



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: MAY 5, 2026

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FROM: LISA BRINTON, DIRECTOR

THROUGH: ORLANDO REYES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

BY: VINCENT MONTGOMERY, PLANNING MANAGER
LAURA GAMA, ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST
AQUONTIS GARLINGTON, ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE

TITLE: RENTAL REGISTRATION AND RENT STABILIZATION
QUARTERLY UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No action required. Receive an administrative report on the Residential Rental Registration and Rent Stabilization Program implementation activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides a quarterly update to the City Council on the implementation of the Residential Rental Registration and Rent Stabilization Program for the period of January 1 through March 31, 2026. During the first quarter of 2026, the program continued to support compliance with local and state housing regulations and strengthen tenant protections through data collection and proactive education and outreach.

DISCUSSION:

During the first quarter of 2026, staff activities were organized around three primary workstreams that guided implementation of the Rental Registration and Rent Stabilization Program. First, staff concentrated on expanding property-owner enrollment and verification within the Rental Registry, conducting targeted outreach, and issuing renewal and delinquency notices. Second, staff supported compliance with the City's rent stabilization requirements, including assisting landlords and tenants with understanding allowable rent increase limits, processing petitions, and coordinating with the third-party Hearing Officer to ensure consistent application of the ordinance. Third, staff advanced public-facing communication tools, improved website content, refined multilingual materials, and collaborated with community partners to strengthen community outreach about the program obligations applicable to landlords and tenants. Operational improvements implemented this quarter include updates to the online registration portal and

streamlined workflows for processing exemption requests (Exhibit A – Tolemi Feature and Improvement List).

Registration Activity and Revenue

From January 1 to March 31, 2026, 8,376 rental units have been registered, which represents 27% of estimated rentals. Revenue collected to date totals \$754,568 of the established 2026 Program Revenue of \$1,191,465. Annual revenue was based on a 45% participation target. Table 1 below provides a summary of registered units and fees collected from January 1 to March 31, 2026.

Table 1 – Registration Summary (January 1 – March 31, 2026)

	RRO Units	RSO Units	RRO Fee*	RSO Fee**	Total Amount
January	887	1,209	\$25,723	\$135,408	\$161,131
February	723	2,746	\$20,967	\$307,552	\$328,519
March	601	2,210	\$17,429	\$247,520	\$264,949
Adjustments & Refunds			\$0	\$0	\$-30.50
Total	2,211	6,165	\$64,088	\$690,480	\$754,568[†]

*RRO: Rental Registry Ordinance, rate per unit \$29

**RSO: Rental Stabilization Ordinance, rate per unit \$112

†Pending reconciliation with the City’s Financial Management System (general ledger)

Program Implementation Challenges

Program timelines were affected by an unexpected vendor delay related to mailing the Notice of Delinquency. Although the Notice was printed on February 20, 2026, it was not mailed. This prompted Tolemi to identify a new mailing distributor and re-issue the Notice on March 27, 2026. To ensure fairness for property owners, staff extended the grace period associated with the delinquency notice; the revised deadline is now May 12, 2026.

During the first quarter of 2026, program operations were adversely impacted by several technology-related constraints within the Tolemi Slate platform. The system’s current workflow architecture prevents multiple registrations or petitions from being initiated for the same property, a safeguard intended to reduce duplication, but one that has created delays for users managing multiple petition types. Tolemi has acknowledged this limitation and is evaluating modifications for inclusion in its product roadmap. At this time, staff can initiate a petition workflow on behalf of a landlord and then transfer it to the appropriate account as a temporary workaround.

Landlord and Tenant Petitions

Petition activity in early 2026 reflects a balanced mix of landlord and tenant filings, including 1 rent increase and 7 rent reduction petitions submitted, with an additional 5 petitions pending review. Several petitions submitted in late 2025 were carried into this year due to petition completeness requirements, resulting in 3 decisions being issued during the first quarter of 2026. To date, 3 rent increase and 4 rent reduction petitions have been completed, alongside several withdrawals, and both petition types currently have one active appeal. In accordance with program requirements, the Hearing Officer has up to 60 days to issue a decision once the City Attorney

determines a petition is complete, and up to 90 days for rent increase petitions following the City Attorney’s completeness determination and payment submission when applicable. This volume demonstrates steady engagement with the City’s rent stabilization processes and continued reliance on administrative review to resolve rent related disputes. Table 2 below provides a petition summary.

Table 2 – Petition Activity

	Rent Increase (Landlord)	Rent Reduction (Tenant)
Filed	1	7
Pending	1	4
Withdrawn	1	2
Decision Issued	3	4
Appeals	1	1

Staff will continue to prioritize compliance monitoring and expand multilingual outreach to include other indigenous languages. These efforts will support evidence-based policy decisions and ensure the program remains accessible, equitable, and effective for both tenants and property owners.

Community Engagement and Outreach

During the first quarter of 2026, staff continued expanding public-facing education and support to ensure both tenants and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities under the Rental Registration and Rent Stabilization Program. In collaboration with Eden Council for Hope and Opportunity (ECHO), the City has provided a series of Fair Housing workshops across all City Council districts. These sessions were well attended by both tenants and landlords and focused on rent stabilization requirements, allowable rent increases, petition procedures, and general Fair Housing protections.

In addition to formal workshops, staff delivered ongoing education and assistance through multiple service channels, including phone consultations, in-person counter support, and email guidance. These touchpoints have become a critical component of day-to-day engagement, helping residents navigate registration requirements, understand petition options, and access multilingual materials.

Looking ahead, staff are coordinating with Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO) to expand culturally responsive outreach in other indigenous languages. Planned efforts include developing community-specific language resources, improving language accessibility, and hosting targeted informational sessions to ensure indigenous communities have equitable access to program information and support.

Throughout the quarter, staff continued proactive outreach to landlords to support successful registration and compliance, including direct email notifications, mailed reminders, social media updates, and targeted phone assistance for owners needing additional guidance. As part of broader stakeholder outreach, multiple meetings were held with landlords and property management companies to listen to their concerns regarding the petition process. Participants committed to

providing a written outline of recommended administrative and policy improvements to facilitate the petition process.

CEQA 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).

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

Review of the Residential Rental Registration and Rent Stabilization Program supports the City Council’s 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Goal of Housing.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There is no direct impact on the General Fund as the Program is covered by fees. The Program cost is intended to be neutral, with Program expenses covered by 2026 Program fee revenue collected.

Fund	General Ledger Number (Operating/CIP)	General Ledger Account Name	Remaining Budget Appropriation	Amount Requested
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint Presentation

Exhibit A – Tolemi Feature and Improvement List