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**Board Approves 2024-2025 County Budget  
*Continued Investment in Public Safety and Infrastructure***

**Stockton, CA** – Yesterday, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approved the 2024-2025 Budget, a \$2.8 billion investment in the community, representing a 1.7% increase over last year’s adopted budget. Overall, \$2.4 billion, or 84.3% of the budget is supported by departmental revenue including State and Federal funding and previous years’ savings. The remaining \$444.1 million is funded by General Purpose Revenue, such as property and sales tax. In addition, the 2024-2025 Special Districts Budget totals \$61,462,362 for water, sewer, lighting, and community service districts throughout the County.

“One of the primary roles and responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors is to establish a sound financial spending plan for the County,” commented Board Chairman Miguel Villapudua. “This budget, particularly the local resources and expenditures where the Board has full discretion, shows the priorities of this Board, which are the primary functions of local government – public safety and infrastructure. As this is my final budget year as a Supervisor, I am proud to say that the budget is once again balanced and financially responsible and prudent. We have slow and measured growth where it is needed and can be sustained. We have set aside funds to ensure that we will be able to accommodate future impacts from the State budget, and we are paying down our unfunded liabilities, like retirement, to ensure the financial solvency of our special funds as well.”

The Board of Supervisors’ focus remained on issues of law and justice throughout the day, as they approved an 11.46% increase to the subject area budget including additional staff for the Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney, Public Defender, and Correctional Health. Additional funding was authorized to expand the Sheriff’s motor team, to keep public streets and unincorporated County roads as safe as possible.

“Public safety remains the top priority of this Board,” commented Supervisor Robert Rickman. “The funds spent there not only protect our families and our communities, it also ensures a quality of life that raises our property values, speeds economic development, and improves the overall health of our community.”

The adopted budget also continues the Board’s investments in the recently created SJ CARES program, which is a Countywide multidisciplinary team approach to address homelessness in San Joaquin County. The Probation Department will supervise clients on probation who are experiencing homelessness, along with homeless citizens who are deemed high-end users of multiple County systems.

“SJCare and Neighborhood Preservation are two critical parts of the whole person care and multi-discipline approach it will take to make a real impact on the homelessness crisis in our community,” added Vice Chair Paul Canepa. “In the eighteen months that I have been on this Board, I have seen our commitment to not only providing funding, but to finding real solutions to make a difference in the lives of the residents and unsheltered people in our community. This budget continues that commitment, and with additional funding for a safe camping site, I am confident we are putting all the pieces in place that will ensure the best possible outcomes for the unsheltered in our community.”

Additional funding for the library and parks and recreation departments was also approved in yesterday’s budget hearings. The library budget was increased by \$2.5 million to fund improvements at the Escalon and Linden branches, additional staffing at the Escalon and Lathrop branches, as well as an update to the library website and increased subscriptions to digital materials. At local parks, there will also be additional services, including the expansion of the Micke Grove Zoo’s educational program and additional staff to improve appearance, maintenance, and upkeep of all County parks.

“It is important that our families have activities and safe outdoor spaces for the children in our communities,” commented Supervisor Tom Patti. “This Board continues to support advancing and improving our local parks. These new positions will help ensure that the park experience is not dependent on the wealth and privilege of the neighborhood but provide safe places for all families and children to spend active time outside. The Board continues to find ways to improve, expand, and enhance the experience for all San Joaquin County families at our local parks. Parks shouldn’t be classified by the neighborhood that they are in; they should be places of refuge and activity that anyone can enjoy.”

Additional Agriculture Biologist/Standards Inspector positions were added to the Agricultural Commissioner’s department as well, stressing the Board’s commitment to the County’s number one economic engine – agriculture. A total of four positions were added to the department to ensure that the County can protect local crops from invasive pests and conduct all necessary functions essential to keeping our thriving agriculture industry vibrant.

“Agriculture is a \$3 billion a year industry that provides countless jobs for our residents, and this Board is committed to providing our Ag Commissioner with all of the tools and staff that she needs to recruit and retain talented individuals here in our County,” commented Supervisor Steve Ding. “In addition to the positions added today, I look forward to having more conversations about retention of our staff so that we can provide local growers and producers with timely and efficient services.”

The CAO submitted the 2024-2025 Proposed Budget to the Board on June 4 and provided an electronic copy on the County website for the Board and the public to review for the past two weeks. The budget is structurally balanced and provides resources for the Board’s top priorities. This balanced budget fully funds current departmental staffing levels, including increases in salaries and benefits stipulated in existing labor agreements, and augments staffing to address critical operational needs, primarily for departments in the law and justice and health services functional areas.

“The 2024-2025 Adopted Budget has been carefully designed to serve the public interest, while remaining fiscally sound, in keeping with the Board’s focus on sustainable investment in our communities,” said County Administrator Sandy Regalo. “I appreciate the hard work and collaboration of County department heads and staff to ensure our investments are sustainable and our reserves remain healthy to safeguard against economic uncertainties in the future, while prioritizing the Board’s strategic priorities.”