

# Sonoma County Transportation Authority

2000

SCTA Annual Report

2001

Presented January 14, 2002

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## Mission Statement

As a collaborative agency of the cities and County of Sonoma, we work together to maintain and improve our transportation network. We do so by prioritizing, coordinating, and maximizing the funding available to us and by providing comprehensive, countywide planning. Our deliberations and decisions recognize the diverse needs within our county and the environmental and economic aspects of transportation planning.

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# SCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Message from the Chair

Dear Friends:

Last year the SCTA programmed over \$60 million to transportation projects throughout the county. That influx of funding has allowed Caltrans, transit agencies and local public works departments to make strides in maintaining and improving our transportation infrastructure.



This year the focus for the SCTA has been directed more towards project delivery while we continue to seek funding for key projects.

In FY2000/2001 we saw construction on Highway 101 begin and progress being made on passenger rail between Sonoma and Marin Counties. We also saw our local public works departments deliver road rehabilitation projects funded through the SCTA.

In addition to project delivery, the SCTA undertook the development of the *2001 Countywide Transportation Plan*. This 25-year planning document reflects the policies and priorities of the SCTA and exhibits the multi-modal approach we are all committed to instituting.

To help fund and deliver future projects the SCTA established an ad hoc committee to explore the potential for a sales tax measure in November 2002 and developed the *Highway 101 – 2010 Construction Strategy* to provide a focus on how improvements to Highway 101 will become a reality.

It has been a pleasure to serve as Chair of the SCTA during this exciting time.

Sincerely,

Mike Kerns, Chair  
SCTA

2001 Mike Kerns, Chair  
Sonoma County

2000 Mike Reilly, Chair  
Sonoma County

2001 Robert Jehn, Vice Chair  
Cloverdale

2001 Joe Costello  
Sonoma

2001 Geoffrey Fox  
Cotati

2001 Mark Gleason  
Healdsburg

2001 Mike Healy  
Petaluma

2001 Paul Kelley  
Sonoma County

2001 Jake Mackenzie  
Rohnert Park

2001 Larry Robinson  
Sebastopol

2001 Sam Salmon  
Windsor

2001 Tim Smith  
Sonoma County

2001 Sharon Wright  
Santa Rosa

2000 Richard Cullinen  
Cotati

2000 Phyllis Carter  
Sonoma

2000 David Keller  
Petaluma

# FORM & FUNCTION

The SCTA was formed by Resolution 90-1522 of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in 1990. The SCTA enacted Ordinance No. 1, pursuant to the provisions of the California Public Utilities Code (Section 180105), which prescribes the powers and duties of the officers of the SCTA and the methods and systems required to operate and manage the agency.

The SCTA is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of representatives from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and each of the nine city councils within the county. The Board of Directors adopted the Mission Statement in December 1999. The SCTA performs several important functions in the local and regional transportation arenas as described below.

## Fund Programming

The SCTA is responsible for programming most of the state and federal funds available to Sonoma County for roadway, transit and bicycle projects. The SCTA ensures that these funds are granted and used properly in Sonoma County and assumes responsibility for assisting local jurisdictions in their applications for funds.

## Coordination

The SCTA coordinates the activities of local jurisdictions with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (the regional transportation agency) and Caltrans. As coordinator, the SCTA provides a forum for discussions among local and regional jurisdictions on transportation, congestion management and project delivery

## Planning

The SCTA is the countywide transportation agency responsible for planning and prioritizing transportation improvement projects. The *2001 Countywide Transportation Plan* for Sonoma County is the primary long range planning document of the SCTA.

Representatives from the SCTA, Caltrans, Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Sonoma County broke ground this year on the first Highway 101 project.



# SCTA COMMITTEES

The following standing Committees advise the SCTA on various policy and technical issues.

## Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is composed of fifteen members from specified interest groups and five members from the public-at-large. The primary function of the CAC is to review projects, policy statements, funding programs, and any other policy acted on by the SCTA and to provide input and recommendations for the SCTA's decision making process.

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## Technical Advisory Committee

The primary function of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to advise the SCTA on all technical matters. It is composed of Public Works Directors, Planning Directors and Transit Operators from each jurisdiction in Sonoma County. It also includes representatives from Caltrans, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the North Coast Air Quality District, and the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District.

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## Paratransit Coordinating Committee

The Paratransit Coordinating Committee (PCC) is composed of one potential transit user over 60 years of age, one who is disabled, two representing local social service providers for seniors, two representing social service providers for disabled persons, one representative from each fixed route public transit operator within the county, and a local transportation agency. Each City or Town Council also appoints one representative. The PCC assists the SCTA in making funding decisions regarding paratransit and transit programs throughout the county.

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## Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee

The Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee (CBAC) was formed in 1993. The CBAC advises the SCTA on programming decisions for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and aides in project coordination.

# FUNDING

The SCTA has oversight over the distribution of nearly all state and federal funding for transportation in Sonoma County. Most of these funds come to the SCTA through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) – the regional transportation and planning agency for the Bay Area.

Most of the money used for transportation projects is generated from the taxpayers that pay fuel, sales and other taxes and fees. These tax dollars flow into federal, state and local funding pots. Much of the funding from these sources goes toward maintaining the existing transportation network - be it road rehabilitation or transit operations. New capital projects such as Highway 101 are funded by these taxes as well.

## Federal Funding Programs

### STP/CMAQ

#### Surface Transportation Program / Congestion Mitigation Air Quality

The STP/CMAQ funding programs were part of the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and were continued in the 1997 Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). STP and CMAQ are called flexible funds because they are not restricted to particular modes. CMAQ funds are limited to implementation of projects that improve air quality. The majority of STP/CMAQ funding is used for maintaining the existing system though some is used for specific projects earmarked by Congress.

Eligible uses for STP funds include:

- Roadway or transit rehab
- Transit facilities
- Operational improvements
- Port facilities

Eligible uses for CMAQ funds include:

- Bicycle paths
- Transit
- Signal Coordination

### TEA

#### Transportation Enhancement Activities

TEA-21 requires a 10% set-aside of the state's STP allocation to be used for Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) above and beyond normal capital improvements. MTC estimates that Sonoma County will receive approximately \$13 million in TEA funds over the next 25 years. The SCTA programs a portion of that money while the remaining TEA money is programmed by MTC to programs called Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) and the Housing Incentives Program (HIP).

Eligible uses for TEA funds include:

- Bicycle paths
- Pedestrian paths
- Rehabilitation of historic projects linked to transportation
- Roadway beautification

# FUNDING

## State Funding Programs

### STIP

#### State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is the largest source of transportation funds made available to the county and is derived from the State and Federal gas tax. The funds may be used for capacity-expanding capital transportation projects and for road rehabilitation. The SCTA programs STIP funds every two years. As one of the only funds available for capacity increasing projects the SCTA has traditionally funded Highway 101 improvements from the STIP. The SCTA programmed \$15.2 million in the 2000 STIP.

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### STA

#### State Transit Assistance (STA)

These funds may be used for transit capital projects and transit operations and are claimed directly by public transit operators. These funds are generated by a statewide ¼ cent sales tax on gasoline and diesel. The SCTA programmed over \$1.3 million in STA funds in FY 2000/01.

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### TDA

#### Transit Development Act (TDA)

TDA funds are the largest single source for transit operating and capital. These funds are generated by a statewide ¼ cent sales tax. The SCTA programmed a total of \$18.2 million in TDA funds in FY 2000/01.

#### Articles 4, 4.5 and 8

TDA Article 4 and TDA Article 8 provide transit operating assistance and capital funding. TDA Article 4.5 funds paratransit operating and capital projects and represent 5% of total TDA revenue.

#### Article 3

Each year the SCTA reviews and adopts a program of projects for bicycles and pedestrians to be funded through the TDA Article 3 program. These funds are generated as part of the sales tax and represent approximately 2% of the total TDA funds received in the county.

#### TDA Article 8

Paratransit service in Sonoma County is funded through TDA Article 8. It is curb to curb public transportation available to the disabled population that meets eligibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Volunteer Wheels Program is under contract with both the County of Sonoma and the City of Santa Rosa to provide paratransit services. Petaluma People Services Center provides paratransit service in Petaluma.



# FUNDING

## GAS TAX

### Gas Tax Subventions

A portion of the State sales tax on gasoline and diesel goes directly to the cities and counties for streets and roads maintenance. This is distributed by a formula based on population and road miles.

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## Other Funding Programs

## TCRP

### Traffic Congestion Relief Program

Governor Gray Davis and the State Legislature approved a list of projects called the Traffic Congestion Relief Program in the FY2000/2001 State budget. These projects are slated to receive one-time only State funds from the General Fund and the sales tax on gasoline. The SCTA lobbied for inclusion in the program and Sonoma County did receive funding for four projects:

- Highway 101 at the Marin/Sonoma Narrows – \$21 million
- Steele Lane Interchange – \$6 million (to fully fund the project)
- Passenger rail service (SMART) – \$37 million
- NCRA Rail rehabilitation - \$60 million (this project is in several counties including Sonoma)

Also included in the TCRP is additional funding for rehabilitation of local streets and roads and increased STIP funding.

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## TFCA

### Transportation Funds for Clean Air

The SCTA is the program manager for the TFCA funds that come into Sonoma County. These funds are generated through a four-dollar surcharge on vehicle registrations within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The Air District covers the southern half of the county (Windsor south). These funds can only be used on specific projects deemed eligible by the Air District. Each year the SCTA approves a program of projects and submits it to the Air District for approval. The FY 2000/01 program of projects totaled \$671,000.

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## GARVEE

### Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle Bonds

GARVEE Bonds provide access to a portion of future STIP funds for earlier programming to STIP eligible projects. The federal government established the GARVEE Bond program and the bonds are issued by the state. GARVEE Bonds are repaid by future federal gas tax revenues.



# FUNDING

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## Sales Tax – Self Help Counties

In the Bay Area voters in five counties have passed sales taxes to pay for transportation improvements. In 1998 and again in 2000 Sonoma County voters have had the opportunity to vote for a county sales tax to supplement funding for highways, streets and road, buses and rail. The vote required for the passage of a tax was not reached in either election.

In order to pay for many of the projects described in the *2001 Countywide Transportation Plan* Project List a local source of revenue, such as a sales tax, is required.

## Specialized Funding Sources

In addition to the programs described here, smaller, more specialized programs are available to local jurisdictions for specific projects. The State, with the passage of Proposition 116, provides funding for rail projects with a local match and demonstration of ability to operate. The State and Federal governments offer grants through the Office of Traffic Safety and the Safe Routes to School program that are targeted to small scale safety oriented projects. Local jurisdictions also fund transportation projects through Community Development Block Grants and development mitigation fees as well as from their own general funds.



# PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

## Highway 101 - Sonoma County's Main Street

Seven of the nine cities in Sonoma County are located along Highway 101. Highway 101 connects the cities and also serves as “Main Street” within them.

Highway 101 serves regional North-South through traffic, inter-county commuter traffic, and local traffic. This results in congestion, sometimes very heavy, during commute hours and often throughout the day. The extremely heavy Friday evening northbound traffic and Sunday afternoon southbound traffic attests to the regional use of 101 as a thoroughfare to and from distant endpoints.

In FY 2000/2001 the SCTA developed the *Highway 101-2010 Construction Strategy* to illustrate how improvement to Highway 101 can be completed before the close of the decade. The table below identifies six phases on the 101 Corridor and lists the status of each phase.

The *2010 Construction Strategy* will employ GARVEE bonds to help fund construction and seeks a commitment from the federal government to help construct the Marin/Sonoma Narrows.



<u>Priority</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Status</u>
1	Wilfred to Highway 12	Funded - In construction
2	Highway 12 to Steele Lane	Funded - EIR in process
3	Rohnert Park Expressway to Wilfred Ave	Funded - EIR in process
4	Steele Lane to Windsor River Road	Need Construction Funding
5	Old Redwood to RP Expressway	Need Construction Funding
6	Marin/Sonoma Narrows	Partially Funded - EIR in process

# PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Paths

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are an important part of the transportation system in Sonoma County. Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds are the primary source of funding, although virtually all of the funding sources can and do fund elements of bicycle/pedestrian paths.

The SCTA programmed \$960,720 to bicycle and pedestrian paths. In addition, it is policy in most jurisdictions to include bicycle facilities in any road improvements when feasible.

### FY 00/01 Project List

Jurisdiction	Projects	Amount
Rohnert Park/Cotati		
	Commerce Blvd/Laguna Path	\$64,040 (TDA)
	Commerce Blvd. Path Bridge	\$35,000 (TFCA)
Petaluma		
	Washington Creek Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge	\$66,000 (TEA)
Santa Rosa		
	Santa Rosa Creek Gap Project	\$134,000 (TEA)
Sonoma		
	West and East MacArthur Streets from striping Fifth street West to Fifth Street East- class II	\$7,500 (TDA)
Windsor		
	Faught Creek Path	\$19,344 (TDA)
	Windsor Creek Path (Arata to Hiram Lewis Park)	\$40,992 (TDA)
	Windsor Creek Path (Natalie Dr. to Dizzy Gillespie Way)	\$23,844 (TDA)
County of Sonoma		
	Green Valley Road Bike Lanes section of West County Trail	\$80,000 (TDA)
	On street class II connection for the West County Trail just north of Graton	\$240,000 (TEA)
	Old Redwood Highway Class II Bike Lanes near Healdsburg	\$250,000 (TEA)

# PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

## Transit Related Projects & Activities

The SCTA administers projects that qualify for Transportation Funds for Clean Air (TFCA). These funds can be used for transportation projects that demonstrate a positive effect on the local air quality. In addition to the bicycle projects listed on the previous page Sonoma County has several transit projects that qualify. Santa Rosa has implemented successful student pass subsidy and voluntary trip reduction programs that have reduced the number of single occupant vehicles on city streets and enhanced air quality.

Sonoma County Transit has used TFCA funds in 2001 and in previous years to fund the development of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fleet and fueling facility.

TFCA Transit	Jurisdiction	Project Name	Amount
	Santa Rosa	Student Pass Subsidy	\$80,000
		Voluntary Trip Reduction Program	\$149,255
	Sonoma County	Purchase CNG Buses	\$406,746

**Transit Forum**

The Paratransit Coordinating Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee hosted a transit forum to discuss transit issue – fixed route and paratransit bus and van service. The committee was especially interested in hearing from the disabled and elderly. Transit operators in Sonoma County were invited to address the Committees about their systems, their plans and their concerns. Members of the public addressed the committee about a variety of issues, most of which regarded paratransit service.

**Coordinated Claim**

Each year a Coordinated Claim for Transportation Development Act (TDA) and State Transit Assistance (STA) funds is developed by the jurisdictions of Sonoma County. These funds are the primary source of operating revenue for all of Sonoma County’s transit operators. Because the service areas of transit operators in Sonoma County cross jurisdictional boundaries, MTC regulations require that a Coordinated Claim for these funds be prepared and adopted annually by each jurisdiction in Sonoma County and by the SCTA. TDA is funded by a ¼ cent statewide sales tax.

**Section 5310**

The Paratransit Coordinating Committee facilitates the Section 5310 scoring and application process for projects submitted by non-profits serving the disabled community. These federal grants, though of relatively small amounts (enough for a specially equipped paratransit van) are tremendously beneficial to local agencies.

# PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

## Countywide Planning

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The *2001 Countywide Transportation Plan for Sonoma County* was approved. Working closely with the Citizens Advisory Committee and member jurisdictions the SCTA documented transportation policy and goals. The *2001 Plan* provides a description of current and planned projects, and deciphers the funding mechanisms required for implementation. To facilitate multi-jurisdictional transportation planning the county was divided into subareas. Jurisdictions worked together to determine objectives and the resulting project lists were heard at every City Council and by the Board of Supervisors. The SCTA also facilitated two public hearings on the development and approval of the project list. The *2001 Plan* will be updated every 2-3 years to co-incide with efforts to update the Regional Transportation Plan.

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## SMART

SCTA staff has been working with the Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Commission on the development of a passenger rail plan in the two counties. A project manager, Lillian Hames, has been hired to coordinate SMART activities, including the formation of a Vehicle Selection Committee, determining likely sites for the maintenance facility and hiring consultants to prepare the necessary environmental documents.

The estimated cost of the system is \$200 million in capital outlay and \$7 million annually for operating costs. Some funds for the project have been designated including \$28 million in Proposition 116 bond money (1990) and \$37 million in Traffic Congestion Relief Program funds (2000).

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## Regional Participation

SCTA staff participates in various regional activities in the Bay Area representing the needs of Sonoma County. By being an active member of the regional transportation community the SCTA is better able to compete for funds and ensure the needs of the county are being addressed. Staff regularly attends meetings held by such regional agencies as Caltrans, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Congestion Management Agency Association.

2001 was particularly busy in the Bay Area. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), a 25 year planning document for the nine counties in the Bay Area required input and participation at every step of the process. The SCTA can also count as a success the inclusion of SMART in the Regional Transit Expansion Plan, also approved in 2001.

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## Project Monitoring

During the past year, the importance of project monitoring and project delivery has been heightened. From both the state and regional level, there is significant pressure to get programmed projects out on the street on time and on budget. The SCTA has increased activities related to project monitoring by meeting often with Caltrans staff to discuss important highway projects and by working closely with local project sponsors to ensure they have the necessary tools to get their projects delivered. This will continue to be a high priority for the SCTA. Staff is currently looking into acquiring a Project Management database system to make tracking more efficient.

# BUDGET

## Budget Summary

### FY 2000/2001 Actuals

#### Revenues

State	\$4,000
Regional	140,000
Local	137,400
Other *	33,079

#### Expenditures

Salaries & Benefits	\$199,459
Contracts & Services	74,889
Operations	67,475

**Current Fund Balance**                      **\$162,231**

\* Other includes funding budgeted for the Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transit study and funding from the TFCA program for administration, and earned interest.

*The SCTA is audited annually by the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller. The FY2000/2001 audit will be completed in January 2002.*