



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING HANDBOOK

Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan

The goal of the Safe Routes to School planning process is to improve safety for students biking and walking to 22 schools in the Salinas Valley and reduce traffic around those schools. The Plan will include a list of recommended street projects and safe routes to school programs to improve safety around each school. This will include things like new sidewalks and improved crosswalks, as well as new programs like safety education, walking school buses and school carpooling. The final plan is expected to be completed and adopted by the cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City in early 2024.



Each city will have a Safe Routes to School Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be made up of community representatives including students, parents, schools, advocacy groups, and residents. This group will meet throughout the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School planning process and take an active leadership role in engaging the community and developing projects.

Goals of the Steering Committee

<p>Improve Community Safety & Mobility</p>	<p>Engage Our Community</p>	<p>Foster Leadership</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase biking and walking to school. • Improve safe biking and walking. • Identify community-led solutions to encourage active trips. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage those who are traditionally underrepresented in politics, who face obstacles to participating, or who feel left out of the political process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower residents with the skills and knowledge they need to shape their transportation future. • Build leadership from the bottom up and forge deeper ties between residents, neighborhoods, and communities.

Participatory Budgeting

\$ Each Steering Committee will lead a Participatory Budgeting process. Participatory Budgeting is a democratic process in which community members decide **how to spend part of a public budget**.

Through Participatory Budgeting, the steering committees will review project proposals based on community feedback and in collaboration with City staff. Next, the steering committees will design a process so that residents vote on projects. The projects receiving the most votes will be recommended to



receive funding and upon approval by the City Council, will be constructed. Projects funded through the Participatory Budgeting process will begin implementation as soon as the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan is adopted.

How much money is available?

Up to \$250,000 dollars will be set aside for each city for projects that are identified through the Participatory Budgeting process AND meet eligibility requirements. Projects must improve safe routes to school for students, families, and residents. The Gonzales City Council must approve the projects prior to implementation.

How is Participatory Budgeting different than the rest of the Safe Routes to School Plan?

- Proposals must meet the eligibility criteria to be included in the Participatory Budgeting ballot.
- Projects will be prioritized by the Safe Routes to School Steering Committee and voted on by community members.
- Projects that come out of the participatory budgeting process will be recommended to the City to be built right away.
- The Safe Routes to School Plan will include all the project and program recommendations developed through the planning process, but may take longer to implement, especially for larger projects that require grant funding and Caltrans permitting.

Project Eligibility

Projects are eligible for placement on the ballot if they meet the following criteria:

- Projects must improve safe bicycling and/or walking routes to schools.
- Projects must be capital infrastructure or programs that improve safe and healthy access to schools.
- Project funding must be spent within 3 years of the adoption of the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan.
- Projects must have a high benefit to cost ratio to be determined by the subcommittee.
- Projects must address needs or concerns raised by the community.



Example Eligible Projects

Infrastructure

Low-cost bulb-outs



Buffered bike lane



Traffic circles



Flashing stop sign



Flashing beacons and crosswalk



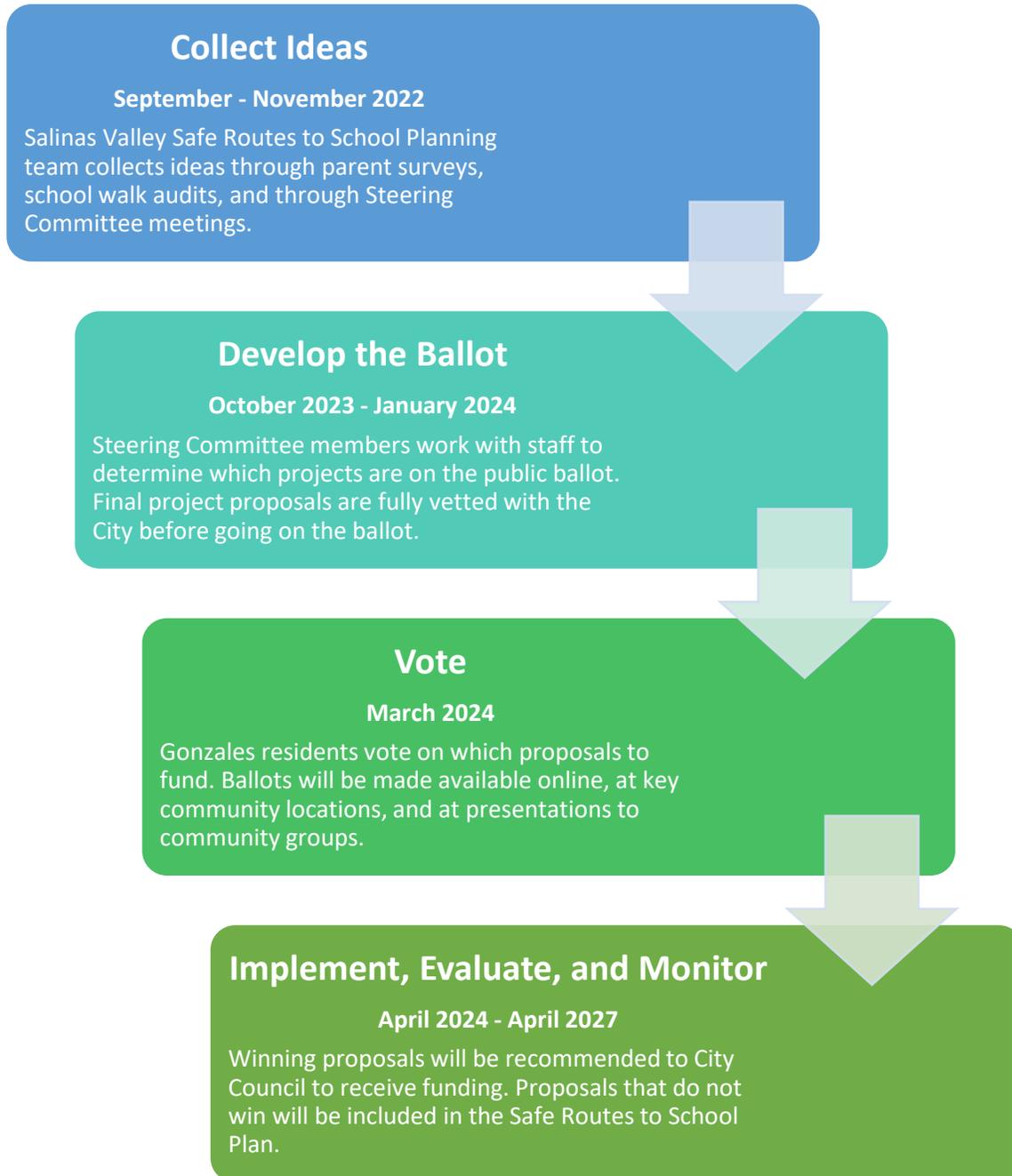
Pedestrian refuge





Gonzales Steering Committee Timeline: What Happens When?

Participatory Budgeting has four main phases:





Phase 1: Collect Ideas

Ideas for Participatory Budgeting proposals will be collected at school walk audits and parent surveys during the first stage of outreach for the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan. During the Steering Committee meeting #2, committee members will receive a presentation on the project ideas that were collected by the planning team and will provide feedback and input on those ideas. Steering Committee members may propose ideas not already on the project list.



Phase 2: Develop the Public Ballot

The Steering Committee and Participatory Budgeting Staff will work together to prioritize projects based on greatest need and benefit. The initial list of project ideas will be reviewed and vetted by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). TAMC staff will determine the eligibility of each project and seek technical expertise from City staff to determine feasibility of potential projects. The Steering Committee will then decide on which proposals will be on the public ballot.



Phase 3: Vote

At meeting #3 and #4, the committee will determine:

- Number of projects on the final ballot
- Ballot appearance and layout
- Instructions for voting – how the ballot/vote works
- Minimum voter eligibility requirements
- Method & locations for ballot distribution
- Length of public vote period
- Verification process to confirm voter eligibility & protect privacy



Phase 4: Project Funding

Upon completion of the public voting process, the TAMC Board and the City of Gonzales must approve the project list before they are eligible for funding. If any projects are not approved by the TAMC Board, the project receiving the next highest votes in the public ballot will be substituted in for funding. All projects not awarded funding through participatory budgeting will be included in the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan recommendations.