

# Introduction

The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) acts as the county-wide planning and programming agency for transportation related issues. The SCTA plays a leading role in transportation: securing funds, project oversight and long term planning.

The SCTA has various legal and administrative requirements to fulfill in the capacity of a countywide transportation agency – some of these requirements are derived from regional agencies such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), while others, like California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) come directly from the state, or federal government.

The *Sonoma County Comprehensive Transportation Plan* is the latest countywide planning document approved by the SCTA. The purpose of the Plan is primarily to update past transportation planning efforts in order to prioritize transportation needs throughout Sonoma County for the next 25 years.

The importance of maintaining an updated planning document is two-fold. *First*, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) requires local transportation authorities such as the SCTA to establish transportation plans that can feed into the larger Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a federally required, 25-year planning document. *Second*, the SCTA is responsible for programming numerous state and federal funding sources to transportation projects. In order to meet this requirement, the SCTA needs a policy and planning document to help guide the programming process. If the SCTA does not meet these two requirements it is at risk of losing critical transportation dollars.

The **Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)** is a multi-modal plan that updates the 2001 Countywide Transportation Plan for Sonoma County and incorporates feedback from the series of Public Planning Sessions held in the summer of 2003. The CTP is also built on the efforts of local elected officials and staff from the cities and the County of Sonoma. This update is formatted in a way that emphasizes modes, whereas the 2001 Plan was oriented around the subareas. However, the subarea context remains important to the planning process and is the backbone of the CTP.

Since 2001 the Countywide Bicycle Plan has been updated. This information has been translated to the Bicycle section of CTP.

The Transportation and Land Use connection is also explored in greater detail and begins the process of the SCTA's next endeavor, a Transportation and Land Use toolkit and Best Practices Manual.

Overall, the **CTP** is meant to refine the vision, goals, and objectives for improv-

ing mobility on Sonoma County’s streets, highways, and transit system and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. To that end, the Plan provides policy guidance and specific transportation improvements for development over the next 25 years.

## **Sonoma County Transportation Authority**

The Sonoma County Transportation Authority, SCTA, was formed as a result of legislation passed in 1990. Proposition 111 resulted in changes to the way transportation projects are planned and funded. This led to the formation of Congestion Management Agencies for most of the counties in the State. In November 1990, the SCTA was formed under the Local Transportation Authority and Improvement Act (Public Utilities Code Section 180000) and designated as the Congestion Management Agency for Sonoma County. In 1997, the SCTA relinquished its position as the CMA under new state legislation that made this function optional. The SCTA now serves as the coordinating and advocacy agency for transportation funding for Sonoma County.

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### **Mission Statement**

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*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.*

## **Membership of the SCTA**

The SCTA is governed by a twelve member Board of Directors. Nine of these members are chosen from the Councils of the nine incorporated cities or towns, the remaining three are chosen from the County Board of Supervisors. Officers are elected annually. The Authority holds public meetings on the second Monday (except holidays) of each month at the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department hearing room in Santa Rosa.

## Function

*The SCTA performs several important functions in the local and regional transportation arena. The three major responsibilities of the SCTA are:*



Programming transportation funds

Coordinating transportation funds and projects among jurisdictions (local/regional/ state/federal)

Preparing and implementing the comprehensive transportation plan

### **Programming Transportation Funds**

The SCTA is responsible for programming most of the state and federal funds available to Sonoma County for roadway, transit and bicycle projects. This is discussed in greater detail in the following chapters. 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.

### **Coordinating Transportation Funds and Projects Among Jurisdictions (Local/Regional/ State/Federal)**

The SCTA coordinates the activities of local jurisdictions with MTC, 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.

### **Preparing and Implementing the Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

The CTP is representative of the long range planning and programming function of the SCTA, and effectively updates the 2001 Countywide Transportation Plan.

Other planning documents such as the Best Practices Manual for Smart Growth and the SCTA Bicycle Plan are also within the SCTA workplan.

### **SCTA Committees and Other SCTA Responsibilities**

The SCTA also has the responsibility, through its committees, for reviewing and updating the Unmet Transit Needs Plan, reviewing and prioritizing TDA Article 3 Bicycle and Pedestrian projects, and reviewing and adopting the

Coordinated TDA/STA Claim. *The following standing Committees advise and give input into various issues for the SCTA:*

Technical Advisory Committee (**TAC**)

Citizens Advisory Committee (**CAC**)

Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee (**CBAC**)

Paratransit Coordinating Committee (**PCC**)

The primary function of the **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, BAAQMD, MTC, the North Coast Air Quality District, and the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District.

The **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 and decisions, funding programs, and any other policy matter acted on by the SCTA and to provide input and recommendations for the SCTA's decision making process. The CAC has also been active in promoting Countywide planning and has worked to develop this CTP document. The CAC has been active in addressing issues surrounding possible ballot initiatives to support transportation projects.

The **CBAC** was formed in July 1993 in response to MTC Resolution No. 875. The CBAC advises the SCTA on programming decisions for bicycle funds and aides in project coordination. The CBAC developed a Countywide Bicycle Plan that is available on line at [www.sonoma-county.org/scta](http://www.sonoma-county.org/scta).

The **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 may also appoint one representative. The PCC assists the SCTA in making funding decisions regarding paratransit and transit programs throughout the county. The PCC is responsible for holding the annual Transit Forum, and makes recommendations allocating Section 5310 funds and approval of the Coordinated Claim for Transit.