



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

## Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

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**File #:** 25-133

**Meeting Date:** 2/18/2025

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**TITLE:**

**CITY OF COSTA MESA, COSTA MESA FINANCE AUTHORITY, AND COSTA MESA HOUSING AUTHORITY AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, AND HOUSING SUCCESSOR ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 2024.**

**DEPARTMENT:** FINANCE DEPARTMENT

**PRESENTED BY:** CAROL MOLINA, FINANCE DIRECTOR

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** CAROL MOLINA, FINANCE DIRECTOR, (714) 754-5243

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Staff recommends the City Council receive and file the following reports for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024:
  - a. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) (Attachment 1).
  - b. Air Quality Improvement Fund Compliance Report (Attachment 2).
  - c. Audit Communication Letter (Attachment 3).
  - d. Independent Accountant's Report on Agreed-Upon Procedures Applied to Appropriation Limit Worksheets (Attachment 4).
2. Staff recommends the City Council and Costa Mesa Financing Authority receive and file the Costa Mesa Financing Authority audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 (Attachment 5).
3. Staff recommends the City Council and Housing Authority receive and file the following reports for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024:
  - a. Independent Financial Audit of the Costa Mesa Housing Authority, including the Low and Moderate-Income Housing Asset Fund (Attachment 6); and
  - b. The Fiscal Year 2023-24 Housing Successor Annual Report prepared under the California Health and Safety Code section 34176.1 as the housing successor and section 34328 as a housing authority (Attachment 7).

**BACKGROUND:**

Federal Single Audit guidelines require a recipient of federal funds to have an independent annual financial audit and compliance audit of the federal programs. As such, the City has retained an independent public accounting firm of licensed certified public accountants, Davis Farr LLP, to

complete an audit of the City's financial records.

The goal of the financial statement audit is to provide users with reasonable assurance from an independent source that the information presented in the financial statements is reliable and free of material misstatements. All the financial reports received unmodified opinions from Davis Farr LLP signifying that, without exception, the financial statements fairly present in all material respects the financial position of the City.

#### ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT (ACFR)

The ACFR is an audited summary report of the financial transactions of the City for Fiscal Year 2023-24 ending on June 30, 2024. The report is presented to the City Council and designed to provide summary financial information.

The financial statements were prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The specific financial documents on which the auditor expresses an opinion include (1) the financial statements, and, (2) notes to the basic financial statements, which include required supplementary information. These documents, along with the auditor's opinion letter and management's discussion and analysis form the core of the ACFR. The additional documents within the ACFR include: the letter of transmittal from the City Manager and Finance Director, the combining and individual fund statements, and a supplemental statistical section presenting detailed information to assist the reader in assessing the economic condition of the City.

The City's audit was performed in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Such audits utilize sampling of data, inquiries of staff and management, testing of procedures and transactions, confirmation with outside parties, checking of certain internal files and documents, review of meeting minutes, specialized audit checklists, and other accounting techniques. The auditors considered the City's internal controls in determining what procedures to use and the size of samples to be selected and reviewed. In their report, the auditors indicated the financial statements were free of material misstatements and all significant transactions were recognized in the proper period.

#### AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FUND COMPLIANCE REPORT

Assembly Bill 2766 (AB2766) authorized the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) to impose an annual vehicle registration fee and to distribute a portion of the revenue to all local jurisdictions within the South Coast Air Basin. These revenues are to be used solely to reduce air pollution from motor vehicles by implementing new programs and studies necessary for the implementation of the California Clean Air Act. The City's Air Quality Improvement Fund accounts for the use of these funds received from CSAQMD. The Air Quality Improvement Fund Compliance Report received an unmodified (clean) audit opinion.

## AUDIT COMMUNICATION LETTER

Audit clarity standards (AU-C) Section 260 requires defined and documented communications between the auditors and the City Council or Audit Committee. This letter provides an opportunity for the auditors to report on any difficulties or major concerns discovered during the audit and explain their role. They provide commentary on management's responsibilities for accounting policies, and they stated that there was a delayed receipt of audit schedules that added to the timing of the audit as it relates to the performance of the audit, and that no disagreements occurred with management. Staff will implement additional project management controls and deadlines earlier in the audit process to avoid any future delays.

## INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON AGREED UPON PROCEDURES APPLIED TO APPROPRIATION LIMIT WORKSHEETS

Section 1.5 of Article XIIB of the California Constitution requires that the City follow the procedures agreed upon by the State of California and the League of California Cities (as presented in the League publication entitled "Article XIIB Appropriations Limitation Uniform Guidelines") to determine the annual appropriations limit (known as the Gann Limit), which sets forth the maximum amount of special tax revenues an agency is allowed to spend. The auditors perform an "Agreed-Upon Procedure" whereby they recalculate the Gann Limit. They determined that the City has correctly calculated the Gann Limit.

## COSTA MESA HOUSING AUTHORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND HOUSING SUCCESSOR ANNUAL REPORT

On January 17, 2012, under the California Housing Authorities Law (HAL), Health and Safety Code (HSC) section 34200, et seq., the City Council established the Costa Mesa Housing Authority (Housing Authority). Also on that date, the City Council selected the Housing Authority to be the housing successor and, as of February 1, 2012, to assume the housing assets, duties, functions, and obligations of the former Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency (Former Agency). These actions occurred as a result of the dissolution of the Former Agency under Assembly Bill x1 26, the California Supreme Court's decision in California Redevelopment Association v. Matosantos, Assembly Bill 1484, and other subsequent dissolution legislation (together, "Dissolution Law"), which laws regulate the administration of successor agencies and housing successors due to the dissolution of all California redevelopment agencies. Further, under Section 34328 of the HAL, the Housing Authority also prepares and presents an annual report on its activities for the preceding year.

Under Section 34176, added by AB x1 26 and amended by AB 1484, the State Department of Finance (DOF) issued a decision letter in January 2013 that confirmed the Housing Authority holds all affordable housing assets of the Former Agency as listed in a Housing Asset Transfer schedule prepared by the Housing Authority and submitted to the DOF prior to August 1, 2012.

Since dissolution, all housing assets are held and administered by the Housing Authority in the Low to Moderate Income Housing Asset Fund (LMIHAF) under the Dissolution Law, as per Sections 34176 and 34176.1. Under Section 34176.1(f), the Housing Successor is required to conduct an independent financial audit of LMIHAF and prepare an annual report for each fiscal year, and provide

such reports to the governing body.

From its inception, the Housing Authority's primary function had been to serve as the Housing Successor to the former Agency. Beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19, the Housing Authority expanded services beyond the scope of LMIHAF by consolidating the City's existing Homeless Outreach Program and establishing a new Bridge Shelter operation for individuals experiencing homelessness.

### **ANALYSIS:**

Based on the results of their audit, Davis Farr LLP provided the City with an unmodified opinion on the financial statements, which indicates that the City's financial statements are free of material misstatements and are in accordance with GAAP. This is the best and highest audit opinion the City could receive.

### **GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL RESULTS**

FY 2023-24 General Fund revenues (before transfers) totaled \$183.9 million, an increase of \$6.2 million over the prior fiscal year. Summary is as follows:

- Property tax increased by \$3.0 million due to a steady housing market, an increase in the City's single-family homes median sales price, and an increase in overall property assessed valuations from new developments and improvements on properties.
- Cannabis tax revenues increased by \$2.3 million due to an increase in the full annual receipts of new Measure Q Cannabis businesses.
- Transient occupancy tax (hotel tax) slightly increased by \$0.3 million due to room rate increases and a shift from consumer spending to experiences, travel, and leisure.
- Sales tax revenue decreased by \$3.5 million compared to last fiscal year. This can be attributed to high inflation and interest rates on debt that have driven consumers to reduce discretionary spending.

General Fund expenditures (before transfers) totaled \$166.9 million, approximately \$1.5 million below the budget. General Fund transfers out totaled \$16.5 million and included \$7.2 million to the Capital Improvements Funds for capital improvement projects and the transfer for the 5% Capital Assets Needs (CAN) Ordinance, \$2.8 million to the Finance Authority Debt Service Fund for bond service payments, \$1.5 million to the Housing Authority for the Rental Assistance Program, \$1.3 million for the Bridge Shelter and related Homeless Services Program, and \$3.7 million to the Internal Service Funds for various equipment, technology and vehicle purchases as well as a true-up per the City's Information Technology Needs Ordinance.

### **GENERAL FUND - FUND BALANCE**

The General Fund's fund balance (i.e.reserves) increased by \$1.3 million. General Fund expenditures of \$166.9 million, plus Transfers Out of \$16.5 million, totaled \$183.4 million, which was

an increase of \$7.1 million compared to last fiscal year. This was offset by \$183.9 million in General Fund revenues, plus Transfers In of \$0.9 million, for a total of \$184.8 million, reflects an increase of \$7.2 million compared to last fiscal year.

As of June 30, 2024, the City has a total of \$60.3 million in General Fund balances (reserves) as follows: 1) A total of \$25.1 million committed for declared disasters, self-insurance, and economic uncertainty; 2) A total of \$14.4 million assigned for compensated absences, the Police Retirement 1% Supplemental Plan, workers compensation claims, a facilities reserve, strategic plan projects, prepaid items, and inventory; 3) An allocation of \$3.4 million for the Section 115 Trust for post-retirement benefits; and, 4) \$17.7 million in unassigned fund balance for a total of \$60.3 million. This amount is \$5.3 million above the City Council's adopted reserve policy of \$55.0 million.

## **STATEMENT OF NET POSITION**

### Change in Net Position

On June 30, 2024, the Statement of Net Position which is in essence the City's overall balance sheet and reflects the City's total assets and liabilities on an All Funds basis, reflects a positive \$2.3 million increase across All Funds, including the General Fund.

### Pensions and Retiree Medical Liabilities

The City's net pension liability increased by \$14.8 million to \$347.2 million primarily due to CalPERS' rate of return earnings of 5.8%, falling short by 1.0% of the rate of return target of 6.8%. Three of the City's four pension plans are administered by CalPERS. The Police 1% Supplemental Plan is administered by the City and is paid on a pay-as-you-go basis.

In addition, FY 2023-24 is the seventh year the City is required to record the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) net liability for retiree health care on its financial statements, similar to the pension liability above. The City's net OPEB liability decreased by \$6.9 million to \$45.5 million due to greater than expected mortality changes in the retired population. This plan is administered by the City and is paid to retirees on a pay-as-you-go basis.

## **COSTA MESA FINANCING AUTHORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Costa Mesa Financing Authority received an unmodified opinion from the auditors, Davis Farr LLP. This is the highest and cleanest attestation report given by independent auditors. The reports that deal with compliance information also received unmodified opinions and no findings were noted.

In Fiscal Year 2023-24, the Financing Authority continued to support debt service payments for the 2017 Lease Revenue Bonds, which were originally issued in October 2017 to fund the Donald Dungan Library, Norma Hertzog Neighborhood Community Center, and Lions Park projects; and to advance the refund of the 2007 Certificates of Participation. On June 30, 2024, the 2017 bonds outstanding principal was \$19.4 million.

**COSTA MESA HOUSING AUTHORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND HOUSING SUCCESSOR ANNUAL REPORT**

An audit of the Housing Authority’s financial activities, consisting of the LMIHAF activities and homeless assistance programs, was completed as part of the City’s overall financial audit by an independent certified public accounting firm, Davis Farr, LLP. The Housing Authority received an unmodified opinion. This is the highest attestation report given by independent auditors. The reports that deal with compliance information also received unmodified opinions with no findings. The audit results are incorporated as part of the City’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The section in the City’s audit/ACFR relating to the LMIHAF Audit is entitled: Costa Mesa Housing Authority (A Component unit of the City of Costa Mesa) Financial Statements Year ended June 30, 2024 (Attachment 6).

In FY 2023-24, the Housing Authority received approximately \$2.2 million in revenues and incurred \$6.1 million in expenditures. The General Fund provided a budgeted \$2.8 million transfer to the Homeless Outreach, and Rental Assistance programs, which includes \$1.3 million for the Homeless Services Program. On June 30, 2024, the Housing Authority’s available fund balance was \$8.3 million, which is restricted and allocated primarily for previously approved City Council priorities and projects.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Not applicable. The reports are for receive and file purposes.

**FISCAL REVIEW:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving and filing the audited financial statements and reports.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

The City Attorney’s Office has approved this report and approves it as to form.

**CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:**

This item supports the following City Council Goal:

- Achieve Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability
- Strengthen the Public’s Safety and Improve the Quality of Life
- Diversify, Stabilize and Increase Housing to Reflect Community Needs
- Maintain and Enhance the City’s Facilities, Technology and Equipment
- Advance Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resiliency
- Recruit and Retain High Quality Staff

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Staff recommends the City Council receive and file the following reports for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024:
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