

**SANTA CLARA CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2026  
MEETING MINUTES**

THE CITY COUNCIL FOR SANTA CLARA CITY, WASHINGTON, UTAH, met for a Work Meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 2603 Santa Clara Drive, Santa Clara, Utah. The meeting will be broadcasted on our city website at <https://santaclarautah.gov>.

Present: Mayor Jarett Waite  
Councilman Mark Hendrickson  
Councilman Dave Pond  
Councilwoman Christa Hinton (arrived at 4:27 pm)  
Councilman Justin Caplin

Absent: Councilwoman Janene Burton

Staff Present: Brock Jacobsen, City Manager  
Selena Nez, City Recorder  
Matt Ence, City Attorney  
Jim McNulty, Planning Director  
Cody Mitchell, Building Official  
Dan Cazier, Fire Chief  
Casey Stratton, Public Works Director  
Gary Hall, Power Director  
Ryan VonCannon, Parks Director  
Lance Haynie, Government Affairs Director  
Rich Rogers, Police Captain

Others Present: Rick Rosenberg  
Clark Ence  
Cathy Ence

### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Jarett Waite called the Santa Clara City Council Work Meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Present from the council were Councilman Mark Hendrickson, Councilman David Pond, Councilwoman Christa Hinton and Councilman Justin Caplin.

### **2. Working Agenda**

#### **A. General Business:**

##### **1. Federal Update presented by James Leavitt, Legislative Director from Cleste Maloy's office.**

James Leavitt, newly appointed District Director for Congresswoman Celeste Maloy, provided a federal legislative update. He noted that Congress was considering the ESA Amendments Act, sponsored by Chairman Bruce Westerman, which would reform the Endangered Species Act to give states and local governments greater input into species recovery criteria. He observed that only approximately 3 percent of listed species are currently recovered under the existing framework, and while the bill was expected to pass the House, its prospects in the Senate remained uncertain.

On matters directly relevant to Santa Clara City, Mr. Leavitt acknowledged the federal contribution of \$1,250,000 toward the city's sewer line expansion project, crediting the city for its substantial groundwork in securing those funds. He also reported that \$2,800,000 had been secured for the St. George Regional Airport in FY 2026. Regarding the city's \$3,000,000 request for a transmission line and substation, Mr. Leavitt confirmed the request had been formally submitted and was visible on the Congresswoman's website. He cautioned that passage could be delayed given that FY 2027 is an

election year and continuing resolutions were possible but expressed confidence that the request was well-positioned in committee.

Mr. Leavitt also extended an invitation for a stop in Santa Clara during Congresswoman Maloy's planned district visit the week of May 4–8, 2026, and invited the Council to identify any projects or topics they wished to highlight. Councilman Hendrickson noted his question regarding the power line request had been answered. The Mayor thanked Mr. Leavitt and expressed the city's appreciation for Congresswoman Maloy's ongoing support.

## **2. Discussion regarding the Tentative Budget FY 2026. Presented by Brock Jacobsen, City Manager.**

City Manager Brock Jacobsen presented the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2027, noting that figures had continued to be refined since the packet was distributed and that the version on screen reflected updates through the prior Thursday.

General Fund: Projected revenues were approximately \$11,660,000 against expenditures of just over \$12,000,000, resulting in a projected fund balance draw of approximately \$360,000–\$370,000. Mr. Jacobsen noted staff would continue working to narrow that gap.

Revenue highlights included a tax revenue increase of approximately 3 percent (to \$4,900,000) due to new growth in property tax and modest sales tax gains. Building permits were conservatively budgeted at 60 new home permits, encompassing activity at Desert's Edge, Quail Crossing, Pioneer Point, Black Desert, and Solace developments. Mr. Jacobsen noted the city had already exceeded that figure in the current year. Transit room tax revenues continued to grow with the expansion of short-term rentals in the northwest part of the city, and the RAP tax similarly reflected increased local sales activity. Business license revenues increased significantly following a fee adjustment from \$50 to \$150. Intergovernmental revenue included approximately \$2,500,000 from the public safety cost-sharing agreement with Ivins City for fire, EMS, and justice court services.

Expenditure highlights by department included:

- City Council/City Manager: Minor adjustments, with the City Manager budget down approximately 11 percent.
- Justice Court: Budgeted at \$435,000, with approximately \$130,000 being a pass-through to the state; Santa Clara's net share is approximately 43 percent under the current agreement.
- Administration: Down approximately 42 percent to \$554,000, primarily due to IT expenses being separated into a new standalone IT Services department (\$541,000), which will improve cost tracking and includes an ADA website compliance project with a deadline approximately one year out.
- Police: Santa Clara's portion of the Ivins City-managed police budget is \$1,750,000 (42.3 percent of the total), plus fuel access and a \$54,000 contribution toward a school resource officer.
- Fire: The largest increase in the budget, rising from approximately \$3,200,000 to \$4,300,000. Key drivers included the addition of three new full-time firefighters at a cost of approximately \$370,000 in wages and benefits (plus PPE), a doubling of the wildland fire crew to two crews (generating increased revenue offset), a significant increase in insurance costs (from approximately \$300,000 to \$460,000), and a budgeted part-time administrative assistant for the fire department as previously discussed by the Council.

Mr. Jacobsen also introduced the possibility of pursuing a SAFER Grant, which would allow the city to hire six firefighters instead of three. Under the grant's cost-sharing structure, Santa Clara's first-year cost would be only approximately \$78,000 for all six positions, compared to \$370,000 for three without the grant. The grant announcement was expected imminently, with awards anticipated around September. The Council expressed general interest, and Mr. Jacobsen noted the Ivins City management team was also supportive of the approach. He acknowledged this would delay the hire of even three firefighters until the grant outcome was known.

- Building/Planning/Streets/Parks/Waste Collection: Each reflected modest increases of 5–10 percent with no major structural changes.
- Swiss Days: Budgeted at \$130,000, with a note that the coordinator position included in the budget would need to be revisited as the event's staffing situation evolves beyond the current fiscal year.
- Parks: Highlighted projects included a splash pad (\$500,000), Tobler Park improvements (\$250,000), columbarium expansion at the cemetery (\$200,000 for four units), and batting cage upgrades at Gubler Park (\$100,000, largely in-house labor).

#### Enterprise Funds:

- Water Fund: Operating revenues of approximately \$2,870,000 were sufficient to cover operating expenses of \$2,600,000, with a modest projected fund balance use of approximately \$47,000 after accounting for bond payments, impact fee projects, and a Solace development ductile line upgrade.
- Sewer Fund: Service charge revenues of approximately \$1,100,000; largest expense is the \$550,000 treatment cost paid to St. George City. The \$100,000 budgeted for design of the congressionally requested sewer line expansion was noted. A slight fund balance increase of \$12,000 was projected.
- Power Fund: Total operating revenues of approximately \$7,750,000, with major expenditures including UAMPS power purchases (\$2,500,000), ownership costs (\$1,750,000), and the construction of the 69kV transmission line and South Hills Substation at just under \$3,000,000 (funded by accumulated impact fees). Mr. Jacobsen also noted engineering work to begin metering the Grimshaw line, generator fuel costs, equipment leases, and a high circuit rebuild. A fund balance draw of approximately \$325,000 was projected.
- Storm Water Fund: Operating revenues of \$624,000 against expenses of \$718,000, with improvements budgeted at approximately \$207,000 (including river cleaning and curb-and-gutter work on Victor-area streets) and bond payments of \$113,000. A fund balance draw of approximately \$73,000 was projected.

Impact Fees: Revenue of approximately \$1,300,000 was projected based on 60 building permits. Key impact fee expenditures included a Sycamore Crossing bridge bond payment (streets), columbarium and splash pad projects (parks), a public safety impact fee study update (\$60,000), and power fund infrastructure projects.

Councilman Caplin raised questions regarding the frequency of fund balance draws across multiple funds and expressed a preference for working toward structural balance. Mr. Jacobsen acknowledged the concern and explained that capital equipment purchases and major infrastructure investments are the primary drivers. Councilman Caplin also inquired whether the fire budget increase required Ivins City approval under the proposed new interagency agreement; Mr. Jacobsen confirmed Ivins City leadership had reviewed the budget and expressed no objections, noting that wildland expenses are variable and offset by corresponding revenues.

Items identified at the budget retreat that were not yet fully addressed included cemetery expansion (land needs to be identified), restrooms at the cemetery, Little League parking upgrades (to be funded via county TRT or RAP tax), digital speed signs (estimated \$3,500–\$5,500 per sign; Council requested quotes for three signs including one on Pioneer Parkway), the Jacob Drive entrance to Gubler Park, banquet room sound system (estimated approximately \$6,000), and HVAC issues in the banquet room.

### **3. Discussion regarding Hillside Protection Overlay Zone. Presented by Jim McNulty, Planning Director.**

Planning Director Jim McNulty opened the discussion by noting that the City's Hillside Protection Overlay Zone, adopted in 2008, had not been updated in 18 years and was overdue for a comprehensive review. He proposed broadening the scope of the ordinance from a hillside-only focus to a full "Sensitive Area Overlay Zone," similar in concept to those adopted by Sandy City and other

Utah municipalities. Such an expanded ordinance would address not only slope constraints, but also earthquake fault lines, rockfall hazards, flooding, erosion, wildland-urban interface (WUI) concerns, native vegetation, and other geological and environmental hazards.

Mr. McNulty indicated that rather than having staff rewrite the ordinance internally, he preferred forming a small, focused committee of professionals, drawing from the Hillside Review Board and community experts such as former Mayor Rick Rosenberg, Board Chair Jerry Admundsen, and Wayne Rogers with a goal of completing the work within six months. He noted that benchmarking had already begun, with six or seven comparable ordinances from cities including Sandy, Mill Creek, Layton, Ogden, St. George, and Ivins identified for reference. He also observed that the current ordinance lacked basic governance provisions such as term limits and officer election procedures, which would need to be incorporated in the rewrite. His preference was to produce a more concise document closer to 20–25 pages rather than the current 40 pages while strengthening its substantive protections.

Former Mayor Rick Rosenberg, now serving on the Hillside Review Board, addressed the Council and shared his perspective based on his recent participation in a board review. He recounted that the existing ordinance contains provisions that are vague, unenforceable, or open to wide interpretation particularly regarding slope disturbance thresholds, allowable cut and fill dimensions, and access routes through steep terrain. He noted that the Utah Geologic Survey had already prepared comprehensive hazard maps for Washington County prior to 2005, providing a ready foundation for updating the city's sensitive area maps. He also suggested that the Hillside Review Board's professional membership could serve as a broader resource to staff on flood plain, erosion, and drainage reviews not just hillside projects and expressed hope that a more consolidated ordinance could be developed before significant new development occurs in areas such as the South Hills and the newly annexed reservoir area.

Councilman Hendrickson expressed strong support for a holistic approach, noting the practical value of consolidating separate ordinances into a single sensitive lands framework and emphasizing the need to get ahead of pending development pressure, particularly given the approximately 1,500 acres of recently annexed land and areas around the reservoir.

The Mayor raised the question of whether conditions were serious enough to warrant placing a moratorium on hillside development while the new ordinance was drafted. Mr. McNulty disclosed that two active development groups were preparing or had recently attempted to submit hillside applications, one of which had been found incomplete and that between the two projects, approximately 100 lots were involved. Mr. Rosenberg acknowledged the moratorium concept had merit, particularly given concerns about the adequacy of recent submittals, and noted that the design guidelines rewrite had successfully been completed within a six-month moratorium window.

City Manager Brock Jacobsen and City Attorney Matt Ence advised that a moratorium could be enacted without a public hearing under state law but would be limited to six months and should not be assumed extendable. City Attorney Ence cautioned that any attempt to extend the moratorium would likely be vulnerable to legal challenge.

The Council discussed scheduling a special meeting to adopt the moratorium ordinance before any complete application could be submitted. The consensus was to hold a special meeting on Monday, April 27, 2026, at 5:00 PM, providing sufficient time for the City Attorney to prepare the necessary findings and ordinance. City Manager Jacobsen confirmed this was feasible, and City Attorney Ence indicated the former mayor would be a helpful resource in preparing supporting documentation.

#### **4. Discussion regarding Roosters. Presented by Mayor Waite.**

The Mayor introduced a discussion regarding the city's prohibition on roosters in the R-1-10 zone, prompted by a code enforcement complaint and subsequent outreach from Clark and Cathy Ence, long-time residents of the Vineyard Drive area. Mr. Clark Ence addressed the Council, noting he had kept chickens and a rooster on his property since 1979 and expressed concern that the current ordinance did not accommodate his longstanding agricultural use. Mrs. Cathy Ence explained that a rooster is essential to maintain a continuous flock, as hens' egg-laying capacity diminishes over time without the ability to hatch new chicks.

The Mayor provided context: the Vineyard Drive area is zoned R-1-10 to the north and RA (rural agricultural) to the south, creating an ambiguous boundary for residents who settled in the area with rural expectations. He noted that informal canvassing of residents had revealed divided opinions some welcomed the sound of roosters, while others objected to the noise. He also disclosed that at least one additional rooster was known to exist near his own neighborhood, suggesting the issue was more widespread than the single complaint implied.

City Manager Jacobsen confirmed that the prohibition on roosters in R-1-10 had been in the code for many years and that other residents in the area had received similar notices and complied. The Ence family's situation arose from a neighbor complaint to code enforcement.

City Attorney Ence advised that the Ences may have grounds for a legal nonconforming use claim (commonly referred to as grandfathering), provided they could demonstrate continuous and uninterrupted rooster ownership since before the relevant ordinance was enacted. He noted this would require further factual inquiry and would not resolve the broader policy question.

The Council discussed several potential policy options, including: maintaining the status quo (no roosters in R-1-10), allowing roosters citywide, permitting roosters only on properties adjacent to RA zones, creating a new sub-zone designation for such properties, or permitting roosters subject to a requirement that they wear a crowing-restriction collar (a device that limits the rooster's ability to crow by restricting airway expansion).

Councilman Caplin expressed openness to amending the ordinance to allow roosters with appropriate limitations. Councilman Pond suggested that if noise is the central concern, a collar requirement or an adjacency-to-RA carve-out could address it. Councilman Hendrickson agreed that the prohibition was appropriate for true residential neighborhoods but acknowledged the boundary situation on Vineyard Drive warranted a nuanced approach. Councilwoman Hinton expressed hesitation about rewriting ordinances based on a single complaint, noting that in the absence of widespread complaints, the current code may be functioning adequately.

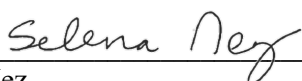
The Mayor acknowledged the differing views and directed that the matter be brought back for further discussion after additional community input is gathered. In the interim, it was suggested that the Ences engage further with the City Attorney to explore the legal nonconforming use question specific to their property.

### **3. Staff Reports**

Staff reports were deferred to the regular City Council meeting scheduled for 6:00 PM the same evening, due to time constraints.

### **4. Adjournment**

Mayor Waite adjourned the work meeting at 5:33 p.m., noting they would reconvene at 6:00 p.m. for the regular meeting.

  
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Selena Nez  
City Recorder

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ May 27, 2026