



## COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

### SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 4/28/2020

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Transportation and Public Works

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Johannes J. Hoevertsz 707-565-2231

**Vote Requirement:** Informational Only

**Supervisorial District(s):** All

**Title:**

November 2020 Transportation Sales Tax Measure Draft Proposal and List of Projects/Need, as presented by Sonoma County Transportation Authority

**Recommended Action:**

The information is being presented as an informational item only from a February 10, 2020 Sonoma County Transportation Authority Board of Directors meeting.

**Executive Summary:**

The Measure M  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cent transportation sales tax will expire in 2024. In order to maintain our status as a self-help county and deliver critical transportation projects, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) is considering a sales tax extension for the November 2020 ballot. The expenditure plan development for the proposed measure is under way; the ad hoc committee recommends a strawman proposal related to the distribution of funds that will provide more than double the amount of local funds dedicated to local roads, bus transit and bikeways. The strawman proposal will help drive reductions in GHG in the transportation sector. It aligns very closely with the project list categories submitted by project sponsors and the data related to pavement and transit needs.

The ad hoc committee discussed a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cent option and deliberated on numerous possibilities for the expenditure plan strawman.

**Discussion:**

The SCTA currently manages a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cent sales tax dedicated to a multi-modal expenditure plan known as Measure M. The strawman proposal maintains the  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cent tax until removed by voters, eliminates the Highway 101 and the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) programs, and allocates the funds to the other program categories thereby more than doubling the funding that will be available to local roads, bus transit and bike and pedestrian pathways.

If voters do not renew Measure M by 2024, the SCTA and its member jurisdictions will no longer have a local funding source to leverage State and Federal dollars for transportation projects. By putting a measure on the ballot in 2020, the SCTA will be able to fund new projects sooner.

The SCTA Board has been discussing when and how to ask voters to continue support for a local tax for

transportation. In March 2019, then Chair Landman formed the Measure M ad hoc committee to help focus the approach. Members of the ad hoc are Chair Susan Gorin and Directors Bagby, Gurney, Landman, Rabbitt and Rogers.

On July 9, 2019, the SCTA issued a call for projects for the *Comprehensive Transportation Plan 2050* asking project sponsors to identify and rank their 10 highest priority projects for consideration in a new tax measure; as well as submit and rank up to 5 transit projects. The result was nearly \$4B in requests ranging from bike safety projects to interchanges across Highway 101 to SMART extension to Cloverdale with increased service.

Based on earlier direction from the SCTA Board, SMART will not be included in the new measure. After removing SMART expansion to Cloverdale, the total need is \$3.57B and breaks down into the following categories:

Call for Measure Projects	Sum of Project Need (\$M)	%
Bicycle and Pedestrian	\$ 397.04	11%
Connecting Communities	\$ 1,086.47	30%
Road Maintenance	\$ 1,500.00	42%
Transit - Bus	\$ 583.06	16%
Grand Total	\$ 3,566.58	100%

In the early fall of 2019, the SCTA hired Muelrath Public Affairs and EMC to help guide and perform an initial poll. EMC conducted the first round of polling in September by surveying 600 likely 2020 voters. The results were positive for a ¼-cent and less optimistic for a ½-cent. The poll asked:

*To reduce traffic congestion on local roads and highways; repair potholes; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; make walking and biking safer; expand local bus service; improve evacuation routes and emergency road access; and enhance transportation for students, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities; shall the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, [Split A: continue the existing ¼ cent sales tax without increasing the rate until ended by voters, providing approximately \$23 million annually / Split B: replace the existing measure with a ½ cent sales tax until ended by voters, providing approximately \$45 million annually], with annual audits and citizen oversight?*

There was very solid support for a ¼-cent with 73% and good support for a ½-cent with 67%. However, when presented with an opposition statement, the support drops to 64% and 58% respectively. After adding in “lean support,” the numbers go to 66% and 59%.

Following the poll, the ad hoc committee reviewed the project lists submitted by each jurisdiction and deliberated on a possible structure for the measure. The ad hoc proposes the following strawman with several thoughts in mind:

1. The needs are great across the board but doubling the amount of local funding available for local roads, bus transit and bicycle and pedestrian projects is a priority and will help drive greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reductions in the transportation sector.

2. The structure of two “buckets” of project types reflects the importance of:
  - a. Improving the backbone of the transportation system across all modes of road maintenance, active transportation and bus service, and
  - b. Connecting communities through infrastructure projects, both big and small, that help people move safely and reliably wherever they need to go.
3. Local jurisdictions will receive funds directly to fix roads and run bus service based on the formulas in use under Measure M.
4. SCTA will manage the other programs in a competitive manner. The content of the Expenditure Plan will include sample projects derived from the list of priority projects submitted by each jurisdiction.
5. Measure M has demonstrated that with local funds self-help counties can leverage significant amounts of Federal, State and Regional funds.

<b>Improve Transportation: preserving and enhancing our quality of life through convenient, reliable and accessible transportation</b>	<b>75%</b>
Fix roads (1)	40%
Add bus service (2)	18%
Affordable access for seniors, youth, veterans and people living with disabilities	2%
Provide clean transportation with zero emission buses and car charging	2%
Enhance transportation options and last mile connections	2%
Build new bikeways (3)	11%

<b>Connect Communities: transportation projects and programs that will help people seamlessly get where they need to go safely and on time</b>	<b>25%</b>
Complete corridor improvements (4) for all modes with projects like:	23%
Infrastructure improvements Complete streets Support housing in downtown areas Access to transit Increase safety Improve evacuation routes	
Use technology to move traffic	2%

The SCTA advisory committees reviewed the strawman proposal in late January and early February.

Next steps are for the SCTA’s Board to decide on the size and term of the measure and provide input on the strawman proposal. After that, staff and the ad hoc will work with Muelrath and EMC on the next steps in polling, focus groups and community outreach. Staff will also be working with the ad hoc and committees to further define the strawman program categories and policies, including the full text of the measure and expenditure plan.

<b>Schedule of Next Steps</b>	<b>Expenditure Plan</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>March 2020</b>
Development			
Focus Groups / Poll Version 2			March 2020
SCTA Board Final Draft of Expenditure Plan			May 11, 2020
Cities and County Presentations			May - June 2020

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**Agenda Date:** 3/24/2020

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SCTA Final approval of Expenditure Plan                      July 13, 2020  
Board of Supervisors Places on the Ballot                      Aug 4, 2020

**Prior Board Actions:**

None

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 19-20 Adopted</b>	<b>FY20-21 Projected</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>			

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

None

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

None

**Attachments:**

Listed Projects

SCTA 2/10/20 Staff Report to SCTA Board of Directors

SCTA Ad Hoc Committee's Strawman Expenditure Plan

SCTA New Transportation Measure, Strawman Proposal

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

None

