



## City of Salinas, LCS Department

Library & Community Services • 350 Lincoln Avenue • Salinas, California 93901 • (831) 758- 7311

---

Linda Shak, MSW  
Program Officer  
Sunlight Giving  
855 El Camino Real, Building 4, Suite 200  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

April 16, 2018

Dear Linda,

In partnership with the Friends of the Salinas Public Library I am writing today to request a gift from Sunlight Giving to assist in building and equipping the new El Gabilan Library in Salinas.

Salinas, with a current population of approximately 155,000 is a very young community with approximately 30.8% of our population 17 or younger and 50% of our population 29 or younger. The number of residents served that we entered as a function of completing your application process reflects the number of current library card registrations we have in our membership database. However, it is important to note that this number is unlikely to represent our capacity to serve Salinas when our new library is complete. The current El Gabilan Library consists of 3,500 square feet to serve the residents of North Salinas. As a result, we're very aware that many children and families go unserved because of this limitation and we look forward to seeing our registrations sharply increase when the new library building containing over 21,000 square feet of service space opens in December of 2019. A presentation showing the floor plan of the new facility is attached.

While many people view East Salinas as the place of highest need, our public safety personnel and school administration is seeing North Salinas, where El Gabilan is located, as an area where need is quickly growing. Test scores for the Library's nearest elementary school, El Gabilan Elementary, represent some of the lowest in California and sadly, are representative of other nearby schools in Salinas. Only 10% of students there scored "proficient" in math. The state average is 38%. Less than 25% scored "proficient" in English Language Arts, significantly lower than the state average of 49%.

The Library provides the first exposure for early learners for many young families, as well as being a prime place where school students can enrich their learning opportunities in the out of school hours. This is critically important in Salinas for many reasons. Sadly, Salinas has a reputation in Salinas as being a "hot spot" for gang violence in California. Fortunately, though, the City and many of its partners recognize early learning and afterschool enrichment opportunities as a powerful antidote to that violence. The Library, we believe, plays and will continue to play a robust role in reversing this tragic trend. The Library also plays a significant role in assisting its users connect to services across the City, County, state, and federal government as well as nonprofits, including First 5 Monterey County, Monterey County Health Department and others. At our John Steinbeck Library we are also contracting with social workers to provide direct services for families

within the Library and hope to expand that to El Gabilan, as well. This holistic approach helps transform our neighborhoods and create brighter futures for our children.

A decade ago, the City of Salinas established a recommended square footage for the new Library of around 24,000 square feet, but budget and land constraints have reduced that recommended size, even though the city has grown since that time and will continue to grow in the near future. The architects provided a prudent option as a work around, based on community feedback. That plan is to expand the outdoor space of the new Library to capture the grounds and convert them into outdoor learning spaces. The attached presentation illustrates some of those opportunities. Unfortunately, further cutbacks to the budget have further limited some of those learning enhancements inside and outside of the Library.

**Failing to include the planned learning spaces would be a missed opportunity on a significant scale. We are seeking your support to make learning a central feature to the community's and Library's future by asking for a gift of \$300,000 to be paid over the course of three years.**

We have included operating budgets for the Friends of the Salinas Public Library since they will be our partner in this capital campaign and will be the receiver of funding requests. In the past few years, their budget has primarily included program support for the Library. In FY 18-19, their budget will reflect the addition of the capital requests and we will be working with their Board of Directors to craft a capital campaign committee with greater representation from the community. This role is not a new one for them, since they assisted the Library in raising funds for the expansion of the Cesar Chavez Library six years ago.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

Please find, also attached to this letter, a copy of our case statement for our larger capital campaign that we will be launching next month. Don't hesitate to contact me if additional information is needed.

Sincerely yours,

Cary Ann Siegfried  
Library and Community Services Director