



County Strategic Priority: Rebuilding Our Infrastructure

Lead Departments

Transportation and Public Works, General Services, County Counsel, and Auditor Controller

Vision

We are improving County infrastructure and supporting communities for a resilient, sustainable future. Rebuilding facilities and investing in ongoing maintenance of infrastructure reduces deferred and corrective maintenance liabilities – saving taxpayer dollars – improves the public’s safety, and enhances the use of and access to services.

Priority Summary

The County is responsible for 1,384 miles of unincorporated area roads, 328 bridges, four small water systems, and 158 county buildings which represent a total of 2.6 million square feet. The public’s ability to benefit from this infrastructure is limited by the age and condition of these assets, and lack of available funding for to maintain functionality and value.

Infrastructure - including buildings, transportation, sewer, water, storm drainage, and flood control facilities – must include provisions for both meeting present and future internal County facility needs, as well as the general public need. Investments should achieve organizational service excellence, and create positive experience for residents and visitors while enhancing safety. All of our infrastructure investments must build resilience to the risks and impacts from climate change. This initiative has three primary focus areas: Securing increased transportation funding; Revitalizing the County Campus for future service delivery needs; and Creating a Resilient Community Toolbox.

As it relates to any of these three initiatives; the goals will include education and outreach components by identifying the County’s areas of responsibility, aligning the public’s expectations with the County’s capacity to deliver, defining what timely response looks like, developing functional, accessible and meaningful materials for the public, including a participatory budget process.

Potential outcome measures to track progress toward these goals could include

1. Complete redevelopment plan for the County Government Center that includes housing and mixed use office/retail.
2. Increase the number maintenance staff per road miles.
3. Continuing Pavement Condition Index trend.
4. Establishing bridge investment and replacement benchmarks.
5. Reduction in roads deferred maintenance backlog.
6. Establish a financing plan for the County Government Center that does not reduce the

County's ability to fund services.

7. Identify County land that could be developed to meet County priorities, such as housing, safety net services, and resource conservation.
8. Achieve Net Zero sustainability for all County facilities.
9. Addresses \$236 million in deferred County facilities maintenance.
10. Investment in County facilities Preventative Maintenance at IFMA standard, e.g. \$2.82/sqft.
11. Inventory communities interested in organizing to improve self-sufficiency and resilience.
12. Developing a Community Toolbox to help communities define needs and priorities, and organize to address those needs in a consistent and sustainable method.
13. All of Sonoma County unincorporated Communities have received Toolkit and have been trained through a community workshop.

Priority Projects

The County has identified three primary projects to advance the Rebuilding our Infrastructure priority. In addition, there are a number of influencing factors, representing potential opportunities to advance this priority or threats to its progress. These include: the Low Carbon Transportation proposal in the Governor's budget¹; declining Highway Users Tax Account²; the Federal Budget³; Save California Streets⁴; and Pending Legislation⁵

¹ The proposal contains a target goal of a 50% reduction in petroleum use, and proposes to allocate \$363 million for Low Carbon Transportation projects. Funding could be made available to increase the use of alternative non-petroleum based fuels such as hydrogen, renewable compressed natural gas, renewable diesel, electric vehicles and the charging station infrastructure to support EV's. While this presents opportunities, it will also present some challenges. To achieve a 50% reduction in petroleum, there may be changes in the off-road mobile vehicles and diesel regulation exemptions that would accelerate the replacement of older County-owned equipment beyond available funding sources.

² Over the past two years the County has seen a significant decline in state Highway User Tax Account (HUTA) revenues, the largest source of funding for Road Operations, taking the average from 2010 to 2015 of \$14.6 million down to \$10.4 million in 2015-16 and an estimated \$10.7 million in 2016-17, for a net loss over two years of \$8.1 million. The current estimates provided by CSAC in response to the Governor's budget continue lower than average HUTA revenues for FY 2017-18. Current estimate is \$11.3 million which is \$3.3 million less than the \$14.6 million prior average. While fund balance has been available in prior years to backfill the HUTA shortfalls, this will not be possible in FY 17-18. If not backfilled with another source, reductions will be necessary in road maintenance resulting in increased delays in Department's ability to perform critical maintenance activities and respond to constituent complaints.

³ The White House is requesting \$16.2 billion for the Department of Transportation's (DOT) discretionary budget, or a \$2.4 billion (13 percent) decrease from the 2017 level. The budget seeks to eliminate funding for DOT's \$500 million discretionary TIGER grant program. Funding for the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Program (New Starts) would only be available to projects with existing full-funding grant agreements. According to the administration, "future investments in new transit projects would be funded by the localities that use and benefit from these localized projects." The budget would eliminate funding for the \$175 million Essential Air Service (EAS) program, which provides subsidized commercial air service to rural airports.

⁴ Due to an aging infrastructure, rising construction costs and budget constraints, the state's local road network is falling into disrepair at an alarming rate. With heavier vehicles, increasing traffic and the need to accommodate alternative modes of transportation, the demands on California's streets and roads are growing. At the same time, a growing percentage of streets and roads are in poor condition and in need of repair.

⁵ Two separate funding bills are pending in the Legislature: Senate Bill 1, authored by Sen. Jim Beall, and Assembly Bill 1, authored by Assembly member Jim Frazier. Both bills will generate about \$6 billion annually. Neither bill dedicates more than 10 percent of its funds for public transit. For context, 20 percent of the federal gas tax is dedicated to public transportation. Moreover, some of the proposed public transit funds are pre-existing while others aren't certain to ever materialize.

Based on the County's current assessment, given adequate resources the following projects will help the County accomplish the goals of this priority.

Transportation Funding: Develop adequate funding for Maintenance, Preservation and Construction of Transportation Infrastructure, position County in collaboration with Cities to support Federal, State and Local transportation infrastructure financing initiatives.

- A. Continue Paving Program and Assessment of Pavement Condition and Un-Met Needs on an annual basis.
- B. Prepare an Updated Bridge Report and Un-Met Needs Assessment
- C. Develop County Roads Information Resource Guide
- D. Continue Legislative Lobbying Efforts

Revitalize the County Campus: Complete the plan to reinvent and improve existing aging County facilities to efficiently and effectively deliver public services; and identify land available for housing, retail and office development in order to achieve long term revenue generation. The plan will rebuild facilities today, that will be relevant in 2050 and beyond through design and committed maintenance funding. Funding and a financing plan for implementation and ongoing maintenance must be identified, as well as achieve Net Zero sustainability goals and maximize the beneficial use of County owned property. Addresses \$236 million in deferred maintenance. The cost for replacement of campus facilities is \$350—\$400 Million. Current maintenance funding is \$3,367,008 or \$1.69/square foot. The total should be \$5,598,399 or \$2.81/square foot which is an industry standard. The gap is \$2,231,391 annually with a 6% annual escalation. The annual need for the next 25 years to address deferred maintenance is \$10,000,000 with a 6% annual escalation. Both deferred maintenance and ongoing maintenance must be funded. In addition, even if campus buildings are replaced, ongoing maintenance must still be funded at the IFMA standard or the deferred backlog will re-emerge

Community Toolbox: Complete resource guide to help unincorporated communities, identify their vision, define their needs and priorities, assess funding gaps, organize from within the community to provide services (i.e. parking and parking enforcement, streetscape/landscaping projects, community identity projects, signing, etc.) in a method that is consistent and sustainable. The project for FY 2017-18 will be to finalize and implement a set of template documents that would allow the community to consider different levels of an organization, such as a Municipal Advisory Council. The tool will also provide a roadmap to larger, more formal structures that may include taxing authority, such as Special Districts or incorporations. In order to provide staff support for up to 10 community groups (assuming each meets once/month), an Administrative Aide position would need to be funded, at a cost of \$123,000.

Stakeholders

Rebuilding our Infrastructure requires the partnership and collective work of many stakeholders. Among these are:

- Local Agency Formation Commission
- Cities and Towns of Sonoma County
- Local and Regional Transportation and Transit Agencies
- County residents and businesses
- Climate protection advocacy groups
- Housing advocates
- Resident and business groups in areas such as: Larkfield, the Springs, Guerneville, and others
- Bicycle and pedestrian groups