



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF WESTMORLAND
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026**

6:00 PM

**City Council Chambers
355 South Center Street
Westmorland, CA 92281**

Mayor's Message

This is a public meeting. You may be heard on an agenda item before the Council takes action on the item upon being recognized by the mayor. During the oral communications portion of the agenda, you may address the Council on items that do not appear on the agenda that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Council. Personal attacks on individuals, slanderous comments, or comments, which may invade an individual's privacy, are prohibited. The mayor reserves the right to limit the speaker's time. Individuals wishing accessibility accommodations at this meeting, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), may request such accommodations to aid hearing, visual, or mobility impairment by contacting City Hall at (760) 344-3411. Please note that 48 hours advance notice will be necessary to honor your request.

Brown Act AB 361:

Location: Westmorland City Hall Council Chambers 355 S Center Street
Justina Cruz - Mayor
Ray Gutierrez- Mayor Pro- Tem
Ana Beltran- Council Member
Xavier Mendez - Council Member
Judith Rivera - Council Member

Call to Order:

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation:

Roll Call:

Oral Communication-Public Comment: Now is the time for any member of the public to speak to the Council. Please step to the podium and state your name and address for the record. Three (3) minute maximum time.

Reports from Council Members Non-Action Items:

Staff Reports Non-Action Items:

Fire Department – Chief Sergio Cruz

Police Department – Chief Lynn Mara

City Manager- Laura Bryant

Public Works Director - Ramiro Barajas

Consent Agenda: Approve the Consent Agenda Items 1-2.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2026
2. Approval of City Warrant List.

Regular Business:

1. Discussion/Action: Regarding Small communities Drought Assistance grant Project 4600015451 Closeout. Joel Hamby, Streets Director
2. Discussion & Action to appoint Ana Beltran as the alternate to the Imperial County Transportation Commission for eligibility to serve on CalVans Board- Ana Beltran, Council Member
3. Discussion/Action to authorize payment to Westmorland Community Food Pantry for expenses related to city sponsored event, not to exceed the amount of \$500.00. Xavier Mendez, Council Member
4. Information Only: REAP Grant Downtown Overlay – Laura Bryant, Manager
5. Information Only: Rate Study Public Notification – Laura Bryant, Manager

Closed Session:

- Public Service Employees Job descriptions and salary scales, as well as Appointment, Employment, or evaluation (Gov't. Code §54957(b)(1)

Adjournment: Next regular scheduled meeting February 18, 2026.

Council meetings are Open to the Public
If you need further assistance, please email the City Clerk
cityclerk@cityofwestmorland.net



CITY OF WESTMORLAND

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: February 4, 2026

FROM: Laura Bryant

SUBJECT: Staff Report – Part-Time Manager

Grants Awarded

1) Public Safety Building:

Congressional Funding has been approved for \$1M and USDA Disaster Relief Grant for Public Safety Building \$2.7 M for a total of \$3,837,500.

The press release is attached for your review. I will be sending it out for publication after the meeting.

2) SCAG REAP Grant-Downtown Overlay Project

Information is provided in the agenda packet.

3) Expedited Drinking Water Grant (EDWG).

Update: I completed the Request for Bid Solicitation form, Self Certification Form, Budget Projections, Rate Study, audited financial statements and a related debt letter to the Water Board last week.

Previous Info: The Water Board approved including all of the items we requested into the EDWG grant, which will increase our grant amount significantly. Additionally, we asked that some discretionary funds be released so we could update our design and plans to include the new items in the plans. These funds were released. The Holt Group, our engineers and construction management team, are working on updating the design and specs with the updated components and we expect to be ready to bid the construction project in April. The bidding of the project has to be timed with the approval of the water rate increase being prepared by our consultants LT.

4) PHLA Grant

Update: I submitted the grant application for two years. Working with ILG Boost program we have developed the implementation plan. Once the grant is approved, we will bring more information to Council.

Previous Info: I have been working with ILG Boost representatives to prepare and submit a PHLA grant which will provide some funding to home owners who need assistance with accessibility in their home. The grant application is ready to submit and I will be working to develop the scope and guidelines for the project. We should be ready to start the program within the next six months.

5) CMAQ Sidewalk Improvements

Update: Ramiro has the lead on this project. We are meeting on Tuesday prior to the meeting with The Holt Group to get a status update.

Previous Info: The city has hired The Holt Group to prepare designs for the CMAQ sidewalk improvement project with funding through the Imperial County Transportation Commission. Ramiro is the lead on this project, but I will be helping him with tracking finances and reporting.

6) Water – Drought Relief Funding of new filter at Water Plant and pipeline installation on 7th Street - \$2.9 M

On the agenda for this meeting.

This is Mr. Hamby's project and he just received word that the final reports have been submitted and accepted. The final payment has been issued by the State and Mr. Hamby will have a final report for City Council acceptance at the next meeting.

Grants Submitted – Waiting Notification

7) AB 617 – Paving Projects -1st Street, 7th Street and City Hall Parking

Update: Ramiro and I attended the AB617 meeting last week. The committee will be visiting the proposed grant improvement sites and will award at the next meeting. There is about \$4M in funding available with over \$11M grant applications received.

Previous Info: We put together a team to work on these applications and submitted them to APCD. We received word that the applications were accepted. The AB617 committee will be meeting next week to review the applications. Ramiro and I will be at that meeting to encourage the committee to select Westmorland applications.

Finance:

8) Rate Study.

Update: On the agenda for this meeting.

Staff has been working with LT Municipal Consultants to develop our rate study. Staff is working with our consultants and our attorney to get the notifications prepared and mailed.

9) Public Safety ½ Cent Sales Tax.

Update: I received word that all 25 years of submittals are under review.

We have received a total of \$58,646 for three years. I have prepared and submitted several documents and forms required to apply for our Public Safety ½ Cent Sales Tax from 2001 through 2026.

10) Auditors and Accountants.

Update: I have been putting a lot of time and effort into getting our accounts in order for the audit. W2 reports are completed and sent to staff.

Previous Info: Staff is working with our accounting firm to get our trial balances submitted.

Other administrative items in the works.

- RDA ROPS

Update: The City's ROPS were accepted and approved by the Oversite board on 1/23/26.

- Park Design – Community Outreach

Update: We provided the QR Code in the utility bill for this month and we hope to get more results. We will report back at our next meeting.

Previous Info: I prepared a QR code to gather input from the community during the Honey Festival. The results will be shared at the meeting tomorrow.

Hours worked.

My timecard submitted on 1/26/2026 reported 62 hours worked.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Bryant

House Passes \$6 Million in Funding for Coachella Valley, Imperial County Projects

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed two spending bills that would direct more than \$6 million to California's 25th Congressional District, according to Rep. Raul Ruiz's office.

The bills, H.R. 6938 and H.R. 5371, now move to the Senate for consideration. If approved, the funding would support three projects: flood infrastructure in Cathedral City, dust reduction efforts near the Salton Sea, and a new public safety building in Westmorland.

The largest allocation—about \$4 million—would go to the Bombay Beach Project, an effort by Audubon California to restore 560 acres of wetlands at the Salton Sea while reducing airborne dust near the town of Bombay Beach. The project also includes plans for public recreation access. Cathedral City's Coachella Valley Water District would receive roughly \$1.1 million for a regional stormwater channel connecting areas north of Interstate 10 to the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel. The project aims to reduce flooding risk for homes in the area.

The City of Westmorland in Imperial County would receive about \$1.1 million to construct a combined fire and police station.

February 4, 2026

Contact: lbryant@CityOfWestmorland.net



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Westmorland Awarded \$2.73 Million USDA Grant and \$1.1 Million Congressionally Directed Community Project Funding to Establish New Emergency Operations Center for Fire and Police

WESTMORLAND, CA MThe U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service has awarded the City of Westmorland a \$2,737,500 grant under the Community Facilities Loans and Grants program. Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz just announced that the City of Westmorland was awarded an additional \$1.1 Million grant through Congressionally Directed Spending Community Project Funds.

The City will use the grant funds, totaling \$3,837,500, to remodel an existing building and construct additional facilities to establish a new Emergency Operations Center that will house the city's fire and police departments.

The current fire department building is in extreme violation of current codes and standards. Fire Department personnel are currently housed in reused FEMA trailers, which serve as both housing and office space for the volunteer fire department and standby firefighters. The Police Department is currently operating out of a 500-square-foot single room at City Hall, where officers conduct bookings, briefings, and all other police operations. There are no interview rooms, evidence lockers, or facilities for detainees.

After Tropical Storm Hilary in 2023, our fire department was damaged beyond repair. The city has an urgent need to upgrade our emergency response capabilities to protect the community from future disasters, said Westmorland Mayor Justina Ytina Cruz. This is truly a life-changing amount of funding for our small city, and we are grateful to the USDA and Congressman Ruiz for recognizing our need and selecting us for these grants.

According to Edgar O. Ortega, the grant manager for the Community Facilities Loans and Grants Program in Imperial County, USDA Rural Development chose this project because it reflects the heart of rural resilience: neighbors looking out for one another and investing in the spaces that keep everyone safe.

This project is about more than repairing a building. It's about giving Westmorland families peace of mind. A new fire station means faster response times, safer working conditions for

The firefighters, and a stronger foundation for the community to face future emergencies together, X said Ortega. By supporting Westmorland, we're helping ensure that the community has the tools it needs to protect lives, homes, and the future of this proud town. X

The recently authorized Congressionally Directed Community Project Funds from Congressman Raul RuizPor ce secured an additional \$1.1 Million that will allow the City of Westmorland to fund planned phase which will expand and improve the Police Department facilities at the new Emergency Operations Center. The Emergency Operations Center will house both the Police and Fire Departments:

- The project site will leverage an existing commercial building at 198 E. 3rd Street.
- The additional Congressional funding will ensure improvement are made so that the police department can relocate to the new facility with safe and modern amenities.
- The project will add new construction on adjacent city-owned parcels, which will serve as the Fire Department station living quarters and apparatus bays.
- The project will also add parking and sidewalks to support the new function.

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is a nonprofit organization that supports local government agencies throughout California. ILG assisted Westmorland with writing the grant, as part of its BOOST Imperial Valley technical assistance program. BOOST is a public-private partnership between ILG, the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC), and community-based organizations to foster infrastructure and community investments in Imperial Valley.

The ILG team has been phenomenal in bringing needed capacity and expertise to help the city secure and implement these grants, X said Westmorland City Manager Laura Bryant. We value their close partnership, including leading the environmental review process and conducting outreach to secure match funding. X

The City anticipates breaking ground on the project soon and will offer occasional updates to the public through reports during City Council meetings held the first and third Wednesday of every month.

About the City of Westmorland

The City of Westmorland was incorporated in 1934, and has a population of approximately 2,400 residents. Westmorland is located in the fertile Imperial Valley in Southeastern California, 12 miles south of the Salton Sea and 31 miles north of Mexicali, Mexico. It is a small residential community that sits along state Highway 86, a major highway and transportation corridor. Visit the City's website at www.cityofwestmorland.net for more information.

##

WESTMORLAND PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT



CITY OF WESTMORLAND

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: February 4, 2026

FROM: Ramiro Barajas

SUBJECT: Staff Report – Public Works Director

1) Expedited Drinking Water Grant (EDWG)

Attended monthly meeting with DDW staff (Pete Stamas and Erica Mendoza), The Holt Group (Juny Marmolejo), and Laura Bryant. Pete Stamas requested some additional documents from City Staff, which Laura provided.

2) Streets Department CMAQ Various Sidewalks Improvement Project

Will be meeting with The Holt Group staff to discuss bidding and construction management.

3) Drought Relief Funding of new filter at WTP and pipeline installation on 7th Street

This project is complete. The final payment along with the late payment to Cora Construction has been sent. Mr. Hamby will be presenting a final report for acceptance.

4) AB 617 – Paving Projects -1st Street, 7th Street and City Hall Parking

Laura and I attended the public meeting on Monday January 26th at the Youth Hall. APCD announced funding in the amount of \$3.7 million. Total amount of all projects presented was \$11 million, which means not every project will be awarded funding. The committee will be selecting projects for funding at the next meeting on February 23, 2026. Attachments of Paving Projects will be provided.

5) Public Safety Building:

Materials were purchased from Lowe's last week and delivered to the job site.

6) Water and Wastewater Departments

New valves and actuators for Filter/Clarifier #1 have arrived and are scheduled for installation within the next three weeks. A letter to the DDW has been sent requesting to place the new Filter #2 online while repairs are being performed on Filter #1. Attachment of Letter has been provided.

7) Parks Department

Youth Hall is in need of additionally interior lighting, new flooring and ceiling repairs. Laura will be seeking grant funding for possible remodel of Youth Hall Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Ramiro Barajas

5. Presentations:

A. 2026 AB 617 North-End

Meeting Calendar

(ICAPCD)

AB 617 NORTH-IMPERIAL

1ST ROUND PAVING PROJECTS

Projects & Description	Project Cost (\$)	Surface Area (sqft)	Emission Reductions (tons/year)	Cost-Effectiveness (\$/ton of PM10)	Max Grant Amount (\$)
<u>GOVERNMENT (75%)</u>					
City of Calipatria: Freeman Street Location: Calipatria, CA 92233 From Industrial Ave. & Brown Ave.	\$804,986	11,063 sqft			\$791,338.10
City of Westmorland: 1st Street Location: Westmorland, CA 92281 From D St. to the Little League Field	\$712,635	25,770 sqft			\$605,739.75
City of Westmorland: 7th Street Widening Location: Westmorland, CA 92281 From Martin Rd. to Center St.	\$1,502,074	51,685 sqft			\$1,276,762.90
City of Westmorland: City Hall Parking Lot Location: 355 South Center St., Westmorland, CA 92281	\$740,866	40,904 sqft			\$629,736

AB 617 NORTH-IMPERIAL 1ST ROUND PAVING PROJECTS

Projects & Description	Project Cost (\$)	Surface Area (sqft)	Emission Reductions (tons/year)	Cost- Effectiveness (\$/ton of PM10)	Max Grant Amount (\$)
SCHOOL (100%)					
Brawley Elementary School District: Community Learning Center Parking Lot Location: Brawley, CA 92227	\$427,745.27	14,470 sqft		\$427,745.27	
Calipatria Unified School District: Transportation Yard & Access Road Location: Calipatria, CA 92233	\$1,390,192.70	47,580 sqft		\$1,390,192.70	
Brawley Union High School District: District Warehouse Location: Brawley, CA 92227	\$484,504.88	17,250 sqft		\$484,504.88	
Brawley Union High School District: District Offices & Athletic Compound Location: Brawley, CA 92227	\$744,432.75	42,738 sqft		\$744,432.75	

AB 617 NORTH-IMPERIAL

1ST ROUND PAVING PROJECTS

Projects & Description	Project Cost (\$)	Surface Area (sqft)	Emission Reductions (tons/year)	Cost-Effectiveness (\$/ton of PM10)	Max Grant Amount (\$)
Westmorland Union Elementary School District: Little League Parking Lot Location: 200 South C St., Westmorland, CA 92281	\$987,385.10	28,831 sqft			\$987,385.10
Westmorland Union Elementary School District: North Parking Lot Location: 200 South C St., Westmorland, CA 92281	\$578,697.53	14,363 sqft			\$578,697.53
Westmorland Union Elementary School District: South Parking Lot Location: 200 South C St., Westmorland, CA 92281	\$296,117.76	8,125 sqft			\$296,117.76
Brawley Elementary School District: Barbara Worth Jr. High Parking Lot Location: Brawley, CA 92227	\$656,896.20	19,961 sqft			\$656,896.20

AB 617 North-Imperial Meeting Calendar

2026

Westmorland

Westmorland Youth Hall (210 W 2nd Street, Westmorland, CA 92281)

JANUARY						
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Calipatria

Calipatria High School Library (601 W Main Street, Calipatria, CA 92233)

FEBRUARY						
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Brawley

Ten Center Recreation Room (220 Magnolia Street, Brawley, CA 92227)

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Zoom

Visit Website for Zoom Information

AUGUST						
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NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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Meeting Legend

In-Person

Virtual

For more information: <https://www.icab617community.org/brawley-westmorland-calipatria> or 442-265-1800



CITY OF WESTMORLAND

355 South Center Street • Post Office Box 699
Westmorland, California 92281
Tel: (760) 344-3411 • Fax (760) 344-5307
info@cityofwestmorland.net
rbarajas@cityofwestmorland.net

January 28, 2026

Mr. Aaron Kent
Imperial District Engineer – Senior Water Resource Control Engineer

State Water Resources Control Board
2375 Northside Drive, Suite 100, San Diego CA 92108
Re: City of Westmorland Water Plant -1310008 Request to Place New Filter Online

Dear Mr. Kent;

The City of Westmorland respectfully requests permission to place “online” our new aluminum filter, recently constructed with Small Communities Drought Relief Grant (SCDR) 4600015451. We ask permission to place the new filter online at this time due to the need to perform maintenance on our older existing filters since this requires taking at least one (#1) of the two (#1 and #3) operating filters offline for repairs and reducing our water production capacity and redundancy.

As you may know, our older filters need maintenance. Our #1 filter is leaking potable water back into the backwash pond via a faulty valve, thus increasing production cost and water accountability. In addition, the air scour valve at this filter must be operated by hand and is not integrated with our new SCADA system. Additionally, the new SCADA system can't be fully verified until the new filter is placed into normal operation.

The city ordered the replacement valve and actuator over five months ago when the need was identified during the construction of the new filter. This was to be considered part of the SCDR project; however, the lead time was about six months and would have held up construction. The delivery of the parts will occur within two weeks and installation has been scheduled on or before February 17, 2026. The installation will require the city to take filter #1 offline during repair and equipment replacement, which will result in there being only one operable filter. This is our concern and our reason for this request.

Timing is a significant concern as well. During the month of February our demand is low; however, as our temperatures rise so does our water demand. If the new filter is not placed online, waiting to make these repairs in the hotter months puts our water supply at risk. Additionally, putting the filter online at this time will enable us to integrate the new actuator into our new SCADA system prior to peak demands.

We realize this is not the normal procedure; however, we hope you will accommodate our request so that we are able maintain a stable water supply during repairs. We are of the opinion that placing the new filter online will serve the best interests (health and regulatory) of both the City and DDW.

Should you have any questions or need additional information please contact the city at the mailing address, email address, or phone number listed above.

Respectfully,

Ramiro Barajas, Public Works Director
City of Westmorland

CC: Juny Marmolejo, The Holt Group



**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF WESTMORLAND
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026**
City Council Chambers
355 South Center Street
Westmorland, CA 92281

Mayor's Message

This is a public meeting. You may be heard on an agenda item before the Council takes action on the item upon being recognized by the mayor. During the oral communications portion of the agenda, you may address the Council on items that do not appear on the agenda that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Council. Personal attacks on individuals, slanderous comments, or comments, which may invade an individual's privacy, are prohibited. The mayor reserves the right to limit the speaker's time. Individuals wishing accessibility accommodations at this meeting, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), may request such accommodations to aid hearing, visual, or mobility impairment by contacting City Hall at (760) 344-3411. Please note that 48 hours advance notice will be necessary to honor your request.

Brown Act AB 361:

Location: Westmorland City Hall Council Chambers 355 S Center Street

Justina Cruz - Mayor

Ray Gutierrez- Mayor Pro- Tem

Ana Beltran- Council Member

Xavier Mendez - Council Member

Judith Rivera - Council Member

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Cruz

Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Cruz.

Roll Call:

Council Present

Justina Cruz, Mayor- Present

Ray Gutierrez, Mayor Pro-Tem- Present

Judith Rivera, Member - Present

Xavier Mendez, Member- Present

Anna Beltran, Member – Absent

Staff Present

Laura Bryant, Manager- Present

Ramiro Barajas, PW director - Present

Sergio Cruz, Fire Chief - Present

Anthony Lyn Mara, Police Chief- Present

Christine Pisch- City Clerk - Present

Mitchel Driskill- City Attorney - Absent

Oral Communication-Public Comment: Now is the time for any member of the public to speak to the Council. Please step to the podium and state your name and address for the record. Three (3) minute maximum time.

Reports from Council Members Non-Action Items:

Staff Reports Non-Action Items:

Fire Department – Mr. Cruz reported that he was notified that the city's Hazardous Mitigation Plan expired. The city had prepared and adopted an updated and he submitted the plan with the state for approval.

Police Department – Mr. Mara has nothing to report.

City Manager- Ms. Bryant provided a written report and updated the council about ICTC's communication, which stated that the alternate for ICTC must be a city-appointed individual. During the last meeting, Mr. Barajas was appointed as the alternate. The city council then proceeded to appoint Ms. Rivera as the new alternate for ICTC.

Public Works Director – Mr. Barajas provided the council with an update on the EDWG grant, working with The Holt Group include the additional items that will be funded by the EDWG grant, such as the addition of water ponds, a generator, and meters.

Consent Agenda: Approve the Consent Agenda Items 1-2.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2026
2. Approval of City Warrant List.

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes of December 17, 2025, and Warrant List. With a motion approved 4/0 with 1 absence.

AYES: (1) Rivera, (2) Gutierrez, Mendez, and Cruz

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 1 Beltran

Regular Business:

Closed Session: Council did not have any items to be discussed in closed session.

- Public Service Employees Job descriptions and salary scales, as well as Appointment, Employment, or evaluation (Gov't. Code §54957(b)(1).) Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to § 54956.9(b): (1 case)

The council adjourned at 7:11 pm. No Closed Session was held. Adjourned with a motion approved 4/0 with 1 absent.

Adjournment: Next regular scheduled meeting February 4, 2026.

Council meetings are Open to the Public
If you need further assistance, please email the City Clerk
cityclerk@cityofwestmorland.net



January 23, 2026

MEMO

TO: LAURA BRYANT, CITY MANAGER

FROM: JOEL HAMBY

RE: SMALL COMMUNITIES DROUGHT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROJECT 4600015451 CLOSEOUT

In 2021, the State opened a Small Communities Drought Assistance grant program with grant funds being awarded on a “first-come/first-served” basis. Council authorized staff to prepare and submit an application in the amount of \$5 million for replacing undersized, leaking water distribution piping. Unfortunately, the funding was exhausted and the City was notified no grant funding would be awarded. However, in November of 2022, a letter was received awarding the City \$2,928,150 with a \$20,000 City match amount for a total of \$2948,150 for the piping replacement project. The scope of the piping work was adjusted to fit the reduced funding.

During the process of formulating the DWR/City agreement, City staff was informed that the project description could be changed if approved by DWR management. Since one of the WesTech filter units at the water treatment plant was needing to be replaced (due to corrosion of the carbon steel body of the filter unit), a request was submitted along with supporting documentation to include replacement of the corroded filter unit in addition to the piping replacement component of the grant application. That request was approved by DWR management.

While the formulation of the DWR/City agreement was in progress, RFP's were advertised and two consultant firms were awarded contracts to do the design of the filter replacement (Dudek) and the piping replacement (BJ Engineering). An aluminum filter body unit was selected for the filter replacement since the aluminum unit has a 100-year life, as opposed to a carbon steel unit with a 20-25-year life. Since there is only one manufacturer that produces the aluminum filter unit- which is also listed on the State's/DDW's approved list- DWR allowed the procurement of the filter from the sole provider. Dudek's July, 2024 Estimate of Probable Cost of Construction for the filter replacement was \$1,935,000—but did not include the instrumentation which came in at \$100,000 making a total cost estimate of \$2,035,000 compared to the bid amount of \$1,916,900.

Since the ultimate cost of the filter replacement was not determinable until the project was let for bids, the design of the piping replacement was paused. The filter replacement project was advertised for bids in July of 2024 and was awarded to Cora Constructors in September in the amount of \$1,916,900. A Notice to Proceed was issued on October 30, 2024. The new filter unit was delivered to the City on February 3, 2025, and put in place. The work of installation and connecting/re-connecting piping and electrical conduit and wiring progressed from February through June of 2025. A Notice of Completion was filed in August since the construction work was concluded. However, the integration of the controls for the new filter unit with the City's existing SCADA/control system was not finally completed until September.

During the course of construction, there were four change orders issued (which were approved by Council in August of 2025) in a total reduction of \$51,444.84; but the City incurred additional construction costs in the amount of \$150,000 (for filter shop drawings), \$7,139.50 for catwalk adjustments, \$3,868.23 for an additional valve from AWC (filter manufacturer), and \$8,867.31 for late payments to Cora. Total cost for the new filter unit, including design and construction management, came to \$2,489,406.32.

Two tasks remain to be performed by Cora Constructors: 1) perform any adjustments to the SCADA/control systems that may be needed when DDW finally issues the new WTP Operating Permit and allows the City to put the new filter in service; 2) perform an inspection and prepare a report at the end of the one-year warranty period. Both of these tasks are to be paid for by Cora Constructors. Their bonds are to remain in place until the end of the one-year warranty period.

An inspection by Division of Drinking Water (DDW) was conducted on October 23, 2025, and no deficiencies or defects were identified. Unfortunately, although DDW had indicated earlier that a new WTP Operating Permit would be issued within four weeks following the inspection, that timeline was stretched to the end of December. DDW Imperial District Engineer did inform the DWR/SCDR project team that the filter meets DDW's requirements on December 22, 2025. This satisfied the SCDR grant requirement of obtaining a regulatory permit; but, once again, the new date of issuance of a WTP Operating permit was moved to March 31, 2025, and the District Engineer refused to allow the City to put the new filter unit in service—until he/they/DDW issue the new permit.

The design of the piping replacement project/work was finalized at the end of March 2025, with a cost of construction estimate of \$395,900. The project was advertised and bids were received on April 10, 2025. The contract was awarded to Rove Engineering in the amount of \$497,365. A Notice to Proceed was issued on May 12, 2025. No significant problems were encountered during the course of construction. Two change orders were issued and approved by Council: 1) for installation of two new fire hydrants plus some additional work for a total of \$41,802; and 2) adjustment for final quantities installed in the amount of \$22,012.10. The construction was completed within just over 60 days and the Notice of Completion was filed on July 17, 2025. No action by Council is needed other than to formally accept the project as complete as of July 17, 2025.

The total amount of piping installed was 3,067 linear feet. Approximately 2,700 linear feet of 4-inch asbestos cement water piping was replaced with new 8-inch and 6-inch PVC water main piping.

Reporting and documentation submittal requirements of the SCDR grant have been fully satisfied, a Project Completion Report was submitted and approved, and the letter requesting release of the 10% retention held by DWR in the amount of \$292,815.02 has been accepted. When the check has been received by the City, notification will need to be provided to DWR of the receipt of the funds and date received. This will finalize the closeout of the grant with the exception that an audit could be performed by DWR if they choose. Records will need to be kept for three years following the final disbursement.

Regarding the cost of the filter and piping projects to the City in excess of the grant funds is listed in the cost spreadsheet as \$149,406.32 for the filter and \$82,875.35 (\$67,000 of the piping project cost could be drawn from the HUTA account since that is the cost calculated for trench repair paving); however, those amounts are based on staff's allocation of the costs estimated for each project. Since the grant program initially was intended to replace piping, the total amount of \$232,281.67 could be attributed/assigned to the filter replacement since it benefitted the most. By comparison, a recent rehabilitation of one of the Wes-Tech filter units cost about \$120,000 in order to extend the life of that filter unit about 15 to 20 years. The new aluminum filter unit has a life expectancy of 100 years.

Suggested recommendation for Council action

Staff recommends that Council accept the project as complete (both the filter replacement and piping replacement), waive the liquidated damages for the filter project, inform Cora Constructors of the two tasks remaining for them to complete, and set the date for the one-year inspection and report based on the filing of the Notice of Completion for the filter replacement project on August 19, 2025.

`CITY OF WESTMORLAND

SCDR/DWR 4600014541 WATER FILTER REPLACEMENT AND PIPE REPLACEMENT PROJECT BUDGET/EXPENDITURES EXHIBIT JANUARY 23, 2026 FILTER PROJECT

BUDGET ITEM	FILTER BUDGET CITY EST.	DUDEK/HOLT/ CITY/ COST	AWC 100%	ARC Weld. Fabrication	CORA 100%	TOTAL FILTER COST TO DATE	BALANCE
Project Administration	\$20,000	\$20,000 (match)				\$20,000	\$0
Design Engineering Services and Permitting	\$263,300	Dudek \$234,521.14 City \$15,160				\$249,681.14	\$13,618.86
Construction Engineering/ Management	\$167,000	Dudek \$78,444.92 Holt \$72,200 City \$33,750				\$184,394.92	-\$17,394.92
Construction	\$1,889,700		\$153,868.23	\$7,139.50	\$1,874,322.53	\$2,035,330.26	-\$145,630.26
Totals	\$2,340,000	\$454,076.06	\$153,868.23	\$7,139.50	\$1,874,322.53	\$2,489,406.32	-\$149,406.32

PIPE PROJECT

BUDGET ITEM	PIPE BUDGET CITY EST.	BJ ENGR./CITY/ HOLT/COST	ROVE 100%	TOTAL PIPE COST To date	BALANCE
Project Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Design Engineering Services and Permitting	\$50,000	BJ \$49,051.25 City \$6,435	\$0	\$55,486.25	-\$5,486.25
Construction Management	\$60,000	Holt \$48,000 City \$18,485 BJ \$7,875	0	\$74,360	-\$14,360
Construction	\$498,150	\$0	\$561,179.10	\$561,179.10	-\$63,029.10
Totals	\$608,150	\$129,846.25	\$561,179.10	\$691,025.35	-\$82,875.35

SCDR Grant Budget: Des. Engr.: \$320,000 Const. Engr./Mgmt.: \$290,000 Const.: \$2,318,150 Total: \$2,948,150 (Includes 20K match)
 Project Costs: Des. Engr.: \$305,167.39 Const. Engr./Mgmt.: \$258,754.92 Const.: \$2,596,509.36 Total: \$3,180,431.67 (Includes 20K match)
Filter cost to date: \$2,489,406.32 + Pipe cost to date: \$691,025.35 = \$3,180,431.67 - \$2,948,150= \$232,281.67 over grant amount

CITY OF WESTMORLAND

SCDR/DWR 4600014541 WATER FILTER REPLACEMENT AND PIPE REPLACEMENT PROJECT BUDGET/EXPENDITURES EXHIBIT JANUARY 23, 2026 TOTAL GRANT COMPARED TO TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

BUDGET ITEM	GRANT BUDGET	PROJECT COSTS	\$ DIFFERENCE	% DIFFERENCE
Project Administration	\$20,000	\$20,000 (match)	\$0	0%
Design Engineering Services and Permitting	\$320,000	\$305,167.39	\$14,832.61	4.64% (surplus)
Construction Engineering/ Management	\$290,000	\$258,754.92	\$31,245.08	10.77% (surplus)
Construction	\$2,318,150	\$2,596,509.36	-\$278,319.36	-12.01%
Totals	\$2,948,150	\$3,180,431.67	-\$232,281.67	-7.88%

NOTES: The duration of the project was from March of 2023 through December of 2025 (almost 3 years)

1. CDBG allows 8% of a grant for City administration—which would be \$234,252;
City employee (Joel) cost for this project was \$73,830 which is 2.5% of the grant amount
2. FHWA soft costs (admin., design, const. mgmt.) are typically 25% of Const. cost—which would be \$647,332.47;
soft costs for this project were \$583,922.31 which is 22.6% of the construction cost



Delivery and placing filter unit in position February 3, 2025



Filter in place; electrical conduit from new filter unit to control room

SIGN FOR CITY OF WESTMORLAND WATER DISTRIBUTION PIPING REPLACEMENT PROJECT DWR/SCDR GRANT

#4600015451 JUNE 6, 2025



Looking north along N. Center St. from 7th Street intersection



Looking west along W. 7th St. from N. Center St. intersection



Westmorland Community Presbyterian Church

285 E. 3RD STREET • P.O. Box 668
WESTMORLAND, CA 92281
CHURCH (760) 344-0909



January 30, 2026

Laura Bryant, City Manager
City of Westmorland
355 South Center Street
Westmorland, CA 92281

Re: Request for Support for Christmas Farmers Market Children's Gifts

Dear City of Westmorland,

On behalf of the Westmorland Community Food Pantry, I am writing to respectfully request a contribution of \$500.00 from the City of Westmorland to help support our annual Christmas Farmers Market, specifically for the purchase of gifts for the children of Westmorland.

The Christmas Farmers Market is an important community event that allows us to provide food, fellowship, and holiday joy to local families. A key part of this event is ensuring that children in our community receive a gift during the holiday season. This year, a total of \$1,622.78 was spent at Walmart to purchase gifts for children attending the event.

Support from the City of Westmorland would help offset these costs and allow us to continue offering this meaningful experience to families in need. Your partnership plays a vital role in strengthening community connections and supporting the well-being of our residents, especially during the holidays.

Thank you for your continued support of community programs that serve the residents of Westmorland. Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information or documentation.

With appreciation,

Cari Augusta
Westmorland Community Food Pantry



WM Supercenter
760-351-0186 Nor:CARMEN
250 WILDCAT DR
BROWNSVILLE CA 92227
ST# 05335 OPH 001487 TE# 10 TR# 08287
ITEMS SOLD 153

TC# 7010 9883 2863 7223 6192 06



BARBIE DOLL	019473523559	10.44 X
CANDYDREAMS	084003834381	11.00 X
CHAMPKISSES	084003834380	11.00 X
TRANSFORMERS	501099631979	15.97 X
TRANSFORMERS	501099631978	15.97 X
LEGO 40747	067341939460	11.00 T
LEGO 40747	067341939460	11.00 T
ACTIVITY KIT	019435628454	5.97 X
GO FISHIN	002185300056	10.47 X
ACTIVITY KIT	019435628454	5.97 X
LEGO 40460	067341936312	14.97 X
GUT SLIME	063099690736	9.97 X
NERF N AGIL	019516624687	12.90 X
NERF N AGIL	019516624687	12.90 X
ACTIVITY KIT	019435628454	5.97 X
OS HAIR PK25	0012044065801	10.00 X
T.HWK SKTBRD	002133110818	31.45 X
T.HWK SKTBRD	002133110818	31.45 X
ACTIVITY KIT	019435628452	5.97 X
AW BST SZ6	697670203301	10.28 X
TODDLER TOY	000077250543	15.62 X
JASMINE FSHN	019473512024	10.97 X
LEGO 31140	067341937486	9.97 X
LEGO 31140	067341937486	9.97 X
LEGO 31140	067341937486	9.97 X
TROUBLE	063050987023	9.43 X
WORKOUT DOLL	019473510818	14.97 X
BELLE FSHN	019473512034	10.97 X
BRD MAKE UP	088014463827	9.97 X
POKEMONWALKT	009229896210	15.62 X
VBALL DOLL	019473510804	14.97 X
LEGO 40747	067341939460	11.00 T
TROUBLE	063050987023	9.43 X
TROUBLE	063050987023	9.43 X
TROUBLE	063050987023	9.43 X
PAW PATROL	068114703775	5.00 T
	WAS 11.52 YOU SAVED 6.52	
POKEMONWALKT	009229896210	15.62 X
AF FIRE	080604401060	15.72 X
LEGO 40725	067341939308	14.97 X
SPDNHWNALKTK	009229896209	14.88 X
NERF N AGIL	019516624687	12.00 X
NERF N AGIL	019516624687	12.00 X
HRD PURPLE	019473516361	10.44 X
SITE MERCH	697070774826	6.00 X
PAW PATROL	068114703755	5.00 T
	WAS 11.52 YOU SAVED 6.52	
AW BST SZ7	697670203300	10.28 X
AW BST SZ7	697670203300	10.28 X
LEGO CITY GR	067341938681	9.97 X
SITE MERCH	697070774825	6.00 X
AP ANM F25 2	009650617221	3.94 X
AP BNF H25 1	009650617241	3.94 X
SL SLIME	019435628267	23.10 X
PNTN HOLPK25	008087820290	15.00 X
EOS HOL STCK	084004471503	10.00 X
EOS HOL BALM	084004471500	10.00 X
SITE MERCH	697070774826	6.00 X
15 DVE CBL	007940052939	15.00 X
WB SPD BRZ	073665845453	14.94 X
WB SPD BRZ	073665845453	14.94 X
HSILK GFTSET	084105802424	10.00 X
COCO GFT PCK	082785402506	10.00 X
OLAY HOLPK25	003077221678	15.00 X
HG SKIN KIT	084306017148	10.00 X
SITE MERCH	004373610514	10.00 X
EOS HOL BALM	084004471500	10.00 X
HSILK GFTSET	084105802424	10.00 X
JMS ABC BEAD	076594072565	10.97 X
MBH SAND ART	019435629016	10.97 X
PRISM KIT	019435628453	5.97 X
PRISM KIT	019435628453	5.97 X
NAIL STUDIO	077898845421	32.44 X
SITE MERCH	084373610514	10.00 X
SITE MERCH	084373610514	10.00 X

SITE MERCH	084373610514	10.00 X
PRISM CHARM	019435632326	12.87 X
HRY GIFT SET	084031740182	15.00
PRISM CHARM	019435632326	12.87 X
HOT WHEELS	019473528307	6.17
JEWEL BRTS	019435627261	14.97
ACTIVITY KIT	019435616337	14.97
SOCCERBALLS	697670203107	15.44
Diecast CAR	019473516873	10.23 X
Diecast CAR	019473516873	10.23 X
PRISM KIT	019435628453	5.97 X
PRISM KIT	019435628453	5.97 X
HG SKIN KIT	084306017148	10.00 X
HOT WHEELS	019473528307	6.17
AP ANM F25 4	009650617223	3.94 X
HOT WHEELS	019473528307	6.17
HOT WHEELS	019473528307	6.17
Diecast CAR	019473516873	10.23 X
Diecast CAR	019473516873	10.23 X
JEWEL BRTS	019435627261	14.97
SOSH GMCONTR	084035970639	5.97 X
SORRY	063050993812	9.43 X
VOLLEYBALL	697670203285	10.28 X
SOCCERBALLS	697670203108	15.44
SLUGSHANDS	084035970636	6.37
CHZEE SQUEEZE	084035970385	5.97 X
2025 HVL SPN	087863901891	15.00
SONYHDRZX110	002724286709	12.88 X
SONYHDRZX110	002724286082	13.88 X
COCONUTFT	084003034382	11.00 X
15 DVE CBL	007940052939	15.00
CHAMPKISSES	084003834380	11.00 X
SONYHDRZX110	002724286708	12.88 X
2025 HVL DPL	087863901830	15.00
15 DVE CBL	007940052939	15.00
HRY GIFT SET	084031740182	15.00
15 DVE CBL	007940052939	15.00
CHOCOLATE	003046700054	6.18
FOOTBALL JR	697670203290	10.28 X
KNS PIZZA	068114705921	19.97
SLIME LIFE	003505156929	9.97 X
JASMINE FSHN	019473512024	10.97 X
SLIME LIFE	003505156931	9.97 X
CHOCOLATE	003046700054	6.18
CHOCOLATE	003046700054	6.18
SIMON	019516618752	9.84 X
GUT SLIME	063099690736	9.97 X
SONYHDRZX110	002724286882	13.88 X
TODDLER TOY	000077250543	15.62 X
FRANKFORDS E	004137641292	9.97 X
VOLLEYBALL	697670203286	10.28 X
LED FLIP	084039751501	19.88 X
CHOCOLATE	003046700054	6.18
FRANKFORDS E	004137641292	9.97 X
15 DMC GP	007940052043	15.00
ARCADE	019439306505	10.37 X
ARCADE	019439306505	10.37 X
ARCADE	019439306505	10.37 X
FOOTBALL JR	697670203290	10.28 X
FRANKFORDS E	004137641292	9.97 X
FRANKFORDS E	004137641292	9.97 X
CHOCOLATE	003046700054	6.18
FOOTBALL JR	697670203290	10.28 X
KNS PIZZA	068114705921	19.97 X
CHOC	003400025909	13.86 X
CHOC	003400025909	13.86 X
OLAY HOLPK25	003077221678	15.00
ORG GIFT PCK	082785402641	10.00 X
OS HOL PK25	001204406580	15.00
MAKEUP CASE	088492053217	23.12 X
FRANKFORDS E	004137641292	9.97 X
LED FLIP	084039751501	19.88 X
SUBTOTAL	1,660.94	
CKOUT BAGFEE	0000000001101K	
10 AT 1 FOR	0.10	1.00 0
SUBTOTAL	1,661.94	
DISCOUNT GIVEN		161.79
SUBTOTAL	1,500.15	
TAX 1	8.750 %	122.63
TOTAL	1,622.78	
ECA CHECK TEND		1,622.78
CHANGE DUE		0.00

When you pay by check, you authorize us to use its information to process an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or a draft drawn on your account, or to process the payment as a check. If payment is returned unpaid, you authorize collection of your payment and the Return Fee below by EFT(s) or draft(s) drawn on your account. Call 888-905-3388 with any questions. RETURN FEE AMOUNT 25.00



memo san diego

to **City of Westmorland**
from **Diana Gonzalez, Tessa Hocquet**
re **Focus Group Summary**
date **January 21, 2026**

This Project is funded and managed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) with Regional Early Action Program 2021 grant funding from the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development.

As part of the Downtown Zoning Overlay project, three focus groups were conducted with representatives from the Westmorland community. The purpose of these conversations was to gather early, targeted input to help inform the development of the Downtown Overlay Zone. As the overlay is drafted, it is important to hear directly from members of the business and development community, local partners, and property and business owners to ensure the zoning framework reflects local priorities, market realities, and community needs.

Objectives

The focus groups were designed to better understand shared goals for the Downtown Overlay Zone and to identify priorities for future Downtown development. Discussions focused on needed land uses and services, development challenges and opportunities, and how zoning and permitting regulations may support or constrain private investment. Participants were also asked to share perspectives on Downtown's desired character and design identity, as well as housing needs, receptiveness to infill housing, and the types of housing that may be viable or desirable in Downtown Westmorland.

Participant Profile

The focus groups were held via teleconference on January 14, 2026. To ensure a range of perspectives, participants included representatives from the land development community, local partners connected to the Westmorland community, and local property and business owners. A total of 20 individuals were invited, and seven participated in the focus groups. Representatives from the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Westmorland School District who were unable to attend the focus groups later shared their perspectives at the pop-up booth during the Honey Festival.

Invitees included property and business owners such as Love's, Date Shake, Town Pump Steakhouse, Avery's Honey, America's Best Value Inn Westmorland, Mallory's/El Sol Market, and local car-related businesses. The land development community included housing builders, real estate professionals, and economic development representatives familiar with development in and around Westmorland. Local partners included organizations representing business, education, faith-based institutions, business,

education, faith-based institutions, agriculture, community advocacy, youth and senior programs, and local leadership.

Below is a detailed list of invitees:

A. Property and Business Owners

1. Love's
2. Date Shake
3. Town Pump Steakhouse
4. Avery's Honey – Kenneth Ashurst
5. America's Best Value Inn Westmorland,
6. Mallory's/El Sol Market
7. Car businesses – Tony Dickerson, Dickerson/Premier Towing

B. Land Development Community

1. Raul Garcia Construction
2. A&N Quality Builders
3. Realtors: Cindy Vandiver
4. Imperial County Association of Realtors
5. Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation
6. Joel Hamby, Economic Development
7. Tom DeBose

C. Local Partners

1. Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce
2. Westmorland School District TK-8
3. Carie Agusta (Presbyterian Church)
4. St. Joseph's Catholic Church
5. Imperial County Farm Bureau
6. Comite Civico del Valle
7. COLAB
8. Senior/Youth programs
9. Tina Cruz [Mayor & 4H representative]

Focus Group Topics

Three focus groups were conducted, each tailored to a specific audience and set of perspectives.

- The Property and Business Owners focus group explored how updated zoning and design standards could better support business and property goals, challenges related to developing or improving Downtown properties, opportunities to strengthen Downtown's identity through design, and ways to make Downtown a more attractive place to own and operate a business.
- The Land Development Community focus group focused on opportunities for residential and mixed-use development Downtown, barriers to development, experiences with the City's review and permitting process, potential incentives or changes that could support Downtown housing, and the types of housing or development that best align with market demand.
- The Local Partners focus group examined how Downtown can better serve community needs, the types of uses and activities that would strengthen Downtown, the desired visual identity of Downtown Westmorland, and existing community assets that could be built upon to enhance Downtown's character and role within the community.

Key Takeaways

Across the focus group discussions, several consistent themes emerged regardless of participant type. These areas of agreement highlight shared priorities related to housing, economic vitality, community services, and the overall character of Westmorland.

- **Housing as a Foundation for Growth**
Participants consistently emphasized the need for additional housing, particularly moderately priced, single-family homes that support homeownership rather than large apartment complexes.
- **Residential Base to Support Business**
Increasing the number of people living in Westmorland was widely viewed as essential to attracting and sustaining retail, services, and long-term economic activity.
- **Streamlined and Predictable Development Process**
There was broad agreement that development should be easier and faster, with clear zoning, streamlined permitting, reduced or flexible fees where possible, and easily accessible information about incentives and allowable uses.
- **Capturing Pass-Through Traffic**
Groups noted Westmorland's significant daily traffic volumes and shared interest in better capturing spending from travelers through food, fuel, and service-oriented commercial uses.
- **Need for Everyday Services**
Participants agreed on the importance of adding basic services such as restaurants, grocery options, medical uses, social services, and government or county satellite offices to better serve residents and nearby communities.
- **Community Facilities and Social Spaces**
There was recurring support for safe places for youth, expanded senior services including cooling centers, and multipurpose facilities that can serve residents year-round.

- **Preserving Community Character**

Maintaining Westmorland's small-town feel, agricultural identity, and strong Hispanic cultural presence was viewed as a priority, with growth that builds on these qualities rather than eroding them.

- **Public Realm and Walkability Improvements**

Improvements to sidewalks, lighting, pedestrian crossings, shade, and cohesive streetscape elements were commonly identified as important for safety, comfort, and reinforcing a recognizable town identity.

Detailed Focus Group Summary

Three focus groups were conducted to gather targeted input from local partners, the land development community, and property and business owners. While participation was limited, the discussions provided detailed and thoughtful insight into community needs, development challenges, and opportunities for Downtown Westmorland.

Local Partners

Local partners emphasized that Downtown should better serve everyday community needs, particularly for youth, seniors, and residents who may have limited mobility or access to services. A major concern raised was the lack of safe, structured places for youth to spend time. Participants noted that while the school district is working toward building a gym, there remains a need for additional spaces where young people can gather safely after school and during evenings. Related to this, partners also expressed a need for a larger senior center that could function as a cooling center during the summer months and accommodate more programming.

The idea of a multipurpose community facility emerged as a recurring theme, with potential to serve youth, seniors, and broader community needs. Participants also discussed the lack of essential services within Westmorland, including the absence of a laundromat and limited access to social services. There was interest in providing satellite office space for County agencies, behavioral health services, or social services, particularly given transportation challenges. Participants noted that bus service to El Centro is limited and time-consuming, which creates barriers for residents who need to access services outside the City.

In terms of Downtown activity, local partners identified frequently visited businesses and destinations such as El Sol Market, local restaurants, Town Pump, Circle K, and the post office. These were described as key everyday anchors, though not sufficient to meet broader community needs.

Regarding visual identity and character, participants noted that recent improvements along Center Street, including decorative light poles and beehive elements, were positive and could be extended along Main Street. Safety concerns were also raised, particularly the desire for a pedestrian crossing over the highway to improve safety for students and residents. Participants emphasized the strong connection between Westmorland and agriculture, noting that many residents are farmworkers and that this identity should be reflected in future development.

Housing needs discussed by local partners focused on affordability and serving specific populations. Participants referenced examples in nearby cities where housing has been developed for farmworkers and expressed interest in similar approaches for Westmorland. There was also a recognized need for additional senior housing. At the same time, participants stressed the importance of preserving Westmorland's small-town character, Hispanic culture, and sense of community, noting that these qualities are central to the City's identity.

Land Development Community

The land development discussion focused primarily on housing feasibility, market demand, and regulatory processes. Participants noted that housing could be a strong opportunity for Westmorland, particularly given the broader regional housing shortage. While some participants did not have direct experience developing in Westmorland, there was a general perception that City-level control offers an opportunity to streamline processes more effectively than County jurisdictions.

A recurring theme was the importance of speed and predictability in the permitting process. Participants emphasized that developers are more likely to invest when timelines are short and clear, particularly given changing market conditions and interest rates. A faster path from entitlement to construction was described as a major incentive. Fee reductions or leniency were also identified as potential tools to improve feasibility.

In terms of housing type, participants strongly favored ownership housing, particularly moderately priced single-family homes. Multifamily housing and large apartment complexes were viewed skeptically, with concerns raised about long-term quality and the perception that such developments primarily benefit large investment entities rather than local residents.

Homeownership was repeatedly framed as a way to build equity and long-term stability for families. Condominiums and townhomes were generally viewed as less compatible with the Westmorland market.

Participants noted that lower land and home costs in Westmorland provide a foundation for development, but that additional effort may be needed to market the City to builders. Suggestions included proactively communicating why Westmorland is a good place to build and reaching beyond the immediate region to attract developers from outside the Imperial Valley. Design consistency was viewed as more important to residents and businesses than to developers, though participants acknowledged that a cohesive Downtown identity could be a long-term draw.

Property and Business Owners

Property and business owners emphasized Westmorland's untapped potential, particularly given the high volume of daily pass-through traffic. Participants noted that tens of thousands of vehicles travel through Westmorland each day, yet the City captures relatively little of that economic activity. Love's was frequently cited as evidence that there is demand for services oriented to travelers, including fast food and convenience-oriented commercial uses.

Business owners expressed a strong interest in making it easier to invest, expand, or redevelop properties. Maintaining a straightforward, low-cost, and predictable permitting process was described as essential. Participants stressed that the City should avoid adding regulatory barriers and instead focus on facilitating development. Improved access to clear information about allowable uses, incentives, and development processes was also identified as a need.

Several participants highlighted infrastructure and public realm improvements as important to supporting Downtown activity. These included improved sidewalks, better pedestrian access along Main Street, and potential traffic improvements to support both local and truck traffic. There was also interest in expanding services oriented to truck drivers and pass-through traffic as a way to grow the local economy.

In discussions about Downtown character and design, participants generally supported the idea of a cohesive theme but emphasized that financial feasibility would be the primary driver of change. Some noted that while design standards can help guide future development, businesses are unlikely to invest in aesthetic upgrades unless there is a clear economic benefit or incentive. Questions were raised about whether grant funding or other financial assistance could help existing businesses adapt to a desired Downtown look.

Regarding housing, property and business owners echoed concerns raised by the development community. Housing was viewed as beneficial overall, but large apartment complexes were discouraged. Single-family ownership housing was strongly preferred, with some participants noting that rising housing costs in nearby cities could make Westmorland an attractive alternative. At the same time, Downtown's main corridor was not widely viewed as the best location for housing, suggesting that residential development may be more appropriate in other areas or as a secondary component of Downtown over time.



memo san diego

to **City of Westmorland**
from **Diana Gonzalez, Tessa Hocquet**
re **Honey Festival Summary**
date **01/21/26**

This Project is funded and managed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) with Regional Early Action Program 2021 grant funding from the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Westmorland Downtown Overlay Community Engagement Event #1: Honey Festival Pop-Up

Location: Westmorland City Park

Date: January 17, 2026

As part of the Downtown Overlay Zoning project, the City of Westmorland hosted a pop-up booth at the Honey Festival to introduce the project and begin early community engagement. The Westmorland Honey Festival is an annual community festival and honey production traditions. It is organized by the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce.

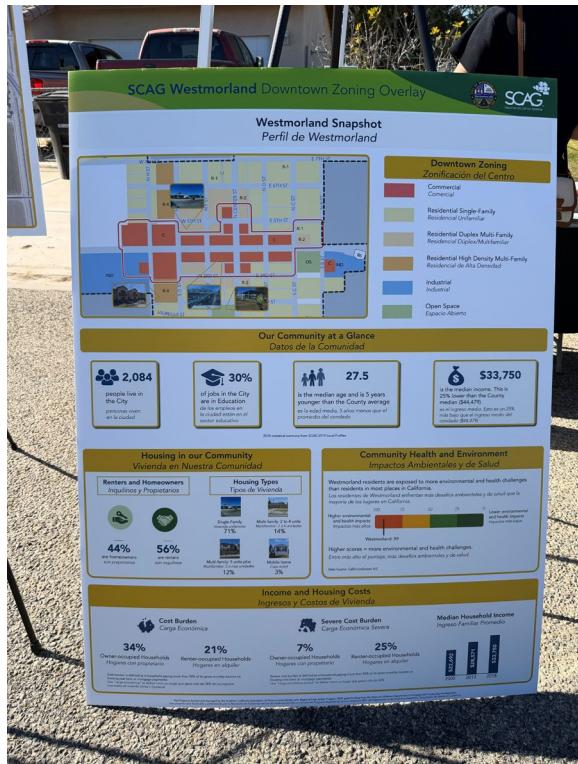
The Downtown Overlay Zoning booth was staffed by two members of the City's consultant team, MIG. The intent of the booth was to explain the purpose of the project, how it connects to broader community needs in Westmorland, and build awareness and trust by showing that community input will directly inform the work ahead.

Content/Activities

The booth featured three bilingual (English/Spanish) display boards designed to inform participants and encourage feedback. The first board, *Westmorland Today*, introduced the project and provided background information, helping participants understand the context and community goals before sharing their input.



The second board presented a snapshot of local demographics and existing conditions, including how land is currently developed and zoned. The third board focused on Downtown needs and invited participants to share their priorities for future Downtown development by “voting,” using dot stickers and sticky notes, on desired land uses and amenities.



Together, the displays and conversations with City representatives and the consultant team created a low-barrier, accessible opportunity for residents to learn about the project and share their lived experiences related to housing, mobility, and Downtown needs. The input gathered will complement technical analysis and inform next steps in the project. Larger versions of the board are included at the end of this summary.

Activity Summary

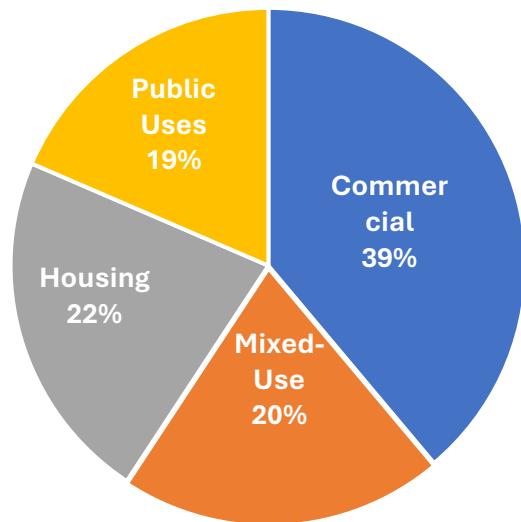
During the pop-up event, approximately 75 community members stopped by the booth and provided feedback. Most participants were Westmorland residents, while others had ties to the community through family—having grown up in the City—or general familiarity with the area. Not everyone completed the activities, but many still stopped to share comments and perspectives on what they feel Downtown needs.



Land Use

Participants indicated that a variety of uses are needed Downtown; however, commercial uses received the highest number of votes by a wide margin. In conversations, many residents emphasized the need for local, everyday commercial options. Several noted they currently travel outside the City for most services and shopping needs. A recurring theme was interest in businesses that serve drive-through traffic or offer convenience for residents, such as fast-food restaurants. Participants pointed out the absence of chain restaurants or drive-through options on Main Street. Some mentioned a desire for more sit-down places (restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream shops, etc.) to spend time with friends and family beyond only “take-out” options. Others mentioned a need for personal services uses, including medical offices and pharmacies, and recreational opportunities such as a movie theater, bowling alley, trampoline park, and water park/sprayground. Participants repeatedly noted a need for activities/places for youth. Public uses identified included a community center, senior center, library, and parks.

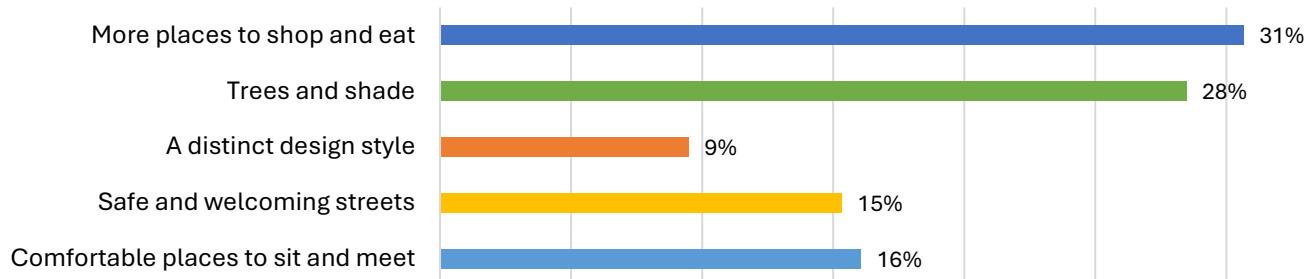
What type of uses would you like to see in Downtown?



Downtown Character

Consistent with the land use feedback and both verbal and written comments, additional places to shop and eat were identified as the top priority for Downtown. Trees and shade also received a high number of votes, reflecting concerns about extreme summer heat. Comfortable places to sit and gather, along with safe and welcoming streets, ranked next. While participants noted that a distinct design style or theme would be a positive addition, it received the fewest votes when compared to other priorities.

Vote for the features that matter most for future Downtown development.



Key Takeaways

Overall, feedback from the pop-up event suggests that the current **underdeveloped condition** of Downtown shapes how residents think about priorities. Many participants focused on very **basic, everyday needs**—such as places to buy groceries, pick up a fast meal, or simply spend time sitting and relaxing in a comfortable environment. The desire for **convenience, shade, and welcoming places** to gather reflects a Downtown that is seen less as a destination today and more as an area that first needs foundational services and amenities.

While housing was consistently identified as a major community need, Downtown was generally not viewed as the most appropriate location for new housing at this time. This appears to be influenced by the perception that other needs, particularly commercial services, dining options, and public gathering spaces, are more immediate and critical. Several commenters suggested that once Downtown is more fully developed and active, housing could become a more realistic and attractive addition in the future.

In terms of housing preferences, participants overwhelmingly expressed support for **ownership housing**. There was notable concern about multifamily housing, largely tied to negative perceptions about the potential quality or long-term condition of such development. At the same time, participants acknowledged the need for **more affordable housing options**, particularly those that are attainable without reliance on subsidized programs such as Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers.



City of Westmorland
P. O. Box 699
355 South Center Street
Westmorland, CA 92281
(760) 344-3411

Name
Address
City, State ZIP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS TO WATER AND SEWER RATES

**Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 6:00 pm
in the Council Chambers at 355 South Center St, Westmorland, CA 92281**

You are receiving this notice as property owner within the City of Westmorland (City). The City Council will hold a public hearing on April 1, 2026 to hear public input and to consider and potentially approve water and sewer (wastewater) rate changes for the next five years.

Background

The City of Westmorland provides water and sewer service to over 500 service connections including single family residences, apartments, businesses, and schools throughout the City. The City's Water and Sewer Funds are self-supported from rate revenues and do not receive tax revenues to fund their operations.

The City has been very successful in pursuing grant funding for water system improvements. Westmorland will receive over \$11 million for treatment upgrades and the installation of water meters. As part of the funding process, the City was required to conduct a rate study to ensure that it has funds available for operations and maintenance costs that are not covered by the grant. The proposed rates are based on a comprehensive cost of service study that calculates water and sewer rates over the next five years, beginning July 1, 2026. The proposed rates do not exceed the proportional cost of the service attributable to each parcel. Rate structure adjustments are also proposed to better align with industry standard practices, improve customer understanding, and implement metered water rates. The study upon which the rates are based is available for review on the City's website.

Why are rate increases needed?

Rate increases are needed for both the water and sewer utilities to fund operating and maintenance expenses, infrastructure improvements that will not be funded by grants, and to maintain emergency reserves. For example, the City plans to spend about \$440,000 over the next five years to purchase new water pumps, vehicles, and other equipment.

Current sewer rate revenues are no longer sufficient to cover operating expenses, and the Sewer Fund is expected to draw down reserves this year to cover costs. Rate increases are needed to cover these expenses as well as replace about \$150,000 of equipment over the next five years. It is also anticipated that the City will take on a low-cost loan in about five years to conduct critical improvements to the wastewater treatment plant, resulting in a new expense of about \$100,000 in annual debt payments.

Current Billing Method

The City is largely unmetered and residential customers are billed flat (fixed) rates for water and sewer service. The current rate structure assigns a number of equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) to each residence or business. The number of EDUs is then multiplied by the current rate to calculate customer fixed charges. Commercial customers are metered and are billed an excessive use rate for any water use above 16 thousand gallons per EDU per month. Table 1 provides the number of EDUs assigned to each customer class for water and sewer service. Each single family home or residential dwelling unit is assigned 1 EDU. Commercial customers are typically assigned multiple EDUs to reflect their higher use of the systems in comparison to one residential dwelling unit. If you have questions about your customer class or current assignment of EDUs, please contact the City.

Table 1: Current EDU Assignments

Land Use	Water EDUs	Sewer EDUs	Billing Unit
Residential Dwelling Units	1.00	1.00	per dwelling unit
Grocery / Liquor Store / Retail	0.24	0.39	per 1,000 sq. ft
Truck Stops / Cafes / Restaurants	0.73	1.18	per 1,000 sq. ft
Motels	0.30	0.49	per room
Bars & Pool Halls	0.85	1.38	per 1,000 sq. ft
Laundromats	0.85	1.36	per washer
Light Industrial	0.31	0.50	per 1,000 sq. ft
Warehouse	0.05	0.08	per 1,000 sq. ft
Service Stations	1.04	1.87	per station
Schools	0.33	0.43	per 1,000 sq. ft
Churches / Public Halls	0.12	0.19	per 1,000 sq. ft
Public Facilities	0.29	0.39	per 1,000 sq. ft
Bulk Water Sales	1.00	1.38	per 16,000 gallons

EDU – equivalent dwelling unit

Proposed Water Rate Structure Changes

The first water rate change beginning July 1, 2026 is proposed to be an inflationary adjustment to the current rates. The number of EDUs assigned to each customer is not proposed to change. Beginning August 2026 and into 2027, the City will install residential water meters and provide usage data to customers. Beginning July 1, 2027, a new, fully metered rate structure is proposed to go into effect. This change will modernize the rate structure, better align with industry standard practices, and recover costs in a manner that is more proportional to how customers use the utilities.

Commercial customers are proposed to be charged a fixed fee based on meter size. Residential customers are proposed to be charged a base fee that is billed per dwelling unit. The base fee is proposed to include

an allotment of water usage which varies by customer class as shown in Table 2. Any usage above each customer's base allotment is proposed to be billed an excessive use rate charged per thousand gallons of metered water use. For single family residential customers, the proposed allotment included in the base fee is 15 thousand gallons per month. For multifamily residential customers, the proposed usage allotment included in the base fee is 8 thousand gallons per month per dwelling unit.

Proposed Sewer Rate Structure Changes

For sewer service, most customers are proposed to continue to be billed fixed charges for service. Single family residential and commercial customers will be billed the same fixed charge per dwelling unit or per business. However, it is proposed that new customer classes be created for multifamily residential customers and for schools. Multifamily residential customers are still proposed to be billed per dwelling unit, but at a lower rate to reflect their lower average usage of the sewer system in comparison to single family customers. Schools are proposed to be billed a fixed rate per student. A new flow fee is proposed for commercial customers which will be a volumetric charge billed per thousand gallons (based on metered water usage) for all indoor usage above 6,000 gallons. It is recommended that customers with large irrigation water usage install a dedicated irrigation meter to ensure that no irrigation water usage is billed the sewer flow rate.

Proposed Monthly Rates

Table 2 and Table 3 list the current and proposed water and sewer rates, respectively. If adopted, new rates would go into effect July 1 of each year from 2026 to 2030. The bill impacts to each customer will vary based on customer class and water usage. For a single family residential customer, the current monthly water bill is \$75.60 (1 EDU) and the proposed July 1, 2026 water bill is \$77.87, an increase of \$2.27. The current monthly sewer bill is \$43.03 (1 EDU) and the proposed July 1, 2026 single family bill is \$44.00, an increase of \$0.97. If you would like additional information on how the proposed changes in water and sewer rates will affect your monthly bill, please contact the City at (760) 344-3411.

Senior Discount

Beginning July 1, 2026, the City will offer a discount of 10% off the total water and sewer utility bill for seniors aged 65 or older. To qualify for the discount, the utility billing account must be in the senior's name (not a family member) and the service address must be a single family home. The account holder must provide proof of age. To apply for the program, please contact the City at (760) 344-3411.

How do I file a protest or participate in the public hearing?

Proposition 218 provides that "Property Related Fees" such as the water and sewer rates the City is proposing to adjust are subject to a "majority protest" process. Any property owner may submit a written protest of the proposed rates; provided, however, that only one protest will be counted per property. If protests are filed on behalf of a majority of the properties subject to the rates, the City cannot adopt the proposed rates. Please see page 5 of this notice for a detailed description of how to submit a written protest to the proposed rates.

Table 2: Current and Proposed Monthly Water Rates

CURRENT		PROPOSED						
		FY2027	Water Included in Customer Class Base Fee (1,000 gal)		FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
All Customers	Base Fee	July 1, 2026	Customer Class	Base Fee (1,000 gal)	July 1, 2027	July 1, 2028	July 1, 2029	July 1, 2030
Rate per EDU	\$75.60	+3%	Multifamily (per dwelling unit)	8	\$53.38	\$57.25	\$61.40	\$65.85
For EDU information see Table 1 on this notice		\$77.87	Single Family (per dwelling unit)	15	\$82.08	\$88.03	\$94.41	\$101.25
		Commercial Meter Size						
		3/4"		15	\$82.08	\$88.03	\$94.41	\$101.25
		1"		25	\$136.80	\$146.72	\$157.36	\$168.77
		1 1/2"		50	\$273.60	\$293.44	\$314.71	\$337.53
		2"		80	\$437.76	\$469.50	\$503.54	\$540.05
		3"		160	\$875.52	\$939.00	\$1,007.08	\$1,080.09
Excessive Use Rate (\$/1,000 gallons)		Excessive Use Rate (\$/1,000 gallons)						
Rate for use over 16,000 per Non-residential EDU		\$4.65		Rate for use over the amounts shown above for all customers				
		\$4.79		\$4.10				
		\$4.40		\$4.72				
		\$5.06						

Table 3: Current and Proposed Monthly Sewer Rates

CURRENT		PROPOSED					
		Customer Class	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
All Customers	Base Fee		July 1, 2026	July 1, 2027	July 1, 2028	July 1, 2029	July 1, 2030
Rate per EDU	\$43.03	Multifamily Total Fee	\$34.66	\$37.77	\$42.68	\$48.44	\$54.98
For EDU information see Table 1 on this notice		Single Family Total Fee	\$44.00	\$47.96	\$54.19	\$61.51	\$69.81
		School per Student	\$1.35	\$1.47	\$1.66	\$1.88	\$2.13
		Commercial Base Fee	\$44.00	\$47.96	\$54.19	\$61.51	\$69.81
		Commercial Flow*	\$5.47	\$5.96	\$6.73	\$7.64	\$8.67
(*over the first 6,000 gallons of metered water use)							

EDU – equivalent dwelling unit. Non-residential customers are currently assigned EDUs based on their estimated water consumption or sewer flow and land use. Residential customers are assigned 1 EDU per dwelling unit.

How to Participate

The proposed rate increases are governed by section 6 of Article XIII D of the California Constitution (Proposition 218), Government Code sections 53751 et seq. and 53759 et seq., and related laws. Property owners subject to the proposed rates may participate in this ratemaking in a variety of ways. More information and the Rate Study Report are on the City's website at <https://www.cityofwestmorland.net/> or you can call (760) 344-3411.

The City will hold a public hearing on April 1, 2026, to receive public comment, including any written protests to the proposed rates. Any property owner may submit one written protest per parcel. Immediately following the close of the public hearing on April 1, 2026, protests will be counted and validated. If valid protests are submitted for a majority (50% plus 1) of the parcels subject to the proposed rate increases, the City Council will not adopt the rates.

Every written protest MUST include ALL of the following to be counted:

1. A statement that it is a protest against the proposed water rates, sewer rates, or both;
2. Name of the property owner who is submitting the protest;
3. Identification of the assessor's parcel number or street address (service address) of the property for which the protest is made; and
4. An original signature of the property owner who is submitting the protest.

Written protests may be submitted by:

1. Mail to: Prop 218 Protest, P. O. Box 699 - 355 South Center St, Westmorland, CA 92281; or
2. In-person delivery during normal business hours at 355 South Center St, Westmorland, CA 92281; or
3. In-person delivery at the Public Hearing, before the end of the Public Hearing.

Regardless of how the written protest is submitted, it must be received by the City before the end of the public hearing to be held on April 1, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at 355 South Center Street (City Council chambers), Westmorland, CA 92281. (Postmark dates will not be accepted.) To ensure protests are genuine, they will not be accepted by e-mail or other electronic means. Please identify on the front of the envelope for any written protest, whether mailed or submitted in person to the City, that the enclosed protest is for the Proposition 218 Protest. Oral comments at the Public Hearing will not qualify as formal protests unless accompanied by a written protest, but the Council welcomes all public input.

At the end of the public hearing, written protests will be counted in public view. Only one written protest per parcel in the City's service area (i.e. address/assessor parcel number) will be counted. If valid written protests are not submitted for a majority (50% plus 1) of the properties subject to the fees, the Council may adopt the proposed rates. The first rate change, if approved, will take effect on or after July 1, 2026.

Pursuant to California Government Code 53759, a 120-day statute of limitations applies to any legal challenge to a new, increased, or extended fee adopted by the City Council pursuant to this notice. If you challenge this proposal in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you, or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Clerk at, or prior to, the public hearing.