The passage of Measure M in November 2004 marked a major shift for transportation improvements in Sonoma County. By instituting a quarter percent sales tax Sonoma became the 18th self-help county in California – a county that can more effectively leverage state and federal transportation dollars by providing a local match.

The ability to leverage local dollars has already paid off in consideration of the recently passed State Infrastructure Bond Measure. While the actual projects have not yet been chosen, Sonoma County projects are strong contenders for this State money, because of local investment provided by Measure M.

VISION
Through a public process involving the cities, Sonoma County, Caltrans and members of the public, the SCTA has developed a transportation strategy for our county. The key components include:

- Maintain and expand our existing transportation system:
- Widen Highway 101,
- Improve interchanges,
- Fix potholes and maintain local streets and roads,
- Relieve traffic congestion on key corridors,
- Establish a passenger rail system,
- Expand the local bus system, and

- Build safe bike and pedestrian routes
- Make the transportation system easy to use with efficient connections between buses, the future passenger rail service, the freeway, and local roads and bike routes.
- Use local money to become a “self-help” county and leverage state and federal funding for transportation needs.
- Enhance safety in all aspects of the transportation system.
- Improve the mobility of all residents, especially seniors and people with disabilities.
- Help meet the unique local transportation needs of each community in Sonoma County.

These broad themes have been translated into specific programs and projects to create the Traffic Congestion Relief Act for Sonoma County.
Measure M at Work

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:
SCTA final statements for fiscal year ending 2006 were audited by independent auditors and reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The auditors issued an opinion - which can be viewed at the SCTA website at www.sctainfo.org/measure_m.htm.

THE FUTURE
The good news is Measure M sales tax receipts have met projections, so progress is being made with all projects in the plan and opportunities to gain State matching funds for Measure M projects expanded with passage of the State Transportation Bond Act in November, 2006.

While progress is being made, most Measure M projects receive only half of their funding through the sales tax measure. On-going difficulties still exist in securing adequate local, state and federal dollars to provide the balance of funding for Measure M projects.

Rising construction costs and shortfalls in the State Budget have required reformulation of some road projects. Also, the narrow defeat of Measure R will delay the resumption of passenger rail service and the construction of the bicycle and pedestrian pathway that shares the railroad right of way.

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Sonoma County Alliance
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4th District
5th District
LOCAL STREETS PROJECTS

Local street projects are allocated 20% of the total revenues over the life of the Measure M program. Four projects were identified in the 2005 Measure M Strategic Plan to receive funds in FY05/06. Accordingly, $200,000 was appropriated to the County for developing a master plan and prioritizing projects that would address traffic concerns in the Penngrove/Railroad Avenue area. The City of Santa Rosa received an appropriation of $300,000 to both purchase right-of-way and to provide design services for projects to relieve congestion on Hearn Avenue between Dutton Avenue and Santa Rosa Avenue. Additionally, $437,000 was appropriated to Santa Rosa to purchase right-of-way for the planned extension of Farmers Lane from Highway 12 to Petaluma Hill Road at Yolanda Avenue. Finally, the County of Sonoma was appropriated $375,000 to complete environmental studies and design projects to relieve congestion on Airport Boulevard.

LOCAL STREETS REHABILITATION

Measure M provides 20% of its revenues for Local Street Rehabilitation. In FY05/06 over $3.25 Million was distributed to the County and the nine cities to use on these projects. Rehabilitation funds are used on maintenance activities such as pothole repair, slurry seals, and overlays.

HIGHWAY 101 PROJECTS

Highway 101 is allocated 40% of the total Measure M program revenues. In the last fiscal year $3.5 Million was appropriated for the construction of a new Steele Lane Undercrossing, as part of the project to widen Highway 101 from Route 12 to Steele Lane. Additionally, $9 Million was appropriated for design services to widen Highway 101 from Old Redwood Highway in Petaluma to Rohnert Park Expressway.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS

Bike and pedestrian projects are allocated 4% of the total Measure M program revenues. There were three projects identified in the 2005 Measure M Strategic Plan to receive funds in FY 05/06. Accordingly, $35,000 was appropriated to the City of Santa Rosa for initial scoping, environmental, and design services to provide access and to extend the Class 1 multi-use path from Streamside Drive to Mission Boulevard along Santa Rosa Creek. The City of Healdsburg received a $380,000 appropriation for design and construction of a combined pedestrian and bicycle trail along the Foss Creek Corridor. The City of Petaluma was appropriated $150,000 for the design of an extension to the multi-use Petaluma River Trail from Lakeville Street to Washington Street.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Measure M allocates 10% of revenues for bus transit services. During FY 05/06, over $1.74 Million was distributed to the four providers (Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa CityBus, Healdsburg Transit, and Petaluma Transit). These funds are generally used for fixed route services, enhanced paratransit service, maintenance, bus purchases and other capital needs associated with transit service.

RAIL

Measure M allocates 5% of revenues for the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART). In FY 05/06 $350,000 was allocated to SMART for use in completing the Environmental Impact Report.

ADMINISTRATION

Measure M allocates 1% of revenues for administration, which consists of miscellaneous administrative costs including but not limited to audits.