



Description

The Communications Department provides information to educate and engage the public and City employees, effectively delivering accurate and consistent messages regarding City initiatives, programs, events and services in coordination with City departments and the Mayor's Office. Additionally, the Communications Department oversees the City's responses to news media and Public Records Act requests; manages content for the City's website and social media accounts; produces videos, graphics and printed materials, and CityTV programming. This programming includes coverage of news conferences, City Council and Committee meetings, and other public and community meetings. Finally, the Communications Department is responsible for internal communications to City employees through the City's intranet, CityNet, employee notifications, videos and production of an employee newsletter.

The vision is:

To be open and accessible to all people in our diverse community, to highlight our employees and programs, promptly answer questions and, in every communication, be responsive, accurate and professional.

The mission is:

To facilitate timely and honest communication and collaboration that fosters greater transparency and openness in City government.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: *Provide strategic communications support to all Mayoral City departments, offices and programs.*

- Maximize opportunities for promoting public reach and engagement for City communications.
- Ensure City's website sandiego.gov content is updated, accurate and easily understood by the public.
- Refine and develop Communications Department internal processes.

Goal 2: *Bolster openness and transparency in City government.*

- Ensure the City follows all requirements under the California Public Records Act (PRA) in responding to requests for records and information.
- Provide live CityTV coverage for meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission and other decision-making bodies and look for opportunities to expand coverage.
- Promote a better understanding of City government through education, community engagement and public information.

Goal 3: *Showcase City projects and employees at work in our communities.*

- Actively share information about City initiatives, programs and services to the media.
- Promote educational and engaging information about the City through a variety of avenues, including social media, print publications, sandiego.gov and CityTV.
- Enhance and grow the City's online and digital presence to empower employees, residents and visitors.

Goal 4: *Deliver public information that is accessible to all San Diegans.*

- Determine and implement marketing strategies and best practices for connecting with all residents across the City.
- Provide translation and interpretation services for City communication platforms and services.
- Ensuring Publishing Services meets the printing needs of all City departments in a timely and effective manner, using City resources.

Budget Equity Impact Statement

Equity Highlights

Examples from the current fiscal year.

- 1: Public outreach and engagement – in the past year we posted 231 articles and updates on our news platform Inside San Diego, increased our social media reach by 23% across seven platforms, with millions of people viewing and engaging with our content, completed 280 graphic design projects for both printed and digital materials, and more than 2,700 print orders, and shared 77 videos about City programs and services.
- 2: CityTV covered 43 news conferences, produced 77 videos, and directed 149 public meetings, including Council, Committee and the Planning Commission at the new Development Services Department public meeting facility in Mission Valley.
- 3: Public information accessible to all San Diegans - through our citywide contract, we've provided 644 translation services in 34 languages. The Communications Department is also working to ensure compliance with new federal rules on the accessibility of web content and mobile apps, with a deadline of 2027.

Budget Equity Lens Summary

Ongoing Operations

Is there an opportunity to adjust the department's ongoing operations to mitigate the impacts of identified disparities, gaps, and deficiencies?

YES

With limited funding for marketing and promotional materials (Tactical Equity Plan - Goal 3/Objective 2), Communications is exploring opportunities to engage with residents and provide information to them directly. In Fiscal Year 2027, we are planning to implement a new email communications tool (Indigov) that we can access through an existing contract with Granicus. This would allow us to send updates and timely information to residents about projects and events happening in their communities.

As Communications has limited resources and staffing to fully support the communications needs of the City's operational departments (Tactical Equity Plan - Goal 1/Objective 2), some departments have sought to add PIO positions embedded within their operations to support engagement and constituent management. Communications would support transferring these positions to our department to streamline Public Information Officer work and ensure the centralized communications model is upheld. The Communications Department continues to face staffing cuts due to the City's overall budget constraints. At a time when trust in government has deteriorated at the national and local level, and journalistic standards are faltering, it is imperative that the City continues to fund a dedicated communications team to ensure the levels of accuracy and transparency that residents and visitors deserve and expect.

Budget Adjustment(s)

Do the adjustments impact any department disparities, gaps, and deficiencies?

YES

The reduction of personnel and non-personnel expenditures creates an operational gap in service and fails to address an existing disparity in our ability to "deliver public information that is accessible

Communications

to all San Diegans.” (Tactical Equity Plan – Goal 4/Objective 1). As well as “bolster openness and transparency in City government.” (Goal 2/Objective 3).

The Budget Adjustments in Fiscal Year 2027 and prior years continue to leave the Communications Department with limited staffing and resources to meet the public's need for information and access to the City. These adjustments, specifically include the reduction of a Program Coordinator that supported the public safety team, which may result in reduced capacity for rapid response and crisis communications, a longer timeline to complete outreach and projects for City departments, as well as decreased ability to support evening and weekend events; also the reduction of a Multimedia Production Coordinator will result in less video coverage of City services and programs, news conferences, Mayor and City Council public events, other public and community meetings. Digital platforms are now the top place where people get their news. Outreach efforts will also be hindered by having fewer resources to promote City services and educate residents.

Key Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Definition	Baseline	FY2026 Performance	Goal
Language access services provided	Percent of translations and interpretations fulfilled	80.00%	90.00%	90.00%
Percentage of Publishing Services jobs completed by deadline	Percentage of Publishing Services jobs completed by the desired deadline.	50.00%	57.00%	90.00%
Social Media Follower Growth ¹	Percentage of increase in follower net growth for the City's social media accounts of Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn.	17.00%	23.00%	20.00%

- 1 The City's social media audience increasingly grew from 271,371 to 333,644 followers, adding more than 62,000 followers in a single fiscal year.

Department Summary

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
FTE Positions (Budgeted)	47.66	40.50	35.00	(5.50)
Personnel Expenditures	\$7,740,819	\$7,578,480	\$6,354,165	(\$1,224,315)
Non-Personnel Expenditures	1,372,195	1,775,773	1,706,263	(69,510)
Total Department Expenditures	\$9,113,013	\$9,354,253	\$8,060,428	(\$1,293,825)
Total Department Revenue	\$2,138,309	\$2,573,111	\$2,570,027	(\$3,084)

General Fund

Department Expenditures

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Communications	\$7,431,891	\$7,222,198	\$5,957,174	(\$1,265,024)
Total	\$7,431,891	\$7,222,198	\$5,957,174	(\$1,265,024)

Department Personnel

	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Communications	38.16	33.00	28.00	(5.00)
Total	38.16	33.00	28.00	(5.00)

Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Employ and Empower Program Support	1.00	\$50,863	\$50,871
Addition of 1.00 Intern - Hourly and associated revenue to support the Employ and Empower Program.			
One-time Additions and Annualizations	-	-	(53,955)
Adjustment to reflect one-time revenues and expenditures, and the annualization of revenues and expenditures, implemented in the prior Fiscal Year.			
Non-Discretionary Adjustment	-	(3,520)	-
Adjustment to expenditure allocations that are determined outside of the department's direct control. These allocations are generally based on prior year expenditure trends and examples of these include utilities, insurance, and rent.			
Discretionary Spending Savings	-	(4,032)	-
Reduction of non-personnel expenditures associated with a reduction in discretionary spending.			
Support for Information Technology	-	(26,254)	-
Adjustment to expenditure allocations according to an annual review of information technology funding requirements.			

Communications

Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Non-Standard Hour Personnel Funding	(1.00)	(53,925)	-
Funding allocated according to a zero-based annual review of hourly funding requirements.			
Salary and Benefit Adjustments¹	(1.00)	(115,364)	-
Adjustments to reflect savings resulting from vacant positions for any period of the fiscal year, retirement contributions, retiree health contributions, and labor negotiations.			
CityTV Team Support	(1.00)	(119,034)	-
Reduction of 1.00 Multimedia Production Coordinator supporting live coverage of City meetings and outreach on social channels to residents.			
Restructure of Public Records Act (PRA) Program	(1.00)	(452,451)	-
Transfer of 1.00 Program Manager and associated non-personnel expenditures to the Department of Information Technology.			
Public Records Act (PRA) Support	(2.00)	(541,307)	-
Reduction of 2.00 Program Coordinators supporting timely communication with public on the receipt, status, and completion of requests.			
Total	(5.00)	(\$1,265,024)	(\$3,084)

1. The budget adjustment includes the restructure of 1.00 FTE to the Department of Information Technology.

Expenditures by Category

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES				
Personnel Cost	4,519,052	4,248,477	3,552,474	(696,003)
Fringe Benefits	2,450,372	2,435,376	1,970,441	(464,935)
PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	6,969,424	6,683,853	5,522,915	(1,160,938)
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES				
Supplies	5,507	10,091	9,170	(921)
Contracts & Services	122,592	134,618	133,377	(1,241)
<i>External Contracts & Services</i>	7,515	9,200	6,200	(3,000)
<i>Internal Contracts & Services</i>	115,077	125,418	127,177	1,759
Information Technology	306,760	358,035	261,501	(96,534)
Energy and Utilities	21,367	27,601	22,211	(5,390)
Other Expenses	6,241	8,000	8,000	-
NON-PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	462,467	538,345	434,259	(104,086)
Total	\$7,431,891	\$7,222,198	\$5,957,174	(\$1,265,024)

Communications

Revenues by Category

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Charges for Current Services	\$818,252	\$626,062	\$622,978	(\$3,084)
Other Revenue	1,054	-	-	-
Total	\$819,306	\$626,062	\$622,978	(\$3,084)

Personnel Expenditures

Job Number	Job Title/Wages	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	Salary Range	Total
FTE, Salaries and Wages						
20001202	Assistant Deputy Director	0.00	1.00	1.00	79,643 - 292,822	\$181,293
20001101	Department Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	99,237 - 375,918	242,819
20001168	Deputy Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	79,643 - 292,822	200,491
20000289	Graphic Communications Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	90,355 - 109,200	107,794
20000487	Graphic Designer	2.00	2.00	2.00	69,534 - 83,574	167,148
91001000	Intern - Hourly	0.00	0.00	1.00	36,920 - 47,320	47,320
90001073	Management Intern - Hourly	1.16	1.00	0.00	36,920 - 47,320	-
20000170	Multimedia Production Coordinator	4.00	4.00	3.00	69,971 - 84,698	254,094
20001234	Program Coordinator	7.00	6.00	3.00	36,920 - 220,314	472,826
20001222	Program Manager	5.00	3.00	2.00	79,643 - 292,822	334,006
20000784	Public Information Officer	3.00	2.00	2.00	77,126 - 93,434	186,868
20000015	Senior Management Analyst	1.00	0.00	0.00	93,621 - 113,214	-
20000916	Senior Public Information Officer	7.00	7.00	7.00	95,846 - 115,835	809,297
20001021	Supervising Public Information Officer	5.00	4.00	4.00	105,269 - 127,192	508,768
	Bilingual - Regular					2,912
	Overtime Budgeted					9,525
	Salary Savings					(35,873)
	Standby Pay					5,792
	Vacation Pay In Lieu					57,394
FTE, Salaries and Wages Subtotal		38.16	33.00	28.00		\$3,552,474

Communications

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Fringe Benefits				
Employee Offset Savings	30,000	24,007	15,954	(8,053)
Flexible Benefits	499,615	443,619	395,651	(47,968)
Long-Term Disability	15,951	21,039	15,155	(5,884)
Medicare	66,383	60,221	50,542	(9,679)
Other Post-Employment Benefits	153,743	130,304	85,374	(44,930)
Retiree Medical Trust	6,487	6,597	6,520	(77)
Retirement 401 Plan	24,371	25,272	24,940	(332)
Retirement ADC	1,454,012	1,544,780	1,249,430	(295,350)
Retirement DROP	14,428	5,094	-	(5,094)
Risk Management Administration	50,532	53,312	42,849	(10,463)
Supplemental Pension Savings Plan	111,172	89,962	56,960	(33,002)
Unemployment Insurance	-	3,942	3,025	(917)
Workers' Compensation	23,677	27,227	24,041	(3,186)
Fringe Benefits Subtotal	\$2,450,372	\$2,435,376	\$1,970,441	(\$464,935)
Total Personnel Expenditures			\$5,522,915	

Publishing Services Fund

Department Expenditures

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Publishing Services	\$1,681,123	\$2,132,055	\$2,103,254	(\$28,801)
Total	\$1,681,123	\$2,132,055	\$2,103,254	(\$28,801)

Department Personnel

	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Publishing Services	9.50	7.50	7.00	(0.50)
Total	9.50	7.50	7.00	(0.50)

Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Non-Discretionary Adjustment	-	\$34,669	\$ -
Adjustment to expenditure allocations that are determined outside of the department's direct control. These allocations are generally based on prior year expenditure trends and examples of these include utilities, insurance, and rent.			
Support for Information Technology	-	(93)	-
Adjustment to expenditure allocations according to an annual review of information technology funding requirements.			

Communications

Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Salary and Benefit Adjustments	-	(5,286)	-
Adjustments to reflect savings resulting from vacant positions for any period of the fiscal year, retirement contributions, retiree health contributions, and labor negotiations.			
Print Shop Management	(0.50)	(58,091)	-
Reduction of 0.50 Information Systems Technician supporting Publishing Services operations.			
Total	(0.50)	(\$28,801)	\$ -

Expenditures by Category

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES				
Personnel Cost	514,016	575,347	535,308	(40,039)
Fringe Benefits	257,379	319,280	295,942	(23,338)
PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	771,395	894,627	831,250	(63,377)
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES				
Supplies	184,596	124,205	174,260	50,055
Contracts & Services	610,453	901,757	902,007	250
<i>External Contracts & Services</i>	528,333	832,169	814,633	(17,536)
<i>Internal Contracts & Services</i>	82,120	69,588	87,374	17,786
Information Technology	51,593	127,155	127,062	(93)
Energy and Utilities	63,085	81,032	65,396	(15,636)
Transfers Out	-	3,279	3,279	-
NON-PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	909,728	1,237,428	1,272,004	34,576
Total	\$1,681,123	\$2,132,055	\$2,103,254	(\$28,801)

Revenues by Category

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Charges for Current Services	\$1,344,663	\$1,947,049	\$1,947,049	\$ -
Other Revenue	342	-	-	-
Revenue from Use of Money and Property	(26,002)	-	-	-
Total	\$1,319,003	\$1,947,049	\$1,947,049	\$ -

Communications

Personnel Expenditures

Job Number	Job Title/Wages	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	Salary Range	Total
FTE, Salaries and Wages						
20000024	Administrative Aide 2	1.00	1.00	1.00	67,184 - 80,974	\$80,974
20000487	Graphic Designer	2.00	2.00	2.00	69,534 - 83,574	167,148
20000067	Information Systems Analyst 1	0.50	0.00	0.00	71,552 - 86,944	-
20000377	Information Systems Technician	0.00	0.50	0.00	68,474 - 82,555	-
20000752	Print Shop Supervisor	1.00	1.00	1.00	81,786 - 97,490	97,490
21000193	Publishing Specialist 2	2.00	2.00	2.00	45,032 - 53,331	106,174
20000912	Senior Offset Press Operator	2.00	0.00	0.00	53,976 - 64,272	-
21000194	Senior Publishing Specialist	1.00	1.00	1.00	52,437 - 63,149	63,149
	Overtime Budgeted					17,516
	Salary Savings					(4,847)
	Vacation Pay In Lieu					7,704
FTE, Salaries and Wages Subtotal		9.50	7.50	7.00		\$535,308

	FY2025 Actual	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Adopted	FY2026-2027 Change
Fringe Benefits				
Employee Offset Savings	719	797	810	13
Flexible Benefits	74,334	97,975	81,356	(16,619)
Long-Term Disability	1,806	2,789	2,224	(565)
Medicare	7,463	7,977	7,398	(579)
Other Post-Employment Benefits	31,757	32,576	22,134	(10,442)
Retiree Medical Trust	1,064	1,177	1,076	(101)
Retirement 401 Plan	4,223	4,703	4,303	(400)
Retirement ADC	117,004	141,565	153,368	11,803
Risk Management Administration	10,430	13,328	11,109	(2,219)
Supplemental Pension Savings Plan	4,487	4,822	4,826	4
Unemployment Insurance	-	523	444	(79)
Workers' Compensation	4,091	11,048	6,894	(4,154)
Fringe Benefits Subtotal	\$257,379	\$319,280	\$295,942	(\$23,338)
Total Personnel Expenditures			\$831,250	

Revenue and Expense Statement (Non-General Fund)

Publishing Services Fund	FY 2025 ACTUAL	FY 2026* BUDGET	FY 2027** ADOPTED
BEGINNING BALANCE AND RESERVES			
Balance from Prior Year	\$ (447,884)	\$ (810,004)	\$ (1,638,317)
TOTAL BALANCE AND RESERVES	\$ (447,884)	\$ (810,004)	\$ (1,638,317)
REVENUE			
Charges for Services	\$ 1,344,663	\$ 1,947,049	\$ 1,947,049
Other Revenue	342	-	-
Revenue from Use of Money and Property	(26,002)	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,319,003	\$ 1,947,049	\$ 1,947,049
TOTAL BALANCE, RESERVES, AND REVENUE	\$ 871,119	\$ 1,137,045	\$ 308,732
OPERATING EXPENSE			
Personnel Expenses	\$ 514,016	\$ 575,347	\$ 535,308
Fringe Benefits	257,379	319,280	295,942
Supplies	184,596	124,205	174,260
Contracts & Services	610,453	901,757	902,007
Information Technology	51,593	127,155	127,062
Energy and Utilities	63,085	81,032	65,396
Transfers Out	-	3,279	3,279
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	\$ 1,681,123	\$ 2,132,055	\$ 2,103,254
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 1,681,123	\$ 2,132,055	\$ 2,103,254
BALANCE	\$ (810,004)	\$ (995,010)	\$ (1,794,522)
TOTAL BALANCE, RESERVES, AND EXPENSE	\$ 871,119	\$ 1,137,045	\$ 308,732

*At the time of publication, audited financial statements for Fiscal Year 2026 were not available. Therefore, the Fiscal Year 2026 column reflects final budgeted revenue and expense amounts from the Fiscal Year 2026 Adopted Budget, while the beginning Fiscal Year 2026 balance amount reflects the audited Fiscal Year 2025 ending balance.

**Fiscal Year 2027 Beginning Fund Balance reflects the projected Fiscal Year 2026 Ending Fund Balance based on updated Revenue and Expenditures projections for Fiscal Year 2026.

***The Publishing Services Fund reflects a negative beginning/ending balance and will be monitored throughout Fiscal Year 2027 to address negative balances.