



## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

[www.tamcmonterey.org](http://www.tamcmonterey.org)

### *HIGHLIGHTS*

**September 25, 2024**

#### **Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan & Participatory Budgeting**

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County Board of Directors received a presentation on the progress of the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan and Participatory Budgeting process.

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Monterey County Health Department, Ecology Action, and the cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City have partnered to develop the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan ("Plan"). The two-year planning process identified barriers to safe access to 22 public schools in South Monterey County cities and recommended infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements.

The Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan includes recommendations for all public K-12 schools in the cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City. The Plan includes a democratic process, called Participatory Budgeting, where community members vote to decide how public funds are spent. TAMC is providing up to \$250,000 to each city to implement the highest voted projects.

The Participatory Budgeting process is designed to fast-track funding and implementation of safe routes to school projects. Each steering committee held eight monthly meetings to identify projects and plan for an election where the community voted on the projects. Steering committee meetings were held primarily in Spanish with interpretation into English and with the option to attend in-person or remotely.

The Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan was funded through a \$664,127 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant and \$126,501 of Measure X Safe Routes to School Program funds. The projects selected through the Participatory Budgeting process are funded by \$1 million

(\$250,000 for each city) in Regional Surface Transportation Program reserve funds from the fiscal year 20/21-22/23 program cycle.

Each of the four city councils in the Salinas Valley approved the recommendation to implement the projects identified by the steering committees. The TAMC Board approved the funding for the Greenfield, Soledad, King City, and Gonzales projects. Board members praised the program for its demonstration of democracy in action and for empowering community members.

### **TAMC Seeks Nominations for 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Transportation Excellence Awards**

The TAMC Board of Directors authorized the release for a call for nominations for the Transportation Agency 's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Transportation Excellence Awards. The award honors individuals, businesses, groups, or projects for their efforts to improve the transportation system in Monterey County.

Examples of potential awards include:

- Projects that exemplify TAMC's mission to develop and maintain a multimodal transportation system that enhances mobility, safety, access, environmental quality, and economic activities in Monterey County;
- Innovative activities that promote safer or more efficient use of the local transportation network;
- Citizens or organizations that have made significant efforts to inform and educate the public about transportation issues;
- Successful efforts to improve transit services and encourage the use of commute options as alternatives to driving alone; and/or
- Transportation employees who excel at their jobs and go the extra mile to improve our transportation system.

The nomination form is available on the Transportation Agency website. It can be submitted online or downloaded here: [Transportation Excellence Awards 2024 Nomination Form](#), and sent to the attention of Theresa Wright at 55 B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901, or [theresa@tamcmonterey.org](mailto:theresa@tamcmonterey.org). The deadline to submit a nomination is December 6, 2024. The Transportation Agency Executive Committee will select the awards recipients at its January 8, 2025, meeting, and the awards ceremony will take place during the regular January 22, 2025, Transportation Agency Board meeting.