

City Council



The City Council is comprised of six Councilmembers and a Mayor. They are the legislative and policy-making body of city government; setting city policy by passing ordinances and resolutions. The Council determines the city budget, appoints and removes certain appointive officials, and generally oversees city functions. They are elected at large by city voters and are directly responsible to the people.

The term of office for a Councilmember is four years and a Councilmember may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Each year, the Council elects one of its members to serve as Mayor for a one-year term. The Mayor presides at all Council Meetings and is recognized as the head of the city government for all ceremonial purposes.



The Council adopted the City of Santa Cruz Two-Year Work Plan on May 23, 2017. The Plan has three strategic goals: Housing, Public Safety & Well Being and Infrastructure. The final Work Plan document was presented on August 22, 2017 with an update on the Work Plan presented on May 8, 2018.

Two-Year Work Plan

July 2017- June 2019

The following three Strategic Goals articulate the forward momentum of the City for the year. Each Strategic Goal lists the focus areas and projects prioritized by City Council.

Strategic Goal #1: Housing

Community Outreach and Education

From June-November 2017, Councilmembers and staff supported a robust community-wide engagement effort on housing. These include several City Council study sessions, listening sessions with community groups, a community survey engaging over 1,300 respondents, and educational brown bag lunches and City-hosted events as part of Affordable Housing Week. The Santa Cruz Voices on Housing report was the result of the outreach, detailing 99 housing policy ideas under 22 overarching topics heard from the community. This report was presented to the City Council on December 5, 2017.

Housing Policy Updates

In 2017, the City Council approved significant new land use policy changes for short-term vacation rental regulation and revision of the Downtown Plan. In order to protect community character and preserve existing housing stock for long-term residency, the short-term vacation rental policy regulated the number of hosted and non-hosted rentals allowed in the City of Santa Cruz. Amendments to the Downtown Plan allow new height and density in the lower part of Downtown to encourage housing development, utilization of public spaces and access to the San Lorenzo River. In 2018, the City Council will consider revisions to the Density Bonus (additional height and density in exchange for more affordable units) and Inclusionary Housing (required percentage of affordability in new development) policies. The Council also plans to consider regulatory updates to parking and accessory dwelling unit requirements, increasing the eligibility range for inclusionary ownership units and adjustments to the in-lieu fee program.

Regional Revenue Measure to Develop Housing

A community-led effort is underway to develop a potential revenue measure, anticipated for the November 2018 ballot. This measure, if approved, would provide funding to support affordable housing rental development and preservation, facilities to address homelessness, and programs facilitating home-ownership.

Downtown Projects

Downtown Plan amendments that have been approved has allowed the development of up to 711 new housing units in the Downtown. In late April 2018, plans for the first project under the revised Downtown Plan were submitted for development of a major parcel on lower Pacific Avenue and Laurel Street, which would provide 205 new housing units. In early 2018, 555 Pacific Avenue was completed, adding an additional 94 units to downtown. There are 98 other housing units in the downtown area that have applications submitted or existing approvals for development. The City purchased the NIAC building on Front Street to facilitate the Pacific Station project. The City and METRO continue to partner to evaluate the integration of the bus transit station and a larger housing and commercial development.

Strategic Goal #2: Public Safety & Well-Being

Homelessness

The City made major progress to address the issue of homelessness. The City adopted the Homelessness Coordinating Committee's 20- recommendations in May 2017, and has completed or made significant progress on 13 of the recommendations. Council appropriated funding in the FY 2018 budget to extend the emergency winter shelter by 22 nights this winter, expansion in hygiene center hours at the Homeless Services Center and expansion of homeless outreach, mental health intervention and Recovery Center operations. The City's plan to provide a permanent, regional Homeless Navigation Center, in partnership with the County and other cities is well underway. The Three-Phased Plan has been started. Phase 1, the River Street Camp, provides safe, fully-staffed and service-linked camping location for about 50-60 individuals and Phase 2, an Interim Homeless Facility, is under active development.

Nuisance Crime Reduction

On March 20, 2018, the Police Department presented the police and park ranger staffing study and recommendations to the City Council. The majority of the recommendations are complete or underway. The recommendations include reallocation of existing resources and improved triage of calls-for-service in order to focus law enforcement response to the key challenges that impair safety and quality-of-life. In the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018, the Police Department launched a neighborhood-focused community engagement series to identify the public safety challenges unique to specific areas of the City. As a result of this work, the Police Department deployed a Neighborhood Policing Team model with each the five lieutenants taking on a specific neighborhood as the lead for policy and resource deployment within that neighborhood. Additionally, the Police Department is pursuing a schedule change to result in more officers on the streets.

Inclusive Community

The City continues to offer community outreach programs such as the State of the City, City Hall to You, the annual report, and the overarching community relations plan remain a priority. The Police Department supported a robust community engagement effort that directly influenced the creation of a Neighborhood Policing Team model. The body-worn camera program is in full operation. Engagement with the immigrant and Spanish-speaking community is supported by City participation in the Regional Immigration Coordinating Committee and the upcoming engagement of a Community Liaison to provide strong two-way connection between the City and these communities.

Strategic Goal #3: Infrastructure

Capital Improvement Revenue Measure

The FY 2019 budget is presented with a \$5.5 million (5%) General Fund realignment with over \$4 million in cuts. Regardless, the City's aging infrastructure is in need of hundreds of millions of dollars of repair and replacement. To support the immediate capital investment needs and general City operations, a quarter-cent sales tax has been placed on the June 2018 ballot. If passed, it will support over \$1 million in capital projects for FY 2019. In the longer-term, the City will evaluate additional revenue options to support capital investment. A third Revenue Subcommittee recently convened to consider revenue options for the November 2018 ballot and beyond.

Asset Management

Public infrastructure, from streets and storm drains to buildings and parks, to our water and wastewater systems, are under the City's management. This infrastructure is funded through enterprise funds (service fee-based revenue) and the general fund (general tax base revenue). With an uncertain general fund budget in the next several years, active staff effort toward a comprehensive asset review was paused, but may commence in FY 2019 should there be need for development of a funding plan.

Downtown Library Project

Voter approval in 2016 of the Library Bond Measure has allocated \$23 million for the Downtown Library improvement project. From July through December 2017, a community Downtown Library Advisory Committee (DLAC) met and studied national library trends including current and future library services, community needs and library conditions. The City Council will hear and discuss recommendations from the DLAC at a June 2018 meeting.

Fiber Strategy

The City has implemented the Pave Once/Dig Once policy which requires notice and invitation for other companies to access City streets for fiber infrastructure if a street opening is planned. For budgetary reasons, the implementation of the fiber project is on hold, except when a street opening coincides with a City building need, in which case the City joins the dig.

Community Vision & Guiding Principles

The City Council's Two-Year Work Plan defines the Community's Vision and Guiding Principles, highlights the critical core services that account for the vast majority of City resources and energy, and sets forth three new strategic goals to meet the vision of the City and enhance the quality of life for all in our community.

The Two-Year Work Plan ensures that both City staff and the City Council, along with the greater community, share a common vision of where the City is going and the work involved to get there.

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY

Department Description:

The City Council is the legislative and policy-making body of the City of Santa Cruz. The City Council's seven members are elected on a non-partisan basis for 4-year terms. Each year the Council elects one of its members to serve as Mayor. The City Council meets regularly to conduct the public's business.

	Fiscal Year* 2017 Actuals	Fiscal Year 2018			Fiscal Year 2019 Adopted
		Adopted Budget	Amended* Budget	Estimated Actual	
EXPENDITURES BY CHARACTER:					
Personnel Services	278,065	271,176	271,176	249,956	271,344
Services, Supplies, and Other Charges	184,847	163,387	159,887	118,512	124,268
Total Expenditures	462,911	434,563	431,063	368,468	395,612
EXPENDITURES BY ACTIVITY:					
City Council	1110 364,561	434,563	431,063	368,468	395,612
Council Special Projects and Services	1113 98,350	-	-	-	-
Subtotal General Fund	462,911	434,563	431,063	368,468	395,612
Total Expenditures	462,911	434,563	431,063	368,468	395,612
RESOURCES BY FUND					
General Fund	101 200,322	232,875	232,875	191,875	197,055
Total Resources	200,322	232,875	232,875	191,875	197,055
Net General Fund Cost	(262,589)	(201,688)	(198,188)	(176,593)	(198,557)

*Sums may have discrepancies due to rounding