

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

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A COUNTYWIDE EFFORT FUNDED THROUGH MEASURE X



Adopted February 28, 2018 by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County





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# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM



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# MEASURE X SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children are at a disadvantage and have limited transportation options. Too young to drive, they must rely on an adult to drive them or on other forms of transportation to get around such as transit, carpooling, bicycling and walking. The majority of children are driven to school in Monterey County which is one of the leading causes of traffic congestion on local roads in the morning and afternoon. Chaotic drop-off zones in front of schools caused by increased driving creates an unsafe environment for students walking and bicycling. The Measure X Safe Routes to School program is aimed at developing better and safer options than driving the majority of children to school, educating children and the surrounding community how to safely walk and bicycle, and encouraging children to use active transportation that will lead to a healthier lifestyle.

The Measure X Safe Routes to School Program Guidelines contain the following sections:

**Measure X** – Measure X is a local transportation sales tax measure that will provide the most consistent source of funding for the program over the next 30 years.

### Program Overview

- Goals (6 E's) – The Program goals are divided into 6 categories: Evaluation, Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Equity.
- Task Force – A Safe Routes to School Task Force will meet quarterly to provide recommendations to staff and facilitate collaboration with agencies and organizations around the county pursuing similar goals of child safety and health.
- Countywide Collaboration – Collaboration with other agencies working towards safe routes to school objectives is an important goal of the program and critical to achieving a deep and comprehensive impact.

**Programs** - The various Safe Routes to School Programs are designed to achieve each of the 6 E's goals (Evaluation, Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Equity)

**Funding** – This section identifies potential sources of funding for the Measure X Safe Routes to School Program.

**Budget** – This section identifies the Program budget for fiscal years 2018 – 2023 as well as priority projects that will be the focus of grant applications, planning, programming and construction.



## MEASURE X

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County placed the Transportation Safety & Investment Plan (Measure X) on the November 8, 2016 ballot. Measure X, approved by 67.7% of Monterey County voters, is anticipated to generate an estimated \$20 million annually, for a total of \$600 million over thirty years. The funding source is a retail transactions and use tax of a three-eighths' of one percent (3/8%). The revenue from the sales tax measure can only be used to fund transportation safety and mobility projects in Monterey County.

Based on extensive community and stakeholder input, the Measure X plan established priorities to:

- Maintain local roads and repair potholes
- Increase safety and reduce congestion
- Improve transportation for youth, seniors, people with disabilities and working families
- Make walking and biking safer

Measure X funds are divided into two programs:

1. Local road maintenance, pothole repairs and safety: 60% of Measure X funds are allocated to the County of Monterey and incorporated cities for local street and road safety and maintenance improvements.
2. Regional safety, mobility and walkability: 40% of Measure X funds are allocated to regional safety and congestion relief, transit and bicycle/pedestrian projects.

Of the regional funding, 8 percent is set aside for a countywide Safe Routes to Schools program.

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Program Purpose

The purpose of the countywide safe routes to school program is to improve the safety and health of children by funding projects and programs (such as sidewalks, bikeways and educational programs) that promote safe walking and bicycling to school and vocational training.

In 1969, 50% of children walked or bicycled to school. Forty years later, that number has dropped to less than 15%. Roughly 39% commute by school bus, and 45% are driven to or from school in vehicles. Back then, 5% of children between the ages of 6 and 11 were overweight or obese. Today, 20% of children are overweight or obese on average, with that percentage nearing 50% in some communities in Monterey County. These statistics point to a rise in preventable childhood diseases, worsening air quality and congestion around schools caused in large part by the choice to drive. This program is intended to reverse these trends by funding projects that improve children's health by making walking and bicycling safer and easier.



The program will result in projects that provide the following benefits:

- Improves safety for children walking and biking to school
- Creates better connections between schools, residential areas and vocational training programs such as Rancho Cielo
- Enhances air quality
- Provides healthier transportation choices for school children and parents

### Program Goals

The Countywide Safe Routes to School Program is consistent with local, State and Federal goals to provide safe access to and from school and will apply the 6 E's to ensure programs and projects funded are comprehensive and inclusive. The Six E's of Safe Routes to School are: evaluation, engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and equity.

### Evaluation (& Planning)

Before attempting to improve safe access to schools, it is important to first understand existing societal, financial and physical barriers. Evaluating parent and student perceptions, agency and school policies and infrastructure surrounding schools will help identify the greatest barriers to walking and biking to school. Safe Routes to School plans should be developed to identify and prioritize programs and projects needed to overcome barriers identified through the evaluation process. The Countywide Safe Routes to School Program will support efforts to evaluate school-based transportation needs and develop or update safe routes to school plans.

Annual evaluation of the Countywide Safe Routes to School Program will help decision-makers assess if the program is successfully meeting desired goals or if changes are needed to improve performance.

- **GOAL EVAL 1:** School-based programs are evaluated using standardized methods consistent with State and Federal funding requirements
- **GOAL EVAL 2:** All school-based program data is housed in a central resource hub
- **GOAL EVAL 3:** Safe Routes to School plans are developed for every school district
- **GOAL EVAL 4:** Countywide Safe Routes to School Program is evaluated annually



### Engineering

Engineering goals are related to improving the physical environment to create safe and inviting infrastructure. Improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities is a vital component of safe routes to school because it creates viable alternatives to driving.

Safe routes to school plans and program evaluation data provide a solid foundation for design and engineering, and help jurisdictions prioritize and secure grant funding. City and County engineers are responsible for developing and/or approving designs for short-term and long-term capital improvements in their jurisdiction. Schools and School Districts are responsible for capital improvements on school property.

- **GOAL ENG 1:** Zero collisions involving bike or pedestrians that result in injury or death
- **GOAL ENG 2:** Planned network of safe and comfortable bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting schools to parks, community centers and sports fields
- **GOAL ENG 3:** Streets designed for all modes, ages and abilities
- **GOAL ENG 4:** Permanent infrastructure for kids to learn and practice safe travel behaviors (traffic gardens)
- **GOAL ENG 5:** Innovative transportation features to enhance pedestrian/bicyclist safety and comfort
- **GOAL ENG 6:** High-priority safe routes to school projects designated in the community's short-term and long-term capital improvement programs
- **GOAL ENG 7:** Safe and functional Drop-Off/Pick-up Zones

### Education

Safe routes to school education should be comprehensive and reach students, guardians, school staff and neighborhood residents surrounding schools, and address issues of safety, traffic and health. Safe routes to school education is particularly powerful and transformative when it is started from a young age and reinforced at home, school and in the community.

- **GOAL EDU 1: All children in Monterey County receive pedestrian and bicycle safety education by 5<sup>th</sup> grade**
  - Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian safety education into the curriculum in all elementary schools
  - All children by 2<sup>nd</sup> grade receive pedestrian safety training in school; all children by 5<sup>th</sup> grade receive bike safety trainings in school
  - Preschool staff, parents and guardians are trained to teach bike and pedestrian safety to preschoolers



- **GOAL EDU 2: Parents, guardians, teachers, school staff and surrounding neighborhood community are educated on safe driving, bicycling and walking in support of safe routes to school efforts**
  - Online safe routes to school resource hub developed and managed by TAMC
  - Family Rides/Family Bike Fair
  - School Pool program and app
- **GOAL EDU 3: High School students know the basics of bike maintenance and can learn advanced bike maintenance skills.**
  - Bike Shops/fix-it stations on all high school campuses
  - Bike maintenance classes included in high school curriculum



### Encouragement

Special events or year-round incentive-based programs help motivate students, guardians and school staff to change their commute to school and form new and healthier habits.

- **GOAL ENC 1:** The majority of children arrive to school by bus, carpool, bike, scooter/skateboard or walking
- **GOAL ENC 2:** All K-12 schools have safe routes to school encouragement programs
- **GOAL ENC 3:** All K-12 schools participate in Monterey County Bike Walk Challenge

### Enforcement

Enforcement near schools strengthens safe routes to school education, reduces traffic violations and improves safety. Police, crossing guards, school staff, parents and members of the community can all contribute to improving the environment surrounding schools.

- **GOAL ENF 1: Crossing Guards at all Elementary Schools**
  - Training and funding for crossing guards (Safe Routes to School National Partnership online crossing guard training)
- **GOAL ENF 2: Community-enhanced enforcement**
  - Volunteers from neighborhood lead walking school buses or “keep eyes on the street”
- **GOAL ENF 3: Enforce traffic laws in school zones without overburdening offenders financially**
  - Diversion program: require school zone traffic offenders to assist with crossing guard duty (Austin, TX program model)

### Equity

The Countywide Safe Routes to School Program is supported by public funds and is intended to be equitable. This means ensuring that disadvantaged and special needs populations are included and served through the Program.

- **GOAL EQ 1: Countywide Safe Routes to School Program resources are distributed equitably**
  - Program resources include direct funding and staff time
- **GOAL EQ 2: Measure X Safe Routes to School Task Force includes advocates for disadvantaged populations**
- **GOAL EQ 3: Children have access to active transportation and safety/security equipment (ex//safety lights, bike locks, helmets, etc...) regardless of income status**



### Safe Routes to School Task Force

The Countywide Safe Routes to School Task Force is a stakeholder group that provides recommendations on program goals, implementation and budget. Members include representatives from agencies and organizations with shared goals of improving the health and wellness of children and safe access to schools in Monterey County.

The Task Force will meet quarterly to review and provide input on the program and coordinate safe routes to school related efforts in Monterey County.

<b>TASK FORCE MEMBERS Representing</b>
North County School District
South County School Districts
Monterey Bay Peninsula Unified School District
Pacific Grove Unified School District
Carmel School District
Salinas School Districts
Monterey County Office of Education
Public Works Departments
Law Enforcement
Monterey County Health Department
Non-Profits/Advocacy Groups
CSU Monterey Bay
Hartnell College
Naval Postgraduate School
Middlebury Institute of International Studies
Monterey Peninsula College
Monterey-Salinas Transit

### Countywide Collaboration

Multiple agencies in the county share similar goals to reduce childhood obesity, improve safety and increase transportation options for disadvantaged residents. Central to the success of the Measure X Safe Routes to School program will be the ability to effectively collaborate with other agencies to reach program goals. To ensure regular opportunities for communication and collaboration, agencies and organizations will be invited to participate in the Safe Routes to School Task Force. Furthermore, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County will provide letters of support and partner on grant opportunities on proposals that will help meet program goals.



## PROGRAMS

### Evaluation Programs

#### Data Collection

The Evaluation Program will support to school-base safe routes to school programs and safe routes to school plans by providing standardized data collection resources. Data collection materials and methodology will be consistent with State and Federal funding requirements. Student and parent surveys, walking audit forms and bike and pedestrian tally forms will be provided on the online Safe Routes to School Resource Hub managed and maintained by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County.

#### Planning

The development of safe routes to school plans is an important step to achieve widespread and long-term improvements in safety. Safe routes to school plans identify existing needs, safety issues, barriers to safe access and opportunities for improvement. Plans also help focus the school and community to help prioritize projects and funding. TAMC staff will provide support in the preparation of planning grant applications as needed to ensure all school districts have safe routes to school plans.

#### Annual Report

Transportation Agency staff will collect school-based safe routes to school program surveys and tally forms to analyze and include in the annual Safe Routes to School Program report. Transportation Agency staff will also collect and analyze collision and injury data annually for each jurisdiction from the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) and other relevant sources. The report will be made available to the community online and hard copies will be made available upon request.

### Engineering Programs

#### Grant Support

Agencies seeking state or federal funding to design and construct safe routes to school improvements in Monterey County may apply to the Grant Support Program. The Grant Support Program will provide grant writing assistance, development of conceptual designs and/or matching funds depending on agency need. The annual budget for the Grant Support Program is approximately \$279,000 and will be distributed through a competitive application process. Application deadlines will leave adequate time to meet current state and federal grant application deadlines. Grant Support Applications will be available online.

#### Traffic Safety Enhancements

Agencies may apply to the Transportation Agency to fund traffic safety enhancement features such as flashing pedestrian crossing signs, signage, intersection murals and traffic gardens.

Traffic gardens are permanent spaces where children and members of the community can practice traffic safety skills without having to interact with motorized vehicles. Traffic gardens include features such as stop signs, crosswalks or roundabouts to help simulate scenarios a pedestrian or bicyclist might



encounter on the street. Traffic gardens can be painted onto an existing school blacktop, or be constructed in a park setting. Transportation Agency staff will work with interested schools/communities to help plan, design and fund traffic gardens in Monterey County. Locations for traffic gardens can be explored during safe routes to school planning, city parks and recreation planning or through meeting with school or school district administrators. Traffic garden design resources and information will be provided online. \$26,000 will be available each year to support the development of traffic gardens and fund other traffic safety enhancements near schools in Monterey County. Applications will be available online.

### Drop-Off/Pick-Up Zone Preliminary Engineering

Schools and/or Agencies (depending on jurisdiction) may apply to the Transportation Agency to fund preliminary engineering to improve a drop-off/pick-up zone. It is recommended that schools also explore non-infrastructure drop-off/pick-up zone traffic solutions through a safe routes to school planning process.

## Education Programs

### Bike and Pedestrian Safety Rodeos

Transportation Agency staff will contract with an organization to provide pedestrian safety rodeos to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and bicycle safety rodeos to 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Transportation agency staff will coordinate with other programs and grant-funded projects providing pedestrian and bicycle rodeos in Monterey County to work toward meeting the goal of all children receiving pedestrian and bicycle safety education by 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Schools may request pedestrian and bicycle rodeos year-round through the Transportation Agency. Applications will be available online.

### Balance Bike Kits & Clinics

Balance bike clinics focus on equipping adults with the knowledge, skills and equipment to teach preschoolers the basics of safe bicycling and walking. The Transportation Agency will contract with certified consultants to provide a complete Balance Bike Kit and training for adults and preschoolers. Balance Bike Kits will include a fleet of balance bikes and helmets to be owned, maintained and stored by the school. Certified consultants will train preschool teachers, staff and parental guardians to properly fit helmets and bikes and to teach bicycling and walking safety to children. Schools may apply to the Transportation Agency for refresher clinics as needed (e.g. due to school staff/parental guardian turnover).

The Balance Bike Kits & Clinics program will have an annual budget of approximately \$8,000 and funds will be distributed through a “first come, first served” application process. Interested preschools may apply year-round for a Balance Bike Kit & Clinic. Schools that do not have a Balance Bike Kit will have priority over schools reapplying for additional equipment. Applications will be available online.

### Street Smarts Community Awareness Campaigns

Transportation Agency will run countywide “Street Smarts” public awareness campaigns focused on safe access to schools. Campaigns will run in English and Spanish and use a variety of methods and media outlets to reach a broad audience including parents, guardians, teachers, school staff and the greater



community. Transportation Agency will coordinate with other community awareness campaigns related to safe walking and bicycling.

### High School/Community Bike Shop Classes

The Transportation Agency will support bike maintenance education by working with high school and school district staff to include bike maintenance instruction in the general curriculum and by supplying fix-it stations through the Bicycle Secure Program.

The Bicycle Secure Program provides fix-it station and helps identify the appropriate location and orientation for installation. It is the responsibility of the school to install the facility securely in a safe and convenient location, and maintain the facility.

Transportation Agency will also provide support to High School/Community Bike Shop programs that fix-up abandoned bikes and donate them to students who cannot afford to buy a bicycle.

### Encouragement Programs

#### Online Safe Routes to School Resource Hub

The Monterey County Safe Routes to School Resource Hub will be maintained by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County. Transportation Agency staff will work with school districts to provide links to the Online Safe Routes to School Resource Hub from school district websites and/or individual school webpages.

The website will include but is not limited to the following information:

- Countywide Safe Routes to School Program information (guidelines, application forms and annual reports)
- Listing of Safe Routes to School Programs in Monterey County
- School Pool Portal and information
- Listing of Safe Routes to School plans and infrastructure projects
- Safe Routes to School Program Resources
  - “How to start your own Safe Routes to Schools program”
    - Step by Step Guides
    - Templates
    - Case studies/examples
    - Local mentor network (network of parents/schools that have experience running a program)
    - Link to register events
    - E-newsletter with tips
    - Contacts
  - “Fund your SRTS Program”
    - Local/State/Federal Funding opportunities



- Contacts

### Safe Routes to School Mini Grants

Safe Routes to School Mini Grants support school-based programs that encourage active and low-emission travel to school. Examples of eligible programs include:

- Year-round “Walk & Roll” programs
- Walk/Bike to School Days
- School Pools (carpool, walking school buses and bike brigades using TAMC’s ridematching software tool)
- Other suggested programs will be considered

School staff or parental guardians are eligible to apply for reimbursable grant funds, safety gear, program incentives and Transportation Agency staff support to start or improve a school-based safe routes to school program. Safe Routes to School Mini Grant has an annual budget of approximately \$52,000, and funds will be distributed through a “first come, first served” year-round application process. Grant awardees will be required to participate in the Monterey County Bike Month Challenge, report on their safe routes to school program activity and submit a budget with actual expenditures in order to receive reimbursement. Safe routes to School Mini Grants may not be used for staff salaries, fundraising, cash prizes or gift cards more than \$20 in value. Applications will be available online.

### Monterey County Bike Month Challenge

The Monterey County Bike Month Challenge is a mileage-based competition held during the month of May. Schools participating in the Challenge will receive positive publicity and recognition, and will be eligible to receive prizes. Schools receiving Safe Routes to School Mini Grants will be automatically enrolled in the Bike Month Challenge. Participation in the Bike Month Challenge will be tracked using a mobile phone app. Information about the Bike Month Challenge and how to participate will be available online.

### Enforcement Program

Enforcement near schools strengthens safe routes to school education, reduces traffic violations and improves safety. Police, crossing guards, school staff, parents and members of the community can all contribute to improving the environment surrounding schools.

### Crossing Guards

Transportation Agency will work with schools and local law enforcement to develop diversion programs that require school zone traffic offenders to assist with crossing guard duty. Access to volunteer crossing guards training resources will be provided on the Online Safe Routes to School Hub.

### Community Enhanced Enforcement

Transportation Agency staff will work with local law enforcement and community centers to provide opportunities to train neighborhood volunteers to lead walking school buses or “keep eyes on the street” while children are traveling to and from school.



### Equity Program

#### Safety Gear Access

Every child should have access to equipment that will increase their visibility on the street and reduce their chances of injury. The Transportation Agency will purchase and give away safety gear to children in transportation disadvantaged communities year-round through community events, pedestrian and bicycle safety rodeos, school-based programs and by request.

#### Bikes for Kids

Transportation Agency will work with local law enforcement, schools and high school/community bike shop classes to give repaired bikes to kids in need (see “High School/Community Bike Shop Classes” under Education Programs).

#### Open Streets Events in Disadvantaged Communities

Support events that encourage active lifestyles and safe walking and bicycling in disadvantaged communities. Provide sponsorships for open street events such as Ciclovía Salinas in other communities around Monterey County.



Figure 1 Ciclovía Salinas 2015

## FUNDING

Measure X will provide a dedicated local source of funding for safe routes to school programs and projects for thirty years. The annual allotment of Measure X funds to the Safe Routes to School Program is estimated to be \$667,000 or \$20 Million over 30 years. Although this budget is a substantial amount of money, it is insufficient to achieve the above goals of the Safe Routes to School Program. Therefore, it is important to identify and pursue other sources of funding and utilize Measure X money as matching funds as much as possible. The table below includes a list of potential local, state and federal funding sources for the Countywide Safe Routes to School Program.

Source	Capital Improvement	Evaluation & Planning	Education, Encouragement & Enforcement	Equipment/Tools	Maintenance
<b>Local</b>					
City Sales Tax	X	X	X	X	X
Regional Sales Tax (Measure X)	X	X	X	X	X
RSTP (Formula & Competitive)	X	X		X	X
TDA 2%	X	X		?	?
SAFE				X	
AB2766	X				
Foundations	X	X	X	X	?
Businesses & Corporations	X		X	X	
Developer Impact Fees	X		X		
Other?					
<b>State</b>					
Active Transportation Program	X	X	X	?	
Highway Safety Improvement Program	X				
California Kids' Plates				X	
Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning		X	X		
California Office of Traffic Safety		X	X		
Caltrans Planning & Environmental Justice Grant	X	X			

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM



Source	Capital Improvement	Evaluation & Planning	Education, Encouragement & Enforcement	Equipment/Tools	Maintenance
Community Based Transportation Grants		X			
State Highway Operations & Protection Program (SHOPP)	X	X			
SB1	X				X
<b>Federal</b>					
Federal Highway Administration Recreation Trails Program?	X				
Centers for Disease Control			X		

## BUDGET (5 years)

The Measure X Safe Routes to School Program budget includes support for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that work toward the 6 E's. The Program is funded through a combination of local, state and federal funds. The largest and most consistent source of funding for the next 30 years will come from Measure X in the amount of approximately \$667,000 annually. To broaden the reach of the program, Measure X money will be leveraged to bring in more state and federal dollars to plan and build safe routes to school projects and fund education and encouragement programs. The draft Measure X Safe Routes to School Guidelines provides grant support including grant writing, conceptual design services and grant matching funds to agencies and organizations applying for state and federal funding.

<b>Estimated Measure X Safe Routes to School Program Budget</b>					
<b>Description</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Evaluation & Planning	\$314,422	\$314,422	\$135,000	\$135,000	\$135,000
Engineering Grant Assistance	\$309,185	\$278,714	\$278,714	\$278,714	\$278,714
Education Programs	\$247,745	\$247,745	\$252,201	\$252,201	\$252,201
Enforcement Programs	See Mini Grant Program				
Equity Programs	\$53,495	\$55,495	\$55,495	\$55,495	\$55,495
Mini Grant Program	\$3,960	\$51,930	\$51,930	\$51,930	\$51,930
Program Administration	\$13,350	\$13,350	\$13,350	\$13,350	\$13,350
<b>TOTALS*</b>	<b>\$999,066</b>	<b>\$1,016,955</b>	<b>\$849,612</b>	<b>\$849,612</b>	<b>\$849,612</b>
<b>*Total budget varies year-to-year due to availability of non-Measure X funding including state, federal, and local sources.</b>					

## Priority projects

The priority projects identified for fiscal years 2018 – 2023 were determined based on need for safe routes to school planning, education and infrastructure improvements. Priority projects are focused in communities with transportation disadvantaged populations or those that have a history of pedestrians and bicyclists being hit by motor vehicles.

<b>PRIORITY PROJECTS FYs 2018-2023</b>	
Seaside & Marina Safe Walking & Biking to School Plan*	Castroville Complete Streets
Pajaro Complete Streets	Pacific Grove Highway 68 Corridor Improvements
South County Safe Routes to School Plan	Bike/Pedestrian Rodeos & Traffic Gardens (Salinas Valley/South County, Seaside & Marina, and North County)
Street Smarts Campaign (countywide)	School Pool (countywide)
Note: *TAMC (and partners) were awarded a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant for the Seaside & Marina Safe Walking & Biking to School Plan in December 2017.	