

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance provides key services to the City Council, the City Manager, all departments, and the public. The department manages the City's financial operations in accordance with industry standards and established fiscal policies. Prudent fiscal stewardship, customer service, compliance, strategic planning, transparency, and effective financial reporting are key elements of its mission.



Functional Areas:

- ✓ Accounting and Financial Reporting
- ✓ Budgeting and Contractual Bargaining Support
- ✓ Emergency Medical Services
- ✓ Accounts Payable and Payroll
- ✓ Revenue, Treasury, and Tax Compliance Auditing
- ✓ Risk and Safety Management
- ✓ Purchasing

Contact Us:

📞 831-420-5030

🌐 <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/finance>

📍 809 Center St., Santa Cruz

✉️ finance@santacruzca.gov

Transparency Portal:

<https://bit.ly/cosctransparencyportal>

Core Services

- Act as an advisor to the City Council, City Manager, and departments in the areas of financial planning and fiscal analysis. Provides leadership in the development and implementation of sound financial policies for the City.
- Develop and maintain the City's long-range financial forecast
- Prepare the Annual Financial Report in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and pronouncements of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB)
- Prepare and maintain accurate financial records for grants, capital projects, enterprise funds, governmental funds, and capital assets
- Invest the City's idle cash in accordance with the Council-approved Investment Policy to ensure that there is sufficient cash available to meet operating needs while maintaining safety, liquidity, and competitive returns on the investment portfolio
- Assist City departments with the procurement of goods and services at competitive prices and in compliance with federal and state laws and City ordinances
- Process all payments for goods and services timely and accurately
- Issue payroll checks and benefits payments bi-weekly and file federal and state payroll tax withholding reports
- Manage the administration of the City's self-insurance program, property insurance program, and develop and administer insurance specifications for City contracts
- Prepare salary and benefit estimates for negotiations with the City's bargaining units
- Oversee the City's safety program
- Collect and record all City revenues including property tax, sales tax, various service fees, utility users' tax, business licenses, franchise fees transient occupancy taxes, and cannabis business taxes
- Oversee updates to the Citywide Master Fee Schedule
- Develop the annual Operating and Capital Improvement Budget and Capital Investment Program on behalf of the City Manager by projecting revenues and expenditures, coordinating the preparation and publication of the budget document, and making the annual budget available through its transparency tool, OpenGov
- Develop and manage the Cost Allocation Plan and Internal Service Funds allocations
- Manage the City's and Successor Agency's outstanding bonds by ensuring timely payments, performing arbitrage calculations, and filing required disclosure reports

- Manage all claims against the City and represent the City in small claims court
- Audit business owners and operators for compliance with City tax ordinances (i.e., transient occupancy tax, cannabis business tax, admission tax)


FY 2026 Accomplishments

FY 2026 Accomplishments	<i>Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency</i>	<i>Strong Businesses and Vibrant Downtown</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Homelessness Response</i>	<i>Public Safety and Community Well-Being</i>	<i>Natural and Built Infrastructure</i>	<i>Thriving Organization</i>
Began implementation of new software Enterprise Resource Program (ERP) solution for City financial management	X						X
Implemented internal procurement training series to educate on procurement best practices	X						X
Earned the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award	X						X
Hosted a vendor open house webinar to inform the vendor community on how to do business with the City.		X					
Received Triple Crown Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for earning top recognition for the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), Annual Budget, and Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for FY 2024	X						X
Received Distinguished Budget Presentation Award with special recognition from GFOA for receiving the highest possible scores from all reviewers in the performance measure category	X						X
Earned "outstanding" marks from all reviewers for the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the budget overall as a communication device	X						X
Received Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award in addition to the Award of Financial Reporting Achievement from GFOA.	X						X
Issued the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) prior to December 31, 2025.	X						X
Created a citywide employee safety policy	X				X		
Implemented, reviewed, and updated employee safety programs					X		

FY 2026 Accomplishments	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency	Strong Businesses and Vibrant Downtown	Housing	Homelessness Response	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	Natural and Built Infrastructure	Thriving Organization
Hosted a community webinar to inform the public on the components of the FY 2027 Annual Budget in advance of the formal public hearings	X						X
Created an online, interactive version of the FY 2027 Annual Budget and educated staff, City Council, and the public on its existence and possible ways to utilize the tool	X						X
Provided Spanish language version of Budget-in-Brief	X						X
Provided Council with a comprehensive list of fees across the City that includes information on the degree to which they fully recover costs	X						X
Created an online tool for residents to apply for Measure C household exemption	X		X				
Completed recruitment for Measure C Oversight Committee members	X		X				
Updated online tax portal to include collection of the Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax 🍷	X						X
Successfully implemented GASB 101 – the recognition and measurement of Compensated Absences	X						X



FY 2027 Goals

FY 2027 Goals	<i>Fiscal Sustainability & Transparency</i>	<i>Strong Businesses & Vibrant Downtown</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Homelessness Response</i>	<i>Public Safety & Community Well-Being</i>	<i>Natural & Built Infrastructure</i>	<i>Thriving Organization</i>
Continue implementing new software ERP solution for City financial management, meeting all project milestones within the planned timeframe	X						X
Earn the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award	X						X
Hosted a vendor open house webinar to inform the vendor community on how to do business with the City.		X					
Receive Triple Crown Award from GFOA for earning top recognition on the ACFR, Annual Budget, and PAFR for FY 2026	X						X
Earn GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award with special recognition in at least one category	X						X
Earn GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.	X						X
Implement compliance audit for all tax revenue streams	X						X
Reduce citywide safety accidents and incidents 					X		X
Increase proportion of vendor payments made via automated clearing house (ACH)	X						X
Begin process to present the FY 2026 ACFR in accordance with GASB pronouncement 103, on financial reporting model improvements	X						X
Issue the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) prior to December 31, 2026.	X						X
Upgrade tax payment platform for receiving City tax revenues	X						X
Recommend merchant fee structure for all credit card payments	X						X
Process all submitted Measure C household exemption application and finalize list of exempted parcels for County Assessor's Office			X				
Provide Measure C Annual Report to Council and members of the Oversight Committee			X				
Initiate business license tax ordinance/fee study	X						X

Workload Indicators

Workload Indicators	Strategic Plan Focus Area	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Goal
# of vendor invoices processed	Thriving Organization	34,207	37,228	37693	35000	35000
# of purchase orders issued	Thriving Organization	1,623	1,796	2036	2000	2000
# of liability claims processed	Thriving Organization	78	60	85	80	75
# of Transient Occupancy Tax audits completed	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency	32	18	19	16	30

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	Strategic Plan Focus Area	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Goal
Payroll federal and state withholding reports filed on time	Thriving Organization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Awarded Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Annual Financial Report	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency; Thriving Organization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Earned Distinguished Budget Presentation Award	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency; Thriving Organization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting received	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency; Thriving Organization	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Percent of tort claims resolved in 180 days	Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Staffing

Positions	FY 2024 Amended*	FY 2025 Amended*	FY 2026 Amended*	FY 2027 Adopted	FY 2027 Change
Accountant I/II	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	-
Accounting Assistant II	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	-
Accounting Services Supervisor	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Accounting Technician	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	-
Accounting Technician-Limited Term	-	3.00	3.00	3.00	-
Administrative Assistant III	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	-
Assistant Director of Finance	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Buyer I/II	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-
Director of Finance	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Finance Manager	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-
Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Payroll Technician	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-
Principal Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Purchasing Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Revenue Collections Specialist	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Risk and Safety Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Risk Management Technician	-	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Safety Officer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Senior Accountant	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-
Total	31.00	36.00	34.00	35.00	1.00

* "Amended" refers to the FTE count as of the adopted budget of the indicated fiscal year, plus any adjustments authorized by City Council within the course of the year



Budget Summary - Finance

		Fiscal Year 2026			Fiscal Year 2027 Adopted*	
		Fiscal Year 2025 Actuals*	Adopted Budget*	Amended Budget*		Year-End Estimate*
EXPENDITURES BY CHARACTER:						
Personnel Services		4,433,736	4,826,807	4,909,936	4,635,224	4,960,308
Services, Supplies, and Other Charges		10,685,343	11,624,218	13,282,547	9,898,428	13,199,052
Capital Outlay		3,471	-	36,301	12,000	-
Total Expenditures		15,122,550	16,451,025	18,228,784	14,545,652	18,159,360
EXPENDITURES BY ACTIVITY:						
Finance	1241	4,958,499	5,395,421	5,558,224	5,004,566	5,604,186
<i>Subtotal General Fund</i>		4,958,499	5,395,421	5,558,224	5,004,566	5,604,186
Finance	1241	61,090	55,000	59,308	-	-
<i>Subtotal Other General Funds</i>		61,090	55,000	59,308	-	-
Finance	1241	-	-	-	-	95,387
Transportation Development Act	6301	1,197,541	-	1,292,737	-	-
Liability Insurance	7821	8,920,842	11,000,604	11,318,515	9,541,087	12,459,787
<i>Subtotal Other Funds</i>		10,118,384	11,000,604	12,611,252	9,541,087	12,555,174
Total Expenditures		15,137,972	16,451,025	18,228,784	14,545,652	18,159,360
RESOURCES BY FUND:						
General Fund	101	4,393,063	5,664,577	5,664,577	5,664,777	5,860,558
Transportation Development Act	291	1,128,112	-	1,292,737	-	-
Technology Surcharge	295	43,670	36,000	36,000	36,000	37,000
Liability Insurance	842	9,970,884	8,667,003	11,102,164	11,102,164	12,454,798
Total Resources		15,535,730	14,367,580	18,095,478	16,802,941	18,352,356
NET GENERAL FUND COST:		397,758	(2,083,445)	(133,306)	2,257,289	192,996
TOTAL AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL:		<u>FY 2025</u> 36.00			<u>FY 2026</u> 34.00	<u>FY 2027</u> 35.00

*Sums may have discrepancies due to rounding

Organization Chart

