

Misguided Sonoma County Transportation Plan

By Craig S. Harrison, President, Save Our Sonoma Roads

The Sonoma County Transportation and Climate Authorities have proposed a flawed Transportation Plan that will harm County roads. The plan should focus on providing an excellent road system and not sacrifice our future by promoting unrealistic climate change goals that are costly and have few real-world benefits. Impeding vehicle traffic flow by carving out bicycle lanes is but one example.

The premise of the plan is a web-based survey that claims that driving is the County's lowest transportation priority. By contrast, the City of Santa Rosa's March 2026 survey found the second most important priority to be fixing streets and repairing potholes, just after maintaining emergency services. It found 87% of residents rate preventing streets from deteriorating as extremely or very important. Driving is a very low priority? Replacing roads with bicycle lanes is nowhere on the list. The Santa Rosa survey reflects the sentiments of urban dwellers. From SOSroads 15 years of experience, rural residents are even more concerned about the condition of our roads.

The transportation plan assumes that residents, including the elderly, will bicycle or walk for trips less than 5 miles. Say what? Rural residents and senior citizens will not drive to Costco, medical appointments, restaurants, or concerts? What about rain, darkness, cold, excessive heat, and roads without shoulders?

The plan never explains its dubious assumptions and implications, but they underpin its goal to only fund projects that achieve zero-emissions by 2050. Air transportation would end in Sonoma County. Only battery-powered aircraft could take off or land, a non-existent technology that is unlikely to ever work. Diesel-powered trucks could not carry cargo in Sonoma County, stifling commerce. Residents could not operate their gas-powered cars, subjecting the County to massive takings claims and hardship for low-income residents.

Setting unachievable, ideological goals is harmful. Decision makers will squander precious transportation funds and reject practical, cost-effective projects. Few want a return to Medieval transportation modes. The plan is a waste of transportation funds that would have been better spent on fixing our roads.