

VOL. 2 ISSUE 7

COUNTY CROSSROADS

Official Newsletter of
the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors

A View from the Dais: A Year of Progress and Purpose

CHAIR PAUL CANEPA, DISTRICT TWO

As we come to the close of 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect and to thank the people who make San Joaquin County what it is.

First, to my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors: thank you for the trust you placed in me to serve as Chair this year. It has been an honor, and the experience has given me an even deeper appreciation for the responsibility of this role and for the dedication each of you brings to the work that we do together.

To the more than 8,000 employees of San Joaquin County: every member of this Board is proud to serve not only as a representative of our residents, but of you. Each day, you improve lives by caring for the sick, supporting those in need, and helping keep our communities safe and strong. Much of your work happens out of the spotlight, but its impact is real and lasting. Thank you for your professionalism, commitment, and service. I am proud to serve alongside you.

And to our community: I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together this year, much of which is highlighted in this newsletter. At the same time, recent events, particularly the tragic shooting in Stockton, remind us that progress does not mean the work is finished. I remain fully committed to that work: to strengthening our neighborhoods, keeping our families safe, and building a future where our children can grow, work, and raise families of their own.

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, thank you for all you do to make San Joaquin County a great place to live. We wish you a blessed, safe holiday season and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

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News of Note

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- [San Joaquin General Hospital Celebrates U.S. Top Honors in Maternity Care and Patient Safety](#)
- [San Joaquin County Releases Independent Review of Emergency Shelter System](#)
- [San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services Offers Guidance on Holiday Blues and Seasonal Affective Disorder](#)
- [San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency Shares Community Support and Resources Following Mass Shooting](#)
- [San Joaquin County Registrar of Voters Certifies Results for the 2025 Special Election](#)
- [Fay Vieira Appointed as San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services Director](#)
- [San Joaquin County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk Announces Grand Opening of Lathrop Passport Office](#)
- [San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Appoints Najee Zarif as Director of Public Works](#)
- [San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Approves Funding to Expand Homeless Recovery Program](#)
- [San Joaquin County Welcomes Information Systems Division Director, Tristian Cormier](#)

Apply for your Passport in New Lathrop Office

San Joaquin County residents now have a more convenient way to apply for or renew a U.S. passport with the grand opening of the new Lathrop Passport Office. Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk Steve J. Bestolarides announced the expansion of the Recorder-County Clerk satellite office, which is now an authorized U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility offering both passport application processing and photo services.

The Lathrop Passport Office is open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and is available by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled by calling (209) 941-5051, with online scheduling coming soon.

A grand opening ceremony was held November 12, 2025, at the Lathrop office, celebrating another step forward in improving access to essential county services.



2025 Year End Wrap Up

Over the past year, the Board of Supervisors delivered measurable results across its strategic priorities, strengthening public safety, supporting a healthy community, and protecting the County's long-term stability.

- ✓ **Fiscal Responsibility:** We said responsible budgeting matters.
 - Adopted a balanced budget for the 11th straight year without using reserves
 - Set aside contingency funds and reduced long-term retirement liabilities
- ✓ **Public Safety & Justice:** We said safety and accountability matter.
 - Reduced fentanyl-related deaths by 25 percent through enforcement and education
 - Expanded Sheriff's task forces targeting organized crime and narcotics
 - Advanced modern justice facilities, with new detention and morgue facilities
- ✓ **Support a Healthy Community:** We said access to care matters.
 - Broke ground on the \$137 million San Joaquin Be Well Campus
 - Strengthened senior services through advanced training for County social workers
- ✓ **Reduce Unsheltered Homelessness:** We said outreach and results matter.
 - Funded 339 shelter beds and enhanced services for higher-needs individuals
 - SJ CARES made 4,400+ contacts, engaged 770 people, and helped 85 transition off the streets
- ✓ **Economic Development:** We said jobs and opportunity matter.
 - \$3.2 billion in agricultural production with exports to 90 countries
 - Continued growth at the Stockton Metropolitan Airport and Port of Stockton
 - Workforce and small business programs served 48,000+ job seekers
- ✓ **Infrastructure, Water & Sustainability:** We said protecting local resources matters.
 - Repaired critical infrastructure and storm systems countywide
 - Advanced groundwater sustainability planning through 2040
 - Opposed the Delta Tunnel to protect local communities, farms, and the Delta

Bottom line: We set priorities. We stayed disciplined. And we delivered results for San Joaquin County.





Accountability on Homelessness - Shelter Evaluation Completed

Earlier this month, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors received an independent review of the County's emergency shelter system, offering a clear, fact-based look at how shelters are operating and how well they are serving people in need. The evaluation examined bed capacity, facility conditions, staffing, and outcomes, with a focus on accountability and measurable progress in reducing homelessness.

Since 2021, the County has invested more than \$56 million in emergency shelter operations, construction, and upgrades. Those investments have added 339 new shelter beds, improved existing facilities, and strengthened partnerships with local service providers, with more to come in 2026.

"Our goal is to create the best possible outcomes for people experiencing homelessness, treating everyone with dignity and respect, while also ensuring our neighborhoods are safe and clean," said Board Chair Paul Canepa.

The review highlights growing demand for shelter, increasingly complex client needs, and opportunities to expand non-congregate beds, improve staffing and training, and strengthen data and coordination. These improvements will help the County better support individuals on the path to stable housing while providing transparency to the public as this work continues. To learn more, watch the [full presentation](#) and the Board's discussion.

New Staff - Same Commitment to Excellence

San Joaquin County Board is strengthening leadership across key departments with a series of recent director appointments.

The Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Fay Vieira as Director of Behavioral Health Services, effective December 1, 2025. Vieira brings more than 17 years of experience in behavioral health, having served in several senior roles within the department and played a central role in expanding clinical programs and partnerships.

Najee Zarif was named Director of Public Works, effective March 23, 2026. A registered Professional Civil Engineer, Zarif has more than 25 years with the department and brings deep experience in infrastructure planning, operations, and leadership.

Earlier, the County also welcomed Tristian Cormier as Director of the Information Systems Division, bringing fresh leadership to countywide technology and IT services.

These strategic hires reflect the County's commitment to experienced leadership that delivers results for residents and staff alike.





175th Anniversary Update: Mountain House and a Look Back

The County's 175th year was a celebration from start to finish. We began in January in the Board Chambers, joined by representatives from all eight cities and our state and federal partners. Together, we marked this milestone and set the tone for a year of shared history and community pride.

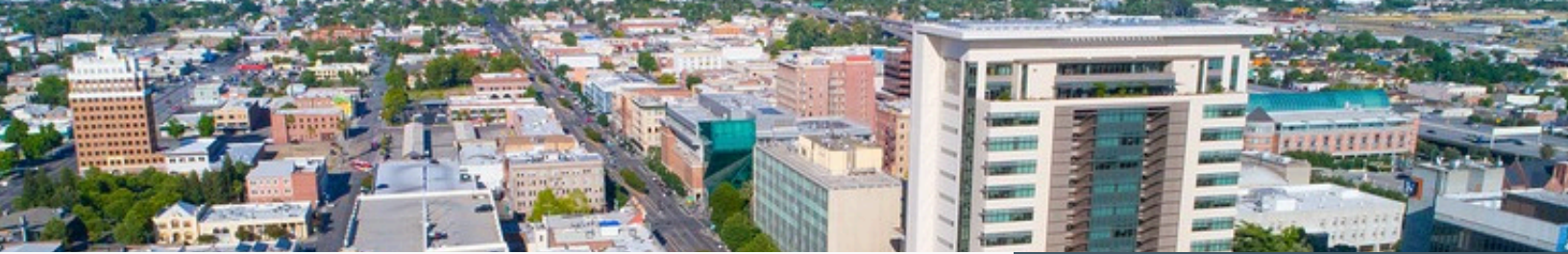
In March, the Board launched an eight-city tour, bringing the 175th celebration to every corner of San Joaquin County. We traveled in historical order from Stockton to Mountain House, and each stop reflected the character of the community it serves. From cultural traditions and civic discussions to student advocacy and neighborhood celebrations, we were inspired by the passion, involvement, and leadership we saw, especially among our young people.

We also hosted the County's 175th Anniversary Gala at the Haggin Museum, welcoming more than 400 guests to celebrate our shared history. In October, the State of the County exhibition and address at the University of the Pacific highlighted both our past and the important work County departments are doing today. Throughout the year, departments also shared presentations at Board meetings that connected our history to current service and innovation.

None of this would have been possible without the partnership of Phillip Merlo, Executive Director of the San Joaquin County Historical Museum. His leadership and storytelling brought our history to life. The Museum's 175th anniversary exhibit will remain on display through June 2026, and we encourage everyone to visit.

As San Joaquin County looks toward the next 50 years, we believe that understanding our roots is essential to growing thoughtfully and inclusively. Thank you for joining us in celebrating 175 years of growing greatness in San Joaquin County.





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