



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: AUGUST 4, 2026

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

FROM: LISA MURPHY, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
SOPHIA ROME, COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER
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TITLE: 2026 TURNER SCHOLARS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Receive an administrative report on the 2026 Turner Scholars Internship Program; no action required.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Salinas was selected to participate in the 2026 Turner Scholars Internship Program through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The Internship Program focuses on providing high school and undergraduate students with professional development and experience working in the public sector. Through partnership with ICMA, the program has allowed the City to bring a structured youth intern program to Salinas to create opportunities to learn about local government administration and gain professional work experience, while supporting the City with advancement of projects and initiatives through research, outreach and engagement. This is the third year the City was selected to participate in the program.

BACKGROUND:

ICMA is a membership association that advances professional local government through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics. Former ICMA member James Kean established an endowment in Bob Turner's name to ensure that high school students each year can serve local government agencies as interns under the guidance of ICMA member mentors. The program goals include increasing local government awareness, networking and mentoring, and future success.

The City applied for the ICMA 2026 Turner Scholar Intern program based on the success and opportunities created for the youth through the program over the past two years. There were three (3) high school and two (2) college interns selected to participate in the 2026 program in Salinas.

Over eight weeks, the interns worked on:

- Review of current outreach and engagement metrics around public works and infrastructure projects to develop a strategic communications plan for these projects
- A recommendation to the City Manager on exploring a City rebranding initiative through robust community engagement and participation
- Development of a visual Owner Journey Map of the touchpoints a Salinas small business owner experiences from idea to launch to growth
- Creation of a Small Business Success Toolkit as a practical resource guide for owners navigating permitting, financing, and City processes
- Content creation to support public works messaging, 4th of July safety messaging, and other day-to-day content
- Research and data collection support for various City projects

Additionally, the Salinas interns participated in cohorts with other Turner Scholar Interns from across the country in monthly meetings and developed Public Service Announcements as part of a capstone project to encourage resident participation in community engagement efforts and education on local government services.

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). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

Economic Development

- Support and engage with new and established businesses, initiatives and districts to revive economic growth, job creation and innovative workforce training
- Strategically explore and expand economic development opportunities throughout the City

City Services

- Expand the City's volunteer programs
- Engage residents and improve communication with the community through the use of innovative solutions

Youth & Seniors

- Improve, expand and develop youth and senior facilities and programs

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Coordination in the development of intern programs was within Administration Department's Communications and Economic Development teams.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Fund	Appropriation	Appropriation Name	Total Appropriation	Amount for recommendation	FY 24-25 Operating Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Resolution)*
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A