



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 520, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073
(831) 454-2100 FAX: (831) 454-3420 TDD/TTY: call 711
CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DATE: May 14, 2025

TO: Santa Cruz County Planning Commission

FROM: Elissa Benson, Assistant County Executive Officer

Ryan Friedrich, Senior Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Review of the 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Consider the Santa Cruz County 2025 - 2030 Capital Improvement Program and provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding a consistency determination with the General Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) serves as a long-range planning tool that identifies major infrastructure, facility, and park projects proposed for County funding over a five-year horizon. While neither a budget or General Plan amendment in itself, the CIP supports budget preparation, financial planning, and promotes strategic planning across County departments.

California Government Code §65401 and County Code 18.50.130 prescribes that the County Planning Commission review the CIP to ensure consistency with the General Plan. Historically, this review was conducted by the Department of Public Works. Beginning in 2023, oversight of the Countywide CIP shifted to the County Executive Office, in coordination with the Community Development & Infrastructure (CDI) Department, County Parks, and the General Services Department.

The 2025–2030 CIP marks the first comprehensive update since the 2021–2022 CIP and re-establishes a baseline of active and planned projects following the redirection of planning resources toward emergency storm recovery from the 2022–2023 winter storms.

OVERVIEW OF THE 2025–2030 CIP

The 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is published as a online website through the County's OpenGov portal. The Commission and members of the public can access the CIP via this link:

<https://stories.opengov.com/santacruzcountyca/aaecc9dd-f305-4560-a015-1c21e19e570e/published/2trUKKreZ?currentPageId=67eabb3cdb14b85f95b1752d>

The CIP focuses on a curated list of 126 active capital projects that are either fully funded, partially funded, under design, or currently in construction. This fiscally constrained approach ensures the CIP reflects only projects with committed or reasonably anticipated funding sources, and

intentionally excludes unfunded or early conceptual project ideas. While this narrowed scope does not fully represent the County's long-term capital needs, it provides a transparent and actionable baseline from which future iterations of the CIP will evolve to incorporate additional priorities and emerging project concepts. The total estimated investment across the 2025–2030 CIP exceeds \$396 million.

Projects are grouped into three primary portfolios: Infrastructure, Parks and Open Spaces, and Government Facilities. Infrastructure projects comprise 91 active efforts and over \$200 million in planned investment—approximately 51% of the total CIP. This includes road repairs, bridge replacements, pavement management, stormwater and sanitation upgrades, and significant solid waste infrastructure projects, much of which respond to disaster-related storm damage and deferred maintenance. The Parks and Open Spaces portfolio includes 12 projects totaling \$127 million (32%), led by the transformative Rail Trail Segment 10/11 and a range of coastal access and local park upgrades aimed at expanding equitable access to recreation. Government Facilities include 25 projects with more than \$68 million in planned investment (17%), covering building renovations, energy upgrades, HVAC systems, ADA improvements, and key public safety and behavioral health infrastructure.

The CIP serves as a strategic planning tool that outlines project costs and identifies likely funding sources over a multi-year horizon. It guides interdepartmental coordination, helps anticipate funding needs, and shapes future budget requests. However, the CIP is not a formal budget and does not authorize expenditures. Spending authority is granted only through the County's adopted annual budget, which must fully appropriate funds for any contractual obligations in the year of award. This distinction highlights the CIP's role in advancing long-term capital priorities while preserving fiscal policies and control in the County's annual budget.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE GENERAL PLAN

While the CIP does not formally amend the General Plan, it supports key General Plan goals related to the built environment, mobility and access, parks and public facilities, and public safety. In accordance with County Code 18.50.130 the Planning Department has prepared a memo (Attachment A) that indicates that the CIP is consistent with the County General Plan.

NEXT STEPS

Following Planning Commission review, the 2025–2030 CIP will be presented alongside the FY 2025–26 Proposed Budget to the Board of Supervisors. Staff welcomes Planning Commission feedback to inform ongoing refinement of the CIP and alignment with long-range land use and environmental planning goals.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Planning Department Memo on General Plan Consistency Determination



County of Santa Cruz

Department of Community Development and Infrastructure

701 Ocean Street, Fourth Floor, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Planning (831) 454-2580 Public Works (831) 454-2160
sccoplanning.com dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us

DATE: May 2, 2025

TO: Elissa Benson, Assistant County Executive Officer
Ryan Friedrich, Senior Administrative Analyst

FROM: Stephanie Hansen, Assistant Director, Community Development and Infrastructure

SUBJECT: General Plan Consistency Determination for the Proposed 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program

The proposed 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan has been reviewed for conformance with the 2024 General Plan/Local Coastal Program as required in Santa Cruz County Code Section 18.50.130. The proposed improvements listed in the Plan are consistent with the County's General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan, particularly the Access + Mobility Element and the Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities Element. The Plan is an important tool to ensure the implementation of the General Plan/Local Coastal Program.