



IMPACT 2025



SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER



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At San Francisco Zen Center, we remain deeply committed to honoring the legacy of our founder, Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, while extending the reach of our offerings to meet the needs of today's world.

For more than six decades, our temples and teachings have offered refuge, inspiration, and a path of awakening to thousands of people.

Thanks to your generosity, the past year has been a time of both renewal and expansion.

Together, we have strengthened our temples and offerings, broadened access to practice for communities near and far, and continued to envision new possibilities for the future.

None of this would be possible without your partnership.

With deep gratitude, we invite you to see how your support is shaping the present—and laying the foundation for the next 100 years of Zen practice.



In this report, we share stories that highlight how your support is helping to:

- Care for and sustain our temples and the land that holds them
- Nurture practice groups that bring the Dharma into the wider community
- Expand our legacy support and realize the vision of Enso Village, the nation's first Zen-inspired senior living community

LAND AND TEMPLE STEWARDSHIP



SFZC is steward to a number of beautiful—and, in many cases, historic—properties in the San Francisco Bay Area and Ventana Wilderness. These buildings, and the lands on which they’re built, comprise our three unique temples: Green Gulch Farm, City Center, and Tassajara.

Here we welcome students, teachers, and guests and offer the nourishment of Suzuki Roshi's way from warm hand to warm hand.

With this comes a responsibility to care for and preserve our facilities in one of the most expensive regions in the country. Over the years, deferred maintenance has at times led to costly emergencies, straining our budgets and disrupting thoughtful planning for improvements.

This year, we launched the following funds:

Building Maintenance Restricted Fund



Older buildings bring inevitable surprises, which may include roof repairs, plumbing updates, and the “emergency fixes” we all know too well.

Supported by **The Caretakers Circle**, a monthly giving club, the **Building Maintenance Restricted Fund** provides funding for projects that require immediate attention, allowing us to respond right away without drawing from our general operating costs.

Hiring a professional engineer or engineering firm will ensure that each project meets safety and code-compliance standards, maintains structural integrity, and delivers cost-effective, lasting solutions for our temples.

Farm Endowment

Green Gulch Farm integrates spiritual practice with responsible land stewardship; our land-based programs positively influence the way farmers are educated, food is grown, communities build resilience, and ecosystems are healed.

This Farm Endowment supports the expansion of our regenerative agriculture practices, the restoration of ecologically sensitive acres of Green Gulch Farm, and the construction of an upgraded water storage/distribution system for creek restoration.



Thanks to the vision of our Board and the generosity of our donors, we have created stable financial models to ensure the longevity, safety, and vitality of our temples, moving from reacting to crises to proactively planning for the future.

Whether you've joined a Dharma talk at City Center, harvested produce at Green Gulch Farm, or hiked the trails at Tassajara, you know how essential our temples are—not just to those who live and practice there, but to the wider world.



PRACTICE GROUPS

Over the years, practitioners at SFZC have discovered that peer-based practice groups offer a vital sense of belonging and an intimate way to support one another on the path. Though SFZC is a large and multi-faceted organization, these smaller groups reflect our deep commitment to fostering close connections.



Young Urban Zen

was formed in 2011 to serve sangha members roughly between 20 and 40 years of age. This once small group has had up to 100 regular attendees who plan social activities and outings, volunteer at the temples, and attend annual Tassajara retreats. Goals for Young Urban Zen include outreach to new members, expanding offerings, and bringing attendance back up to pre-COVID levels by early 2026.

Meditation in Recovery

our longest-running practice group, started with 10 people in 2000. Led by senior practitioners in recovery, this group explores the connections between Buddhist practice and recovery. MiR is looking at ways to increase access post-COVID, and plans to continue hosting day-long retreats at Green Gulch Farm and City Center.

Trans Sangha

was formed by and for transgender sangha members in 2023. Starting with just 2 members, the group's mailing list now includes 200 people, about 50 of whom meet weekly to sit zazen. Goals include making the Dharma accessible for those who might not otherwise have access and strengthening the bonds in the trans community.

Urban Gate Sangha

(formerly Saturday Sangha) was formed in the early 2000s to support lay practitioners who don't live in the building at City Center. Sangha members learn how to lead zazen instruction, participate in the doanryo, care for the temple, and help prepare lunch for the community. Goals include increasing participation and continuing to support the path of SFZC sangha members who are not in residency.

Queer Dharma

was formed in 2010 with monthly in-person meetings. This group welcomes those who identify as LGBTQIA to share in a spirit of connection, well-being, and authentic presence. Meetings consist of meditation (including instruction), brief talks by Queer-identified speakers, most of whom practice in the Zen Buddhist tradition, and discussion. Since the pandemic, meetings of 20 or so members have been held online. Goals include increasing member outreach and adding more talks and engagement opportunities.

BIPOC Affinity Group



was formed in June of this year to offer a space of connection and support for those who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color. The group offers an opportunity to explore the Dharma together, reflect on shared and individual experiences, and enjoy each other's company in community. Most groups meet weekly, usually at City Center, to sit together, reflect, and navigate shared challenges. Importantly, they do not arise from the institution itself, but from those who see a need and choose to gather. In this way, our practice groups embody the heart of our community: intimate, independent, and deeply nourishing.

OUR LEGACY

In 2019, one in every eleven people on Earth was 65 or older. According to the UN, by 2050, this number will nearly double, rising to one in six. How will we care for and nourish our elders? How will we honor their deep wisdom and experience, and celebrate their vitality and humor? SFZC is looking closely at these very real and important questions through the lens of the Dharma and our practice.



DHARMA LAMP CIRCLE

The Dharma Lamp Circle, created to support the sangha around end-of-life planning, also serves philanthropic donors who wish to leave a lasting legacy. Bequests play a vital role in sustaining SFZC; these funds ensure the preservation of our historic sites, the training of new practitioners, and the continuation of Suzuki Roshi's teachings. The generosity of Dharma Lamp Circle members helps SFZC to build a stable, reliable foundation for the future.



ENSO VILLAGE

About 20 years ago, SFZC made an ambitious commitment: to provide lifetime room and board to our longtime teachers, many of whom have dedicated their entire adulthood to serving the SFZC community. This meant securing affordable housing and elder care in one of the least affordable zip codes in the country. SFZC partnered with Kendal to realize this vision by creating Enso Village, a senior living facility in Healdsburg, California with a focus on mindful aging, environmental stewardship, and contemplative care. Founded on SFZC's core values, it has 220 independent living apartments (20 of which are set aside for SFZC elders), 30 assisted-care units, and 24 memory-care units.



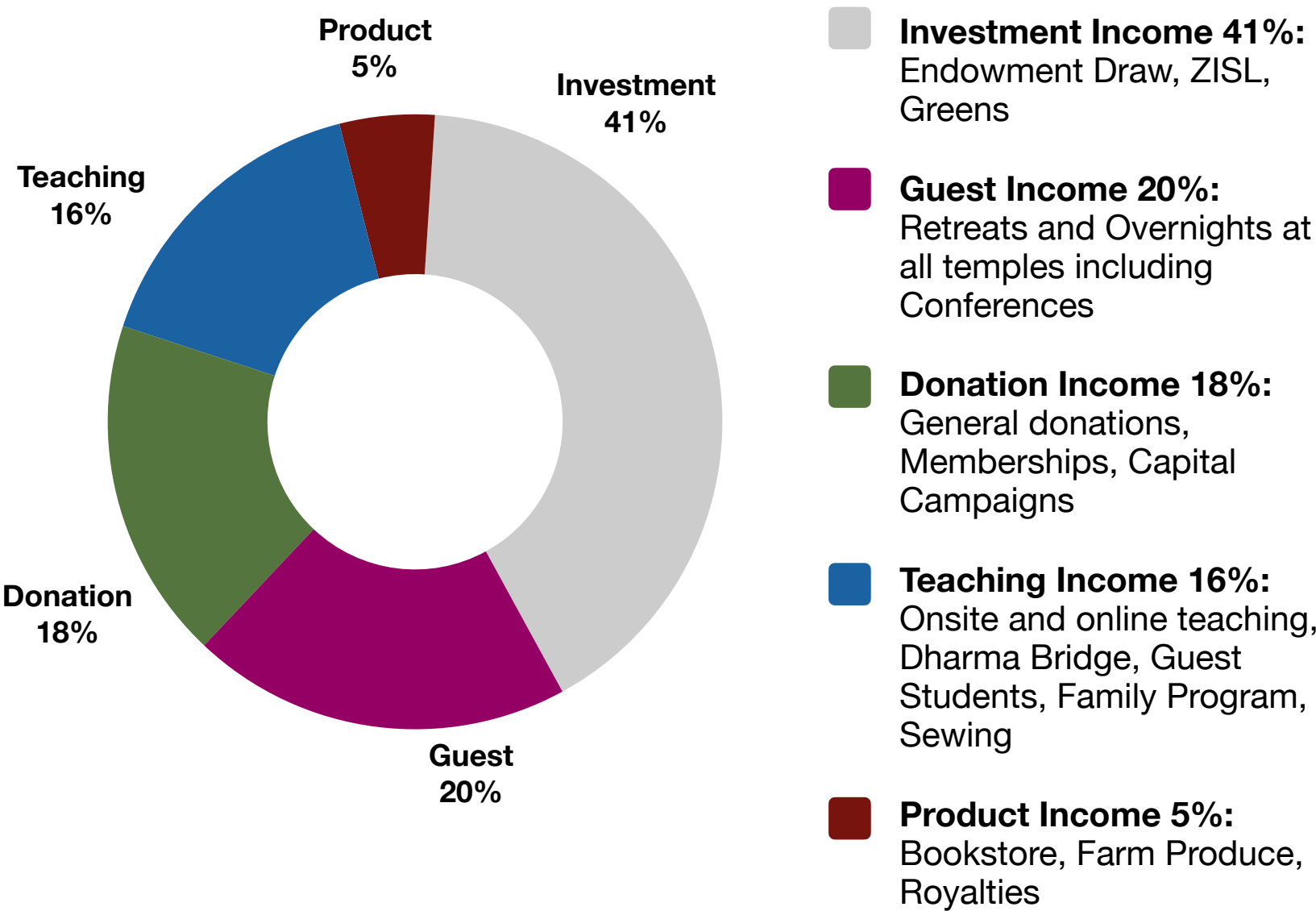
As of today, 27 SFZC elders have made their home at Enso Village, joining a community of 320 other seniors. SFZC's financial support helps these elders enjoy a well-earned retirement after decades of service and practice, while some continue to offer Dharma talks and classes through our online zendō.

Although maintaining this level of care involves significant expense, our agreement with Kendal provides for financial distributions once Enso Village hits its revenue benchmarks, which will help offset these costs. This is a true partnership rooted in generosity and shared impact.

SFZC Financial Snapshot

May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

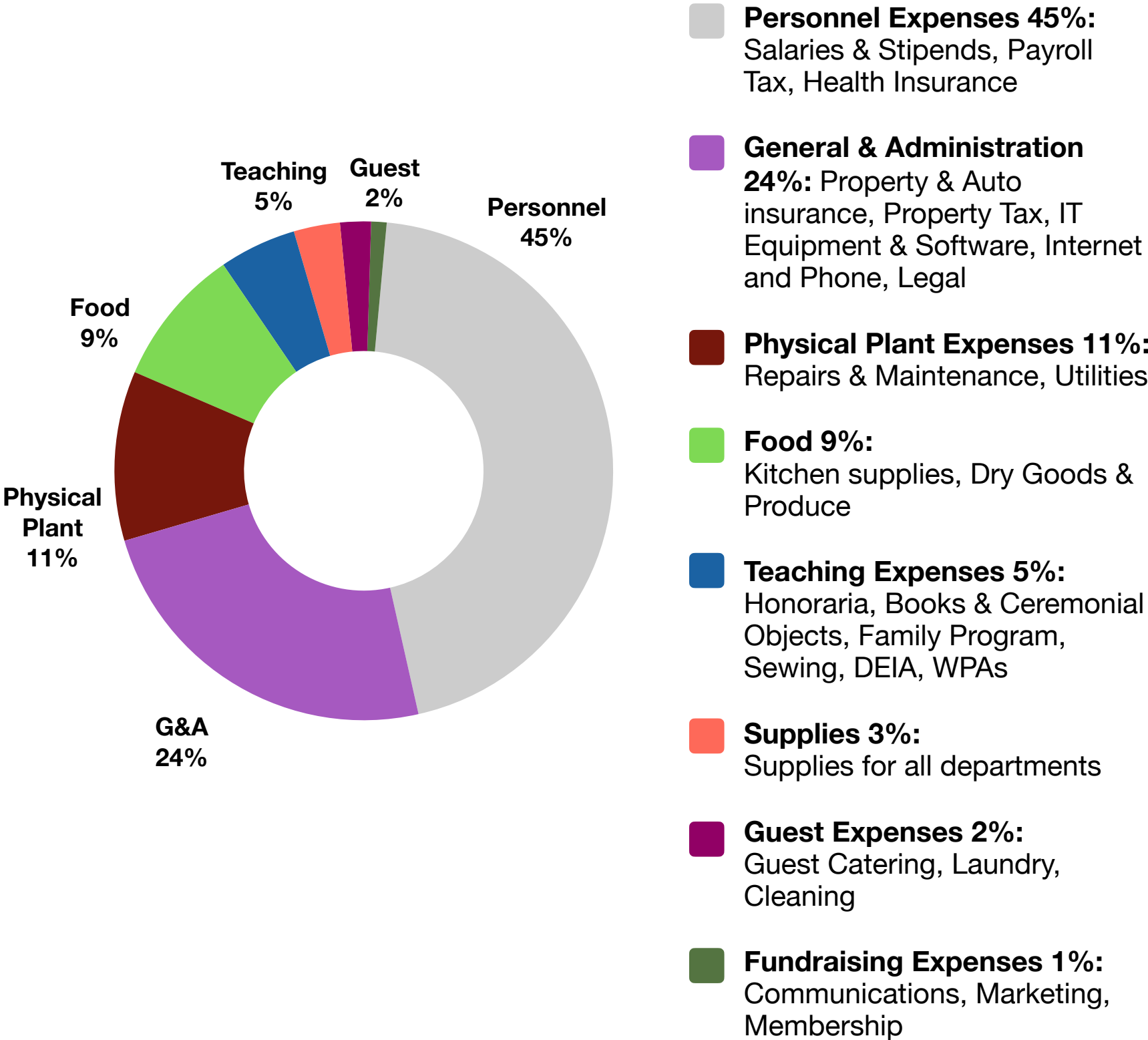
Income:



SFZC Financial Snapshot

May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

Expenses:





THANK YOU

Together we engage and build community.

Your support makes this possible.

Our minds and hearts express the fullness of our gratitude.

Deep bows.

Photo credits

Sara Tasker, Brent Haas, Christopher Shelton, Richard Bae, Pranavi Javangula, Florian Brodyn, Darío M S, Mitsu Suzuki, Sasha Moravec (HKIT), Erin Scott.



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