

Sonoma County Transportation Authority

2001 SCTA Annual Report
2002

Presented November 4, 2002

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.

Suzanne Wilford, Executive Director

Janet Spilman, Transportation Planner

Angela Caruso, Executive Assistant

520 Mendocino Avenue Suite 240 Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Phone:707-565-5373

*

Fax:707-565-5370

*

www.sonoma-county.org/scta

SCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Message from the Chair

Dear Friends:

In fiscal year 2001/2002 the SCTA adopted the first countywide transportation plan. This twenty five year planning document established a list of key projects throughout the county that are multimodal and ranked on a sub-regional basis.

The SCTA broke new ground this past year in terms of project delivery when Caltrans agreed to allow the SCTA to directly oversee the environmental phase of two Highway 101 improvement projects. While these two projects will be funded with 100% STIP funds, Caltrans will provide oversight while the SCTA and private consultants to do the work. This arrangement will help deliver the project in an expedited and less costly manner.

On the transit side, the SCTA played a key role in supporting AB2224 by Assembly Member Joe Nation. This legislation created the Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transit District – a two county entity that will ultimately own and operate passenger rail service on the NWP rail right of way. AB2224 puts us one step closer to making passenger rail service a reality.

During fiscal year 2001/2002 the SCTA, along with others throughout the state, saw the impact of a slowing economy on transportation. While the outlook for additional discretionary funds diminished, we were still able to program nearly \$83 million to key highway, transit and bicycle projects.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the SCTA. I would like to thank my Vice Chair Paul Kelley and the other Directors for their enthusiasm and support. Finally, our work gets done by staff dedicated to their tasks. I would like to thank our Executive Director Suzanne Wilford, Janet Spilman and Angela Caruso. Good luck to Jeanette Wood with her new career at College of the Redwoods.

Sincerely,

Jake Mackenzie
Chair, SCTA



2002 Jake Mackenzie, Chair
Rohnert Park

2001 Mike Kerns, Chair
Sonoma County

2002 Paul Kelley, Vice Chair
Sonoma County

2002 Steve Allen
Windsor

2002 Joe Costello
Sonoma

2002 Geoffrey Fox
Cotati

2002 Mike Healy
Petaluma

2002 Robert Jehn
Cloverdale

2002 Lisa Schaffner
Healdsburg

2002 Tim Smith
Sonoma County

2002 Sam Spooner
Sebastopol

2002 Sharon Wright
Santa Rosa

2001 Mark Gleason
Healdsburg

2001 Larry Robinson
Sebastopol

2001 Sam Salmon
Windsor

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

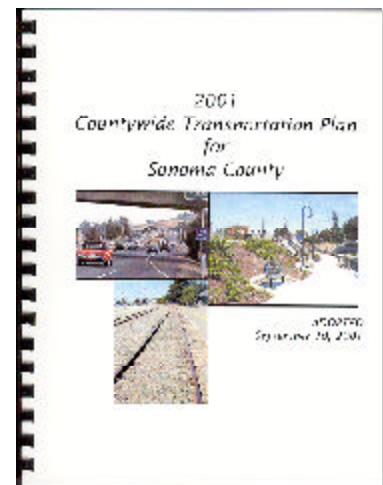
The SCTA is responsible for programming most of the state and federal funds available to Sonoma County for roadway, transit and bicycle projects. The SCTA ensures that these funds are granted and used properly in Sonoma County and assumes responsibility for assisting local jurisdictions in their applications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



SCTA COMMITTEES

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.

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.

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 representing the low income community, 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.

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 21st 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
- Roadway beautification
- Pedestrian paths
- Rehabilitation of historic projects linked to transportation

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 over \$62 million in the 2002 STIP.

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 \$1.7 million in STA funds in FY 2001/02.

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 2001/02.

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.

Paratransit

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

In FY 2001/2002 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.

Other Funding Programs

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. TFCA projects programmed in FY 2001/02 totaled nearly \$859,000.



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.

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 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 2001/2002 the SCTA continued to pursue the *Highway 101-2010 Construction Strategy*. This effort illustrates how improvement to Highway 101 can be completed before the close of the decade. The table below identifies the six phases on the 101 Corridor and lists the status of each phase.

The *2010 Construction Strategy* employs 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>Amount Funded</u>	<u>Status in 01/02</u>
1	Wilfred to Highway 12	\$28.7	Under construction 01/02
2	Highway 12 to Steele Lane	\$77.5	Funded - EIR in process
3	Rohnert Park Expy to Wilfred Ave	\$47.8	Funded - EIR in process
4	Steele Lane to Windsor River Road	\$10 (\$90 needed)	Partially Funded - EIR in process
5	Old Redwood to RP Expressway	\$10 (\$90 needed)	Partially Funded - EIR in process
6	Marin/Sonoma Narrows	\$50.8 (\$400 needed)	Partially Funded - EIR in process

All amounts are in millions

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 Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the SCTA for bicycle facilities throughout the county. There is an effort made to link paths to each other and to transit in order to maximize safety and usefulness.

The SCTA programmed \$960,720 to bicycle and pedestrian paths in FY 01/02. In addition, it is policy in most jurisdictions to include bicycle facilities in any road improvements when feasible.



FY 01/02 Project List

Jurisdiction	Projects	Amount
Cotati	Marsh Creek Trail	\$18,682 (TDA)
Santa Rosa	Franklin Avenue/North Street Bike lanes - class II	\$100,000 (TDA) \$50,279 (TFCA)
Sebastopol	Railroad Forest Bike Path - class I	\$42,800 (TDA)
Sonoma	Bicycle Crossing at West MacArthur Fifth street West to Fifth Street East- class II	\$49,000 (TDA)
County of Sonoma	Countywide installation of Bicycle Caution signs	\$15,000 (TDA)

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 FY 2001/02 and in previous years to fund the development of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fleet and the development of transit facilities in Petaluma and Windsor.

TFCA Transit	Jurisdiction	Project Name	Amount
	Santa Rosa	Student Pass Subsidy	\$80,000
		Voluntary Trip Reduction Program	\$156,841
	Sonoma County	Eleven 40' CNG Buses	\$135,659
		Six 30' low floor CNG Buses	\$117,711
	Petaluma/County	Petaluma Transit Mall	\$256,302
	Windsor/County	Windsor Intermodal Facility	\$57,096

Transit Forum

The Paratransit Coordinating Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee hosted a transit forum in November 2001 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. Altogether, nearly \$20 million was programmed in the FY 01/02 Coordinated Claim.

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

Project Tracking

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 has worked with a consultant to develop a database system to make tracking more efficient.

Countywide Planning

In September 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. Work is beginning on the update to the *Countywide Transportation Plan* and to the *Countywide Bicycle Plan*.

SMART

SCTA staff has been working with the Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Commission on the development of a passenger rail system in the two counties. The State Legislature passed AB 2224 in 2002 to create a Transit District for SMART that will oversee the development and operations of the commuter rail system in Marin and Sonoma Counties.

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.

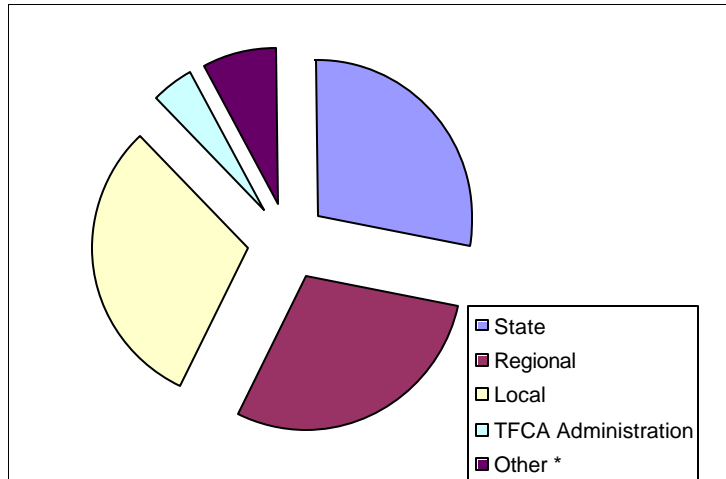
BUDGET

Budget Summary

FY 2001/2002 Actuals

Revenues

State	\$137,500
Regional	140,000
Local	150,000
TFCA Administration	21,672
Other *	37,898



Expenditures

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

Current Fund Balance \$18,575

* Other includes funding budgeted for the Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transit related expenses, prior year adjustments and earned interest.

The SCTA is audited annually by the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller. The FY2001/2002 audit will be completed in Spring 2003.