



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Midpen board approves annual budget and priority open space projects**

**Los Altos, Calif.** —The Midpen board of directors has approved the operating Budget and Action Plan for the fiscal year running July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. In response to COVID-19 economic impacts, Midpen general fund expenditures will remain flat and no new staff positions will be budgeted.

Capital expenditures account for nearly \$28 million (35%) of the just more than \$81 million total budget, with nearly \$37 million (45%) allocated toward operating expenses and almost \$17 (20%) for debt service. Revenue is projected at just over \$82 million.

The Capital Improvement and Action Plan section of the budget forms the fiscal year work plan, which includes 74 projects, 32% of which are eligible for reimbursement through Measure AA, a general obligation bond funding source approved by voters in 2014. Action plan projects are balanced across four main program areas: land acquisition and preservation (18%), natural resource protection and restoration (27%), public access, education and outreach (31%), and assets and organizational support (24%). Priority projects for the FY21 include:

- Progress on the Highway 17 wildlife corridor to provide safe crossing for mountain lions and other wildlife
- Continue implementation of the ADA barrier removal plan to provide equitable access to programs, services and activities
- Prepare Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve for the next phase of public access, including construction of the Alma cultural landscape area and planning new trails
- Finalize the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program to help with wildland fire prevention and preparedness in coordination with local fire agencies and surrounding communities
- Continue the collaborative high-resolution vegetation mapping project in San Mateo County and begin a similar project encompassing Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties to better inform wildland fire and invasive plant management throughout the region
- Contribute funding to extend a regional trail corridor from Saratoga to the Pacific Ocean through the Saratoga to the Skyline Trail project

Midpen receives the majority (73%) of its total funding from property taxes, with the remainder from bond reimbursements (20%), and grants, interest, rental and other income (7%). In FY20, Midpen received an Operating Budget Excellence Award from the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers and a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association. The complete Budget Book and Action Plan and the Budget in Brief high-level overview are available at [openspace.org/budget](https://openspace.org/budget).

*The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. On the San Mateo County coast, our mission also includes preserving agricultural land of regional significance and rural character and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources. Midpen has successfully protected nearly 65,000 acres of public open space land in the Santa Cruz Mountains region since 1972. [openspace.org](https://openspace.org)*