

Popular Annual Financial Report

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024



Headquarters in Los Altos, California



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve by Carol Daniels

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COVER PHOTO CREDITS

Top photo: Fremont Older Open Space Preserve by Denise Lawrence

Second row, left to right: Purisima Creek Open Space Preserve by Katrina Zerga, Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve by Ingrid Hegerberg, Long Ridge Open Space Preserve by Jacob Osborne



MISSION The mission of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

COASTSIDE MISSION To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Introductory Message

It is my pleasure to present the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024.

The PAFR summarizes Midpen's financial activities and performance results gathered from our Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The ACFR was prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and includes financial statements audited by Chavan & Associates, Certified Public Accountants. Midpen received an unmodified (or clean) opinion that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization.

The financial information in the PAFR is presented to simplify the information contained in the ACFR and to offer the public a broad overview and longer-term perspective of Midpen's assets, liabilities and net position. The reader should note that the PAFR is not a substitute for the ACFR as it is an unaudited report and does not present all the necessary financial statements and note disclosures required by GAAP.

Midpen's detailed financial information, including audited financial statements, is available in the ACFR. The ACFR provides full disclosure of our finances, including the notes to the financial statements, required supplementary information and historical statistical information.

The ACFR and other financial and budget documents are available at **openspace.org/financials**.



Sincerely, /s/Ana María Ruiz

Ana María Ruiz General Manager

Board of Directors and Management



District Wards



Left to right: Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Margaret MacNiven, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Jed Cyr, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle

Craig Gleason – Board Treasurer	Ward 1: Cupertino, Lexington Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga
Yoriko Kishimoto	Ward 2: Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Loyola, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Stanford
Jed Cyr– Board Vice President	Ward 3: Cupertino, Sunnyvale
Curt Riffle – Board Secretary	Ward 4: Cupertino, Los Altos, Mountain View, Sunnyvale
Karen Holman	Ward 5: East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale
Margaret MacNiven – Board President	Ward 6: Atherton, La Honda, Ladera, Loma Mar, Menlo Park, North Fair Oaks, Pescadero, Portola Valley, Redwood City, West Menlo Park, Woodside
Zoe Kersteen-Tucker	Ward 7: El Granada, Emerald Lake Hills, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Moss Beach, Redwood City, San Carlos, Woodside

Executive Management

Ana María Ruiz–General Manager Hilary Stevenson–General Counsel Mike Foster–Controller

Susanna Chan–Assistant General Manager/Project Planning and Delivery Brian Malone–Assistant General Manager/Visitor and Field Services Stefan Jaskulak–Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services

About Us

Midpen helps plants, animals and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region by preserving a connected greenbelt of more than 70,000 acres of open space. These diverse and scenic landscapes, from bay wetlands to redwood forests and coastal grasslands, host an incredible diversity of life, making our region one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

Preserving, restoring and providing access to our region's iconic, cultural, working and scenic landscapes offers us opportunities for health, climate resilience and refuge. We actively manage the land and waterways to restore their health and function, helping our local ecosystem become more resilient in a time of climate change. By caring for the land, the land in turn takes care of us, providing tangible and intangible benefits like clean air and water, flood protection and the opportunity for restorative experiences in nature.

Midpen preserves have long and complex histories of human use prior to becoming open space. On the San Mateo County Coast, where local agricultural roots run deep, our mission includes preserving viable working lands. We partner with small-scale local ranchers to use conservation grazing as a land management tool for enhancing native coastal grasslands and providing wildland fire protection.

Midpen preserves are free and open to the public daily, 365 days a year, and provide an extensive trail network for environmentally sensitive public recreation. Our programming connects people to nature through experiences, including environmental interpretation, docent-led activities and volunteer opportunities.

HISTORY

The late 1960s was a time of rapid growth in the Bay Area. Through a determined and heartfelt grassroots effort by local conservationists, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District was created in 1972 when the Measure R "Room to Breathe" initiative was passed by Santa Clara County voters. District residents voted to expand Midpen's boundary into southern San Mateo County in 1976, and again in 1992 to a small portion of Santa Cruz County. In the late 1990s, development pressure increased on the San Mateo County Coast, threatening sensitive habitat and the area's rural heritage. This led to the 2004 Coastside Protection Area, an extension of District boundaries to the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County, and the addition of preserving rural character and encouraging viable, agricultural use of the land to our organizational mission.

GOVERNANCE

Midpen is governed by a seven-member publicly elected board of directors. Board members serve a four-year term and represent a geographic ward of approximately equal populations. The board holds its regular public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m., at the Midpen administrative office: 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos, CA.

STAFFING

The staff currently includes over 200 employees in 12 departments: budget and finance, engineering and construction, general manager's office, general counsel's office, human resources, information systems and technology, land and facilities services, natural resources, planning, public affairs, real property and visitor services. Though not part of a department, the Controller is also part of the staffing numbers and like the General Manager



Midpen Staff by Erin Ashford

and General Counsel reports directly to the Board of Directors.

For more information about Midpen, visit openspace.org.

Regional Map





Organizational Chart



Midpen At-A-Glance



Founded in 1972





More Than 70,000

Acres Preserved

Over 2 Million Visitors Per Year

Over 250 Miles

of Trails



27 Preserves



\$89.5 Million Budget





752,352 Residents

Demographic and Economic Statistics



¹ 2019-23 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve by Minnie-Uppuluri

Revenues





Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve by Michael Byun



Coal Creek Open Space Preserve by Dean Birinyi

Statement of Net Position

The statement of net position presents information on all of Midpen's assets and liabilities, deferred outflows and deferred inflows, with the difference between these amounts being reported as net position. The net position is the difference between what Midpen owns and what it owes. Net Position is an aggregate view of the District's finances and at the end of FY24, the net position was \$516.5 million.

	Total FY24	Total FY23	Total FY22
Current Assets	\$113,939	\$102,598	\$96,769
Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	\$87,791	\$65,437	\$66,304
Non-depreciable Capital Assets	\$515,515	\$525,690	\$503,418
Other Noncurrent Assets	\$6,045	\$6,281	\$5,766
Deferred Outflows of Resources	\$16,797	\$17,835	\$11,587
Total Assets and Deferred Outflows	\$740,087	\$717,841	\$683,844
Current Liabilities	\$15,218	\$14,266	\$19,579
Non-Current Liabilities	\$199,930	\$205,636	\$206,843
Deferred Inflows of Resources	\$8,436	\$8,770	\$10,907
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	\$223,584	\$228,672	\$237,329
Net Investment in Capital Assets	\$448,182	\$435,083	\$409,656
Restricted Net Position	\$6,510	\$4,345	\$6,193
Unrestricted Net Position	\$61,811	\$49,741	\$30,666
Net Position, End of Period	\$516,503	\$489,169	\$446,515

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION AS OF JUNE 30, 2024 (IN THOUSANDS)



Long Ridge Open Space Preserve by Charlie Theodoro

Revenues and Expenses (Governmental Activities)

Given the nature of Midpen's finances and operations, all financial activities are governmental. Our primary source of revenue is property taxes, levied on all taxable property within the district's boundaries, covering portions of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Revenue for the year ended June 30, 2024, totaled \$83.9 million, reflecting a decrease of \$11.3 million or 11.85% compared to FY23. The decrease of \$11.3 million is primarily attributed to the one-time \$10.4 million revenue received in FY23 for the sale of the former administrative office building that became surplus property after relocating into a new office site. Additionally, we received higher than normal outside grant funding for the Cloverdale acquisition. Property tax revenue continued to rise steadily year over year due to growth in the assessed valuation of real property. Investment earnings also increased due to improved investment yields and the interest earned on general obligation bond proceeds. Total expenses for FY24 were \$56.8 million, marking an increase of \$4.3 million or 8.2% compared to FY23. This rise is attributed to higher overall capital expenditures and staff increases as Midpen continues to build out its staffing levels to support more open space protection, restoration, and public access. Midpen's overall net position increased by \$27.3 million as the District continues to pay down long-term debt and overall revenues continuing to exceed expenditures.

	Total FY24	Total FY23	Total FY22
Revenues			
General Revenues	\$78,650	\$72,446	\$64,352
Program Revenues	\$7,198	\$14,561	\$5,374
Special Item—Gain on Disposal of Capital Assets	(\$1,962)	\$8,155	-
Total Revenues	\$83,886	\$95,162	\$69,726
Expenses			
Land Preservation	\$50,363	\$45,382	\$31,358
Interest and Fiscal Charges	\$6,449	\$7,126	\$ 7,930
Total Expenses	\$56,812	\$52,508	\$39,288
Increase in Net Position Before Adjustments	\$27,074	\$42,654	\$30,438
Prior Period Adjustments	\$260	_	\$633
Increase in Net Position	\$27,334	\$42,654	\$31,071
Net Position, Beginning of Period	\$489,169	\$446,515	\$415,444
Net Position, End of Period	\$516,503	\$489,169	\$446,515

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET POSITION AS OF JUNE 30, 2024 (IN THOUSANDS)

Debt

Midpen is legally restricted to issuing debt not to exceed five percent of the assessed valuation of the property situated within the District's boundaries. As of June 30, 2024, the assessed value of property within the District's jurisdiction totaled \$382.1 billion, resulting in a legal limit of \$19.1 billion. Midpen's revenue bonds, parity bonds, and refunding bonds are secured by general fund property tax revenue, while the general obligation bonds are secured through a separate ad valorem tax levy on all taxable property within the District's boundaries. The latest ratings for Midpen's debt issues from Standard and Poor's and Fitch Ratings are shown below. Based on the debt issue balance as of June 30, 2024, the District is well within the legal issuance limit.

Debt Issue	S & P	Fitch	Balance as of June 30, 2024
2012 Refunding Promissory Notes	AAA	AAA	\$6,580,603
2015 General Obligation Bonds (MAA) Series A	AAA	AAA	\$37,680,000
2015 Refunding Promissory Notes	AAA	AAA	\$15,930,000
2016 Green Refunding Bonds	AAA	AAA	\$32,260,000
2017 Green Refunding Bonds Series A	AAA	AAA	\$25,025,000
2018 General Obligation Bonds (MAA)	AAA	AAA	\$43,020,000
Total			\$160,495,603

TOTAL DEBT SERVICE PAID FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2024



	18.1%	2015 MAA
	14.1%	2015 Refunding
	41.3%	2016 Green
	7.2%	2017 Refunding
	19.3%	2018 MAA

Award

Government Finance Officers Association

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Presented to

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District California

For its Annual Financial Report For the Fiscal Year Ended

June 30, 2023

Christophen P. Morrill

Executive Director/CEO



Fremont Older Open Space Preserve by Jonathan Chang

Measure AA Projects



In June 2014, voters approved Measure AA (MAA), a \$300 million general obligation bond to protect natural open space lands; open preserves or areas of preserves that are currently closed; construct public access improvements such as new trails and staging areas; and restore and enhance open space land, which

includes forests, streams, watersheds and coastal ranch areas.

In August 2015, Midpen issued its first tranche of \$45 million in general obligation bonds to reimburse itself for project expenses planned for approximately the next two or three years, as well as the legally permitted look-back period of 60 days prior to board's certification of election results.

In February 2018, Midpen issued its second tranche of \$50 million in general obligation bonds and issued a third tranche in early FY25.

EXPENDITURE PLAN

The MAA expenditure plan is the culmination of an 18-month community vision planning effort that began in 2012 and yielded a list of 54 priority actions designed to help Midpen focus, inspire and coordinate open space conservation and management on the San Francisco Peninsula, San Mateo Coast and South Bay regions for the next 40 years. Portions of the top 25 priority actions (Portfolios 1-25) are funded by MAA and included in the expenditure plan. The full MAA bond accountability report, available on our website, is arranged in parallel with the expenditure plan to facilitate review by the Bond Oversight Committee and the general public.

ANNUAL BUDGET

Each year Midpen embarks upon a priority-setting and budgeting process with the board, allowing for at least a sixmonth planning process. The final budget and action plan is approved prior to the start of the fiscal year, which begins July 1. Within the budget document, there is an MAA project budget overview, which provides a prospective view into next year's planned spending.



Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area by Michelle Yau

Popular Annual Financial Report

The following chart shows the expenditure plan allocations broken down by portfolio, with the total expenditures for each portfolio through June 30, 2024. The purpose of this chart is to show the portfolio allocations that were approved in the expenditure plan and the relative expenditures in each portfolio, life-to-date. The MAA program and its portfolios are broad and complex and subject to a separate audit. For more detailed information regarding the portfolio allocations and expenditures, please visit openspace.org/MAAreport.



PORTFOLIO LEVEL EXPENDITURES TO ALLOCATIONS (In Millions)

Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve by Karl Gohl

Accomplishments

Over the course of the past fiscal year, Midpen has accomplished major milestones and made substantial progress on its key action plan projects adopted by the Board of Directors, which include the 25 Measure AA portfolios. The accomplishments for FY24 are outlined across the following five categories:

- Land Acquisition and Preservation
- Natural Resources Protection and Restoration
- Public Access, Education and Outreach
- Awards, Grants and Recognition

Highlights of the major accomplishments are provided below.

LAND ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION

- With the completed acquisitions of the Eberhard property in December of 2023 and the Fifths property in May of 2024, a total of 156 acres were added to La Honda Creek Space Preserve. These acquisitions protect redwood forested lands and wildlife habitat on the headwaters of La Honda Creek within the San Gregorio watershed. In terms of public access, the Eberhard acquisition advances a connection between La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserves.
- In May of 2024, Midpen finalized the purchase of a 644-acre portion of the undeveloped uplands area of the Johnston Ranch property from the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). The purchase continues to protect 1.2 miles of Arroyo Leon Creek, a tributary to Pilarcitos Creek, with potential spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout. The purchase also provides opportunities for public access through expanding and connecting local trail systems.
- Closed escrow on a forested, 3.7-acre trail easement area as an addition to Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. The Boothroyd-Krebs public trail easement is located southerly adjacent to the preserve and may be utilized in the future as part of the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail or other trails within the preserve.
- Purchased a 40.83-acre property as an addition to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. The Vielbaum property rests at 3,400 feet in elevation and is bordered by the 19,437.84-acre Sierra Azul Preserve to the north, east and south and private property to the west. The purchase protects fire-adaptive California bay forest and serpentine leather-oak chaparral within the Upper Los Gatos Creek and Upper Guadalupe Creek watersheds.



Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve by Yao Pi Hsu

NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

- As part of Midpen's work with the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Collaborative, 254 acres at Bear Creek Redwoods, Long Ridge and Sierra Azul Open Space Preserves have received forest health treatments. In addition, fuel reduction work was completed in areas of La Honda Creek, Windy Hill, Coal Creek, Skyline Ridge and Russian Ridge Open Space Preserves by FireSafe San Mateo, Woodside Fire Protection District, San Mateo RCD and Midpen staff.
- Successfully completed spillway repairs at Lower Turtle Pond, located within La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. Ponds provide prime habitat for turtles; their time in the sun is essential to shell development and overall health. These improvements not only support special status species recovery for the western pond turtle, but also the federally endangered San Francisco garter snake (Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia) and federally threatened California red-legged frog (Rana draytonii).
- Completed stabilization and repairs, which included bat-specific enhancements to the interior of the 160-yearold White Barn.
- Completed approximately 14,000 linear feet of wildlife-friendly livestock fences in the 450-acre Lobitos/Elkus property and the neighboring 340-acre Lobitos Ridge property, which protect riparian resources in both the Lobitos Creek and San Gregorio Creek watersheds.
- Completed the cleanup of an old landfill discovered within the Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. The cleanup involved two distinct efforts: systematically collecting and documenting as many historic artifacts as possible, and removing contaminated soil and other hazardous waste, which included 274 tons of hazardous soils and ash, three tons of recyclable metals, one cubic yard of non-friable asbestos containing materials, 32 tires, 1.5 tons of general waste and debris and an undocumented 500-gallon fuel storage tank along the Alma Loop Trail.
- Adopted a comprehensive agricultural policy that reaffirms Midpen's work preserving upland grazing areas protected through acquisition and conservation grazing leases, which support both agriculture and grassland habitats.



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve by Kevin Bella

PUBLIC ACCESS, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- The winter storms of 2022-23 caused landslides, toppled thousands of trees and disrupted access to preserves and trails for visitors and Midpen staff. In FY24, Midpen crew repaired the damage to trails and culverts as well as two major landslides in Bear Creek Redwoods and Sierra Azul Open Space Preserves.
- Following the acquisition of Midpen's 27th open space preserve in FY23, Midpen has welcomed the public to Cloverdale Ranch Open Space Preserves. In July 2023, District staff hosted two initial "Community Field Day" events, with three subsequent docent-led hikes throughout the fiscal year, inviting people to experience and learn more about coastal grasslands and the role of conservation grazing at the preserve.
- Opened approximately 1.1 miles of additional trails to the public. In coordination with the City of San Carlos, Midpen designated a new trailhead with amenities and an unnamed 0.1-mile trail segment at Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve. At Russian Ridge Open Space Preserves, Midpen utilized a former interior unpaved road to access a beautiful ridgeline vista point, opening the 0.5-mile Fog Drift Vista Trail for hiking, equestrian and bicycle use.
- Completed trail improvements in Coal Creek Open Space Preserve that reestablished the Alpine Trail as a safe connection between Portola Valley and Skyline Boulevard. Completed the removal of the informal bypass trail and opened connections to the new, more sustainable 0.5-mile bypass trail.
- Reached a major milestone in the Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossing project. In May of 2024, the Midpen board of directors selected the northern trail overcrossing location, which will connect the Los Gatos Creek Trail to **El Sereno Open Space Preserve**. The future trail overcrossing will connect over 50 miles of existing regional trails and will also be accompanied by a separate wildlife undercrossing.
- Formed a public access working group in June of 2023 to collaborate with Midpen on a plan for introducing public access to the 79-acre Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. After a total of seven meetings, the working group developed their final recommendations for parking and trails, which will be presented to the Planning & Natural Resources Committee later in 2024.
- ✤ 4,547 volunteer docent hours, 249 guided public activities and over 2,000 participants.
- 22 field trips serving 349 students.
- 145 volunteer activities that logged 10,627 hours of land stewardship work.
- 1,937 volunteer trail reports in support of land management.



Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve by Greg Heikkinen

AWARDS, GRANTS AND RECOGNITION

- Received the following notable awards and special recognition for its projects, programs and efforts.
 - Awarded the California Chapter Northern Excellence Award for the design work to repurpose the lower west lot for carpools at Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve.
 - Received the Merit Award in Technology from California Trails and Greenways for the development of the Trail Explorer, an interactive online experience designed to help visitors plan an outing to Midpen preserves.
 - Awarded the Innovation Award from the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers for creating two demographic dashboards, Disadvantaged Communities Explorer and the California Demographics Data Explorer.
 - Received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) special Triple Crown medallion for receiving all three (3) GFOA awards in the same year:
 - → Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (eighth year).
 - → Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Award (sixth year)
 - → Popular Annual Financial Report Award (fifth year)
 - Received the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers Budget Award for the sixth straight year.
- Midpen received 5 new grant awards in FY24 totaling \$9,500,000. The funded projects include:
 - Eberhard Land Conservation
 - Badger/Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment
 - Los Gatos Creek Watershed—Wildland Fire Resiliency
 - General Operating Support
- Disbursed \$250,000 in FY24 to grantees in support of Midpen's Grantmaking Program priorities and mission, building and strengthening the environmental community through partnerships.



Cloverdale Ranch Open Space Preserve by Teddy Miller



Fremont Older Open Space Preserve by Jing Liu



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

5050 El Camino Real Los Altos, California 94022-1404 650-691-1200 info@openspace.org **openspace.org**

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