

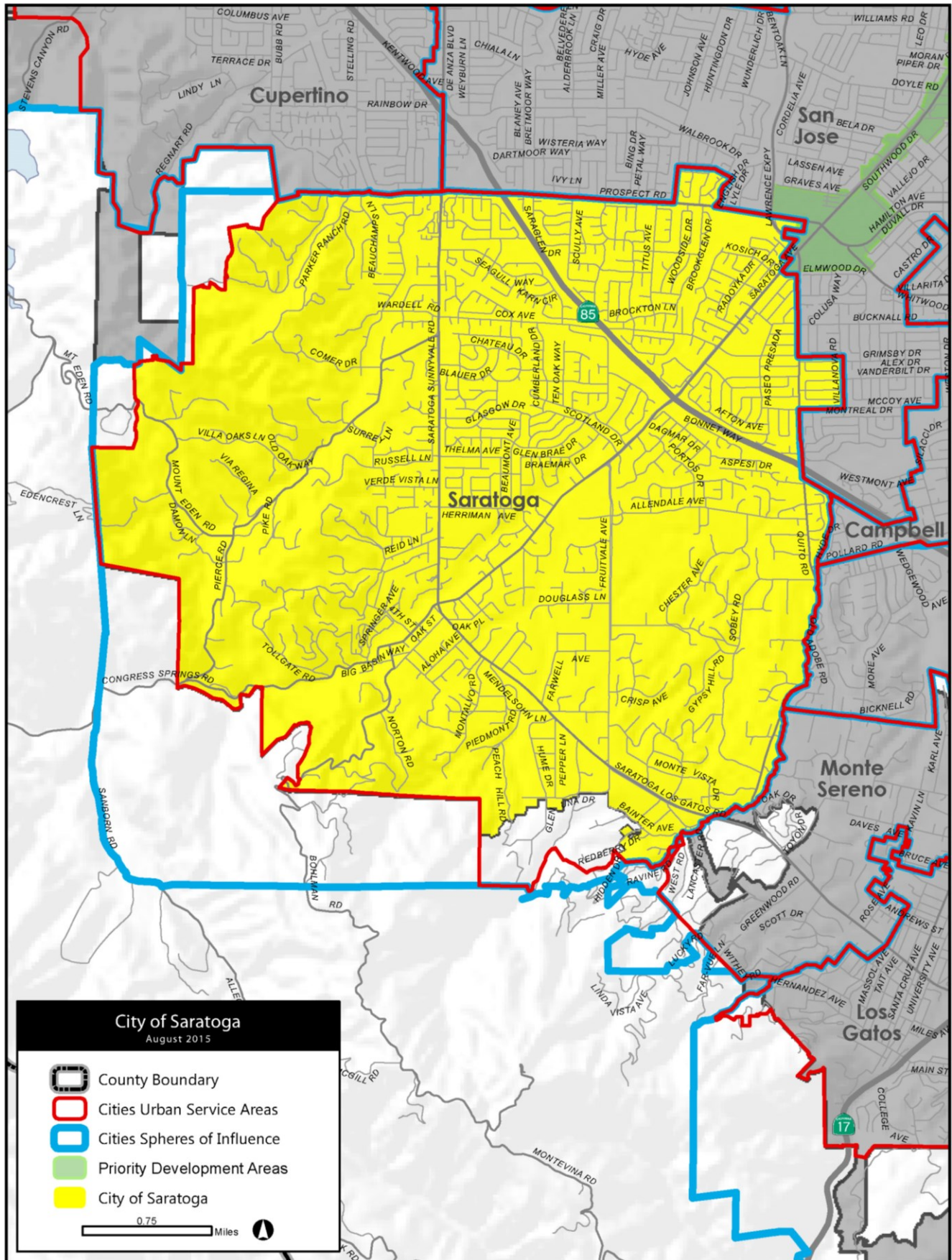
16 City of Saratoga



16.1 Agency Overview

The City of Saratoga was incorporated in October 1956. According to the California DOF 2015 estimates, the population of Saratoga is 30,799. As of 2015, the City's incorporated area spans 12.78 square miles. Located at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the City's predominant land use is residential. Saratoga is home to West Valley Community College and is part of a group of five jurisdictions that comprise the West Valley cities along with the cities of Campbell, Cupertino, Monte Sereno, and the Town of Los Gatos. As of 2015, Saratoga's USA spans 13.1 square miles, and its SOI encompasses 15.6 square miles. These boundaries can be seen in Figure 39.

Figure 39. City of Saratoga Existing Boundaries



16.1.1 City Staffing

In FY 2014, total City staffing included 55.9 FTE employees. As shown in Table 180, the greatest number of FTEs is assigned to the public works function. As discussed in section 16.4 of this document, Saratoga uses contracts to provide a number of services (e.g., law enforcement) or is served by special districts or other agencies with their own revenue sources (e.g. wastewater treatment).

Table 180. City of Saratoga Staffing in Top Four Functions

City Staffing by Major Service Function	FY 2014 FTEs
Public Works	20.7
General Government	13.7
Community Development	12.0
Parks and Recreation	9.6

Source: CAFR

16.1.2 Form of Government

Saratoga is a general law city that operates under a council-manager form of government. The City Council consists of five members who are elected at large. Council members serve four-year terms and select a mayor and vice mayor annually.

16.1.3 Joint Powers Authorities

The City of Saratoga is a member of three JPAs, as shown in Table 181.

Table 181. City of Saratoga Joint Powers Authorities by Major Service Function

Name of JPA	Major Service Function
Santa Clara County Library District	Library services
Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority	Identify, coordinate, and implement public safety communications interoperability
West Valley Solid Waste Management	Collection, disposal, recycling and landfill diversion of solid waste

Source: City website and City staff interviews

16.1.4 Awards and Recognition

The City of Saratoga has been the recipient of several awards between 2010 and 2015, as shown in Table 182.

Table 182. City of Saratoga Recent Awards

Name of Award	Issuer	Year(s) Received
12th Safest City in U.S.	Neighborhood Scout	2014
2nd Safest City in California	Movoto	2014
6th Safest City in U.S.	Neighborhood Scout	2013
Safest City in California	SafeWise Report	2013

Name of Award	Issuer	Year(s) Received
Make Hunger History Award		2012-2013
Bay Area Green Business		2008-2013
Tree City USA		2007-2014
Distinguished Budget Presentation Award	Government Finance Officers Association	2012-2014
Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting	Government Finance Officers Association	2011-2013

Source: City of Saratoga staff

16.2 Growth and Population

16.2.1 Growth and Population Projections

State law requires the ABAG to prepare an SCS that considers how the region will accommodate projected growth over a long period while also reducing the region's generation of GHGs consistent with state goals for GHG reduction. "Plan Bay Area" is this region's SCS, adopted by ABAG and the MTC in July 2013.

The fundamental thrust of Plan Bay Area is to accommodate the majority of growth in PDAs. PDAs include infill areas within a city usually served by transit, such as historic downtowns and underutilized commercial strips. This approach is consistent with and supportive of LAFCO's goals to encourage orderly boundaries, discourage urban sprawl, and preserve agricultural and open space lands. Plan Bay Area includes projections for the region's population, housing, and job growth within existing urbanized areas. These projections demonstrate that the region has the capacity to accommodate expected growth over the next 30 years without sprawling further into undeveloped land on the urban fringe.

Many Bay Area cities use ABAG's projections as the basis for long-range planning. When ABAG prepared Plan Bay Area in 2013, it made projections for population and housing for 2015 for each city in the region. However, some cities believe that the state DOF estimates for population (based on information received on housing development and other current information) are more accurate. The City of Saratoga uses the ABAG population projections for its long-term planning. However, City staff indicated they believe the ABAG long-term projections for jobs and housing are inflated for Saratoga.

ABAG's projections for population, households (occupied housing units) and jobs are shown in Table 183.

Table 183. City of Saratoga Population, Jobs and Housing Projections through 2040

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	29,926	30,100	30,800	31,600	31,900	32,300	32,700
Total Jobs	9,910	10,360	10,840	10,990	11,170	11,390	11,640
Total Households	10,734	10,790	11,000	11,220	11,270	11,310	11,360

Source: 2010 population from US Census. ABAG data used for 2015 to 2040 projections.

16.2.2 Jobs and Housing

In 2015, according to ABAG estimates, the City has 10,360 jobs within the community and 12,240 employed residents. Within Saratoga, there are 0.85 jobs for every employed resident. The U.S. Census American

Community Survey 2013 estimates that Saratoga has 11,324 housing units; when combined with ABAG's estimate of 10,360 jobs within the City, jobs and housing balance is 0.91.

State law requires that ABAG quantify and allocate housing needs to each jurisdiction within the Bay Area. In periodic updates to the general plan's Housing Element, each Bay Area jurisdiction must then demonstrate how it will meet that need over the next planning period. The current Housing Element update cycle is from 2015 to 2023.

As Table 184 shows, the majority of housing units in Saratoga are owner-occupied single-family housing units. According to ABAG, between January 1, 2014 and October 31, 2022, the City of Saratoga's assigned housing need is 439 units. In November 2014, Saratoga adopted its 2015-2023 Housing Element and demonstrated that it has sites and housing opportunities available to accommodate 480 units, which is 41 units in excess of its assigned regional share of 439 units. The City of Saratoga's housing element was certified by the State of California's Housing and Community Development Department in January 2015.

Table 184. City of Saratoga Housing Profile

Housing Statistic	Number
Number of total existing housing units	11,324
Owner-occupied (SFR) housing units	9,320
Renter-occupied housing units	1,620
RHNA by income category	2014 to 2022
Above moderate	93
Moderate	104
Low	95
Very Low	147
Total	439

Sources: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2013 (number of total housing units); ABAG (housing needs)

16.2.3 Planning and Building

In calendar year (CY) 2014, Saratoga issued a total of 1,542 residential and commercial building permits. Total building permit valuation is estimated at \$75,342,537.

The City's total assessed valuation for FY 2014 is approximately \$11.5 billion. This represents a 15% increase from FY 2009.

16.2.4 Priority Development Areas

The City has no priority development areas.

16.2.5 Planning for an Aging Population

The City has adopted several measures to accommodate the needs of the aging population within Saratoga. These include adopting second-unit incentives to facilitate construction of second units to allow seniors to age in place or with family members. The City's senior center is operated by a nonprofit group. The City has partnered with the Palo Alto Medical Foundation's Linkages program to better serve the needs of seniors and is looking for other opportunities to fulfill seniors' transportation needs.

16.3 Boundaries, Islands, and Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

16.3.1 Planning Boundaries

The City's USA and municipal boundaries are nearly contiguous with the exception of one unincorporated area. This island is discussed in section 16.3.2.

The City has no plans to amend its USA or SOI within the next five years. It is not currently providing services to the area outside of its city boundaries.

16.3.2 Unincorporated Islands

One unincorporated island exists within the City of Saratoga's USA. Located in the southeast portion of the City, this island (referred to as STG05) comprises multiple parcels that together total approximately 205 acres.

The City attempted to annex the island in 2014 but was unsuccessful. According to City staff, the annexation did not occur because residents within the unincorporated pocket preferred to remain under the County's jurisdiction, which has fewer regulations than the City. Greater alignment between the County and City of Saratoga's land use policies may incentivize annexation of this island.

Maps of each city's unincorporated islands are included in Attachment B.

16.3.3 Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs)

No disadvantaged unincorporated communities were identified within the City of Saratoga.

16.4 City Services

In Saratoga core municipal services are delivered by both City staff and contract service providers. As noted earlier, Saratoga is part of the West Valley cities group, which collaborates on many aspects of service delivery. Such collaboration is noted where applicable. The primary service provider for the major municipal services discussed in this report is summarized in Table 185.

Unless specifically noted, the City of Saratoga did not anticipate difficulty in continuing to provide services or maintain infrastructure or facilities related to service delivery in the following areas.

Table 185. City of Saratoga Service Delivery Model by Major Service Function

Major Service Function	Primary Service Provider	Non-City Service Provider, if applicable
Animal Control	Contract	City of San Jose Animal Care and Services Department
Law Enforcement	Contract	Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office
Library	JPA	Santa Clara County Library District
Parks and Recreation	City and Contract	Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation District
Planning/Building	City	
Solid Waste	JPA	West Valley Solid Waste Management, which contracts with West Valley Collection and Recycling
Streets	City	

Major Service Function	Primary Service Provider	Non-City Service Provider, if applicable
Stormwater	City	
Utilities		
Electricity	Franchise Agreement	Pacific Gas and Electric
Gas	Franchise Agreement	Pacific Gas and Electric
Telephone, High-speed Internet	Franchise Agreement	AT&T, Comcast (State-Issued Franchise)
Wastewater	Special District	West Valley Sanitation District, Cupertino Sanitary District

Source: City website and City Staff interviews

In the past five years the City has not stopped or started providing any municipal services. Given the expected population growth for the City of Saratoga, City staff does not anticipate any difficulty providing municipal services to its community.

A summary of key service level statistics is compiled as part of Attachment A to this report.

16.4.1 Animal Control

The City of San Jose is the contract service provider for animal control within the City of Saratoga. In FY 2014 total City expenditures for this function were \$182,164. Service level statistics are included in Attachment A.

16.4.2 Law Enforcement

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office is the contract service provider for law enforcement and dispatch services within the City of Saratoga. The County does not operate a police station in the Saratoga city limits. In total, there are 15 sworn officers assigned to Saratoga. During FY 2014, there were 4,585 calls for service. The City reports that response time for Priority One calls averaged 5 minutes and 25 seconds. The City's goal for response time for Priority One calls is 6 minutes.

In FY 2014, total City expenditures on this function were \$4,491,284. Approximately 26% of the City's General Fund is dedicated to law enforcement.

Through its contract with the County, the City of Saratoga has access to many shared specialized resources. These include a SWAT team, helicopter, bomb squad, dive team, crowd control, and crime scene investigation.

16.4.3 Library

The Santa Clara County Library District provides library services within the City of Saratoga. There is one facility located within the City. Annual print circulation exceeds 1.2 million, and nearly 124,000 digital books are available for download to library patrons.

16.4.4 Lighting

Lighting within the City is provided and maintained by the City. A summary of lighting infrastructure is provided in Attachment A.

16.4.5 Parks and Recreation

The City is the primary service provider for parks and recreation. FY 2014 total expenditures for parks and recreation were \$1,586,353. The City has 15 parks and a total of 84 park acres. In addition, 64 acres of open space owned by the City are publicly accessible and in the process of being developed as Quarry Park. The

City is working with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District through a purchase-partnership agreement to open a new park facility in 2015 known as Quarry Park. Upon the opening of Quarry Park in 2015, the total number of accessible park acres will increase by an estimated 64 acres. The City reports 2.8 park acres per 1,000 population, which falls below their goal of 5.0 park acres per 1,000 population.

The City operates two community centers and one senior center. Saratoga is included in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation District, which primarily serves students at local schools. The City's Recreation Department focuses on the population not served by the regional Recreation District. Saratoga also partners with the City of Campbell for a chartered excursions program.

16.4.6 Solid Waste

The City of Saratoga is a member of the West Valley Solid Waste Management Authority JPA. The authority arranges and manages collection, disposal, recycling, and landfill diversion of solid waste originating in the cities of Saratoga, Campbell, Monte Sereno and the Town of Los Gatos. Through the authority, solid waste services are contracted to a service provider (currently West Valley Collection and Recycling). In FY 2014, City expenditures for public solid waste services (household waste augmentation and authority dues) were \$42,235.

In CY 2013, Saratoga disposed of 16,386 tons of solid waste. Saratoga offers green waste and yard trimmings disposal and recycling of mixed paper, bottles, cans and other recyclable materials. In 2013, the City's amount of pounds of solid waste disposed per person per day was 2.9 for its general population, meeting the state's goal for the community of 4.2 pounds. The pounds of solid waste per person per day for employees in the community was 11.7, meeting the state's goal for the community of 19.4 pounds. No solid waste disposal facility is located within Saratoga, but West Valley Collection and Recycling may use any of the nine landfill transfer stations located within Santa Clara County.

16.4.7 Streets

The City of Saratoga maintains 283 lane miles, 142 center lane miles, and 15 sidewalk miles. The City expends approximately \$1 million annually on paving, including street-related expenditures. Street sweeping is provided by contract. The City maintains approximately 4,200 street trees (excluding those in the lighting landscape assessment districts and Hakone Gardens). The City's pavement condition index (PCI) is 72, which exceeds its PCI goal of 70.

16.4.8 Stormwater

The City's stormwater system is managed and maintained by the City's Public Works Department. Given the new regulations coming into effect, City staff noted concerns about unfunded state mandates related to stormwater. The concerns are about future costs to address the City's aging stormwater system and related system maintenance that has been deferred.

Maintenance of the stormwater system is not funded by a stormwater maintenance fee added to residents' wastewater bills. Unlike the other West Valley cities, Saratoga is served by two sanitary districts (West Valley Sanitation District and Cupertino Sanitary District). Only West Valley Sanitation District assesses a stormwater maintenance fee. Since a similar fee is not collected in the Cupertino Sanitary District, Saratoga officials expressed concern that existing revenue sources are insufficient to fund future necessary stormwater improvements, maintenance, and repairs to ensure compliance with state regulations.

In addition, the City of Saratoga is part of the WVCWP. Along with Campbell, Los Gatos and Monte Sereno, the City of Saratoga helped create WVCWP to control discharge of polluted stormwater into local creeks and the San Francisco Bay. As a part of the WVCWP, Saratoga participates in the SCVURPPP along with several other cities and the County to address water pollution on a regional basis (more information on

SCVURPPP is included in the Shared Services chapter of this document). SCVURPPP members share a common NPDES permit, allowing member agencies to discharge stormwater into the San Francisco Bay (see the Shared Services chapter for more information). The City reports that it is compliant with NPDES standards.

As part of WVCWP, West Valley cities, including Saratoga, pay a fee to receive administrative guidance and implementation compliance with the regional NPDES requirements. Property owners within the West Valley Sanitation District, which includes a portion of Saratoga, pay a surcharge to fund WVCWP. For residential properties, the fee is approximately \$20 per parcel. Fees for commercial properties vary depending on square footage. The fee is collected as part of the tax roll along with sewer service charges.

16.4.9 Utilities

PG&E is the electricity and gas provider within Saratoga. PG&E did not respond to requests to identify the total number of PG&E gas and electric meters in the City of Saratoga. The City did not indicate concerns about PG&E's ability to serve Saratoga's existing population or its future demand for energy and natural gas.

Telecommunications providers (telephone, high speed internet and land-based video/cable services) serving Saratoga are AT&T and Comcast. Saratoga indicated no concerns about the availability or reliability of telecommunications services, including high-speed internet.

16.4.10 Wastewater

The City of Saratoga does not provide wastewater service. The City is bisected by two sanitary districts: West Valley Sanitation District and Cupertino Sanitary District. Together, the districts have 164 miles of sewer within the City. The City reports 1.7 gallons of annual sewer overflow per 100 miles of pipe in 2014.

Saratoga does not operate a wastewater treatment plant. Treatment is handled by the San Jose-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. Sludge is disposed of as alternate daily cover at Newby Island. Recycled water is not available within the City.

16.5 Financial Information

The following section provides key financial data points related to Saratoga's municipal operations based on the most recent audited financial statements available from FY 2014. Select information is provided from FY 2009 for trend and comparative information.

In FY 2014, Saratoga's total citywide expenditures exceeded \$20.5 million. Approximately 79% (\$16.1 million) of these expenditures constituted General Fund expenditures.

16.5.1 Revenues and Expenditures

The City's primary source of revenue is property tax. Since FY 2009, property tax revenue has increased by about \$1.4 million (17%). Sales tax revenue in Saratoga in FY 2014 remained slightly below pre-Great Recession levels (see Table 186).

Table 186. City of Saratoga Tax Revenues

Tax Revenue Type	FY 2009	FY 2014
Property Tax	\$8,147,478	\$9,525,980
Sales Tax	\$1,043,034	\$941,350
Utility Users Tax	N/A	N/A

Source: CAFR

A summary of the City's General Fund revenues and expenditures is shown in Table 187.

Table 187. City of Saratoga Major Sources of General Fund Revenues and Expenditures

	FY 2009	FY 2014
Total General Fund Revenues	\$15,874,201	\$18,268,368
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$15,763,360	\$16,137,578
Top Four Sources of General Fund Revenues		
1. Property taxes	\$8,147,478	\$9,525,980
2. Other revenues	\$1,849,928	\$2,472,609
3. Franchise fees	\$1,656,716	\$1,948,642
4. Licenses and permits	\$1,119,888	\$1,463,784
Top Four Sources of General Fund Expenditures		
1. Public works	\$4,352,644	\$4,833,962
2. Public safety	\$4,205,672	\$4,491,384
3. General and governmental services	\$3,330,074	\$3,247,245
4. Community development services	\$2,450,549	\$2,181,710

Source: CAFR

16.5.2 Debt

A summary of the City's obligations, debt, and liabilities is provided in Table 188.

Table 188. City of Saratoga Obligations, Debt and Liabilities

Obligations, Debt and Liabilities	FY 2009	FY 2014
General Bonded Debt	\$13,285,000	\$11,449,062
Ratio of Direct Debt (General Bonded Debt) to Net Assessed Valuation	0.1%	0.1%
Ratio of Combined Debt (Direct and Overlapping Debt) to Net Assessed Valuation	2.5%	2.3%
Unfunded pension liability as reported in most recent CAFR	Not provided	\$6,936,824

Source: CAFR

16.5.3 Reserves

Saratoga's unassigned General Fund reserve levels have increased since FY 2009. Such increases are a positive indicator of economic recovery from the Great Recession and proactive fiscal management practices employed by the City (see Table 189).

Table 189. City of Saratoga Reserves

Line Item	FY 2009	FY 2014
Unassigned General Fund Reserve Levels	\$5,581,824	\$7,781,815
Economic Uncertainty Reserve Fund (separate from General Fund Reserve)	\$1,300,000	See Note

Source: CAFR

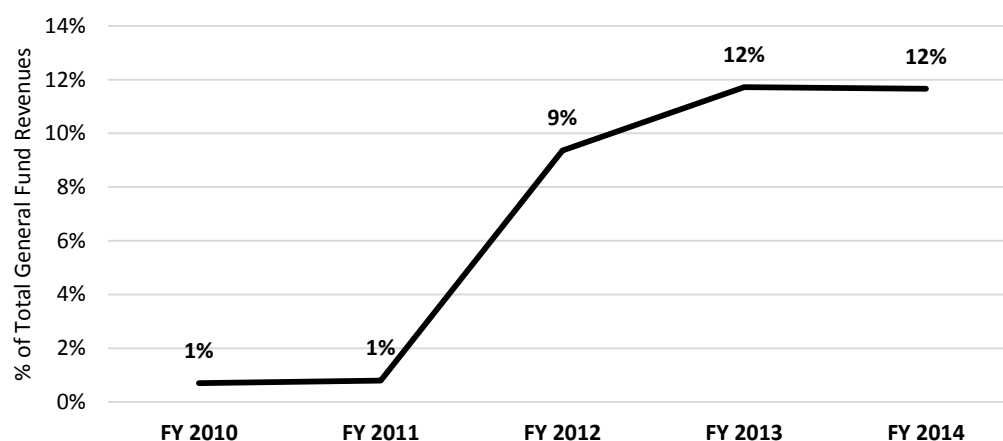
Note: Fiscal stabilization reserve of \$1.5 million incorporated into Unassigned General Fund reserve figure above for 2014; Economic uncertainty reserve separated in 2009.

16.5.4 Financial Health Indicators

Using select indicators from the League of California Cities' Financial Health Diagnostic Tool, the City of Saratoga is in positive fiscal health.

Over the past five years the City has accumulated annual surpluses in the General Fund. The City's General Fund surplus has increased by 11 percentage points since FY 2010, an indicator of positive fiscal health. The trend of the City's General Fund deficit/surplus is shown in Figure 40.

Figure 40. City of Saratoga Gross Annual General Fund Deficit/Surplus by year from FY 2010 to FY 2014



Source: CAFR

Table 190 shows the City's General Fund Fiscal Indicators. The City has budgeted a deficit in its General Fund for FY 2015, but has a five-year financial plan that provides for maintaining a healthy level of General Fund reserves over that period. The City has generally been conservative in its budget estimations, and actual performance typically exceeds budgeted forecasts. Not included in the City's FY 2015 operational surplus/deficit is a transfer from the General Fund of \$1.7 million to fund capital projects, which if recurring in nature, would impact the General Fund's long-term fiscal health. The City's liquidity ratio indicates the necessary cash to fund its liabilities. General Fund reserves of 64.6% greatly exceed the GFOA-recommended minimum reserve of 17% (or two months) of annual operating expenditures.

Table 190. City of Saratoga General Fund Fiscal Indicators

Fiscal Year	Indicator	Value
FY 2015	Net Operating Deficit/Surplus	-12.9%
FY 2014	Liquidity Ratio ¹	20.5
FY 2014	Fund Balance as percent of Expenditures ²	64.6%

Source: CAFR, City Finance Staff

¹ Calculated by combining cash and short-term investments and then dividing by current liabilities

² Unreserved (unassigned and assigned) General Fund Reserves as a percent of annual operating expenditures

16.5.5 Financial Reporting

The City's CAFR is prepared in a timely manner and audited by an independent CPA. See Table 191.

Table 191. City of Saratoga Financial Reporting

Financial Reporting Indicator	Status
Unqualified opinion from independent CPA	Yes
Publication of CAFR within six months of fiscal year	Yes

16.6 Service Review Determinations

LAFCO is required to prepare a written statement of determination with respect to six key areas as specified by Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. Using criteria described in section 2.4, the following determinations are provided for the City of Saratoga.

1. GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

As of 2015, the City of Saratoga serves 30,799 residents within its 12.78 square mile incorporated area. ABAG projects that the City's population will grow at a rate of 0.5% annually over the next 10 years, and then a slowing growth rate, leading to a population of 32,700 in 2040.

The City has one unincorporated island that is 205 acres. Due to its size, this island is not eligible for streamlined annexation.

The City has identified sufficient housing opportunities to meet its RHNA of 439 housing units between 2014 and 2022. The City does not anticipate that growth patterns will expand beyond Saratoga's existing USA. No PDAs exist within Saratoga for infill development.

The City last prepared a comprehensive update of its general plan in 1983 but has updated various elements of the Plan over the years, including the Land Use Element in 2007.

The City's existing boundaries accommodate the level of growth projected by ABAG in Plan Bay Area.

2. LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ANY DISADVANTAGED UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES WITHIN OR CONTIGUOUS TO THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

No DUCs were identified within or contiguous to Saratoga's SOI.

3. PRESENT AND PLANNED CAPACITY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES, ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS OR DEFICIENCIES, INCLUDING THOSE RELATED TO SEWERS, WATER AND FIRE IN ANY DUCs WITHIN OR CONTIGUOUS TO THE SOI

City staff noted that, given new regulations coming into effect, the City is concerned about unfunded state mandates related to stormwater infrastructure maintenance. As a result of these regulations, the City anticipates future costs to address its aging stormwater system and related deferred maintenance.

The City of Saratoga does not anticipate obstacles to maintaining existing service levels or meeting infrastructure needs in the next five years, given the growth and population increases projected.

The City's number of park acres per 1,000 population of 2.8 is below the goal of 5.0 that it has established.

4. FINANCIAL ABILITY OF AGENCY TO PROVIDE SERVICES

Saratoga's General Fund has consistently operated at a surplus over the past five years, and the City has a five-year financial plan that maintains a healthy level of General Fund reserves. Saratoga's General Fund reserves of 64.6% exceed the minimum reserve threshold of two months of operating expenditures (17%) as recommended by the GFOA, indicative of the City's ability to meet future service needs in the event of an economic downturn. In addition, the City's liquidity ratio of 20:1 indicates the necessary cash to fund its short-term obligations with sufficient cash flow.

The City of Saratoga has sufficient financial resources to accommodate infrastructure expansion, improvements or replacement based on the agency's capital improvement plans. One area of potential concern is stormwater, as discussed under Determination Three.

The City prepared its CAFR in a timely manner, which was audited by an independent CPA with an unqualified opinion.

5. STATUS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED FACILITIES

The City of Saratoga is engaged in service sharing agreements as identified in Table 192 below.

Table 192. Summary of Shared Services in the City of Saratoga

Service Area	Type of Sharing Arrangement	Partnering Entity
Animal Control	Contract	City of San Jose
Law Enforcement – Operations	Contract	SCC Sheriff's Office
Law Enforcement – Radio Communications	JPA	SVRIA
Library Services	JPA	SCCLD
Recreation	Contract	LGSRD
Solid Waste	JPA	WVSWMA
Stormwater	MOU	SCVURPPP

Further opportunities to share services were identified in the area of stormwater management, where greater collaboration for system maintenance, improvements, and regional response to new federal and state mandates may be possible.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

Saratoga provides comprehensive information about core municipal operations on its website, including public hearing notices, agendas, and minutes for the City Council and its various advisory commissions and committees; annual budget; CAFR; general plan; and various master plans.

Through the publication of these documents, the City of Saratoga promotes accountability for its community service needs.

16.7 Sphere of Influence Recommendations and Determinations

SOI BOUNDARY RECOMMENDATION

The City's existing SOI is coterminous with its City limits to the north and east. The southern and western portion of the City's SOI includes unincorporated hillside lands located outside of the City's USA boundary. Some of this area includes very-low density residential development, while other portions of this area is undeveloped, and has little or no roads or other infrastructure. The boundaries of some of the City's unincorporated islands help form sections of the southern and western portion of the City's SOI boundary. The southern portion of the City's SOI boundary also includes some permanently preserved open space (e.g., the Villa Montalvo Arboretum). The City is bounded by the Cities of Cupertino and San Jose to the north; the City of Campbell, Los Gatos, and Monte Sereno to the east; and unincorporated lands to the south and west.

It is recommended that LAFCO reaffirm the City of Saratoga's existing SOI boundary because the City's SOI boundary serves multiple purposes including serving as:

- A long range planning tool to help LAFCO evaluate USA boundary changes and annexation requests.
- Areas that will not necessarily be annexed to the City or will not necessarily receive services from Saratoga, but are areas in which the County and Saratoga may have shared interests in preserving non-urban levels of land use. Specific examples include the foothills and ridgelines located south and west of the City. Furthermore, both the City and the County share a mutual interest in protecting view sheds and natural resources.
- Areas where the City and the County have significant interaction.
- Areas that contain social and economic communities of interest to the City, such as areas within the City's jurisdictional boundaries.

In making this recommendation, it should be made clear that inclusion of an area within the City's SOI boundary should not necessarily be seen as an indication that the City will or should either annex or allow urban development and services in the area. The City's USA boundary is the more critical factor considered by LAFCO and serves as the primary means of indicating whether the areas will be annexed and provided urban services.

SOI DETERMINATIONS FOR THE CITY OF SARATOGA

Government Code §56425(e) requires written determinations with respect to the following four factors to update an agency's SOI. Based upon the information contained within Saratoga's service review profile in this chapter, the following determinations are provided to update the City's existing SOI:

1. The Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area, Including Agricultural and Open-Space Lands

Land uses primarily consisting of residential development uses are planned within Saratoga's USA boundary. The County's and City's general plans call for the continuation of non-urban uses beyond the City's USA boundary.

2. The Present and Probable Need for Public Facilities and Services in the Area

The type of public services and facilities required within Saratoga's SOI boundary is not expected to change, although the level of demand will increase slightly.

3. The Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services that the Agency Provides or is Authorized to Provide

The present capacity of public facilities appears to be adequate. However, Saratoga is still in the process of addressing the impacts that state mandates will have related to stormwater infrastructure maintenance on budgetary and operational resources, as indicated in the City's service review determination #3 above.

4. The Existence of Any Social or Economic Communities of Interest in the Area if the Commission Determines That They are Relevant to the Agency

There exist social and economic conditions that cause interaction and interdependence between the City and the areas within its SOI boundary.

5. For Those Cities that Provide Public Facilities or Services Related to Sewers, Water or Fire Protection, the Present and Probable Need For Those Public Facilities and Services in Any DUCs within the Existing SOI

Not applicable.