



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

DEPARTMENT: POLICE
PUBLIC WORKS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FROM: CARLOS ACOSTA, CHIEF OF POLICE
DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
LISA BRINTON, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

BY: CROSS DEPARTMENT COORDINATION TEAM

TITLE: HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION RESPONSE;
APPROPRIATION REQUEST TO PURCHASE AND INSTALL
LIGHTING AND CAMERAS AT IDENTIFIED LOCATIONS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the following appropriation to purchase and install lighting and cameras at identified locations in the Alisal neighborhood bounded by Roosevelt Street, Kings Street, and North Madeira Avenue between East Alisal and East Market Streets:

- 1) The appropriation of \$620,000 of Community Development Block Grant Funds to purchase and install streetlights as shown on Exhibit A.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

During Public Comment at multiple City Council meetings, residents of Las Casas de Madera and the surrounding neighborhood raised concerns regarding prostitution occurring in the area and the impact it has on safety, and quality of life. In response, a cross-department coordination team made up of representatives from Police, Public Works, Community Development, Library & Community Services, and the City Attorney's office was established to identify a multi-pronged strategy to address neighborhood concerns. Identified strategies including installation of cameras and additional lighting, permit and/or parking restrictions, and evaluation of the correlation between food truck and human trafficking and prostitution activities were presented to the City Council on May 27, 2025, and to neighborhood residents at a community meeting on September 16, 2025. This report outlines community feedback received on the identified strategies and staff recommendations for implementation.

DISCUSSION:

Prostitution enforcement in the City of Salinas has evolved over the years, shaped by legislative changes, law enforcement strategies, and community efforts aimed at addressing the complex challenges surrounding this issue. The visible presence of sex workers increased particularly affecting neighborhoods such as Roosevelt Street, Kern Street, Kings Street, and North Madeira Avenue. In response, the Salinas Police Department (SPD) has increased presence in the affected areas including working closely with local hotels, churches, and businesses to ensure that proper signage is posted regarding human trafficking and trespassing laws and conducting an operation targeting both human traffickers and individuals purchasing sex. A weeklong operation resulted in the arrest of four adult males each charged with pimping, pandering, and conspiracy. To address the broader issue, SPD's coordination efforts expanded to include the City Attorney's Office, Monterey County District Attorney's Office, city leaders, department directors, as well as state and federal representatives. Together, these stakeholders developed a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the negative impacts of prostitution on the community.

City Coordination Team Recommended Strategies

At the May 27, 2025, City Council meeting, the City coordination team (Team) presented an overview of current prostitution and human trafficking legislation, and challenges faced in addressing the issue. The Team identified an initial pilot area of focus in the neighborhood between East Alisal and East Market Street along Kern Street, Kings Street, and Roosevelt Street, and North Madeira Avenue, which could be expanded in the future to other areas citywide. The Team also presented recommended strategies to deter human trafficking and prostitution activities including:

1. Installing solar street lighting along Kern Street between East Alisal Street and Roosevelt Street.
2. Installing four (4) cameras at key intersections/angles.
3. Considering "No Parking" zones along Kern Street between East Alisal Street and East Market Street.
4. Evaluating the correlation between prostitution and food truck activity.

Neighborhood Engagement and Response to Recommended Strategies

The next step was to obtain input from the neighborhood residents to identify which strategies would be effective in addressing the issue. A community meeting was held on September 16, 2025, at Sherwood Elementary School. A Community Engagement Summary is attached to this report with a synopsis of the feedback received provided below.

Lighting. The lack of lighting is a concern throughout the surrounding neighborhood and the Alisal (East Salinas). The Alisal community identified the need to address dark spaces in public areas (streets and parks), as a priority in the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (2019), and identified the action of conducting a lighting needs assessment.

During the community meeting, residents expressed a high level of support for increased lighting and highlighted the need to improve safety and visibility. Priority areas include Kern Street, Roosevelt Street, Kings Street, North Madeira Avenue, and locations near motels, gas stations,

housing complexes, and La Paz Park. The community strongly favors installation of bright, energy-efficient LED fixtures. These upgrades are seen as essential in deterring prostitution and human trafficking and enhancing public safety across the neighborhood.

Cameras. The installation of cameras in this focus area will help reduce crime and enhance public safety. These cameras serve as a proactive deterrent to criminal activity, as individuals are less likely to engage in unlawful behavior when they know they are being monitored. In addition, surveillance footage provides critical evidence that assists law enforcement in identifying suspects and solving crimes more efficiently. The presence of cameras also reassures residents and business owners, fostering a greater sense of security and community confidence.

Community members expressed strong support for the installation of high-quality, strategically-placed security cameras to reduce crime and enhance public safety in the pilot area. Community members also noted that the proposed four cameras would not be sufficient to adequately cover the areas of high activity and emphasized the need for expanded coverage. To build community trust and awareness, residents recommend clearly announcing the presence of cameras through signage, media, and outreach. Concerns were also raised about privacy, including limiting access to surveillance footage by external entities such as Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE), and clarifying who controls and monitors the data. Ensuring transparency and safeguarding privacy rights will be critical to maintaining public trust and community support.

No Parking Zone Pilot Program and Correlation between Prostitution and Food Truck Activity. Staff recommendation was to conduct a 6-month pilot program which would establish “No Parking” zones along Kern Street between East Alisal Street and East Market Street. The pilot program would also include relocation of the food trucks to another area to determine whether there is a correlation between activities.

Residents voiced concerns about the potential negative impacts of “No Parking” zones or a residential permit program, particularly if they reduce parking access for nearby residents or businesses. Therefore, they did not support this proposed strategy. Regarding neighborhood food truck activity, residents did not see a direct correlation between food trucks and human trafficking and prostitution activity on Kern Street. Meeting participants emphasized the economic value of food trucks, viewing them as a community asset and opposing their removal. Instead of removal, residents suggested limiting roaming food trucks and exploring alternative strategies to partner with existing vendors, including distribution of resource flyers to raise awareness about human trafficking and available community services.

Recommended Next Steps

Based on the feedback received from the community, the Team recommends the following:

Lighting. Kimley Horn has prepared a lighting assessment to determine dark spots along Roosevelt Street from Kern Street to Pearl Street and prepared preliminary cost estimates based on possible wiring scenarios (wired, solar or a combination of wired and solar). Community Development Block Grant funds are the identified funding source. See Fiscal Impact and Sustainability section below regarding required Substantial Amendment and budget appropriation request. Once the funding source is secured, design documents will be completed, and the project

will be bid. Public Works staff anticipate construction completion within 60-70 working days of project initiation.

Cameras. Based on community feedback, an additional five cameras, for a total of nine cameras are proposed in the initial phase to be installed at East Alisal Street and Kern Street, Kern Street and Roosevelt Street, Roosevelt Street and Kings Street and East Market Street and Kern Street. The additional cameras will add camera coverage on North Madeira and Roosevelt, eastbound to Wood Street towards La Paz Park. Only Salinas Police Department will have access to surveillance footage for investigative purposes. AVP CIP (9246) funds are the identified funding source. See Fiscal Impact and Sustainability section below regarding budget appropriation request. Once the funding source is secured, product specification and installation locations will be provided to the installer.

No Parking Zones. Consistent with the community feedback, no further action to limit parking on any of the affected streets is recommended. Public Works staff previously received and reviewed stop sign requests for the intersection of Roosevelt Street and Kings Street. Based on traffic data collected at the time, all-way stops were not warranted based on the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines. Similarly, no further action is recommended to relocate the food trucks or to limit food truck activity in the area.

CEQA/NEPA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). Currently, CDD staff is in the process of completing a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) review for the CDBG funding allocation. CDBG funding cannot be released until NEPA review is completed.

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The formation of a City cross-departmental team and coordination with the Monterey County District Attorney's Office to develop and implement strategies to address human trafficking and prostitution in our community furthers the City Council Goal of Public Safety by increasing collaboration with partner agencies to address public safety and public health issues. In addition, the proposed purchase and installation of cameras furthers two Alisal Vibrancy Plan Health and Safety Goal 1: Ensure Streets, Parks and Public Spaces in the Alisal are Safe, and Health and Safety Policy 3.5: Strengthen and Increase Enforcement of Existing Regulations to Improve Neighborhood Appearance, Health and Safety.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Representatives from the Salinas Police Department, City Attorney's Office, Community Development, Library & Community Service, and Public Works Departments formed the cross-departmental team and contributed to this report.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Community Development Block Grant funds are identified as funding source for the proposed purchase and installation of lighting. A Substantial Amendment is required to reappropriate \$620,000 from Chinatown Improvement Activities¹, which are not shovel ready, to Alisal lighting improvements. The proposed Amendment will be presented to City Council for consideration on November 18, 2025. Should City Council approve the Amendment, it will be forwarded to the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) for approval. Funds may not be re-appropriated until HUD approval is received and NEPA review is completed. AVP CIP 9246 is identified as the funding source for the proposed purchase and installation of cameras. The cost to purchase and install nine cameras is \$94,234, including and annual recurring cost of \$840 for the first year of operation. (Exhibit B) Going forward the Police Department will include annual recurring costs (\$840) in its operational budget. On November 12, 2025, staff presented the proposed AVP budget appropriation to the AVP Implementation Committee for consideration. The Implementation Committee supported the use of AVP implementation funds to purchase and install the nine cameras.

Fund	General Ledger Number (Operating/CIP)	General Ledger Account Name	Remaining Budget Appropriation	Amount Requested
2910	30.3240-66.4000	Improvements	\$950,000	\$620,000

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Community Engagement Summary (September 16, 2025)

Exhibit A: Location of proposed lighting

Exhibit B: Location of proposed cameras

¹ As identified in the CDBG Substantial Amendment item on this Council agenda, the reappropriation of funds from Chinatown Improvement Activities will not negatively any of the work and/or projects in Chinatown. It is simply a function of timing and when projects will come online.