



**AND NEW (!) IN 2024-2025:**



# **WORKPLAN**

# **2024 -2025**

## **MCBC MISSION**

**Forging cross-sector alliances to build a vibrant and prosperous Monterey County Business Community.**

## **BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

The Monterey County Business Council (MCBC) is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit corporation comprised of professionals from business, government and education working together on countywide issues. All cities in Monterey County are members. Since its founding in 1995, the membership only organization has promoted the concept of private-public partnerships by bringing business experience and techniques to the public arena to bolster workforce and economic development. As we venture into our third decade of work, the MCBC is at the forefront of fostering and developing regional assets and collaboration in areas such as economic growth, workforce, broadband deployment, leadership development, and an inventory of assets to better help create and retain jobs and businesses in Monterey County. The MCBC serves both business and government by providing collaborative leadership, promoting sustainability and global competitiveness of existing and emerging businesses, while reflecting our strong commitment to economic vitality, the environment and quality of life.

## **APEX ACCELERATOR**

The MCBC's economic development efforts were greatly enhanced in 2012 when it created and became the host organization for the Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator. The Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator mission is to improve the economic condition of our region by assisting small and medium size businesses in applying for and obtaining local, state, and federal government contracts. The Monterey Bay APEX provides procurement technical assistance to help companies sell their products or services to the appropriate government agency by offering confidential counseling at no cost to the client. The core of the procurement assistance program is counseling and education. The Monterey Bay APEX is staffed with four local counselors experienced in government contracting and provides a wide range of services, including classes, individual counseling and easy access to bid opportunities, contract specifications, procurement histories, and other information necessary to successfully compete for government contracts. Our APEX counselors are bilingual, have backgrounds in government acquisition, small business, and all receive ongoing training to keep pace with continually evolving acquisition procedures and policies.

The Monterey Bay APEX will continue to develop partnerships with government agencies, universities, community colleges, local economic development entities, small business development centers and other business programs or local institutions providing additional contracting opportunities. It will also continue to educate area businesses on opportunities for obtaining and performing under federal, state and local contracts by providing workshops and training in collaboration with groups such as the new Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and regional chambers of commerce.

## **SUPERVISOR SPEAKER SERIES/MEMBERSHIP LUNCHESES**

We continue our Supervisor Speaker Series to bring the public sector, private industry, and non-profit organizations a better understanding of what is happening countywide--- straight from each of the Supervisors. We hold the series in each supervisorial district and give the Supervisors the forum to discuss hot topics and issues both within their district, and countywide initiatives. Additionally, we address big issues like healthcare negotiations (with Anthem and MCSIG) and Kaiser Permanente's move to Salinas and local colleges Promise program. We also give the microphone to new leaders who are handling issues within their respective industries, like Dr. Allen Radner, Interim CEO of Salinas Valley Health, Dr. Vania Quinonez, President of CSUMB and Mr. Michael Gutierrez, President of Hartnell College. Speakers this year included Sonia de la Rosa, CAO of the County of Monterey, and Sheriff Tina Nieto.

## **LEADERSHIP MONTEREY COUNTY**

In 2018, MCBC launched Leadership Monterey County. MCBC offered to take the lead to merge the two previous leadership programs into a countywide program and formulated a new 501(c)(3) organization with a board of directors comprised of board members of LMC alumni, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.

Graduates of the program are encouraged to lead in the business, government, education, and not-for-profit board positions and enhance the economic vitality of the region. This program is designed to educate future leaders of the Monterey County Economic Opportunity Pillars: Agriculture, Tourism, Education, and Research. Mitchell Friedman, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, is the facilitator. As of this year, the program has graduated 170 participants.

## **MONTEREY BAY DEFENSE ALLIANCE**

The MCBC's crucial component of our support in furtherance of efforts to prepare our region for the next possible round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). As part of such efforts, MCBC will continue to work with a regional approach by convening and providing administrative and logistical support to its meetings, which include members of the Monterey Bay Defense Alliance and faculty and staff from CSUMB, MIIS, NPS, Defense Manpower Data Center and the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Analysis Center (TRAC). In 2024-2025, MCBC plans to partner with the City of Monterey on an Economic Impact Report on the Defense industry's impact on Monterey County. Participants in the meetings are at the forefront of such efforts and the MCBC will continue to work with our region's military personnel and facilities to help ensure they remain at the forefront of such work and thereby better prepare to demonstrate that our regional military installations are vital to not only our local economy, but to national defense and security.

MCBC formed the Monterey Bay Defense Alliance with Representative Jimmy Panetta as an advocate for the group on national affairs. The Congressman laid out a series of strategies to help Monterey County retain its military installations. The group meets monthly, and Monterey Bay Defense Alliance also expanded the board to include representatives from Hospitality and Education—identifying the need to expand the efforts into other significant areas of the economy on the Monterey Peninsula. Recently, MBDA reported out with Congressman Panetta’s introduction of the Annual Regional Economic Impact Report. MBDA meetings have also featured VADM Ann Rondeau of the Naval Postgraduate School and former Commandant COL Phillip Deppert of the Defense Language Institute.

## **LOCAL BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

MCBC will continue to encourage economic development business legislation at both the local and state level. However, **MCBC does not endorse political candidates.** This past fiscal year MCBC spoke at city council meetings, authored letters of support for economic development funding for local jurisdictions. Additionally, MCBC was present for business-related issues being presented at City of Marina, City of Salinas, City of Soledad, City of King City and County Board of Supervisors meetings, as well as city planning commission meetings and strategic planning sessions for multiple jurisdictions.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS – “COMMUNITY BUILDERS” GALA**

Taking a cue from the overwhelming need for housing in Monterey County, MCBC opted to focus the Gala this year to honor the local businesses who are trailblazing in the efforts of bringing bold, innovative housing solutions in Monterey County.

There were seven awards presented at the Gala. They are listed below for your reference.

1. Agriculture – Avila Construction
2. Education – Salinas Union High School District
3. Government – City of Gonzales
4. Nonprofit – Community Human Services
5. Creative & Innovation – Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
6. Sustainable Building & Design – Rancho Cielo Youth Campus
7. Lifetime Achievement Award – Pete Scudder

The MCBC Board of Directors felt each of these organizations were champions of their respective industries and led the community in bringing forward-thinking housing options for our county.

Lastly, and certainly not to be underestimated, the pandemic hit and MCBC took a strong lead in providing free webinars to over 2,400 small and large businesses on Zoom for Monterey County business owners through 2020-2022. This was the beginning of a strong partnership with the County of Monterey, to assist with outreach to businesses in all areas of the county, and in multiple languages. This upcoming year, we are wrapping up the partnership with the County of Monterey with the one-time ARPA “Building Business Back” plan that has focused specifically on countywide business retention and pandemic recovery, and flood damage relief programs.

MCBC’s success with educational lunches and forums, Monterey Bay APEX, Leadership Monterey County, and the Monterey Bay Defense Alliance has resulted in greater awareness of our County’s incredible resources and has broadened our base of assets, collaborations, and successful entrepreneurial endeavors.

## **KEY PROGRAMS/PROJECTS - REQUEST FOR INVESTMENT**

### **I. Monterey Bay APEX ACCELERATOR**

Monterey Bay APEX Funding Request: \$100,000.00

The Monterey Bay Apex Accelerator provides free consulting to small and medium businesses in Monterey County, enabling them to apply and win government contracts in all sectors – local, state, and federal agencies. Our APEX is funded, in part, by a contract with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and a match from the MCBC and its partners. Our local Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator has had enormous success nationwide, resulting in the acquisition of 15 other counties in California for counseling assistance. Additionally, the overwhelming success of contracts awarded in Monterey County alone has encouraged our APEX in confidently increasing our Workplan from the goal in 2018-2019 (\$500,000) and 2019-2020 goal (1000% increase to \$5,000,000) to doubling our efforts in 2021-2022 and again for 2022-2023 had a \$10,000,000 goal in local contracts awarded for Monterey County businesses. In 2023-2024 we have closed \$18,732,557 in government contracts for Monterey County---resulting in 328 jobs created and 186 clients served.

The continued growth of this program is assured with the increased awareness of local businesses for contracting opportunities with state, local and federal governmental agencies.

#### **Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator Performance Measures:**

300 new jobs created and/or retained. \$20,000,000.00 in new contracts awarded for Monterey County small and medium-sized businesses. We have outperformed year after year and are committed to expanding the program.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aptac-us.org/contracting-assistance/successes/>

## **II. Central Coast Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**

Central Coast SBDC Funding Request: \$64,000.00 (BoS already approved)

The Central Coast Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free consulting to small businesses in Monterey County, enabling them to have the tools necessary to be successful. Creating a business plan, human resources issues, and access to capital are all components to a successful small business.

Monterey County Business Council participated in the competitive bid process to win the award for the SBDC and launched it on April 1, 2024. The contract is a 50/50 match with the Small Business Administration, and a match between MCBC and its partners. We were thrilled to get financial commitments secured by the County of Monterey for 2024-2025 for \$64,000 at the Board of Supervisors meeting. Additionally, 11 of 12 of the cities committed to funding close to \$70,000. The Community Foundation committed \$5,000, and Monterey Bay Economic Partnership committed \$25,000. MCBC has a personal match of \$45,000 of in-kind services and costs associated with putting on the programming.

MCBC decided to roll out the SBDC a little differently than what Cal Coastal had provided previously. MCBC put agreements in place to expand the visibility of the SBDC all over the county – to include satellite offices in the City of Soledad, and the City of Monterey, with bilingual business counselors available in all three locations, including the home office in Salinas.

Last year, the Cal Coastal SBDC assisted 839 local businesses. MCBC's goal is to exceed that number in its first full year. We have recently hired a Program Director, Roger Gilbert to launch the SBDC and hire two, full-time bilingual business counselors.

### **SBDC Performance Measures:**

Program launched on April 1, 2024. In fiscal year 2024-2025, the SBDC goal is to hire staff, establish satellite locations, and assist more than the 839 Monterey County businesses that were assisted in 2023.

### **III. Increase Small and Medium Size Business Outreach Efforts**

Funding Request: \$24,593

MCBC key objectives for 2024-2025 include the following:

- To create greater alignment among the activities of business, government, education, media, health and foundation/community-based efforts.
- To build coalitions around key community issues and foster increased public-private partnerships.
- To develop programs that support the development of jobs and business opportunities.
- To work to improve the business climate to retain and expand existing businesses and the recruitment of new businesses; to keep economic development in the forefront of municipal priorities.

In order to fulfill those objectives, MCBC will continue to provide facilitation and implementation of programming supporting the main economic drivers of Monterey County. The flexibility of industries remains a major topic, but it can be presumed the major industries continue to fall under the Monterey County Economic Opportunity Pillars: Agriculture, Tourism, Education, and Research. These efforts aid in accelerating regional development of small and medium-size businesses and the creation and retention of jobs.

Overall, MCBC will continue to execute the facilitation of the Leadership Monterey County program. MCBC will also continue to educate and engage the public, among other things, highlighting the success of our initiatives and partners through events such as our Supervisor Speaker Series, Hot Topics forums and Annual Economic Development Awards.

MCBC will also continue to advocate for the region's military missions through the Monterey Bay Defense Alliance which seeks to prepare the County for the next anticipated BRAC round.

Partners in all of these activities include, but are not limited to, the following: local Chambers of Commerce; See Monterey; Salinas United Business Association; Monterey County special districts; the Monterey County Office of Education; CSUMB; MPC, Hartnell College; El Pajaro CDC; NPS; the Workforce Development Board; California GoBIZ, Small Business Administration; trade organizations, and all cities of Monterey County.



The MCBC continues to leverage its website and growth of social media platforms and gain more followers through Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, publicizing its ongoing efforts, increasing community awareness and fostering collaboration with our County Supervisors and new and existing partners throughout the County. The County of Monterey is recognized as a sponsor on all promotional and program materials. The County is also recognized in weekly emails to over 1500 businesses and our Friday Facts, a weekly newsletter featuring articles about new and important business-related events in Monterey County.

**Performance Measures:**

MCBC will provide facilitation and implementation of programs that support County of Monterey Economic Opportunity Pillars: Agriculture, Tourism, Education, and Research, designed for growth in awareness and retention and creation of jobs – **6 programs**.

MCBC will host Economic Activities promoting business advocacy, leadership, and public engagement, designed for growth in public engagement and outreach for economic development – **10 programs**

\*\*\*

**TOTAL FUNDING FOR 2024-2025:  
0.46% of DSA FORMULA = \$188,593**  
*(request awarded in 2023-2024: \$175,000)*