



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**AMEDEE O. "DICK" RICHARDS JR. COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

South Pasadena Planning Commission Statement of Civility

As your appointed governing board we will treat each other, members of the public, and city employees with patience, civility and courtesy as a model of the same behavior we wish to reflect in South Pasadena for the conduct of all city business and community participation. The decisions made tonight will be for the benefit of the South Pasadena community and not for personal gain.

NOTICE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The South Pasadena Planning Commission Meeting will be conducted in-person from the Amedee O. "Dick" Richards, Jr. Council Chambers, located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

The Meeting will be available:

- In Person – Council Chambers, 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena
- Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83530439651> **Meeting ID: 8353 043 9651**

To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, members of the public can observe the meeting via Zoom in the following methods below.

- Go to the Zoom website, <https://Zoom.us/join> and enter the Zoom meeting information; or
- Click on the following unique Zoom meeting link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83530439651>

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Amitabh Barthakur

ROLL CALL: Chair Amitabh Barthakur
Vice-Chair Jason Claypool
Commissioner Mark Gallatin
Commissioner Arnold Swanborn
Commissioner James Martin
Commissioner Matthew Horton
Commissioner Joseph Williams
Youth Commissioner Batia Lou

COUNCIL LIAISON: Mayor Sheila Rossi

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Majority vote of the Commission to proceed with Commission business.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Disclosure by Commissioners of site visits and ex-parte contact for items on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES (Public Comments are limited to 3 minutes)

The Planning Commission welcomes public input. If you would like to comment on an agenda item, members of the public may participate by one of the following options:

Option 1:

Participate in-person at the Council Chambers, 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena.

Option 2:

Participants will be able to “raise their hand” using the Zoom icon during the meeting, and they will have their microphone un-muted during comment portions of the agenda to speak for up to 3 minutes per item.

Option 3:

Email public comment(s) to PlanningComments@southpasadenaca.gov. Public Comments received in writing will not be read aloud at the meeting, but will be part of the meeting record. Written public comments will be uploaded online for public viewing under Additional Documents. There is no word limit on emailed Public Comment(s). Please make sure to indicate:

- 1) Name (optional), and
- 2) Agenda item you are submitting public comment on, and
- 3) Submit by no later than 12:00 p.m., on the day of the Planning Commission meeting.

NOTE: Pursuant to State law, the Planning Commission may not discuss or take action on issues not on the meeting agenda, except that members of the Planning Commission or staff may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising public testimony rights (Government Code Section 54954.2). Staff may be asked to follow up on such items.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2026

PRESENTATION

3. City Budget Presentation – Assistant City Manager Nick Kimball

DISCUSSION

4. Discussion and Direction Regarding Citywide Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards (ODS)

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission receive and discuss the presentation related to City-wide Multi-family and Mixed-use Objective Design Standards and provide feedback as appropriate.

ADMINISTRATION

5. Comments from City Council Liaison

6. Comments from Subcommittees

7. Comments from Planning Commissioners

8. Comments from Staff

ADJOURNMENT

- 9. Adjourn to the Regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for July 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.**

PUBLIC ACCESS TO AGENDA DOCUMENTS AND BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

Planning Commission meeting agenda packets are available online at the City website: <https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Your-Government/Boards-Commissions/Planning-Commission>

AGENDA NOTIFICATION SUBSCRIPTION

Individuals can be placed on an email notification list to receive forthcoming agendas by emailing CityClerk@southpasadenaca.gov or calling the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230.

ACCOMMODATIONS



The City of South Pasadena wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. If special assistance is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230. Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

I declare under penalty of perjury that I posted this notice of agenda on the bulletin board in the courtyard of City Hall at 1414 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030, and on the City's website as required by law.

6/4/2026

Date



Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner



DRAFT

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes**

**May 12, 2026, 6:30 PM
Amedee O. "Dick" Richards Jr. Council Chambers
1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030**

CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Amitabh Barthakur on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Amitabh Barthakur
Vice-Chair: Jason Claypool
Commissioners: Mark Gallatin, Arnold Swanborn, James Martin,
Matthew Horton, Joseph Williams

Youth Commissioner: Batia Lou

City Staff

Present: Todd Hileman, City Manager
Serita Young, Esq., Deputy City Attorney
Erika Ramirez, Community Development Department Director
Jasmin Kim, Planning Manager
Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner
Lillian Estrada, Administrative Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved, 7-0.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Vice-Chair Claypool disclosed ex-parte contacts related to Items 3 and 4 involving texts and personal conversations with nearby residents. Chair Barthakur disclosed visiting the address related to Item 3.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

Philip Browne, a resident of Indiana Avenue, expressed concerns about the enforcement of completion bonds on hillside houses and the lack of notification for neighbors regarding ADU construction. He highlighted issues with the construction of an ADU next door, including inadequate retaining walls and a lack of safety standards.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of April 14, 2026

Approved, 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

3. **Appeal of Project No. DRX25-0008** – To consider an appeal of the City Staff's denial of a Design Review Permit for the proposed construction of a new 6' high vertical rail metal fence with two access gates and 6' hedges located within the front setback area of two properties – 1510 Ramona Avenue (APN: 5319-024-010), and 1512 Ramona Avenue (APN: 5319-024-003). Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15270(a), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not apply to projects that a public agency disapproves. This is a continued public hearing item from the April 14, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following action(s):

1. Denying the appeal and upholding the Community Development Director's denial of Project No. DRX25-0008.

Deputy City Attorney Serita Young recused herself due to her firm's conflict with this Item. Outside Special Counsel Todd Litfin was available (via Zoom) to advise with respect to this Item.

Staff Presentation:

Senior Planner Dean Flores presented the Staff's case, explaining the denial of the 6' high fence due to neighborhood compatibility and design review criteria. He noted that the Applicant appealed the denial and the appeal body is the Planning Commission.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired about accommodation for similar previous requests, whether a proposal utilizing different materials would have mattered, and how a revised proposal would be reconciled with the design standard in the guidelines for historic residences.

Applicant Presentation:

Jennifer Garcia, Holy Family School Principal and Nathan Diaz Fisher, the architect on the Project, presented their case, emphasizing the need for increased security due to recent school shootings and safety assessments, highlighting the challenges of maintaining security while adhering to design guidelines, while preserving the historical nature of the properties.

Questions for Applicant:

The Commissioners inquired about window glazing and tinting, additional safety precautions the school is considering, existing fencing between the two (2) houses, and if specific fencing or a security perimeter had been approved as part of the primary CUP on the Holy Family Specific Plan.

Public Comments:

Mallory Ashdown, resident and parent of a student, spoke in support of the fence for safety reasons, emphasizing the importance of creating a secure environment for children.

Josh Albrektson (via Zoom), resident, spoke in opposition to the fence, arguing it would be hostile architecture and incompatible with the neighborhood.

Kathy LaRossa, resident and 25-year educator, spoke in support of the appeal, urging the Commission to prioritize student safety over aesthetic concerns.

Kyle Colon, resident and neighbor to the Project, spoke in opposition to the appeal, citing concerns about neighborhood character and the adequacy of existing security measures.

John Jefferson, resident and neighbor to the Project. spoke in opposition to the appeal, citing concerns about neighborhood character and the adequacy of existing security measures.

Applicant Rebuttal:

Principal Garcia remarked that they are interested in maintaining the neighborhood, but ensuring the school is safe. Architect Fisher stated the fencing is intentionally designed not to look like a fortress.

Questions for Applicant:

Vice-Chair Claypool inquired whether the properties were historic resources at the time of purchase.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners engaged in a robust discussion of the balance between security and neighborhood character, suggesting a compromise solution.

Planning Commission Youth Commissioner Batia Lou spoke about her experience as a student and the importance of a fence at South Pasadena High School, encouraging the Commission to prioritize the safety of children alongside the protection of the cultural heritage of Ramona Street in their deliberations.

Architect Fisher indicated that he is open to these conversations and believes a solution can be reached.

The Commissioners agreed that the Applicant should work with the community and resubmit the Project with a solution that works for all sides.

Commission Motion and Action:

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER SWANBORN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GALLATIN, to deny the appeal and uphold the Community Development Director's denial of Project No. DRX25-0008 and request that Holy Family School work with the community, gather support for the Project, and then return to the Staff and the Planning Commission for resubmittal.

AYES:	Gallatin, Martin, Swanborn, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Horton
ABSTAINED:	None

Motion carried, 6-0.

Commissioner Horton left the meeting before the vote.

Deputy City Attorney Young rejoined the dais.

4. **Project No. PLR24-0006** – A request for approval of Design Review and Hillside Development Permits to construct a new three-story 2,327 square-foot single-family dwelling with an attached 492 square-foot, two-car garage on a 0.16-acre vacant hillside property located at 1327 Indiana Avenue (APN: 5314-008-014) and to make a determination of a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15303, Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following action(s):

1. Conduct a continued public hearing;
2. Select architectural plan “Option A” or “Option B”;
3. Adopt a Resolution finding the project exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15303, Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) and approve Project No. PLR24-0006 subject to Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Senior Planner Flores provided the history and background on this Project, which was previously presented in August 2025, with feedback from the Commission to redesign the home to be more human-scaled and compatible with the neighborhood.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired about differences in slope measurements, if the City Architect had reviewed the Project, and whether Staff had a preference of one design over the other.

Applicant Presentation:

None. However, Designer Jim Li spoke on behalf of the Applicant and clarified the slope calculation discrepancy, noting it was a mathematical error.

Questions for Applicant:

The Commissioners inquired which Option the Applicants preferred, had questions about the light fixtures, and had numerous questions about the plans and the planting plans, deciding to forward those specific concerns to the Planning Department via email to be reviewed during Plan Check.

Public Comments:

Sue Matz, resident and neighbor, expressed concerns about the poor condition of the street, the size of the home to be built, landscaping concerns, insufficient parking, builder's follow-through to completion, and safety concerns on Indiana Avenue. She also expressed frustration over the project's delay and the removal of trees.

Philip Browne, resident and neighbor directly across the street from the Project, echoed Sue Matz's concerns about traffic safety and enforcement on Indiana Avenue.

Applicant Rebuttal:

Designer Jim Li remarked that the Applicant prefers Option A because the articulation of the façade is more visually appealing based on the slopes.

Commissioner Discussion:

Commissioner Martin acknowledged the Project's previous review by the Design Review Board of which he was a member and noted its design improvements.

The Commissioners focused on the design aspects, with some questions about specific design elements. The Commissioners discussed the commercial nature of the windows and the need for clear direction on the Project, suggesting refining the garage door and entry, reconsideration of the height and safety of the upper deck on the second level, the need for traffic enforcement on Indiana Avenue, and the removal of the trees.

The Commissioners suggested changes to the proposed guest parking, landscaping, exterior lighting and the use of solar shaders, recommending approval of the Project with a Chair Review for minor modifications to the Project Plan.

The Commissioners also discussed the need to consider whether the planting choices identified in the Planting Plan are feasible.

Commission Motion and Action:

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER SWANBORN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARTIN, to approve Project No. PLR24-0006 by adoption of the Resolution, forwarding it to a Chair Review for minor modifications to the proposal, as discussed this evening.

AYES:	Gallatin, Martin, Swanborn, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Horton
ABSTAINED:	None

Motion carried, 6-0.

5. **Project No. ZTA26-0002/SPA26-0001** – Consideration of City-Initiated Zoning Code Amendment and Specific Plan Amendment amending South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) Chapter 36 (Zoning) adding SPMC Section 36.400.065 Required Community Meeting to Chapter 36 and amending Chapter 36 and the Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP) related to Conditional Use Permit Review Authority for Alcoholic Beverage Sales and Live Entertainment Uses and making a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following actions:

1. Hold a public hearing.
2. Adopt a Resolution recommending to the City Council approval of the City-Initiated Zoning Code Amendment and Specific Plan Amendment ZTA26-0002/SPA26-0001, amending South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) Chapter 36 (Zoning) to add SPMC Section 36.400.065 Required Community Meeting to Chapter 36 and amending Chapter 36 and the Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP) related to Conditional Use Permit review authority for alcoholic beverage sales and live entertainment uses.

Staff Presentation:

Director Ramirez presented the Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments related to required community meetings for certain projects and modified CUP review authority for alcohol-serving establishments and live entertainment uses. The process would involve hosting a community meeting, providing project plans and operational details, and submitting meeting minutes and sign-in sheets.

Questions for Staff:

City Manager Todd Hileman explained the rationale behind the community meeting requirement, emphasizing the need for early community engagement.

The Commissioners questioned the discretionary nature of the process and suggested a more standardized approach. They discussed the potential impact on businesses and the need for a balanced approach. They expressed concern regarding the timeline.

City Manager Hileman clarified the City Council's role in reviewing CUPs and stated that he would work with the City Attorney, the Staff, and the Commission to propose more specific conditions of approval.

Public Comments:

Karie Reynolds, from the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, spoke on behalf of commercial property owners and business owners expressing opposition to the changes, citing negative impacts on businesses, highlighting the uncertainty created by the proposed changes, and arguing that these changes could shift CUP decisions from a planning-based, standards-driven process to a more politicized and variable decision-making process, affecting small operators' confidence.

Josh Albrectson, resident, spoke in opposition to the denial of the appeal and expressed concern that the proposed changes could violate housing law, among other things.

Director Ramirez acknowledged receipt of two (2) emails and one letter received regarding this item.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners engaged in a robust discussion regarding the potential impact on businesses, the implications of the proposed amendments, the importance of early community engagement, consideration of a balanced approach that addresses community concerns while supporting economic growth, the timeline, and the review authority of the City Council for CUPs.

After further considerable discussion, City Manager Hileman pulled Staff's recommendation and remarked that he will work with Director Ramirez and City Attorney Roxanne Diaz to develop a revised, simplified community meeting plan based on a tiered approach, and propose a new review period.

Commission Motion and Action:

NO ACTION was taken by the Planning Commission on Project No. ZTA26-0002/SPA26-0001.

6. **Project No. ZTA26-0003/ZTM26-0002/SPA26-0002** – Consideration to adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council adopt an Ordinance to amend Chapter 36 (Zoning) of the South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) and to the South Pasadena Zoning Map to delay effectuation and exclude certain individual sites and to adopt a transit-oriented development alternative plan pursuant to Senate Bill 79 (Government Code Sections 65912.155 et seq.), and making a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following actions:

1. Open the public hearing, take testimony from anyone wishing to speak, and
2. Adopt a motion continuing the item to the Planning Commission meeting of May 19, 2026 at 6:30 pm.

Staff Presentation:

This Item, having been noticed for this evening's meeting, opened the Public Hearing to receive public comments.

Questions for Staff:

None.

Public Comment:

Josh Albrektson, resident, questioned the need for a process to continue an item without any action.

Commissioner Discussion:

None.

Commission Motion and Action:

MOVED BY CHAIR BARTHAKUR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GALLATIN, to continue this item to the May 19, 2026 Planning Commission Special Meeting.

AYES:	Gallatin, Martin, Swanborn, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Horton
ABSTAINED:	None

Motion carried, 6-0.

ADMINISTRATION

7. Comments from City Council Liaison

None.

8. Comments from Subcommittees

Commissioner Martin provided updates on the Objective Design Standards Subcommittee and the ADU Program Subcommittee. The subcommittees are meeting regularly with two (2) City consultants, and both subcommittees are

progressing beyond the community engagement research phase into the design phase. They are looking forward to a presentation by the ADU consultant firm at the next meeting, as well as continued discussion among the full Commission on SB 79, and perhaps some interim standards they might like to incorporate before the final adoption of the Objective Design Standards.

9. Comments from Planning Commissioners

Chair Barthakur attended the Planning Commissioners Academy Conference and offered to share the keynote speech with the Commission and Staff.

Commissioner Gallatin will attend the American Planning Association Virtual Conference on May 27, 28 and 29 and will report back at the June meeting.

Commissioner Swanborn reminded Staff to add an agenda item at the next meeting to consider adding a member to the Subcommittees.

10. Comments from Staff

Director Ramirez shared that the Downtown Specific Plan won an award from the LA Chapter of the APA and will be submitted to the California APA for award consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

11. Adjournment to the Special Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further matters, Vice-Chair Claypool adjourned the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

Amitabh Barthakur, Chair



Planning Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 3

DATE: June 9, 2026

FROM: Nick Kimball, Assistant City Manager/CFO

SUBJECT: **RECEIVE A PRESENTATION PROVIDING AN OVERVIEW OF THE CITY BUDGET**

Recommendation

It is recommended at the Planning Commission:

- a) Receive this report and the accompanying Budget presentation for information; and
- b) Provide any questions or comments to staff for consideration during the FY 2026-27 budget development process. No formal action is required.

Executive Summary

This staff report accompanies the presentation prepared by the Finance Department for all City Commissions. The purpose of this educational briefing is to provide Commission members with a foundational understanding of how the City's budget is structured, how revenues and expenditures are organized, and where the Planning Commission's programs and services fit within the broader municipal financial framework. No action is required; this item is presented for information and discussion.

Background

The City of South Pasadena operates on a fiscal year running July 1 through June 30. The City Manager proposes a budget each spring, which is then reviewed through a series of public study sessions and adopted by City Council each June. The budget is a legally binding document — state law requires cities to adopt a balanced budget, and departments may not spend in excess of their approved appropriations.

South Pasadena's FY 2025-26 total budget is approximately \$90 million across all funds. The General Fund, the City's primary operating account, totals approximately \$43 million and funds the core services residents rely on, including Police, Fire, Public Works, Library, Community Development, and Community Services. The Community Development Department operates within the General Fund and represents approximately 7% of total General Fund expenditures.

Analysis

The Finance Department is presenting the budget briefing to the City's standing Commissions as part of an ongoing commitment to transparency and civic financial literacy. The goals of this presentation are to:

- Explain in plain terms what the City's budget is, why it exists, and how it is legally structured;
- Define key financial terms — revenue, appropriation, fund, reserve, and fund balance — that Commissioners will encounter in staff reports and public discussions;
- Illustrate how the City's money is organized into four distinct fund types and why funds cannot be freely redirected between purposes;
- Provide context for the FY 2025-26 General Fund budget and the City's 5-year financial forecast; and
- Explain the role Commissions play in the annual budget process and identify upcoming opportunities for public participation.

How the City's Money is Organized: The Four Fund Types

State law requires cities to use “fund accounting” — a system in which money is organized into legally separate “buckets.” Revenues restricted for a specific purpose must remain in that fund; they cannot be redirected to another purpose. The City currently maintains four categories of funds:

Fund Type	FY 25-26 Budget	Description
General Fund	~\$43M	Primary operating fund. Funded by property tax (40%), sales tax (13%), UUT (10%), and fees. Pays for Police, Fire, Library, Parks, Public Works, and Administration. No legal restrictions on use within general government purposes.
Enterprise Funds	~\$30.7M	Self-sustaining operations funded by user fees: Water Fund (~\$25.2M), Sewer Fund (~\$3.8M), and Arroyo Seco Golf Course (~\$1.7M). Rate-payers fund these — not General Fund tax dollars.
Special Revenue Funds	~\$12.4M	Revenues legally restricted for specific purposes across 36 separate funds. Includes Gas Tax (street maintenance), Metro transportation funds (Prop A, Prop C, Measure R, Measure M), and Street Lighting & Landscaping Assessment District. Cannot be redirected; purpose is set by law or grant agreement.
Internal Service Funds	N/A	Internal cost pools funded through interdepartmental charges. Currently used for liability and workers' compensation insurance. Expanding in FY 2026-27 to include a Facility Maintenance Fund and Vehicle Replacement Fund.

General Fund: Revenue and Expenditure Overview

The General Fund is the City's primary operating account and the fund most directly relevant to Community Development operations. An understanding of its revenue sources and expenditure structure is essential context for Commission deliberations.

Revenue Sources

Approximately 85% of General Fund revenue comes from five primary sources, organized below from most stable to most economically sensitive:

Revenue Source	% of Revenue	Volatility	Notes
Property Tax	40%	Low	Most stable source; based on assessed value of real property
Sales & Use Tax	13%	Moderate	More sensitive to economic conditions; major component
Intergovernmental / VLF	11%	Low–Moderate	Includes Vehicle License Fees returned by the State
Utility Users Tax (UUT)	10%	Moderate	Levied on electricity, gas, phone, and cable usage
Charges for Services	8%	Moderate	Fees for permits, inspections, recreation programs, and services

Expenditure Structure

The General Fund's expenditure structure is largely fixed. Key characteristics include:

- Personnel costs represent 66% of the General Fund budget. These costs are largely fixed, governed by collective bargaining agreements and salary schedules.
- Operating costs represent approximately 25% of expenditures and include contracted services such as city attorney, building inspection, street sweeping, tree maintenance, and park maintenance.
- Capital outlay and transfers to other funds represent the remaining ~9%.
- Only approximately 5% of total expenditures (~\$2.25 million) is considered discretionary — available to fund new priorities or enhancements in any given year.

By department, approximately 48% of the General Fund is allocated to Public Safety (Police: 30%, Fire/EMT: 18%), which is typical for full-service California cities. Community Development represents approximately 7% of the total General Fund budget.

5-Year General Fund Forecast

The Finance Department has prepared a five-year forecast for the General Fund as a planning tool. Key findings relevant to Commission deliberations:

- Revenues and expenditures are projected to remain approximately in balance through FY 2031-32, growing from ~\$43.7M to ~\$51.3M.

Overview of the City Budget

June 9, 2026

Page 4 of 5

- The General Fund reserve balance is projected to remain well above the Council-adopted 25% minimum throughout the forecast period.
- The forecast is updated twice annually: following mid-year actuals (February/March) and following year-end close (September).
- The forecast uses conservative assumptions and will be refined as economic conditions and known cost drivers evolve.

The City's heavy reliance on property tax (40% of revenues) provides relative stability compared to cities that depend more heavily on sales tax. However, known cost pressures — including deferred infrastructure maintenance, underfunded self-insurance reserves, and growing pension obligations — underscore the importance of the new Internal Service Funds being developed for FY 2026-27.

The Budget Process

The annual budget cycle for FY 2026-27 is currently underway. The process and key milestones are as follows:

Month / Date	Milestone
January 2026	Revenue projections and salary projections prepared by Finance
February 2026	City Council Study Session: strategic goals and budget priorities; prior year ACFR reviewed
March 2026	Current-year mid-year review; FY 26-27 budget kickoff for departments
April 2026	City Manager reviews operating budget requests; Capital Improvement Program development
May 14, 2026	City Manager's Proposed Budget posted for public review
May 20, 2026	City Council Study Session #1
May 28, 2026	Community Budget Meeting (public)
June 3, 2026	City Council Study Session #2
June 10, 2026	Joint City Council / Finance Commission meeting
June 17, 2026	City Council Public Hearing; Budget Adoption
July 1, 2026	FY 2026-27 Fiscal Year begins

How the Commission Contributes

Commissioners serve as liaisons to the community and bring constituent perspectives on the Community Development Department Work Plan and priorities to the attention of City staff and Council. Commission's also serve to support the respective department in successfully achieving the Department's Work Plan.

Each Commission receives a presentation from staff annually on the Department's Work Plan, which is funded by the City Council through the annual budget process. Through that presentation, the Commission is asked to provide feedback and recommendations. If any new work plan items are recommended by the Commission, staff will present the

recommendation, along with an estimated cost and staff time, for City Council consideration during the budget development process when departments submit their enhancement requests.

Commissioners may submit written input or attend public budget sessions during the various public meetings held in May and June.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with the receipt of this informational report.

Attachments

- A. City Budget Overview Presentation (PowerPoint)

ATTACHMENT 1

City Budget Presentation

City Budget Process

Date: June 2026

Prepared By: Finance Department

What Is a City Budget?

The Annual Financial Plan

The budget is the City's official plan for how it will collect and spend public money each year. City Council must adopt it before the fiscal year begins.

Legally Required & Binding

State law requires cities to adopt a balanced budget. Departments cannot spend more than their approved appropriation — the legal spending limit.

How Big Is It?

South Pasadena's total budget is approximately \$90 million across all funds. The General Fund — the main operating budget — is about \$43 million.

Fiscal Year: July 1 – June 30

Unlike the calendar year, the City's fiscal year runs July 1 through June 30. "FY 2026-27" means July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

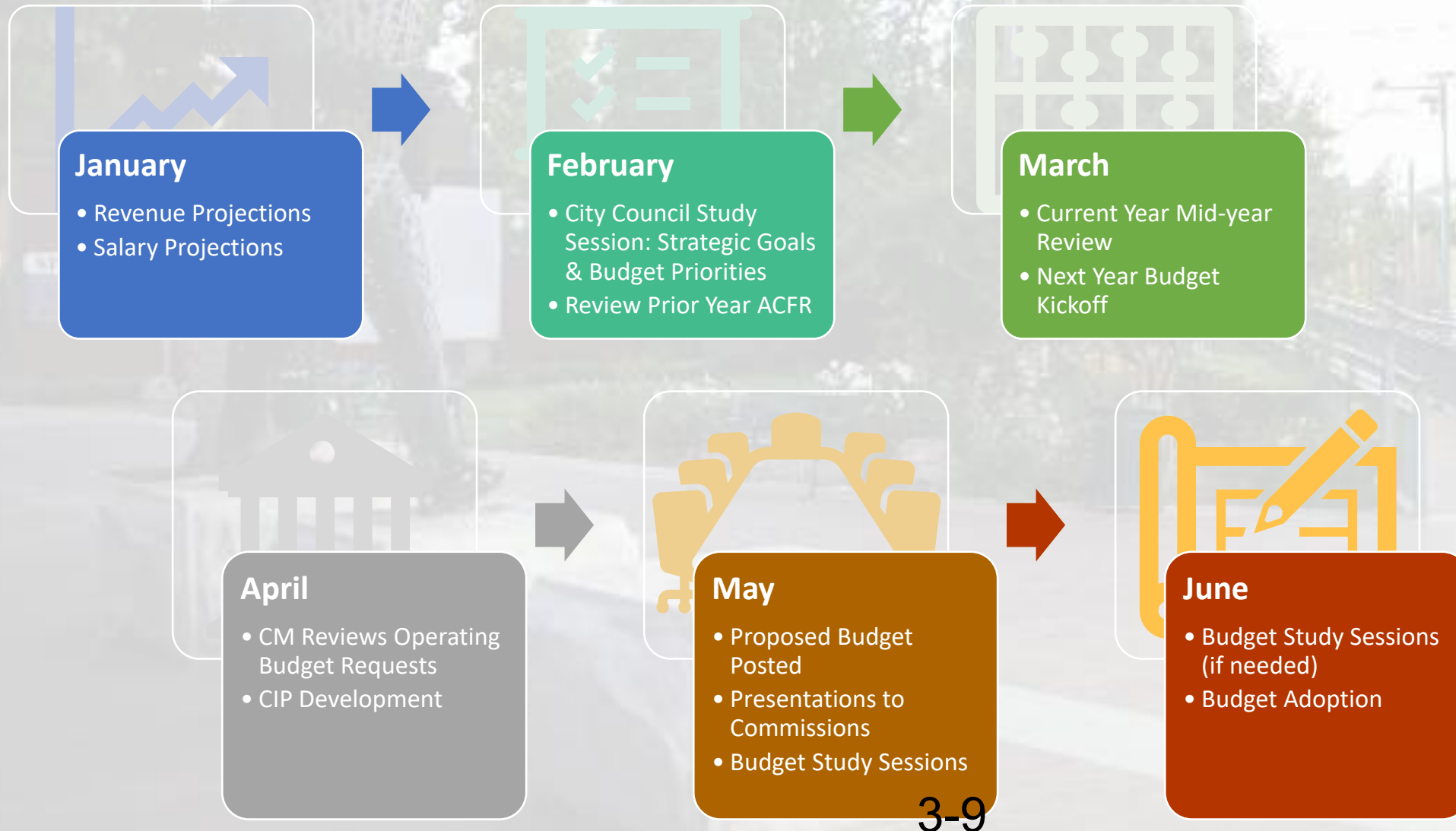
Who Approves It?

The City Manager proposes the budget. City Council holds public hearings and adopts it each June. Commissions like yours provide community input throughout the process.

What Does It Fund?

Police, Fire, Public Works, Library, Parks, Water, Sewer, and all the day-to-day services residents rely on. The budget translates priorities into action.

A Robust Budget Process



3-9

FY 2026-2027 Budget

Budget Building Blocks

Community Survey

2025



Why South Pasadena?

1. Quality of Life
2. Sense of Community
3. Schools/Education



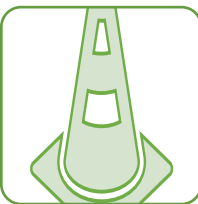
Continued Budget Priorities

1. Infrastructure
2. Public Safety
3. Library



New Budget Priorities

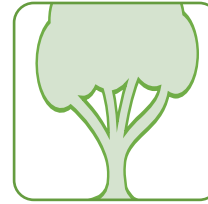
1. Affordable Housing
2. Rent Control
3. Infrastructure Renovation



Other Community Priorities

1. Street Repair & Maintenance
2. Safe Streets & Traffic Control
3. Revitalization of Library and Parks

2026



Why South Pasadena?

1. Quality of Life
2. Culture/Community Feel
3. Schools/Education



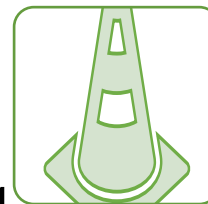
Continued Budget Priorities

1. Infrastructure
2. Public Safety
3. Community Events (i.e. Farmer's Market, 4th of July, Arts Crawls, etc.)



New Budget Priorities

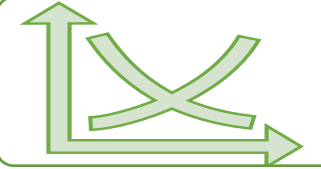
1. New Pedestrian Nature Trails
2. Plant more Parkway Trees
3. More Bike Lanes



Other Community Priorities

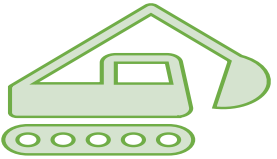
1. Condition of streets/street lights/traffic signage
2. Walk-ability/bike-ability/pedestrian safety

City Council Priorities



Finance

- Recruit/Retain Skilled Staff
- Improve Financial Reporting & Budgeting



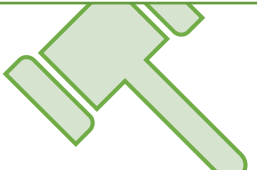
Infrastructure

- Move Capital Improvement Program forward
- Address condition of City-owned Facilities



Housing

- Finalize Housing Element & related zoning
- Complete acquisition & Sale of CalTrans properties



Governance

- Update Policies and Implement Best Practices
- Align Commission policies and procedures with City Council policies and procedures



City Operations

- Establish formal Community Communication Strategy/Plan
- Develop Departmental KPIs to measure progress/success

General Fund - Revenue

Forecast Methodology

Top 5 Revenue Sources



Property Taxes (40%)

- Housing Trend Data, Property Tax Consultants, Economic Activity



Vehicle License Fees/Intergovernmental (11%)

- Automotive Trends, Property Tax Consultants, Economic Activity



Utility Users Tax (11%)

- Consumption/Rates Trend Data, Tax Consultants, Economic Activity



Charges for Services (8%)

- Economic Activity, Historical Trend Data



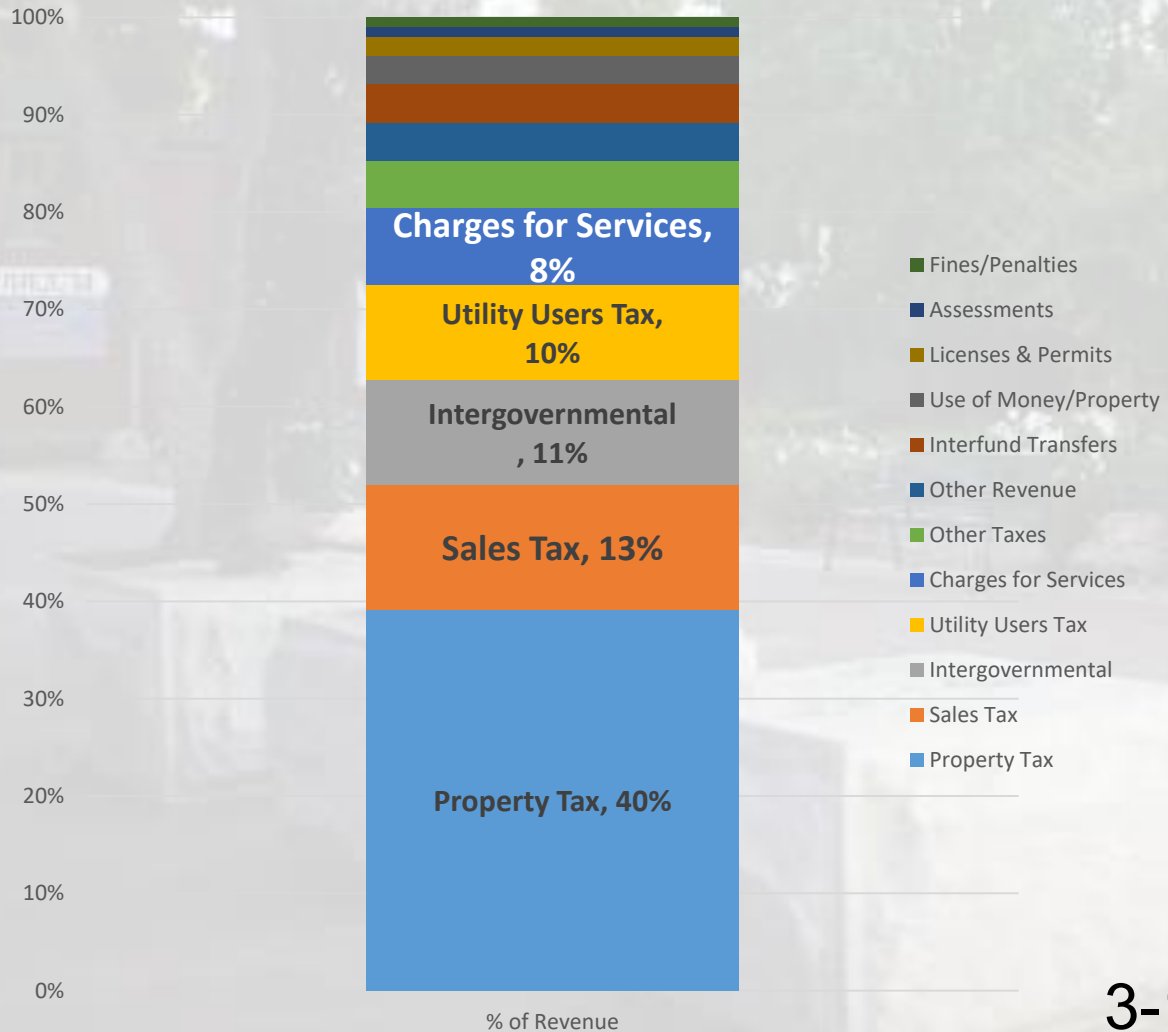
Sales & Transaction Use Taxes (13%)

- Economic Activity & Forecast, Sales Tax Consultants, Trend Data

~85%

General Fund: Revenue

By Source



Top 5 Revenue Sources = ~85% of Total

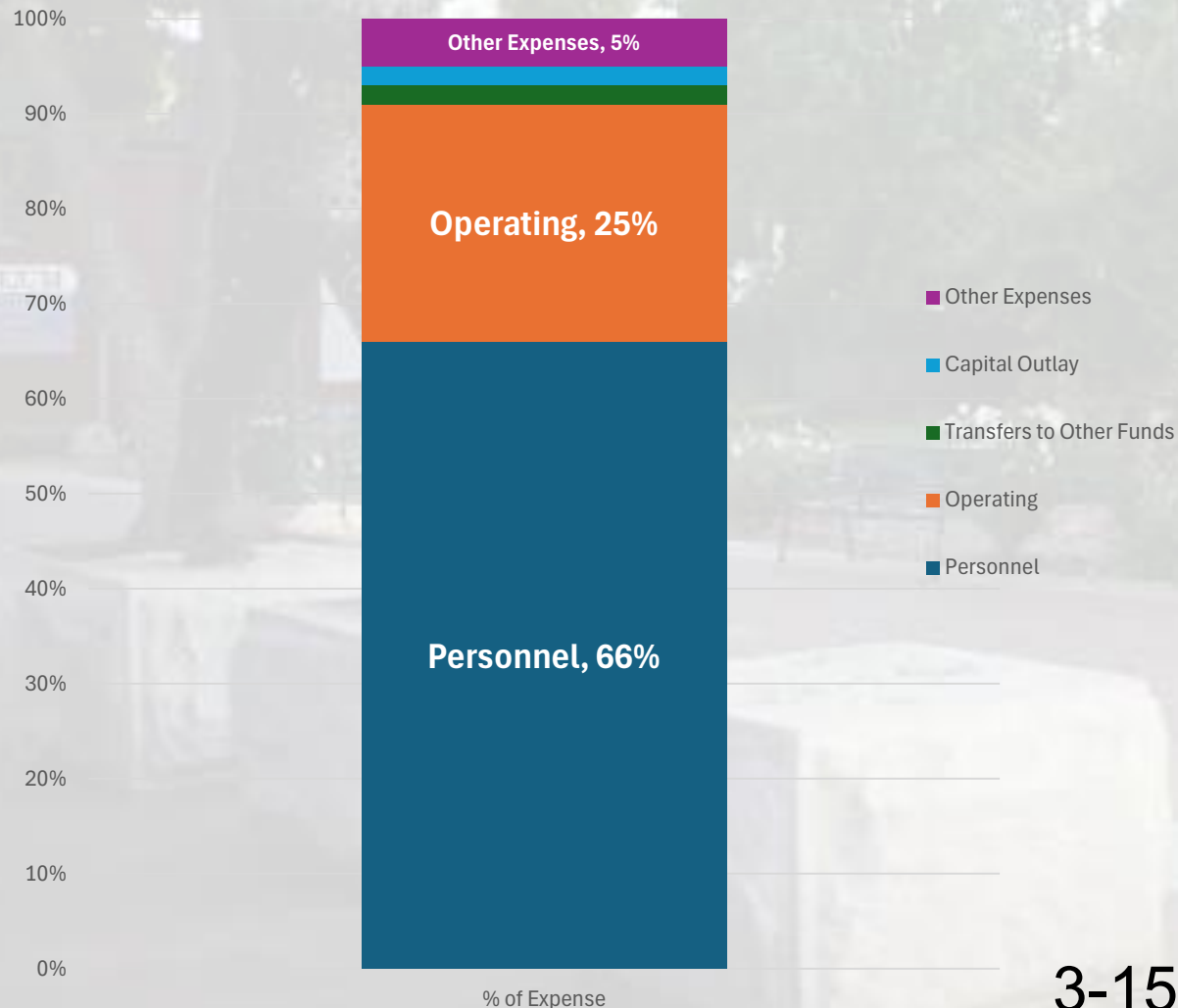
Heavily Reliant on **Property Tax** = Most stable & Low Sensitivity to Short-term Economic Conditions

Source of funding for most one-time & ongoing Enhancement Requests

3-14

General Fund: Expenditures

By Category



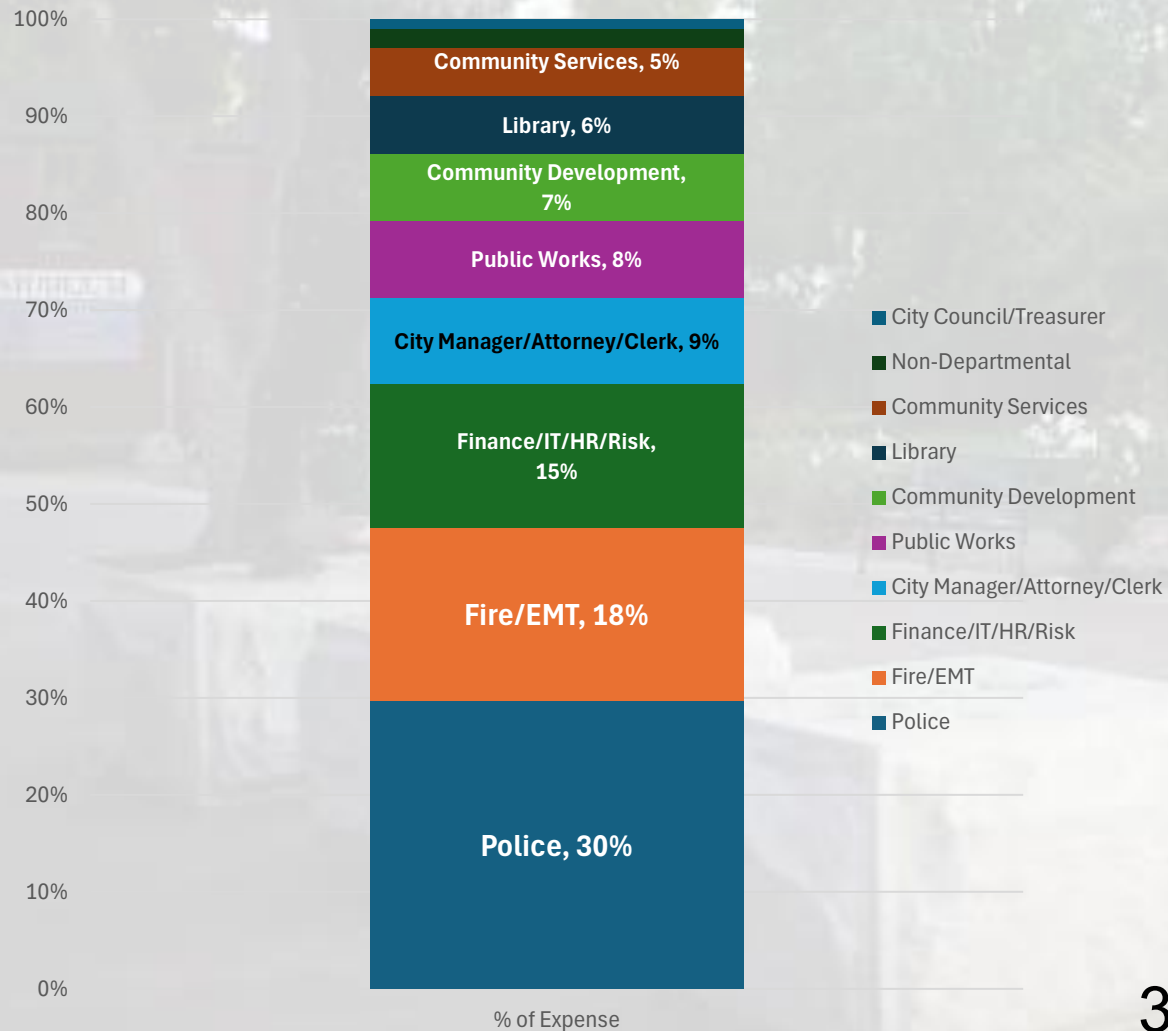
66% of budget for **Personnel** – relatively fixed and subject to bargaining agreements

Operating Costs – Includes contracted services such as city attorney, building review & inspection, street sweeping, tree maintenance, park maintenance that account for more than 50% of total operations.

Approximately 5% of costs available as “**discretionary**” funding for new priorities. (~\$2.25 million)

General Fund: Expenditures

By Department



~50% of budget for **Public Safety** – Common in Municipal Operations.

~25% for public facing community services.

~25% for internal management support services.

FY 2026-2027 Budget

General Fund Overview

A Path to Sustainability

Building on the FY 2025-2026 work to stabilize operations, restore financial reporting, and equitably allocate costs across funds, the FY 2026-2027 Proposed Budget aligns structural operating costs with recurring revenues and establishes the dedicated reserves the City needs for long-term financial stability.

Three Significant Cost Pressures

Compensation Adjustments

- Recently ratified labor agreements
- Necessary for organizational stability

Internal Service Charges

- Liability, workers' comp, facility, and fleet costs not previously built into operating budgets

Streets & Sidewalks Condition

- Deteriorating pavement and sidewalk infrastructure requiring a long-term plan

Departmental Response & Results

Operating Efficiencies

- Each department identified savings within existing operations

Increase Cost Recovery Revenue

- Pursued opportunities to recover costs through user fees to ensure customers are paying their fair share

7% Operating Reduction

- Additional across-the-board reduction applied to remaining General Fund operating expenditures

Results: A balanced budget that funds ongoing obligations and preserves the unassigned General Fund reserve about the 25% policy minimum

Balanced Budget at a Glance

\$45.7M

PROJECTED REVENUES

+1.5% vs FY25-26 amended

\$45.7M

OPERATING EXPENDITURES

Includes new ISF charges & labor

\$3.2M

ONE-TIME RESERVE TRANSFERS

Resolves Negative Fund Balance for 3 ISFs & Election '26

\$48.9M

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

Operating + reserve transfer

General Fund Reserve – Minimum Requirement Maintained

\$14.3M*

Ending
Unassigned
Reserve

31%

Reserve as %
of
Expenditures

\$2.9M

Above 25%
Policy
Minimum

*Includes Designated for Fiscal Findings (DFF): \$1.5M earmarked from available reserve to absorb anticipated cleanup adjustments related to fund balances, audit findings, and disallowed grant expenditures.

Four Focus Areas Advancing the Path to Sustainability

Each focus area directly advances one or more of the Council's adopted priorities for FY 2026-2027.



1. Confronting the City's Largest Financial Exposures

- One-time funding to address negative balances and establish reserves in the Self-Insurance, Facility Maintenance, and Vehicle Replacement Funds.
- Council Priority: Finance



2. Strengthening Customer Service

- Launch the Customer Success Center and Salesforce platform, with no net increase to citywide headcount.
- Council Priorities: Operational Efficiencies; Community Services Evaluation



3. Preparing for the Budgetary Effects of Development

- Comprehensive update of Development Impact Fees and evaluation of alternate financing mechanism.
- Council Priorities: Finances; Housing



4. Addressing Critical Infrastructure Needs

- Long-term financing plan for streets and sidewalks; continued direct CIP budgeting in restricted funds.
- Council Priorities: Infrastructure; Traffic Mitigation & Safety



Four Focus Areas Advancing the Path to Sustainability

Each focus area directly advances one or more of the Council's adopted priorities for FY 2026-2027.



1. Confronting the City's Largest Financial Exposures

- One-time funding to address negative balances and establish reserves in the Self-Insurance, Facility Maintenance, and Vehicle Replacement Funds.
- Council Priority: Finance



2. Strengthening Customer Service

- Launch the Customer Success Center and Salesforce platform, with no net increase to citywide headcount.
- Council Priorities: Operational Efficiencies; Community Services Evaluation



3. Preparing for the Budgetary Effects of Development

- Comprehensive update of Development Impact Fees and evaluation of alternate financing mechanism.
- Council Priorities: Finances; Housing



4. Addressing Critical Infrastructure Needs

- Long-term financing plan for streets and sidewalks; continued direct CIP budgeting in restricted funds.
- Council Priorities: Infrastructure; Traffic Mitigation & Safety



Continuing Reforms Across the City's Funds

Beyond the four focus areas, the Proposed Budget continues active financial management initiatives across the City's Enterprise, Special Revenue, and Internal Service Funds — and supports priority work that advances through department work plans and the Council Scorecard.

ENTERPRISE FUNDS

- Water and Sewer Utility Rate Study returning to Council in late spring / early summer 2026
- Water Fund debt management and refunding evaluation as market conditions allow
- Reinstated water service shutoffs to restore collections discipline
- Arroyo Seco Golf Course public-private partnership exploration

SPECIAL REVENUE & ISFs

- Five-year income statements completed to resolve negative fund balances
- \$1.5M Designated for Fiscal Findings to absorb anticipated cleanup adjustments
- Direct CIP budgeting in restricted Special Revenue Funds
- ISFs sustained ongoing through internal service charges built into operating budgets

ADVANCED THOUGH WORK PLANS

- Urban Forest Management Plan — community-engaged plan development
- Community Services Programs Evaluation — supported by Customer Success Center data infrastructure
- Quarterly Council Scorecard reporting on all adopted priorities
- Updates returned to Council as deliverables are completed

Budget Document Organization

Introduction: Budget Message

Summary Schedules

General Fund
Department
Budgets

Other Funds

3-23

FY 2026-2027 Budget

Budget Schedule

3-24

Budget Schedule

City Manager's Proposed Budget Posted for Public Review: May 14, 2026

All City Commissions

Presentation
May 14, 2026
June 10, 2026 (joint)

City Council

Study Sessions:
May 20, 2026
June 3, 2026
June 10, 2026 (joint)
Budget Adoption:
June 17, 2026

Community

Budget Meeting:
May 28, 2026
Public Hearing:
June 17, 2026

Fiscal Year Begins: July 1, 2026

FY 2026-2027 Budget

Questions

3-26



Planning Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 4

DATE: June 9, 2026

FROM: Erika Ramirez, Community Development Director
Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION REGARDING CITYWIDE
MULTIFAMILY AND MIXED-USE OBJECTIVE DESIGN
STANDARDS (ODS)**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission receive and discuss the presentation related to City-wide Multi-family and Mixed-use Objective Design Standards and provide feedback as appropriate.

ANALYSIS

Torti Gallas + Partners was selected by the City to prepare citywide ODS for multifamily and mixed-use development. Work began in January 2026 and is anticipated to be completed by December 2026. The consultant team is collaborating with a Planning Commission subcommittee, Planning staff, the City's contract architect, City Council, and the community. The effort also includes review of key regulatory documents, recent development projects, and public input gathered through surveys and engagement activities.

The consultant and staff will prepare a presentation to the Planning Commission to provide an update of the work completed so far, a timeline of work to come, and will seek direction from the Commission with respect to architectural and building frontage types and other design standards.