



# WORKPLAN

## 2025 -2026

### 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. 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 three procurement 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 Accelerator 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 LUNCHES**

Our Supervisor Speaker Series brings 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 in our community and give the microphone to leaders at the forefront of their respective industries. Speakers this year included Bruce Taylor, CEO of Taylor Farms, and David Stivers, CEO of the Pebble Beach Company.

## **LEADERSHIP MONTEREY COUNTY**

In 2018, MCBC launched Leadership Monterey County. MCBC formulated a new 501(c)(3) organization that built upon the foundation of two previous leadership programs (Leadership Monterey Peninsula and Leadership Salinas Valley).

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. The program has graduated 200 participants.

## **MONTEREY BAY DEFENSE ALLIANCE**

To prepare our region for the next possible round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), MCBC supports 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 partnered with the City of Monterey on an Economic Impact Report on the Defense industry's impact on Monterey County. We supported a special event to release this report to the community in January, 2025.

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.

## **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 to city councils throughout Monterey County, as well as with the County Board of Supervisors.

MCBC created and leads the South County Roundtable, which is a regular meeting of the City Managers in King City, Greenfield, Gonzales and Soledad. With some of our ARPA funding from the County of Monterey, we invested in a Retail Study to help South County cities identify and capitalize upon retail opportunities in their area. We will continue to follow up on helping further the economic development of South County and have a leadership role in developing the Container Village in Soledad.

In the upcoming year, we plan to extend our partnership with the County of Monterey with the one-time ARPA “Building Business Back” plan. Specifically focused on countywide business retention and pandemic recovery, the program will conclude in 2026.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS GALA**

MCBC’s Gala honors local businesses that are at the forefront of economic development in Monterey County. The Gala Awards bring together and recognize the SBDC Business of the Year as well as the following industries: Agriculture, Education, Hospitality, Government, Nonprofit.

## **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 in Monterey County, as well as the other 13 Central Coast counties in which we provide services.

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). Goals were doubled in 2021-2022 to \$10,000,000 in local contracts awarded for Monterey County businesses and were maintained at that level for 2022-2023. In 2023-2024 we closed \$18,732,557 in government contracts for Monterey County---resulting in 328 jobs created and 186 clients served. In just the two quarters ending in December 31, 2024, we have helped bring in \$81.8 million in contracts for 21 Monterey County businesses. This represents 1319 jobs created or retained. for our APEX Accelerator is to help bring \$20M in contracts to Monterey County businesses.

### **Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator Performance Measures, 2025-26:**

\$20,000,000 in new contracts awarded for small and medium-sized Monterey County businesses and to create or retain 300 jobs.

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

Central Coast SBDC Funding Request: \$65,000.00

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's ongoing contract to operate the SBDC includes a 50% contribution by the Small Business Administration and requires a 50% match by MCBC and our partners. We were pleased to get financial commitments with the County of Monterey for 2024-2025 for \$64,000. 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 has agreements in place to expand the visibility of the SBDC all over the county – including satellite offices in the City of Soledad and the City of Monterey, with bilingual business counselors available in all locations, including the home office in Salinas.

### **SBDC Performance Measures, 2025-26:**

<b>Performance Metric</b>	<b>Goal</b>
SBDC Clients Advised (excluding training)	500
New Business Starts	30
Number of Loans / Equity	60
Unique Clients Served in Underserved Communities	435

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

Funding Request: \$25,000

MCBC key objectives for 2025-2026 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, email and social medium conduits 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; Naval Postgraduate School; the Workforce Development Board; California GoBIZ, Small Business Administration; trade organizations, and all cities of Monterey County.

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 300 contacts in our weekly e-newsletter featuring articles about new and important business-related events in Monterey County.

**Performance Measures, 2025-26:**

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**

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**TOTAL FUNDING FOR 2025-2026:  
0.46% of DSA FORMULA = \$190,000**