

Index of Policies

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Page</u>
Air Quality Policy	2
Agricultural Policy	3
Business Growth & Development Policy	4
Buy Local Policy	5
Education Policy	6
Healthcare Policy	8
Housing Policy	10
Infrastructure / Public Services Policy	11
Political Action Policy	13
Redevelopment Policy	14
Redistricting Policy	15
Sustainability Policy	16
Transportation Policy	18
Tourism Promotion Policy	19
Water Policy	20
Zoning Policy	21

Air Quality Policy

Good air quality not only benefits the health of industry, business, and the community at large but also defines the quality of life.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce will, therefore, support measures that will assist in the attainment and maintenance of reasonable, achievable and scientifically sound uniform air quality standards at local, state and national levels

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce will also identify and support business opportunities that would create local sources of alternative energy that will meet air quality goals while creating new jobs and stimulating the local economy.

Agricultural Policy

Agriculture in the Salinas Valley is a key foundation industry that contributes very significantly to the economy and overall wellbeing of Monterey County.

As the Salinas Valley is the premiere vegetable production region in the state, the nation, and the world, and a growing leader in the wine industry, the promotion, protection and continued vitality of Salinas Valley agriculture must be considered to be of paramount importance.

Agriculture in the Salinas Valley is dependent upon the natural resources (air, soil, water) of the Valley for its continued success and vitality. Thus the maintenance, reliability, protection and affordability of these resources for the agricultural industry are of critical importance.

Modern agriculture as we know it in the Salinas Valley is also dependent upon the economic and regulatory environment in which it operates. The Chamber supports zoning, land use, labor, marketing, and food safety policies that are conducive to its success, longevity and growth, to wit:

- Zoning and land use policies must adequately protect the property rights of land owners, including the right to develop facilities for the processing and shipping of agricultural produce.
- Zoning policies should work to preserve agricultural lands against the intrusion of urban sprawl, restricting urban development to those areas least well suited to agriculture.
- Labor policies must protect the rights of both employers and workers in a fair and equitable manner that protects the economic viability of the industry. This includes the continued requirement that union representation elections be conducted by secret ballot voting, and the inclusion of agricultural labor under the National Labor Relations Act rather than under the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act.
- The vegetable and wine industries must be free from marketing policies that unreasonably restrict the operation of open and free market practices.
- Food safety is critical to the viability of the local agricultural industry, but policies in this area must be based on sound and proven science, efficient and effective application, and consideration of the competitive markets in which it sells its products.

Also of great importance to the Valley's agriculture is the infrastructure that moves products from field to market. The Chamber supports infrastructure improvements to facilitate efficient, safe and expeditious movement of agricultural products.

Business Growth & Development Policy

Economic development and a strong economy are vital for Salinas Valley, and therefore the Chamber will play an active, central, and promotional role in all appropriate forums to assist businesses which seek to begin or expand operations in, or relocate to Salinas Valley.

In a timely and responsive manner, the Chamber will handle all contacts received from business owners by sending information packets, making subsequent contact with business owners and, on an equitable basis, offering suggestions and referrals for assistance by Chamber members.

The Chamber will continue to provide educational opportunities for businesses to enhance their management and operational skills.

The Chamber will advocate actions by local governmental agencies which enhance the attractiveness of Salinas Valley to businesses which seek to begin or expand operations in, or relocate to, Salinas Valley in a manner which is consistent with other Chamber business policies.

Buy Local Policy

Business transactions which take place within the city limits have the greatest, longest lasting, direct economic impact on the economic vitality of that City. Local government receives reimbursement for sales tax revenue collected within its jurisdiction. A strong sales tax revenue base is essential in maintaining local services, providing employment opportunities, strengthening our local economy, and providing the ability to expand local commerce. Locally spent money is re-circulated within the community to other businesses and non-profit organizations. Furthermore, local purchases reduce transportation costs and air pollution.

For these reasons, The Salinas Valley Chamber encourages its members and government agencies to support commerce within the local area and to give priority, wherever practical, to businesses located within their city limits or the county. The Chamber supports giving qualified local vendors an opportunity to match non-local vendors prices when service and quality standards are met.

Education Policy

The success of the Salinas Valley business community and the welfare of the Salinas Valley community as a whole require that educational standards in its public schools and colleges be maintained at the highest possible levels, and that all curricula and program services be consistent with local employers' needs, as well as with student needs, interests and aspirations. Moreover, education should facilitate a student's preparation for successful participation in the local, state, and national workforce and for post secondary higher education. Education should also foster a sense of local community awareness and a desire to participate in shaping a more sustainable local social and economic environment. With these objectives in focus, the Chamber will be guided by following principles with respect to education:

1. Local educational institutions must prepare students for success in the workforce as well as for entry into post-secondary education.
2. Education must instill in students a sense of responsibility toward their families, employers, and community.
3. Education should include coverage of local history, business, politics, environment and community programs, and promote involvement in the community.
4. The focus of education should be on teaching students to think analytically, to adapt to change, and to solve real world problems. Testing should be minimized to that which is necessary to assess student learning from a particular lesson or unit, and to determine a student's final grade in a class.
5. Education is the foundation upon which the rest of a student's life is built, and thus is worthy of more instructional time than is presently required.
6. Some students will have difficulty meeting grade level standards, and thus the education system must offer effective intervention strategies to enable these students to catch up.
7. Extracurricular activities of all kinds not only contribute favorably to a student's school experience, but significantly enhance academic achievement, and thus should be supported.
8. Teachers, staff, administrators and governing board members must be held accountable for the financial stability of public schools, and for the academic performance of all students.
9. Teacher and administrator compensation must be connected fairly but objectively to the academic achievement of students.
10. Teachers should be afforded the maximum flexibility in applying their professional training and experience to their duties while maintaining adherence to state and local academic standards.
11. Students or parents (or guardians) should be held accountable for academic achievement. Students should not be promoted to higher grades or graduated until they have reached the standards set for their current grade level.

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
SVCC Business Policies

12. Parents must participate in and assume an appropriate share of the responsibility for the education of their children.
13. The community at large should be provided a means to audit school performance and accountability as to academic achievement, administrative management and financial management.
14. The business community must offer guidance to the education community in the knowledge, skills, behavior and general responsibilities it requires of its employees.
15. The business community must actively support programs, in partnerships with schools that reward students for academic achievement and improvement, and facilitate their exposure to the workplace environment.
16. Public education is an investment in the community's future and its financial support (as to both operating funding and capital funding) must be seen as much and provided to the maximum level consistent with efficiency and other priorities for the use of public funds.
17. School facilities must be technologically relevant, safe and conducive to effective and efficient teaching and learning.
18. For the effective tracking of student academic achievement, there must be developed a student records system that is universally consistent and applicable across district and state boundaries. It should include students in both private and public schools.
19. Where significant costs efficiencies, greater accountability and improved articulation between grade levels can be achieved, school districts should be unified.
20. Qualified candidates should be encouraged, without bias, to run for seats on school boards.

Healthcare Policy

The Chamber believes that the nation's health care system should be structured to afford the maximum access to quality health care and freedom of choice to all citizens.

The government should not become the sole provider of health care insurance, nor a competitor to private sector health care insurance providers.

The current employer-based system of health coverage should be strengthened rather than weakened by governmental involvement, by enabling such coverage to be more affordable and available, while nevertheless developing viable alternatives for individually owned health coverage and expansion of access to affordable health care for the currently insured.

Government involved should focus on maximum competition between private sector insurance carriers serving employers, while encouraging and enabling coverage for those who are currently uninsured. To enhance such competition, all laws that inhibit the purchase of insurance coverage by employers or individuals from carriers outside the purchaser's state of residence should be repealed.

Tax credits, allowing greater flexibilities under ERISA or other laws for self-insurance, insurance practices reform and liability reform can also contribute to an affordable and broadly based health care system. However, to the extent that the cost burden for improved or expanded care is increased by non-market forces, it should be borne by taxpayers generally rather than employers directly.

For the insurance industry overall, consumer value and cost containment will continue to be best achieved by vigorously competitive free market forces.

The Chamber supports the development of an electronic medical recordkeeping system that will increase the efficiency, efficacy and accuracy of medical care delivery without compromising a patient's right to privacy.

The Chamber supports changes to existing laws that enable workers changing jobs to carry their health care with them to the new job.

The Chamber supports any proposals and changes in existing laws that encourage small employers to band together to increase the size of health insurance coverage pools such that health insurance costs may be decreased.

The Chamber supports speedier government approval of new prescription medications, as well as access to foreign produced prescription medications,

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
SVCC Business Policies

whether proprietary or generic, where they meet government standards as to safety and efficacy.

The Chamber supports the inclusion in any health insurance coverage of features that provide preventive medical services and wellness programs.

Housing Policy

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce supports legislation which maintains a balanced housing inventory, programs that provide a variety of housing levels and types, affordable housing, and mixed-use development.

The Chamber supports legislation which removes barriers to developing, building and maintaining a balanced housing inventory to the extent such legislation is not inconsistent with other Chamber Business Policies, such as but not limited to the Chamber's Agricultural Policy.

The Chamber supports programs which improve: the integration of sustainable construction methods; efficiency of planning; infrastructure; environmental reviews; and that promote an environmentally sustainable community, as identified in the Chamber's sustainability policy.

Infrastructure/Public Services Policy

INFRASTRUCTURE: The Chamber acknowledges that adequate physical infrastructure supports community vitality. The Chamber advocates infrastructure programs that sustain the existing community while accommodating anticipated growth. Infrastructure includes roads, wet utilities (domestic and recycled water, storm drain, sanitary sewer, and industrial wastewater), and dry utilities (gas, electric, phone, cable television, and internet).

Infrastructure programs should include implementation measures that:

1. provide adequate levels of service to the existing community
2. anticipate and proactively support future development
3. support expansion of enterprise in the Salinas Valley
4. incorporate capacity needs/requirements for enterprise envisioned in municipalities' policy documents
5. implement timely system upgrades

Business and government must work together to create and maintain adequate infrastructure for the Salinas Valley. Both must commit necessary resources to support infrastructure needs and carefully plan for appropriate growth.

PUBLIC SERVICES: The Chamber supports programs, policies and legislation that enhance the health, safety, and welfare of Salinas Valley residents to seek alternative sources, to improve efficiencies, and realize cost savings.

Solid and Hazardous Waste: Waste disposal and treatment are the concern of everyone in the public and private sectors. Government should act decisively to extend the life of existing landfills by promoting the diversion of solid waste by recycling, reuse and reduction and other alternative diversion technologies. . Business and Government should adopt best management practices to reduce waste and to use recycled and reclaimed products. Strong emphasis should be placed on pollution prevention and source reduction while being considerate of the affect of site placement and growth of waste handling infrastructure upon the economic well-being and health of persons living in adjacent communities. .(note there are no county landfills in operation)

Police, Fire, and Emergency Services: Staffing and equipping of police and fire departments should reflect the needs of the entire community, and the hiring and training of such personnel should be aggressively pursued. Local governmental jurisdictions should encourage the provision of emergency medical services by providers who utilize modern technology and qualitative management practices, and who strive to maintain adequate service response times at competitive prices.

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
SVCC Business Policies

The Chamber encourages public safety agencies to provide, where appropriate, ongoing training to community members in the fire, crime and other hazard prevention or avoidance, and in such self-help activities as first aid, fire suppression, calling for public safety agency assistance, etc.

Public sector communications systems, and the technology associated therewith, (including intra and inter-agency systems and systems affording the public appropriate access to government agencies) bear heavily on the efficient and effective provision of administrative, police, fire and emergency medical services to the community. The Chamber supports continuing improvement of the public sector communications systems and technologies which serve these purposes.

Parks and Recreation. The Chamber acknowledges that parks and associated recreational programs are essential to the well being of Salinas Valley residents. The Chamber supports the continuous maintenance and upkeep of municipal parks, recreation facilities and open space, as well as the preservation of related recreational programs.

Political Action Policy

The Chamber will, at its discretion, take such political actions as its Board of Directors feels are prudent in the interests of its members. Such political action, as appropriate, may take any of the following forms:

- Endorse and/or certify and/or identify candidates for elective office who are deemed by the Board to represent the best interests of the business community.
- In its sole discretion, the Board may create and implement a political action committee to provide financial support to such candidates.
- Write letters to appropriate legislators, elected officials and regulatory agencies advocating the Chamber's positions.
- Seek publication of its views in news media.
- Publish its views in Chamber publications.
- Pursue public awareness of its views via the Internet.
- Appear before public bodies and gatherings to express its views.
- Take such other actions as the Board feels are appropriate to effectively make known the interests of its members.
- Publish, by whatever means it deems most effective, the voting records of elected officials on matters of concern to Chamber members.

On all political issues of interest or concern to its members which are not clearly established in written policy statements previously approved by the Board and published to its members, the Board shall institute means by which its members may debate, recommend and otherwise participate in determining the political positions it takes on behalf of its members. Such means may include but are not limited to:

- Open meetings of Chamber members.
- Surveys of Chamber members via the Internet or other vehicles.
- Referral to the Chamber's Governmental Review Council or to other standing or special Chamber committees, provided the general membership of the Chamber is invited to participate.

No person or persons shall speak or write about political positions in the name of or on behalf of the Chamber except as specifically authorized by the Board of Directors.

Redevelopment Policy

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce believes the government's role is to manage and drive the process of redevelopment with the full participation of the Chamber. Redevelopment should be a streamlined process that encourages proactive collaboration between the public and private sector.

Redevelopment within existing urban areas should take priority over the expansion of existing urban areas so as to:

- prevent or address decay in the center of urban areas and
- maintain the vitality of existing urban centers.

The productive reuse of existing urban land and space resources should take precedence over the conversion of rural land and space resources to urban use. Zoning and building code ordinances should be structured to accommodate and encourage this type of restoration.

Redistricting Policy

The Chamber supports the concept of representation by geographically compact, population-balanced districts for all governing bodies within Monterey County. Fair representation of communities of interest should be recognized in district designs, but not to the extent that districts are non-contiguous or of such dimensions as to render the representation less than fully effective. Districts should be impartially designed independently of current office holders.

Sustainability Policy

Sustainability simply means the ability to continue over time. The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce (SVCC) believes that for businesses to retain profitability and enhance further growth, they must learn to operate more efficiently with increasingly limited natural resources. As a matter of policy, the SVCC believes that there is no conflict between commercial profits and environmental health. For businesses, this offers significant economic development opportunities.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce has adopted internal practices and promotes external policies that are consistent with the development of local business, community responsibility, and ongoing environmental awareness.

The Chamber supports and assists in business development through various educational and networking opportunities with the focus on improving business efficiencies.

The responsibility of the Salinas Valley community is demonstrated through active participation in local government affairs including the support of business-friendly legislation and voicing concern for legislation that may prove detrimental to the continued viability of local business. This responsibility is integrated into support and engagement of our educational system at all levels. Lastly, the Chamber also supports organizations with similar interest and objectives.

By example, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce further protects its stakeholders by practicing all reasonable and achievable actions to define, educate, and encourage sustainability via proactive initiatives including but not limited to:

- Providing internal staff, member and volunteer programs on sustainable business practices;
- Minimizing the generation of solid waste, encouraging recycling and reuse;
- Minimizing the use of toxic chemicals;
- Minimizing energy consumption;
- Minimizing pollution;
- Using water efficiently; and
- Considering transportation alternatives.

The SVCC recognizes that adopting sustainable business practices is an evolutionary process, requiring that companies move forward in small steps while maintaining and/or improving their profitability.

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
SVCC Business Policies

The SVCC supports and encourages businesses to use sustainability principles in their planning and investment strategies, so as to increase their long-term economic viability and competitive advantage.

Transportation Policy

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce supports safe, timely and cost-effective transportation policies and projects that ensure the ability of residents and visitors to travel within the area and the ability of intrastate and interstate commerce to be conducted efficiently.

The Chamber believes that an adequate circulation system (including roads, highways, rail, bus transit, bikeways, and pedestrian paths) is essential to maintain and support the area's current and future social and economic viability. The Chamber supports regional efforts to secure a fair share of state and federal transportation funding. The Chamber will consider supporting locally generated tax revenues to implement transportation projects that benefit both residential and commercial interests.

Transportation planning and projects should reflect the importance of agriculture and tourism as the two major economic contributors to Monterey County. The Chamber encourages the exploration of new methods of expediting commercial traffic, including freight rail transportation and agricultural vanpool programs. The Chamber supports strong anti-littering and illegal dumping programs to sustain the scenic value of city and county roads and highways.

The Chamber supports transportation that balances the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders and drivers that will enhance the economic vitality of downtowns. The Chamber will encourage transportation alternatives within urban areas, such as carpooling, walking, biking and public transit systems, for business, personal and recreational travel.

Tourism Promotion Policy

The Salinas Valley has long enjoyed a productive and prosperous agricultural industry; it is now poised to participate in Monterey County's second largest industry, tourism. , With the expansion of public and private attractions and investments, along with an increased number of special events, the dynamic Salinas Valley agricultural industry can be complemented by the enhancement of tourism.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce therefore supports:

- Local legislative programs and policies which promote the development, retention and expansion of tourism in Monterey County.
- Cooperative efforts by and with other organizations to promote; enhance and increase meetings, conventions and transient tourism.
- Inclusion of the Salinas Valley's agricultural and cultural heritage in hospitality industry image, identification and promotional efforts.
- Local legislative programs and policies which promote and enhance the development or expansion of agriculture- and wine-related facilities which will strengthen complementary agricultural and tourism endeavors.

Water Policy

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce supports sound management and economically feasible actions that enhance water supply, manage storm water, conserve available water supplies, and preserve water quality within Monterey County and the Monterey Bay Area.

Governmental action should address concerns of both urban and agricultural interests and should stress coordination and cooperation between businesses, existing agencies, jurisdictions and communities. Informed public input is critical to funding and implementing successful water management. Water management decisions should be based on sound technical evaluation and encourage preservation of the environment, responsible use of water resources, and the overall economic viability of the Salinas Valley.

The Salinas Valley, its residences and its businesses, should support and participate in funding and implementing projects identified through the Basin Management Plan process. Government laws and regulations should, where it is technologically and economically feasible to do so, facilitate responsible and sustainable development and use of water from new and alternative water supply sources, such as desalination and wastewater reclamation..

Strong efforts using 'best management practices' are needed to protect the quantity and quality of existing groundwater supplies.

Business should cooperate in developing standards for water use based on historical data and the application of best management practices. The accurate determination of water use by each user is a necessary component of any water conservation program. Baseline standards should be used for business where there is no historical data. The Chamber will encourage water conservation and discourage waste. Incentives rather than penalties should be used whenever possible to encourage the use of water conservation measures and technologies.

Absent development of physical infrastructure solutions, yearly allocations, banking and water transfer credits should be considered at the local level. Recreational water use should generally have a lower priority than domestic and business uses. The Monterey County Water Resources Agency should act as an umbrella agency to coordinate, encourage and assist the conservation efforts of all local agencies.

The Chamber opposes the imposition of control over Monterey County's water resources by government agencies beyond the local county level and encourages local interests to reach agreement on the means, methods, rules and financing necessary to maintain local control.

Zoning Policy

The Chamber supports zoning policies which promote and facilitate economic development opportunities and community viability. Zoning decisions should consider the effects of policy on the development or reuse of presently unused or underdeveloped properties, and the protection of agricultural land.

The interests of property owners, businesses, and other community stakeholders should be considered in zoning decisions.