



2024 Legislative
Workshop

COUNTY OF MONTEREY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FEBRUARY 2, 2024

County of Monterey Board of Supervisors Legislative Workshop February 2, 2024

Fact Sheets

San Lucas Clean Drinking Water



Clean drinking water pipeline for the severely disadvantaged community of San Lucas

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.



Nic Coury/courtesy Monterey County Weekly

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.



Nick Rahaim/courtesy Monterey County Weekly

While there has been a responsible party identified for the nitrate water quality issues, other water quality issues also need to be addressed. The responsible party will be partially financially liable for the treatment of nitrates, however, should the pipeline move forward. Funding is needed for project design, environmental assessment, engineering, and construction work to provide a clean, long-term, reliable source of drinking water to meet the community’s current and future needs.

Request

Support legislation and budget proposals that create new or expands existing sources of funding for a long-term project that provides a reliable source of clean drinking water to the small, disadvantaged community of San Lucas.

Contact

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Nacimiento and San Antonio Dams High Priority Safety of Dams Project

A set of subprojects for Nacimiento 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.

Nacimiento and San Antonio reservoirs supply water to Monterey County's fertile Salinas Valley for all the valley's beneficial uses. The reservoirs, built in 1957 and 1967 respectively, were put in place by the people of the Salinas Valley to provide flood control; store and release water for aquifer recharge; and combat seawater intrusion in the valley. The facilities provide water to the Salinas Valley agricultural economy, as well as valley residents; a large number who work in the agricultural industry or in the tourism-related businesses on the Monterey Peninsula. Without these reservoirs, life, culture, and the economies of Monterey County would suffer greatly.

The water released from these reservoirs utilizes the natural Salinas River channel for approximately 100 miles of conveyance through the Salinas Valley. The releases percolate into the ground for groundwater aquifer recharge and are seasonally diverted about 90 miles downstream to augment recycled water supplies used for irrigating crops in northern Monterey County.

Aging infrastructure is a national phenomenon. The problems in California and other states indicate there is a significant need to protect, maintain, enhance, and renew existing infrastructure, which is far more cost effective if done early and consistently. At Nacimiento, the condition of the spillway and plunge pool limits the volume of releases from the high-level outlets. This limitation can adversely affect the dam's storage and flood control potential. San Antonio is currently operated under self-imposed, risk reduction measures that limit the amount of water that can be stored pending the California Department of Safety of Dams mandated replacement of the spillway following the 2017 Oroville Dam spillway failure.

This is a multi-benefit Project. It provides flood control, drought resiliency, and groundwater recharge to drinking water supply aquifers for over 250,000 residents, including disadvantaged communities that support our hospitality and \$11.7 billion agricultural industry. In addition, having both facilities fully operational is crucial to implementation of several



Nacimiento Dam and Reservoir



San Antonio Reservoir



San Antonio Dam and Spillway

Groundwater Sustainability Plans. Monterey County does not receive any imported water from State or Federal water projects. Monterey County Water Resources Agency (Agency) is the lead agency for the Project. The Agency received just over \$6 million in the 2022-23 State Budget, and a commitment for an additional \$17 million in the 2023-24 State Budget to advance these projects. While appreciative of these investments, a large financial obligation remains to achieve project completion.

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.

Nacimiento Plunge Pool Rehabilitation:

Also, 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 project. The Rehabilitation Project is expected to be complete by 2028.

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 FY 2024-25, \$5.6 million in FY 2025-26, and \$1.2 million in FY 2026-27.



Nacimiento and San Antonio Dam and Reservoir facilities to fulfill needs and provide flood protection and a sustainable water supply. Efforts that protect existing and create new sources of funding for these projects have been achieved to advance these critical dam safety projects over time. Continued assistance and support in securing funding to complete the project would specifically \$8.6 million over the next three (3) fiscal years to complete the Low-Level Outlet Works project.

Agency
monterey.ca.us

FEMA Reimbursements



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

The County continues to work with the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to recover costs related to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, 2020 Wildfires, and 2021 and 2023 Winter Storms. Monterey County has experienced several major disaster events in recent years and is concerned that FEMA may reduce disaster related reimbursement funding and/or change the way disaster events qualify for reimbursement. The County has submitted millions of dollars in FEMA Public Assistance grant requests to recover costs related to these disaster events. FEMA takes considerable time to review these applications - in some cases, the County has waited two plus years to recover approved and expended costs for disaster response and recovery efforts. The process creates a significant administrative burden and creates a need for dedicated staff and training to keep up with FEMA's ever-changing requirements. There is also a need for clear and consistent guidance and policy interpretation from FEMA, as constant changes lead to major difficulties in documenting and seeking reimbursement.



More recently, 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.

Request

Support efforts to improve the FEMA Public Assistance Program including written guidance to clarify expenses that are eligible for reimbursement and expedite the grant award process to ensure the County is reimbursed for eligible costs as quickly as possible.

Contact

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Community Services Center - Seaside

Secure funding to construct a Community Services Center that reimagines County services by designing an integrative community-based approach to service delivery.



The County has invested in planning and architectural design work for the planned construction of a new Community Service Center. The design calls for a 60,000 square foot, four-story building to replace the current 11,000 square foot Social Services facility in the City of Seaside.

The new Community Services Center is envisioned to house Social Services, a Family Justice Center, and Monterey County Free Libraries' new Seaside Branch. The Center will be a hub for the City of Seaside and surrounding communities and will include community spaces, meeting rooms and outdoor public spaces for community programming.



The Center will serve as a one-stop location for customers to secure public benefits, employment services, adult services, and family and children's services. The Seaside Library Branch will include spaces for children's programming and family activities. The Family Justice Center will provide a safe and convenient location for victim advocate services. Flexible workspaces will be used as hoteling stations for Women, Infants, and Childrens (WIC) nutrition classes, Department of Social Services (DSS) eligibility assessments, Health Department services, and Behavioral Health services. Multipurpose community spaces and meeting rooms will also be available for community-based organizations, resource classes, and hosting public forums.

The new building is more than a social service location, as it is designed to simultaneously serve as a center for a broad spectrum of community engagement and wellbeing. The goal is to not only improve access to and satisfaction with County services, but also the outcomes associated with those services through a holistic approach to community engagement.

Request

Secure funding to construct a Community Services Center that reimagines County services by designing an integrative, community-based approach to service delivery. The estimated cost of the Center is \$112 million. To date, the County has invested \$3 million for the design, engineering, and environmental tasks.

Contact

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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 of Monterey 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 are inadvertently penalized, because funding is reduced as homelessness is reduced. Programs established to serve people experiencing homelessness are at risk of closure if funding levels do not remain the same or increase. Therefore, the County supports performance-based funding for countywide plans that meet metrics in reducing homelessness. Funded entities should be rewarded for aggressive goals and achieving success.

Request

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.

Contact

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Monterey County Veterans Home



Establish a new Veterans Home in Monterey County to serve the areas' aged and disabled veterans' community and honor their service to our Nation.

Monterey County seeks to sponsor State legislation that permits the construction of a Veterans Home in Monterey County – preferably on or near the former Fort Ord. Establishing a Veterans Home in Monterey County will address the needs of our nation's heroes living in California by significantly reducing wait times, providing close proximity to veteran health care and several other veteran services, and reducing the risk of veterans' homelessness. 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).

The 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 the State Department of Veterans Affairs 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 VA.



✦ 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 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's Veteran Population

California has the largest Veteran population in the United States – with over 1.6 million Veterans. Monterey County and its surrounding area is home to thousands of these veterans plus thousands more active and reserve military members. The Veterans population in the local area is 108,000:

- 21,000 in Monterey County
- 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

Economic Impact

California's Veterans are accessing their earned benefits, VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) Benefits, at greater levels than ever before. In 2011, 15.8% of Veterans accessed these benefits, which increased to 27.8% by 2019. Overall, these benefits total over \$8 billion annually and represent a tremendous positive economic impact on California's economy. California is losing veterans at an alarming rate – much faster than the next 2 largest veteran population states (Texas and Florida). We owe all we have to the veterans of this Nation, and it is our joint obligation to do all we can to care for those who have selflessly served for the freedoms we have today.

Benefits to Locating a Veterans Home in Monterey County

Locating a Veterans Home in Monterey County will provide an attractive geographical location with a rich Military History and current Military presence. Residents of the Veterans Home would have easy access to the Major General William H. Gourley VA-DoD Outpatient Clinic, Commissary's, Military Gyms and other Military / Veteran accessible facilities. There are a large variety of beaches, walking/bike trails and County/ State/National parks that will promote outdoor activity.

Request

Support efforts to establish a CalVet Veterans Home in Monterey County to serve the needs of our growing veterans' population and support the veteran's community's contributions to our local economy.

Contact

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Farm Bill Reauthorization and Immigration Considerations



Support reauthorization of the Farm Bill, especially an update to the definition of “rural” and funding for the USDA Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program – PL-566. Support the Farm Workforce Modernization Act and other comprehensive immigration reform legislation that addresses the County’s labor force needs and provides a path to citizenship for the nation’s undocumented immigrant population.

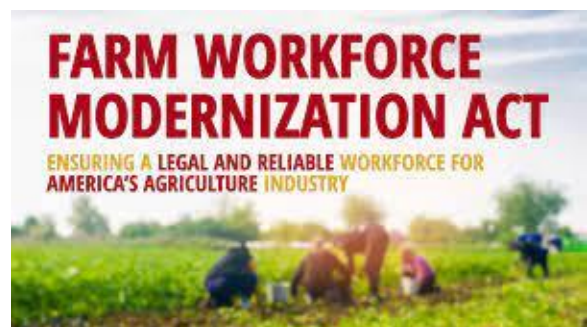
Farm Bill Reauthorization: The Farm Bill is a package of legislation passed roughly once every five years that has a tremendous impact on farming livelihoods, how food is grown, and what kinds of foods are grown. Covering programs ranging from crop insurance for farmers to healthy food access for low-income families, from beginning farmer training to support for sustainable farming practices, the farm bill sets the stage for our food and farm systems. Several components of the current Farm Bill expired in September 2023, with others set to expire on December 31, 2023. However, in November 2023, Congress extended the Farm Bill provisions through September 2024. The County supports reauthorization of the Farm Bill to support the local agricultural industry, consumers, and the natural environment.



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.

Immigration: 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.

Taken together, these policy proposals are critically important to the economic health of Monterey County.

Request

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. Support efforts to update the definition of “rural” in the new Farm Bill and to protect or expand funding for the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program – PL-566.

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.

Contact

Nicholas E. Chiulos, Chief Assistant County Administrative Officer

County Administrative Office

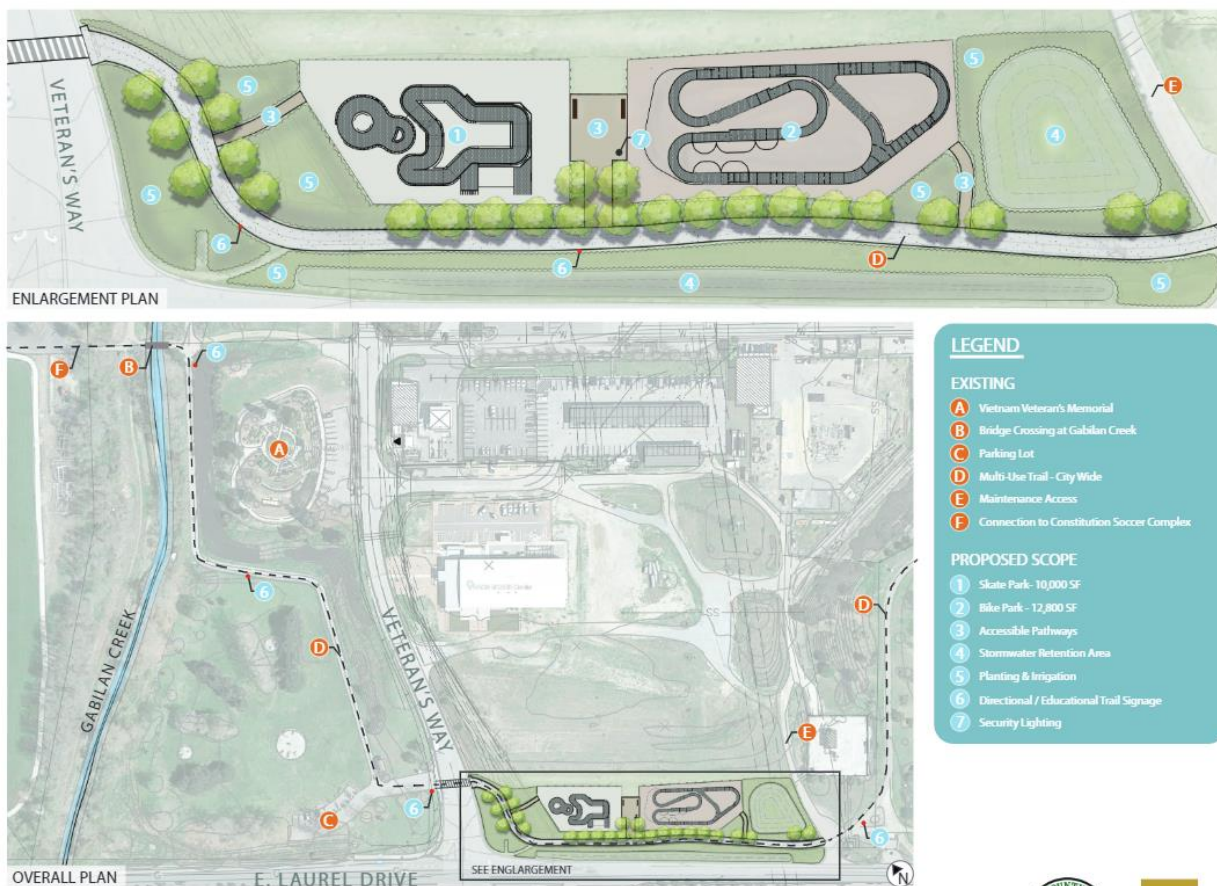
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Monterey County Bike and Skate Park



Construct a regional Bike and Skate Park. In partnership with the City of Salinas, the property includes the expansion of the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, multi-use trails, and the Monterey County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park.



MONTEREY COUNTY BIKE & SKATE PARK
855 E. LAUREL DRIVE, SALINAS
January 19, 2022



Monterey County does not have a public bike park available to the community. Creating a Bike Park and Skate Park will create a safe, accessible, and unique recreational facility that will enhance the community and draw participants from surrounding regions (Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties).

The proposed site is linked by several multi-use trails connecting the proposed project to some of the most underserved neighborhoods and several elementary schools. The two recreation features together will enhance recreation offerings for Monterey County, creating a regional draw that will complement the adjacent existing recreation features near the proposed project site.

The property is easily accessible from U.S. Interstate 101, nested within the County's most densely populated area and contiguous to the following 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:

Approximately 12,800 square feet, will include various terrain and riding conditions that will allow riders to progress their skills (beginner to advanced) and safely practice their sport – and will include perimeter fencing, lighting, and accessible pathways.

The Skate Park:

Approximately 9,470 square feet, will include quarter pipes, half pipes, and bowls along with street skating features including the following: stairs, rails, curbs, ramps, and ledges – and will include perimeter fencing, lighting, and accessible pathways.

The proposed project will include trail crossing and split rail fencing to enhance safety, environmental education interpretive panels and direction signage, native landscaping and irrigation, trash receptacles and stormwater retention.

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

Request

Funding in the amount of \$3 million is sought to construct a regional Bike and Skate Park. In partnership with the City of Salinas, the property includes the expansion of the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, multi-use trails, and the Monterey County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park.

Contact

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Old Monterey County Jail



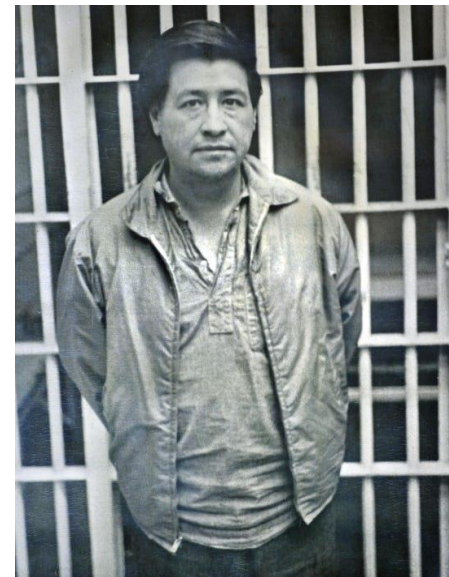
Adaptive reuse project for the Old Monterey County Jail, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 for its significance in the national farm labor movement. Estimated project cost \$17.25 million.

The Old Monterey County Jail (Old Jail) located at 158 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California, was built in 1931 in the Gothic Revival architectural style during the Art Deco period. The facility originally consisted of a multi-level administrative building with access onto Alisal Street, with the jail located behind the building connected by a stairwell. Additions were made circa 1950 around the original building. It served as the County's primary jail until a new jail was completed in 1977.



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

In December 1970, César Chávez, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, was held in the Old Monterey County Jail for 20 days for refusing to call off a lettuce boycott, thereby raising national and international attention to 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.

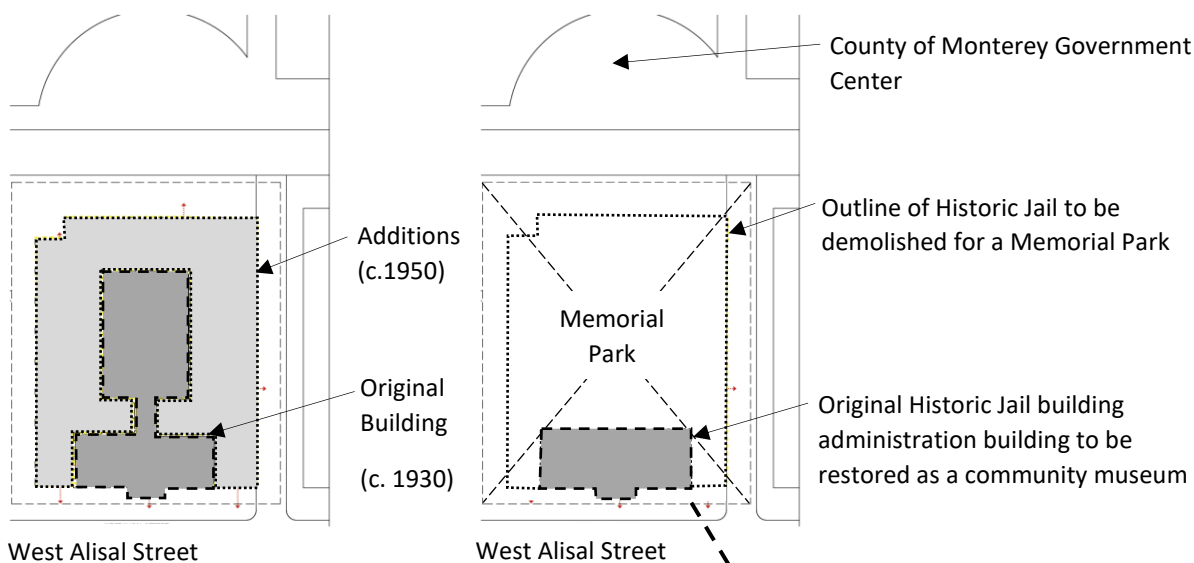


In 1998, the County began planning for redevelopment of the County Government Center which included demolition of the Old Monterey County Jail. The Jail demolition action was challenged and resulted in the County abandoning the effort. The Jail was inspected finding mold and some structural deterioration, and the County performed work to stabilize and mothball the facility and restrict access.

Around 2014, the County began efforts to assess potential reuse of the facility and site. A feasibility study evaluated nine options ranging from demolition (\$4 million) to full restoration (\$34 million). In 2016, the Board selected to demolish the facility, but in 2017 changed course to explore adaptive reuse of the facility. Requests for Proposals were issued in 2018 and 2019 which generated no responses. Later in 2019, the Board provided direction to seek State Budget funding to restore the Administration Wing and add new building; preserve the Alisal Street Façade and add a park; or preserve the Administration Wing and add a park. If funding is available, the Board would also consider full restoration for reuse.

Request

Monterey County seeks \$17.25 million to retain the Administrative Building portion of the Old Monterey County Jail. This would retain a significant piece of the historic resource that fronts Alisal Street, which could be used as a museum of the Labor movement. The area behind the Administrative Building could be a new memorial park dedicated to César Chávez that could be used for civic rallies similar to the Labor movement and is located at the west end of a promenade leading to Historic Downtown Salinas.



Existing Plan

Concept Plan



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