



County of Monterey

Item No.4

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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Receive a presentation from Monterey Bay Economic Partnership regarding California Jobs First Catalyst Grants.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Economic Development Committee:

Receive a presentation from Monterey Bay Economic Partnership regarding California Jobs First Catalyst Grants.

SUMMARY:

The California Jobs First initiative, launched by Governor Gavin Newsom in 2021 as part of a \$600 million Regional Investment Initiative (formerly the Community Economic Resilience Fund), aims to foster sustainable economic growth across the state's 13 regions by centering disadvantaged communities in the transition to a clean energy, carbon-neutral economy by 2045. It establishes regional Jobs First Collaboratives to develop inclusive economic plans that prioritize high-road development, creating good-paying, accessible jobs in climate-forward sectors while building resilience against global disruptions and inequality.

DISCUSSION:

The Catalyst Predevelopment Phase is a part of the California Jobs First program aimed at seeding investment into regional strategies and projects that drive innovation, growth, and community impact. Resources through California Jobs First are distributed throughout the Central Coast in collaboration and in consultation with Uplift Central Coast, a collaborative effort to build a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous economy across six counties: Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

Through Catalyst, Uplift has awarded \$9 million for sector-specific predevelopment activities to 36 entities that support strategic projects and initiatives in the Central Coast region. The Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) serves as the local regional coordinator for grantees that operate in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. Catalyst funds began to be distributed to grantees in June 2025 and will continue through summer 2026.

Of the 36 projects funded through Uplift, 10 of them are located in or have major operations within Monterey County. These projects are involved in a variety of strategic sectors that are important to Monterey's economic health - such as agriculture, workforce training, and drone technology - many of which also attempt to address problems through creative local solutions.

The projects funded under Catalyst include:

- Action Council of Monterey County, Inc.
- Esperanza Community Farms
- Esselen Tribe of Monterey County
- Hartnell Community College District
- Monterey Bay DART
- Mujeres en Acción
- Rancho Cielo
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- Ventures
- San Benito County Arts Council

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

Staff consulted with County Counsel.

FINANCING:

Receiving this report has no financial impact.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

The opportunity for the Economic Development Committee to receive this presentation supports the Board approved strategic plan.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan Goals:

This assists with attracting and retaining businesses that will improve the well-being of County residents.

- ☐ Well-Being and Quality of Life
- ☐ Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- ☐ Safe and Resilient Communities
- ☒ Diverse and Thriving Economy

Link to the Strategic Plan:

<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showdocument?id=139569>

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