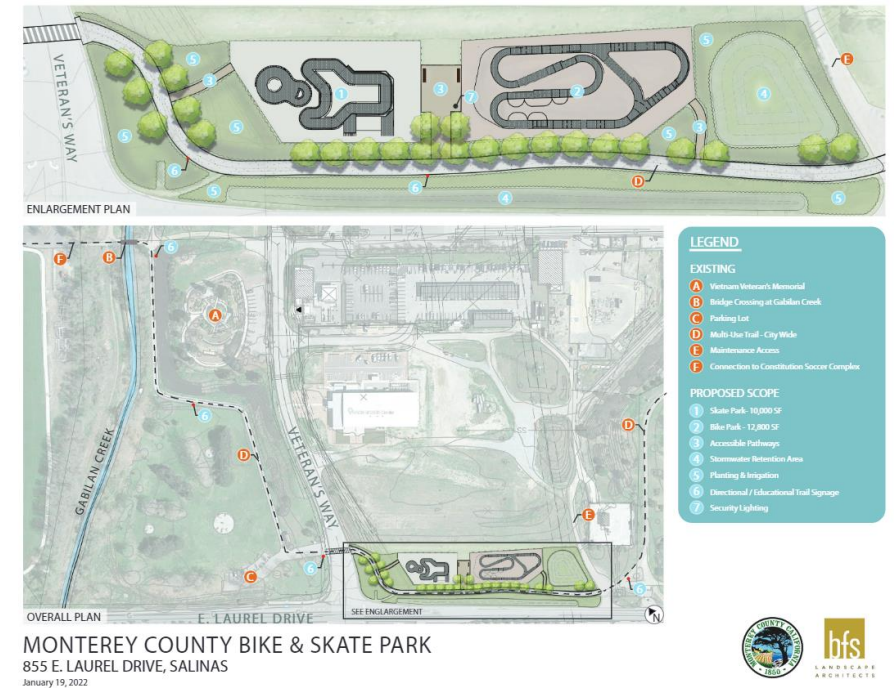
The proposed site is linked by several multi-use trails connecting the project to some of the most underserved neighborhoods and several elementary schools and will complement the adjacent existing recreation features.

The property is easily accessible from U.S. Interstate 101, nested within the County's most densely populated area and contiguous to recreation features: Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, Monterey County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park, Carr Lake, Natividad Creek Park, and the Twin Creeks Golf Course/First Tee Monterey County.

The Bike Park will include various terrain and riding conditions that will allow riders to progress their skills (beginner to advanced) and safely practice their sport.

The Skate Park will include quarter pipes, half pipes, and bowls along with street skating features including stairs, rails, curbs, ramps, and ledges.

Important partners for this project include the City of Salinas, the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, and the Monterey County Blue Zones Project.





Old Monterey County Jail

Constructed in 1931 in the Gothic Revival style, often used during the Art Deco Period of the 19th century for public buildings and academic structures.

In 1970, Cesar Chavez, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, was held in the jail for 20 days for refusing to call off a lettuce boycott, thereby raising national and international attention for farmworkers. His incarceration brought national figures such as Ethel Kennedy and Coretta Scott King to the jail to visit and advocate for his release. This event is considered pivotal in the struggle for farm labor rights.

In 2004, the Jail was listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places reflecting its architectural significance and for areas where Cesar Chavez was imprisoned. It is the only historic landmark of the farmworker rights movement on the Central Coast.

This project presents a unique opportunity to preserve and reuse the historic site, stimulate local economy, promote cultural pride for a significant event in the farm labor movement, with careful consideration of the community's needs and with respect for the historic significance of the site. - Estimated cost - \$17.25 million