



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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NEWS RELEASE



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BOARD APPROVES 2023-24 PROPOSED BUDGET

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved the \$1.1 billion Fiscal Year 2023-24 Proposed Budget, including a \$731 million General Fund, that reflects slowing revenue growth while preserving support for community priorities despite significant uncertainties in local, State and national financial forecasts.

Despite challenges including financing the most recent storm disasters, the Proposed Budget supports several key initiatives, including establishment of a new South County Government Center and a new Children's Crisis Stabilization Center, design of a new Freedom Campus Health Care Center, completion of the Live Oak Library Annex and Aptos Library, the creation of a Master Plan on Aging, increases in funding for inmate medical and behavioral health care, and completion of a new DNA laboratory.

In addition to a slowing economy resulting, the County faces structural issues continue to limit County revenues. Despite half of County residents living in unincorporated areas – a much larger share than other counties -- the County collects just 13 cents out of every property tax dollar, which is lower than most counties. And the county faces continues increasing costs due to inflation, employee retention, increased costs for disaster response due to climate change, and unfunded State mandates, including the implementation of the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act.

Kicking off the final budget hearing, the County was pleased to accept an award from the California State Association of Counties for its online budget. To learn more about the 2023-24 Proposed Budget, visit the County's award-winning budget website at <https://www.santacruzcounty.us/VisionSantaCruz/Budget.aspx>.

