



TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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HIGHLIGHTS

February 28, 2024

TAMC Board Approves City of Soledad's Participatory Budgeting Funding Request

The Board of Directors of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County approved the City of Soledad's request to program Regional Surface Transportation Funds dedicated to the City's Participatory Budgeting process for the following four projects:

- Orchard Lane and Gabilan Drive Pedestrian Improvements in the amount of \$63,000;
- Main and Gabilan Drive Pedestrian Improvements in the amount of \$132,250;
- Benito and Gabilan Pedestrian Improvements in the amount of \$11,000; and
- Orchard Lane Pedestrian Improvements in the amount of \$23,000.

The Participatory Budgeting process is a component of the Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan for all public K-12 schools in the cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City. Project prioritization is determined through a democratic process, called Participatory Budgeting, where community members vote to decide how public funds are spent in their cities.

The process is designed to fast-track funding and implementation of safe routes to school projects that are meaningful to community members. In October 2022, a Soledad Safe Routes to School Steering Committee was formed to assist in developing the process and engaging the greater community in identifying projects, creating a ballot and soliciting citywide votes to determine which projects to fund.

The Salinas Valley Safe Routes to School Plan is 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 four cities) in Regional Surface Transportation Program Reserve funds from the fiscal year 2020/21-2022/23 program cycle.

TAMC Board Directs Staff on Sand City Bike Trail and Parking Proposal

The Transportation Agency's Board of Directors received a presentation on the Sand City bike trail and parking proposal from Zane Mortensen, the City's interim City Planner. The proposal seeks to create a one-mile segment of multi-use trail and parking in two areas within the TAMC-owned right-of-way. The proposal promises that the "proposed multi-use trail will take into consideration the future use of the TAMC corridor for rail and/or bus transit and would not obstruct any of the existing rail infrastructure" and would "minimize conflict with the existing property leases." After the presentation, the Board directed TAMC staff to coordinate with the City on considerations for a possible future use agreement for an alignment of a trail that avoids conflict with future mass transit users and for fair market value lease agreements for non-trail uses such as parking.

Sand City was awarded a Monterey Bay Air Resources District AB2766 Clean Vehicle Program grant totaling \$250,000 to support planning and design, including project oversight, environmental review, engineering, and conceptual design. Most of the Monterey Branch Line in Sand City's proposal is currently leased by TAMC to private businesses. Revenue from leases is used for trash and weed abatement along the length of the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way.

TAMC Board of Directors Hosts Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing

The Transportation Agency Board of Directors held a public hearing to receive comments to identify unmet transit needs in Monterey County.

In its role as the Transportation Development Act fund administrator, the Agency annually seeks public input to identify unmet transit needs in Monterey County. This unmet needs process is associated with the Local Transportation Fund, which is one of two designated funding sources for public transit created by the California Transportation Development Act.

The Agency solicits public input on unmet transit needs and places comments into the following categories:

1. Transit service improvement requests that would improve an existing service.
2. Transit service expansion requests that extend a transit route beyond its current limits and fill a gap in service.
3. Capital improvement projects that would enhance existing public transit facilities.

In addition to public testimony provided at the hearing, the Transportation Agency accepts comments throughout the year in writing, by email, through a questionnaire posted on the Agency website and through the Monterey-Salinas Transit Mobility Advisory Committee.

The Transportation Agency's deadline for accepting public comments and questionnaires for the consideration as part of the annual unmet transit needs process is April 30, 2024. Comments can be submitted at: <https://www.tamcmonterey.org/unmet-transit-needs>.

Staff will present the final list of comments to the TAMC Board, prior to allocating Local Transportation Funds in June.