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Monica White
President & CEO Food Share
Ventura County



The Deal: Food Share of Ventura County's new 80,000-square-foot facility

The Dealmakers: Monica White
President & CEO Food Share,
Ventura County

Food Share aims to meet the needs of an entire community

By Paula Aven Gladych
Special to the Business Times

Ventura County's largest nonprofit food bank, Food Share, has set the wheels in motion to build an 85,000-square-foot facility that will enable it to distribute twice the amount of food it is able to provide currently—up to 40 million pounds a year.

The number of people Food Share serves annually has tripled since 2019, said Monica White, president and CEO of Food Share of Ventura County. In 2025, the food bank served 250,000 individuals, which is 30% of the county's population.

The organization works with 200 food pantries across the county to distribute food and household necessities to people in need. It coordinates the collection of fresh food and household staples from various donors, including grocery stores, food growers, the Federal government, food drives and gleaning from privately owned fruit trees.

Food Share purchases \$2.5 million worth of food every year, things that are always available on site, such as tuna, peanut butter, rice, beans, pasta and milk. It operates out of two warehouses currently, which is about 42,000 square feet of space.

Tim Hagel, director of Safe Passage Youth Foundation and former Thousand Oaks police chief, works closely with Food Share to provide meals for over 600 low-income children and their families.

"I would love to see the day Food Share is out of business, if the world were perfect and you didn't need to provide this many resources and help for families," he said. "The fact of the matter is, we are getting worse. It is like we are in a hidden recession."

He added that every meal item that Food Share can deliver is one less item a family in need has to purchase and means they can put that money toward other expenses, such as rent or health care.

"When you see a mom able to receive food with dignity and pride, that is another thing underappreciated by everybody," Hagel said.

Food Share's Feeding Our Future campaign has raised \$32.3 million of the \$50 million it needs to make this deal happen. It purchased the 12.1-acre property in the Channel Islands Business Park in Oxnard three years ago, which gives the nonprofit plenty of space to expand in the future.

The new building's design is complete, and Food Share is working with a contractor on pricing for the project. The City of Oxnard's Planning Commission gave unanimous approval and Food Share wants to get its plan and drawings submitted by the end of March 2026, hoping to break ground in early 2027. Food Share expects to move into the new building in 2028.

Vianey Lopez, Ventura County supervisor, Fifth District, said the county was able to provide \$3 million in funding for Food Share's expansion through American Rescue Plan Act funds it received during the pandemic.

"This expansion is meaningful because it will move into the district I represent," she said. "To me, this expansion means they are going to be able to be more efficient, be more accessible and be able to grow opportunities to support our community and work with nonprofits by having space that is , that is all in one place."

The new building will include a 148% increase in cooler space, room for additional volunteers to come in and help pack food boxes for organizations that serve those in need, a large community room that can host groups of 150, additional office space, six loading docks, 3,000 pallet spaces and 173 parking spaces.

"The population of Ventura County is decreasing, not growing at this point, but even if it stayed where it's at, the cost of housing increased so much I can't imagine it is going to be in a better position 10 years from now than we are today," White said. "I only think it is going to get worse. I'm an optimist. We are hoping for the best but planning for the worst."

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