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Uplift Central Coast Awards \$9 Million to 36 Central Coast Initiatives

Catalyst Predevelopment Funds to Drive Economic Growth Across Six-County Region

San Luis Obispo County - 4 February 2025 - Uplift Central Coast is proud to announce the award of \$9 million in Catalyst Predevelopment Funding to 36 organizations committed to advancing economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and equitable growth across the Central Coast. These organizations, representing all six counties, span diverse industries and address critical needs in areas such as workforce development, aerospace, education and job training, child care and community development, and climate resilience and sustainable agriculture.

"By investing in these vital sectors, Uplift is helping to enhance quality of life for residents and drive lasting impact across the Central Coast," said Bruce Stenslie, President & CEO of the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC).

With nearly \$50 million in funding requested and only \$9 million available, Uplift received an overwhelming number of highly competitive applications. To build a strong and diverse regional portfolio, Uplift selected 36 projects out of 136 proposals —providing funding for predevelopment activities such as feasibility studies, site assessments, and early-stage planning—while ensuring projects are well-positioned for future investment from private, governmental, and philanthropic sources.

"This announcement marks a moment of celebration, as these awarded projects represent not just funding, but the potential to catalyze meaningful change in our communities, now and well into the future," said Melissa James, President & CEO of REACH.

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The Catalyst Predevelopment Phase is a crucial step in transforming Uplift’s regional strategies into actionable projects. Uplift’s goal is to see all funds successfully invested by the summer of 2026. “We look forward to working alongside grantees every step of the way, fostering collaboration, supporting implementation, and celebrating milestones as the vision for a brighter future becomes reality,” said Tahra Goraya, President & CEO of the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP).

A full list of funding recipients and additional details can be found on the [Uplift Central Coast website](https://UpliftCentralCoast.org) (UpliftCentralCoast.org).

About Uplift Central Coast Coalition:

Uplift Central Coast is a six-county partnership convened by three economic development agencies—the Economic Development Collaborative, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, and REACH—with the shared goal of creating an equitable economic resilience plan through creative and sustainable community-led efforts for residents throughout Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties.

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