

# Cruz/Monterey

EARTHQUAKE 1989 - S.C. COUNTY - REBUILDING

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## \$10 million for quake recovery

Mercury News staff report

Within two weeks, officials in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties will have slightly more than \$10 million for long-awaited earthquake recovery projects, a spokeswoman for state Sen. Henry Mello, D-Watsonville, said Monday.

The senator learned Monday that Gov. George Deukmejian on Saturday signed his bill that paved the way for the state to get \$8 million in federal funds by putting up a 25 percent local match, said Cathie Douglas.

Susan Mauriello, Santa Cruz County administrative officer, said Mello had to fight "an uphill battle" to get the funding. Four of the five projects to be funded

### Four of the five proposed projects to be funded are in Santa Cruz County.

are in Santa Cruz County, with \$640,000 earmarked for a county jail project, \$640,000 for a city of Santa Cruz parking structure, \$528,000 for a parking structure in Watsonville and \$245,000 for the Santa Cruz County Port District retaining wall.

The remaining \$500,000 will go to the city of Hollister for sewer line repairs.

Mauriello said the communities worked together so that their projects wouldn't be in competition for funding.

Renovation of the old county jail on Front Street will provide commercial and

retail space, with businesses displaced by the quake getting first priority, she said. An art and history center would be built next door. The jail housed prisoners for half a century before it was abandoned in 1986.

The city of Santa Cruz multistory parking structure is planned for the core downtown area. Parking was identified as a high priority of downtown businesses.

Federal authorities held up approval of the disaster relief grant for months because the state couldn't come up with its

share, Douglas said.

"Various options were considered, but it was difficult because of the \$3.6 billion shortfall in this year's budget," Douglas said.

It finally was agreed to take the money from the quarter-cent sales tax for earthquake relief, she said.

Legislators approved Mello's funding plan during the final three hours of the legislative session, which ended Sept. 1, Douglas said.