



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING HANDBOOK

North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan

The goal of the Safe Routes to School planning process is to improve safety for students biking and walking. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County has set a goal for all schools in Monterey County to be covered by a Safe Routes to Schools Plan, and now we are continuing these efforts in North Monterey County. 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 adopted by the County of Monterey.



As part of the planning process, there will be one Safe Routes to School Steering Committee in North Monterey County covering the communities of Castroville, Prunedale, Las Lomas, and Pajaro. The Steering Committees will be made up of community representatives including students, parents, schools, advocacy groups, and residents. This group will meet throughout the North Monterey County Safe Routes to School planning process and take an active leadership role in engaging the community and developing projects.

Goals of the Steering Committee

Improve Community Safety & Mobility

- Increase biking and walking to school.
- Improve safe biking and walking.
- Identify community-led solutions to encourage active trips.

Engage Our Community

- Engage those who are traditionally underrepresented in politics, who face obstacles to participating, or who feel left out of the political process.

Foster Leadership

- 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

 The 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 Committee will review project proposals based on community feedback and in collaboration with County staff. Next, the Steering Committee will design a process to enable North County residents vote on projects. The projects receiving the most votes will be recommended to receive funding and upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, will be constructed. Projects funded through the Participatory Budgeting process will begin implementation as soon as the projects are approved by the Board of Supervisors and the TAMC Board of Directors.

How much money is available?

Up to \$1 million total will be set aside 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 County of Monterey must approve the projects prior to implementation.

While we do our best to create accurate cost estimates for the projects that are funded through Participatory Budgeting, construction costs have been increasing quickly and unforeseen circumstances do come up. TAMC and County staff will do their best to construct as many projects as possible with the available funding and will report back to Steering Committee members with construction updates.

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 County 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 will 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 North Monterey County 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

Quick-build curb extensions



Buffered bike lane



Traffic circles



Flashing stop sign



Flashing beacons and crosswalk



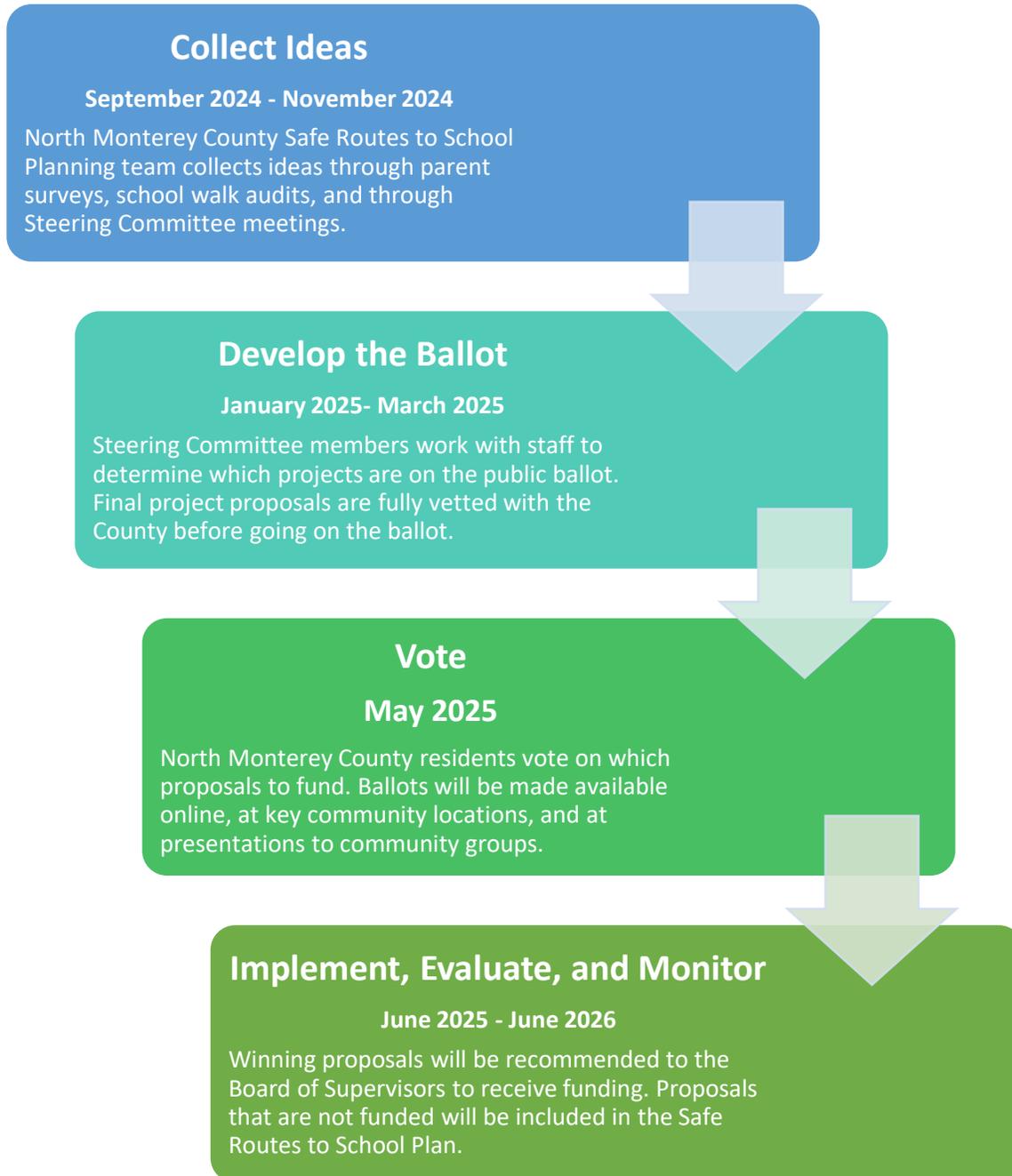
Pedestrian refuge island





North Monterey County Steering Committee Timeline: What Happens When?

Participatory Budgeting has four main phases:





Phase 1: Collect Ideas

Ideas for Participatory Budgeting proposals will be collected from Steering Committee members, at school walk audits, and through parent surveys during the first stage of outreach for the North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan. During Steering Committee meeting #4, 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 are encouraged to 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 County 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 #4 and #5, 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 County of Monterey 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 North Monterey County Safe Routes to School Plan recommendations.