

CITY OF SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA

Report to the City Council

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020



Certified
Public
Accountants

CITY OF SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA
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Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of Sunnyvale, California

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of City of Sunnyvale, California (City), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the City's basic financial statements. Professional standards require that we communicate to you the information related to our audit discussed on pages 1 through 4.

In planning and performing our audit of the basic financial statements of the City as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, we considered the City's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the City's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the City's internal control over financial reporting.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A reasonable possibility exists when the likelihood of an event occurring is either reasonably possible or probable as defined as follows:

- *Reasonably possible*. The chance of the future event or events occurring is more than remote but less than likely.
- *Probable*. The future event or events are likely to occur.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses. Given these limitations during our audit, we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

The purpose of this communication, which is an integral part of our audit, is to describe, for management and those charged with governance, the scope of our testing of internal control and the results of that testing. Accordingly, this communication is not intended to be and should not be used for any other purpose. This report is a matter of public record and this does not limit the distribution of this report.



Walnut Creek, California
December 15, 2020

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REQUIRED COMMUNICATIONS

We have audited the basic financial statements of the City as of and for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, and have issued our report thereon dated December 15, 2020. Professional standards require that we advise you of the following matters relating to our audit.

Our Responsibility in Relation to the Financial Statement Audit

As communicated in our engagement letter dated June 1, 2020, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to form and express opinions about whether the financial statements that have been prepared by management with your oversight are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve you or management of your respective responsibilities.

Our responsibility, as prescribed by professional standards, is to plan and perform our audit to obtain reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit of financial statements includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, as part of our audit, we considered the internal control of the City solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control.

We are also responsible for communicating significant matters related to the audit that are, in our professional judgment, relevant to your responsibilities in overseeing the financial reporting process. However, we are not required to design procedures for the purpose of identifying other matters to communicate to you.

Planned Scope and Timing of the Audit

We conducted our audit consistent with the planned scope and timing we previously communicated to you.

Compliance with All Ethics Requirements Regarding Independence

The engagement team, others in our firm, as appropriate, our firm, and our network firms have complied with all relevant ethical requirements regarding independence.

Qualitative Aspects of the City's Accounting Practices

Significant Accounting Policies

Management has the responsibility to select and use appropriate accounting policies. A summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the City is included in Note 1 to the basic financial statements. As described in Note 1 to the City's basic financial statements, the City implemented Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 95, Postponement of the Effective Dates of Certain Authoritative Guidance. Implementation of this statement did not have a significant impact on the City's financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020.

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No matters have come to our attention that would require us, under professional standards, to inform you about (1) the methods used to account for significant unusual transactions and (2) the effect of significant accounting policies in controversial or emerging areas for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus.

Significant Accounting Estimates

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's current judgments. Those judgments are normally based on knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ markedly from management's current judgments.

The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements are:

- *Fair value of investments.* The City's investments are generally carried at fair value, which is defined as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. All of the City's investments are measured using level 2 inputs, except for investments in the California Local Agency Investment Fund, a guaranteed investment contract, open-end mutual funds, and money market mutual funds which are not subject to fair value hierarchy.
- *Estimated allowance for losses on notes and loans receivable.* The allowance for losses on notes and loans receivable is based on the types of loans and management's estimate regarding the likelihood of collectability based on loan provisions and collateral.
- *Depreciation estimates for capital assets, including depreciation methods and useful lives assigned to depreciable assets.* The estimated useful lives of capital assets were determined based on the nature of the capital assets and management's estimate of the economic life of the assets.
- *Net pension and Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, contributions, expenses, and other related balances.* These balances for pension and OPEB are based on actuarial valuations, which incorporate actuarial methods and assumptions adopted by the City, performed by the California Public Employees' Retirement System's and the City's independent actuaries, respectively.
- *Accrued landfill postclosure care costs.* The City has estimated the postclosure care costs of the Sunnyvale Landfill based on what it would cost to perform all currently mandated closure and postclosure care. Actual postclosure care costs may be different due to inflation, changes in technology, or changes in State or Federal regulations.
- *Claims liabilities.* The City is exposed to a variety of risks of loss due to general liability, workers' compensation and other claims, and records an estimate of these losses based on actuarial studies performed by third-party actuaries. These studies are prepared based on the City's prior claims history, which is used as a basis for extrapolating losses for known and incurred but not reported claims. Actual loss experience may vary from these estimates.

We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the accounting estimates described above and determined that it is reasonable in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole and in relation to the applicable opinion units.

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Financial Statement Disclosures

Certain financial statement disclosures involve significant judgment and are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. The most sensitive disclosures affecting the financial statements were the disclosures of the City's Pension Plans in Note 16, the Other Postemployment Benefits in Note 17, and the Redevelopment Successor Agency Trust in Note 20.

Significant Difficulties Encountered during the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management relating to the performance of the audit.

Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements

For purposes of this communication, professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that we believe are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Further, professional standards require us to also communicate the effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods on the relevant classes of transactions, account balances or disclosures, and the financial statements as a whole and each applicable opinion unit. Management has corrected all identified misstatements.

In addition, professional standards require us to communicate to you all material, corrected misstatements that were brought to the attention of management as a result of our audit procedures. None of the misstatements identified by us as a result of our audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole or applicable opinion units.

Disagreements with Management

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, concerning a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, which could be significant to the City's financial statements or the auditor's report. No such disagreements arose during the course of the audit.

Representations Requested from Management

We have requested certain written representations from management, which are included in the letter dated December 15, 2020.

Management's Consultations with Other Accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters. Management informed us that, and to our knowledge, there were no consultations with other accountants regarding auditing and accounting matters.

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Other Significant Matters, Findings, or Issues

In the normal course of our professional association with the City, we generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, operating and regulatory conditions affecting the entity, and operational plans and strategies that may affect the risks of material misstatement. None of the matters discussed resulted in a condition to our retention as the City's auditors

Other Matters

We applied certain limited procedures to the management's discussion and analysis, the budgetary comparison schedules, information on the modified approach for City streets infrastructure capital assets, and the schedules related to the pension and other postemployment benefits plans which are required supplementary information (RSI) that supplements the basic financial statements. Our procedures consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We did not audit the RSI and do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

We were engaged to report on the combining fund financial statements and schedules, which accompany the financial statements but are not RSI. With respect to this supplementary information, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves.

We were not engaged to report on the introductory and statistical sections, which accompany the financial statements but are not RSI or supplementary information. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements, and accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

Our responsibility also includes communicating to you any information which we believe is a material misstatement of fact. Nothing came to our attention that caused us to believe that such information, or its manner of presentation, is materially inconsistent with the information, or manner of its presentation, appearing in the financial statements.