



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



## PRESS RELEASE

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### STATE APPROVES \$115 MILLION FOR COASTAL RAIL TRAIL, ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved \$115.8 million in grant funding through its Active Transportation Program for six active transportation projects in Santa Cruz County today, including nearly 7 miles of the Coastal Rail Trail through the heart of Santa Cruz County.

The State funding will go toward construction of community-supported bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout Santa Cruz County. Approximately \$103.3 million will go to constructing portions of the Coastal Rail Trail. These Coastal Rail Trail projects will provide a new dedicated bicycle and pedestrian route between the City of Santa Cruz and the Seacliff neighborhood in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz County's local Measure D (2016) sales tax provided a match to leverage the State Active Transportation Program funding.

"This is a big win for Santa Cruz County," said RTC Executive Director Guy Preston. "The Coastal Rail Trail projects are going to transform the way people travel through our county and will benefit generations of bicyclists and pedestrians. This is a great example of how voter-approved local funding can leverage larger state and federal grants."

Other projects awarded funding will improve existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersections for bicycle and pedestrian use, and support bicycle safety education. These projects advance Santa Cruz County's goals to improve the public's safety, health, and access to alternative modes of transportation, as well as advancing equity and reducing our impact on climate change.

The Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 project is being delivered by the City of Santa Cruz and received \$35.7 million in funding. This project is a 2.2-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail from the eastern terminus of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 7 at the Beach Street/Pacific



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Avenue Roundabout to the eastern side of 17th Avenue. Environmental, design, and right-of-way work for the project is currently underway.

“We are so excited to secure funding to advance constructing the Coastal Rail Trail. This is an important project for our community,” said Santa Cruz City Manager Matt Huffaker. “Families, children, and visitors will be able to safely walk and bike in Santa Cruz to all of our amazing amenities.”

The Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 & 11 project is being delivered by the County of Santa Cruz and received \$67.6 million. The \$67.6 million in funding for Segments 10-11 is the largest ATP grant ever awarded. This project is a 4.5-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail from 17th Avenue in Live Oak to State Park Drive in the Seacliff neighborhood. The project is currently in the environmental phase with final design expected to begin in 2024.

“The Coastal Rail Trail is a game-changer for the County’s residents, bringing them new recreational and commuting options while helping us reduce greenhouse gasses and improving the health and safety of the community,” said Santa Cruz County Parks Planner Robert Tidmore. “This will be remembered as an important day in building Santa Cruz County’s transportation future.”

Additionally, the City of Watsonville was awarded \$6.9 million for its Safe Routes to Downtown Watsonville project that will construct pedestrian and bicycle improvements at several schools and within downtown Watsonville; the City of Santa Cruz was awarded \$2.9 million for construction of a multiuse path on Swanton Boulevard and sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and intersection improvements on Delaware Avenue; Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency was awarded \$1.8 million for its Safe Routes for Watsonville School Families and Community program that will provide training and education for pedestrian and bicycle safety; and the University of California Santa Cruz was awarded \$0.7 million for its “SlugBikeLife” Bike Safety and Education Program Phase 2 to further develop a robust and culturally inclusive bike safety, education, and encouragement program at UCSC. Statewide, the CTC programmed \$1.02 billion for 93 active transportation projects. Santa Cruz County received over 13% of the total funding, representing a generational investment to improve active transportation in our community.