



Category: Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing Measure D

2016 Santa Cruz County Transportation Sales Tax
Fiscal Year 2023/24 Highlights

FY23/24 Measure D Revenue and Expenditure Snapshot

Measure D Allocation	\$166,667
Interest earnings & adjustments	(\$193)
Carryover from Prior Years	\$0
Expenditures	\$56,816
Carryover Balance (Loaned from Hwy Corridors)	\$109,657

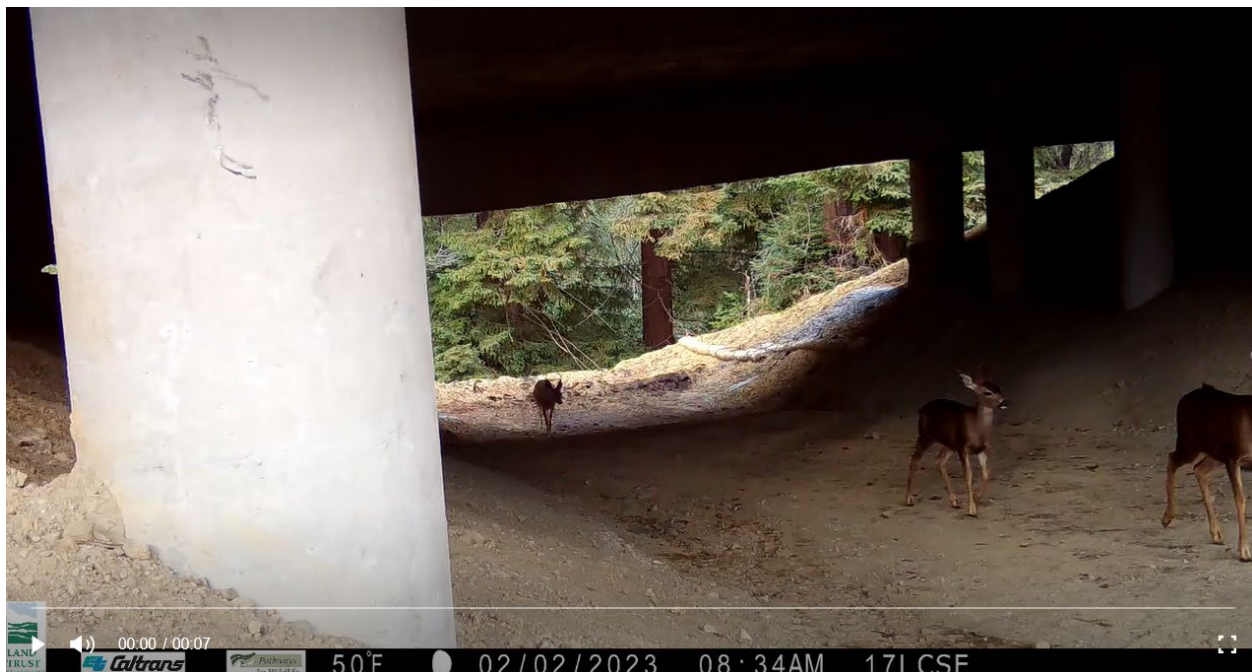
Highlights of Measure D Investments FY23/24*

**See the Expenditure Report for full list of how Measure D was spent this year*



PROJECT: Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

- Description: Construction of new crossing under Highway 17 at Laurel Curve for wildlife
- Project Benefits: Reduce collisions between autos and wildlife, reconnect wildlife habitats
- FY23/24 Measure D spent: \$55,828 for landscaping and monitoring
- Total Project Cost: \$12.5 million



MAP OF PROJECT LOCATION



Leveraged Funds

The RTC used Measure D revenues to serve as match and leverage the following funds for the project:

- State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP): \$4 million
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County: \$3 million. Land was purchased/preserved on either side of the highway prior to passage of Measure D.

Planned Investments for Carryover Balances and Future Funds

An inter-program loan from the Measure D: Highway Corridors category was used to advance construction of the Wildlife Crossing. Future Measure D revenues (\$166,667/year) are being used to close out the project, monitoring and plant establishment, and to repay the inter-program loan.

Additional information about this project is online at:

- The 5-year plan is online at: www.sccrtc.org/MeasureD
- Video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hufu0dbvYU>
- RTC webpage: <https://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/highway-17/>
- Storymap: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/40523de82f3042629f0e5f58112f3038>
- Pathways for Wildlife: <https://www.pfwildlife.com/hwy-17>
- Land Trust: <https://landtrustsantacruz.org/protected-areas/highway-17-wildlife-crossing>

Measure D Annual Report Cover Sheet - Fiscal Year 2023/24
RTC Category: Hwy 17 Wildlife Crossing

Measure D Financial Information	
FY23/24 Formula Allocations	\$166,667
Beginning Balance (unspent prior years Measure D Revenues/carryover and Interest)	(\$193)
Interest earned in FY23/24 (including interest earned on balances carried over from prior years)	\$411
Total Measure D Funding Available in FY23/24	\$166,473
Total Measure D Funds Spent in FY23/24	\$56,816
Total Measure D Balance (Rollover to FY24/25 = loan from Hwy Corridors to be repaid with future allocations-through end of Measure)	\$109,657
Measure D Compliance Documents – Check with “x” documents included	
1. FY23/24 Annual Report Cover Sheet <i>(this document)</i>	X
2. FY23/24 Audited Financials for Measure D funds <i>(see “Measure D Audit Guidance” for additional information)</i>	One for all RTC categories
3. FY23/24 Expenditure Report Spreadsheet: List of projects that Measure D formula funds (direct allocations) were spent on.	Attached
a. Grouped projects supplemental information	N/A
4. Annual Report Highlights (new for FY23/24)	Attached
5. Map	See Fact Sheets
6. Performance Measures Report Spreadsheet	N/A
7. 5-Year Program of Projects (5-Year Plan)	Attached
8. Ongoing Public Outreach for Projects Using Measure D Funds	
a. Description of Public Outreach Process: Project construction is finished. Fact sheets and other information on the project are available on the RTC and Caltrans websites.	
b. Sample(s) of public outreach on Measure D-funded projects conducted during the reporting year <i>(Attach samples or provide links to outreach. This is not the adoption of your 5-Year Plan)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project completed construction prior to FY23/24. 	
c. Website with Measure D information <i>(per Article III.A.7.)</i>	Web address: https://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/highway-17/
d. News Article: <i>(Attach a copy of or weblink to at least one news article or press release about Measure D-funded projects in the past fiscal year. News release should inform public that project is funded by Measure D. Per Article III.A.8.)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2023/12/21/first-puma-witnessed-using-laurel-curve-crossing/ 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/mountain-lion-highway-17-wildlife-tunnel/3410366/ 	
<p>e. Signage: <i>(Photos of Measure D logo on signs at construction sites and on public education materials/websites.)</i></p> <p>Project is finished</p>	
<p>f. Evidence that the 5-year program of projects adopted at the start of FY23/24, and subsequent decisions programming & budgeting Measure D funds, were approved through a public process. <i>(List webpages/links and dates of decisions or attach staff report, resolutions, public hearing notice, committee meetings, etc)</i></p> <p>i. Public hearings at RTC meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11/2/23: FY23/24-27/28 5-year plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ News Release: https://sccrtc.org/rtc-seeking-input-on-use-of-measure-d-funds-on-regional-highway-trail-rail-and-lift-line-projects/ <p>ii. Advisory Committee Review of draft plans: October 2022 and October 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle Committee • Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC) • Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) 	See web pages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of 5-Year Plan Public Hearing soliciting input on 5-Year Plan <i>(per Article III.A.4.)</i> 	Date: 11/2/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date annual 5-year Plan approved by Governing Board 	Date: 11/2/23
<p>g. Photos: <i>(Attach before/after and construction photos if available of projects/work done in the reporting year.)</i></p>	See Highlights Doc
<p>h. Fact Sheets on larger projects</p>	Attached
9. Maintenance of Effort	N/A
10.Planned Use of Fund Balances & Potential Liabilities	
<p>a. Fund Balances, Carryover Projects, and Description of planned, longer-term and future uses of Measure D revenues, if known.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5 million of Measure D revenues over the 30-year measure are designated for this project. • Construction is finished. Final invoices from Caltrans for Plant Establishment and mitigation monitoring continue. <p>b. Future Liabilities: <i>(Describe possible liabilities, including information on how future costs for projects not yet completed are anticipated to be funded.)</i></p> <p>While only 1/30th of the \$5 million in Measure D funds designated for this project are allocated each year (approx. \$166k/year over 30 years), in order to expedite construction of this project, the RTC approved an “inter-program loan” of Measure D funds from the “Highway Corridors” investment category, to be repaid with future allocations to the Wildlife Crossing. The Measure D Ordinance, 5-year plan and</p>	

[Strategic Implementation Plan](#) allow inter-program loans as a means to reduce financing costs and accelerate implementation of the Measure D Expenditure Plan. All future allocations of Measure D to the Highway 17 Wildlife project (\$166,666/year through 2035) will be paid to the Highway Corridors category as repayment, with interest, for the interprogram loan.

Required Attachments:

- ☐ Measure D Audited Financial Statement
- ☐ Expenditure Report (spreadsheet)
 - ☐ Details for grouped projects, if applicable and not provided above (e.g. location/limits, summary of work done, schedule)
- ☐ Measure D Annual Report Highlights
- ☐ Map(s) of Measure D-funded projects
- ☐ Measure D 5-Year Program of Projects
- ☐ Evidence of public outreach/process for Measure D expenditures (e.g. notices, news releases, board resolutions/staff reports, etc. Links to documents okay.)
 - ☐ News Article or News Release about projects funded by Measure D
 - ☐ Signage photos
- ☐ Photos of project locations (before/after)
- ☐ Fact Sheets for major projects

planning/shared documents/measure d/fy2024expenditurereports rtc/3c. cover sheet-wildlife.docx

MEASURE D EXPENDITURE REPORTReporting Year **FY23/24**Recipient Agency/Investment Category **SCCRTC-
Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing**

Project Description/Location						Leveraged Funds, if any		
#	Project Name	Project Description <i>(may include additional project components, ex. complete streets, traffic calming, crossing improvements, drainage upgrades, etc.)</i>	Location/Limits (if grouped project, list each location/limit)	Work Done in FY23/24	FY23/24 Measure D Expenditures	Leveraged Fund Amounts <i>(grants & other funds where Meas. D used as match)</i>	Leveraged Fund Source(s) Name(s)	Total Project Cost
##	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Construction**	Construct wildlife undercrossing to connect habitat on either side of the highway. Creates a wildlife corridor enabling animals to safely cross the highway.	Highway 17 near Laurel Curve	Landscaping, monitoring	\$55,828	\$ 7,377,000	Land Trust \$3M, SHOPP	\$12.5 M
##	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Oversight and public outreach	RTC costs associated with oversight, agreements, coordination, and public engagement.	Highway 17 near Laurel Curve	Cooperative agreements, public outreach, review of designs	\$988			
Total Spent					\$ 56,816.00	\$ 7,377,000		

MEASURE D EXPENDITURE REPORT

3.

#	Project Name	Consistency with 5-year plan		Stats - if applicable				Other
		Project in approved 5-year plan?	If not in 5-year plan or different amount or scope, why different?	New Bike Lane Miles	New Ped Path or Sidewalk Miles	Miles of pavement rehab/repair (pothole, seals, etc)	If Complete Streets not incorporated into project, why not?	Other Notes or Information <i>(optional)</i>
##	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Construction**	Yes		NA	NA	0.10	NA	Initial construction costs paid by Land Trust. After \$3M Land Trust spent, balance to be covered by Measure D.
##	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Oversight and public outreach	Yes						
				0.00	0.00	0.10		

Measure D: 5-Year Program of Projects (FY23/24-FY27/28)
Highway 17 Wildlife Corridor (\$5 million over 30 years)

Approved 11/2/23

Previously updated 6/6/19, 9/3/20, 10/7/21, 11/3/22.

						Planned							
	Project	Description	Schedule	Prior Years	FY22/23*	FY23/24	FY24/25	FY25/26	FY26/27	FY27/28	Future Debt Service**	Total Measure D	Proposed Updates
1	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Construction**	Construct wildlife undercrossing to connect habitat on either side of the highway. Creates a wildlife corridor enabling animals to safely cross the highway.	2021-2023	\$0	<u>\$2,580,469</u>	<u>\$1,470,531</u>						\$4,051,000	Shift funds not spent FY22/23 to FY23/24. Project expected to be closed out by end of 2023. No change to total.
2	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Construction Financing	Financing/debt service on loans or bonds needed advance implementation, since Measure D revenues are allocated over 30 years. RTC anticipates using interprogram loans from other Measure D Regional programs.	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	Debt Service payments \$166,667/year					<u>\$957,078</u>	Update based on timing of expenditures.
3	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing near Laurel Curve: Oversight and public outreach	RTC costs associated with oversight, agreements, financing, coordination, and public engagement.	FY19/20-FY23/24	\$5,121	<u>\$3,869</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>						<u>\$13,990</u>	Shift some unspent funds from FY22/23 to FY23/24 and reduce total. Previously \$15k
Estimated Annual Measure D Expenditures				\$5,121	\$2,584,338	\$1,475,531	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$3,125,000	\$5,022,067	Includes est. \$22k interest
Interprogram loan from Measure D - Highway Corridors				\$0	\$1,525,724	\$1,308,864						\$2,834,589	Reduce based on expenditure timing. Previously \$3.02M
Wildlife Crossing Revenues (net interprogram loan)				\$5,121	\$1,058,613	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$166,667	\$3,125,000	\$5,022,067	

*Estimated expenditures; to be updated based on audited actuals.

**Since the full \$5M committed in the Measure D Expenditure Plan for this project will not be available until end of the 30 year measure, consistent with the Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan, the RTC authorized loans from the Highway Corridors investment category. Land Trust committed \$3M for construction costs.

***Pre-construction and support costs funded through Caltrans SHOPP. Actual cost and financing will depend on final construction costs and timing.



Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

Project Description

Construction of a wildlife undercrossing on Highway 17 near Laurel Road in Santa Cruz County to link core wildlife habitat areas on either side of the highway and to allow animals to travel beneath the highway. Mountain lions, bobcats, deer and other wildlife are using the crossing, reducing car crashes with wildlife. The main crossing was constructed in 2022 and 2023. Caltrans has since installed additional fencing to guide wildlife to the crossing and is completing re-vegetation of the area.

55,000-66,000 vehicles travel over Highway 17 between Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties each day (over 20 million vehicles a year). The dense traffic, concrete median barriers, and lack of culvert undercrossings or bridges made Highway 17 a barrier for wildlife moving through the Santa Cruz Mountains. Wildlife had most frequently been trying to cross Highway 17 near Laurel Road.

Caltrans, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and resource agencies partnered to construct this project.



Project Highlights

- Provides safe passage for wildlife to cross under Highway 17 near Laurel Road in the Santa Cruz Mountains
- Bridges two core wildlife habitat areas on each side of Highway 17
- Traffic volumes of over 60,000 vehicles per day, combined with a concrete median barrier and a lack of adequate culvert or bridge undercrossings contribute to animal-vehicle collisions.
- Collaborative project between the Regional Transportation Commission, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and Caltrans
- Primary construction completed in 2023, final vegetation work underway

Project Delivery Strategy

Caltrans led the project delivery. The pre-construction phases were funded with Caltrans State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOP) funds and the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. The RTC used Measure D funds to leverage additional SHOPP and Land Trust funds for construction. <https://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/highway-17/>



PROJECT FACT SHEET

Updated April 2025

Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

Total Programming

Estimated Total Cost	\$12.5M
Funding Sources	
Measure D (Neighborhood)*	\$5M
Other Secured**	\$7.5M

Project Status/Schedule

Construction of crossing was completed in 2023. Final fencing and vegetation work continues through 2025.

*Includes loan payments (principal and interest)

**Includes Land Trust and SHOPP funds.



Funding Partners

