



**CITY OF SALINAS
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

DATE: MARCH 4, 2025

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FROM: LISA BRINTON, DIRECTOR

TITLE: SALINAS CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER QUARTERLY REPORT

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No action required; this item is for informational purposes only.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On October 22, 2024, City Council approved the annual Agreement between the City of Salinas and the Salinas Valley TBV, Inc. to operate the California Welcome Center (CWC). City Council also directed staff to continue to provide quarterly updates on CWC monthly operations and financial reporting to the Finance Committee. Staff updated the SVTVB reporting requirements and established a reporting template that was used beginning October 2024 to include more quantitative data such as daily visitor count, social media posts, and special events hosted which has been translated to an estimated number of overnight stays based on the TID revenue received. A summary of Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Quarters 1 and 2 is provided below.

DISCUSSION:

July 2024 – December 2024 Reporting

For 2 Quarters 1 and 2, the SVTVB received a total TID passthrough of \$54,490.59 and provided monthly documentation of CWC operations (Attachment 1) that includes, but is not limited to:

- a) the number of visitors to the CWC including groups (on a daily basis),
- b) an itemized summary of marketing materials (whether presented electronically or on a physical medium such as paper or canvas) which provide information regarding potential lodging options within the City of Salinas,
- c) an itemized list of additional marketing materials used to attract visitors to the CWC or the Salinas area,
- d) a summary (when available) of how many printed materials were provided to visitors, the number of visitors to SVTVB's website, and
- e) any additional information which can be collected or derived from collected data using formulas or software commonly utilized and accepted throughout the industry.

Highlights of Quarters 1 and 2 activities include:

- Ongoing collaboration with various stakeholders such as the First Mayors House, Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad Museum, and Friends of the Salinas Public Library to attract visitors to the Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) and promote overnight stays.
- Monthly Educational Tours to schools and Non-profit Organizations.
- Actively engaged on social media to promote local and surrounding events keeping the community and visitors informed and involved.
 - 1,467 visitors in Quarter 1
 - 1,309 visitors in Quarter 2
 - 7,158 website visits to the CWC website and Soul of CA website in Quarter 1
 - 6,573 website visits to the CWC website and Soul of CA website in Quarter 2

The SVTVB meets monthly with city staff, Monterey County Convention and Visitor Bureau and other stakeholders to collaborate on strategies aimed at boosting overnight stays within the City of Salinas. The following strategies have been discussed and some have been implemented:

- MCCVB reaching out to hoteliers to have an open discussion on ways to improve overnight stays within Salinas.
- Communication and sharing of event information for events within the City to be promoted by both SVTVB and MCCVB.
- Sharing current programs and projects to find ways to partner and enhance outcomes.

At the time of 2024-2025 SVTVB Agreement approval, Council directed staff to return to the Finance Committee by January 2025 with a proposed strategic plan for optimizing TID funds including a recommendation to either renew the existing agreement or to pursue another identified approach. Due to the timing of Council Committee appointments, the Finance Committee meeting did not convene in January 2025. Staff continues to analyze TID usage and will present a final recommendation prior to the expiration of the agreement in August 2025.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

This item has no impact to the General Fund. The Agreement is be funded from TID assessment collected and retained by the City between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, minus 1% to cover administrative costs.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit A 2024 Quarter 1 and 2 Combined Monthly Reports
2. Exhibit B 2024 Quarter 1 and 2 Summary Report