

**UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
OF THE
SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION
February 18, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. in the City Council Chamber Rotunda.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENT: Chairperson McKelvey Daye, Commissioners Rocamora, Mora, Gutierrez, and Purnell.

ABSENT: Commissioners Meeks and Wruck.

STAFF: Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman; Senior Planner, Son Pham-Gallardo and Administrative Aide, Brisa Salcedo.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairperson McKelvey Daye opened for public comment at 4:02 p.m.

A resident provided public comment regarding rent control stabilization and its impact on their family’s rental property. The resident referenced an email conversation dated May 9, 2023, addressed to him and three council members, inquiring about a zoning change for the property to allow for additional construction. The resident stated that the matter remains unresolved and expressed interest in speaking with a City representative to discuss the issue further.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye closed for public comment at 4:05 p.m.

CONSENT

ID#26-040 Approval of the Minutes: January 21, 2026

Upon motion by Commissioner Gutierrez, and a second by Commissioner Rocamora, the minutes of January 21, 2026, were approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson McKelvey Daye, Commissioners Rocamora, Mora, Gutierrez, and Purnell.

NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Wruck and Meeks.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

ID#26-053 Study Session: CEQA 101

A presentation was provided by Senior Planner Son Pham-Gallardo on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires government agencies to consider environmental impacts before approving plans and policies or committing to a course of action for a project. The study session focused on Current Planning's role in processing and reviewing development applications and how CEQA is applied to individual projects.

Commissioners and Chair comments included the following:

- Commissioner Rocamora inquired about the decision-making process for future building growth in the City of Salinas.
 - *Planning Manager Courtney Grossman explained that development decisions are guided by the City's General Plan, which is currently being updated.*
- Commissioner Gutierrez asked whether the CreekBridge stream bed cleaning project required approval from Current Planning under CEQA guidelines.
 - *Planning Manager Courtney Grossman explained that the stream bed cleaning is a recurring maintenance activity to maintain the area.*
- Commissioner Purnell inquired about Class 32 exemptions, General Plan designations, and whether the current General Plan includes any recommendations that would affect Class 32 exemptions. Commissioner Purnell also requested an example of a "near-miss" exemption.
 - *Senior Planner Son Pham-Gallardo explained that when planners receive a project, they must classify it and determine how CEQA applies. If a project does not qualify for an exemption, additional environmental review is required, beginning with an initial study. She further explained that under the "near-miss" principle, projects that fail to meet one exemption criterion may still qualify for the exemption. An example was provided related to Class 15301 (Existing Facilities).*

- Commissioner Purnell also asked about mitigation measures under CEQA and who determines them.
 - *Senior Planner Son Pham-Gallardo explained that CEQA includes guidelines and appendices used by planners, along with environmental studies, to assess potential impacts. If a project is found to have significant impacts, mitigation measures are identified to reduce those impacts where feasible.*
- Chairperson McKelvey Daye asked whether CEQA delays projects and how many projects have been stopped as a result.
 - *Planning Manager Courtney Grossman explained that projects are often modified in response to CEQA review and provided a local example. He noted that projects with environmental impacts may still be approved by the City Council under certain conditions.*

Public comments included the following:

- A resident commented on the environmental impact related to the homelessness and overpopulation.

Additional comments from Commissioners and Chair included the following:

- Commissioner Rocamora inquired about new housing development in the City of Salinas.
 - *Planning Manager Courtney Grossman explained that the City has been advancing specific plans to address the housing shortage. Planning Manager Courtney Grossman also noted that some projects initiated by developers have been paused due to economic and other conditions rather than City administrative actions.*
- Commissioner Purnell asked how planners remain current with constant updates to laws and regulations.
 - *Planning Manger Courtney Grossman stated that planners participate in ongoing professional training.*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

No public hearings were presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was presented.

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

No follow-up reports were presented.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Planning Manager Courtney Grossman stated that the General Plan Annual Progress Report (APR) and the Housing Element APR will likely be presented at the March 4, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson McKelvey Daye adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

LORISA MCKELVEY DAYE
Chairperson

COURTNEY GROSSMAN
Executive Secretary

All past Planning Commission meetings may also be viewed on the Salinas Channel on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/thesalinaschannel>