

SMART GROWTH AND RURAL ROAD SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE

Yolo County maintains over 795 miles of roads, has a \$45 million maintenance backlog, and lacks adequate funding to upgrade the roads to accommodate the current mix of road users, including agricultural vehicles, commuters and bicyclists. Yolo County only has 23,265 people in the unincorporated area and over 88% of its residents live in cities. As a result, relatively little funding flows to the county for road maintenance and improvements. In addition, Yolo County has directed growth to cities so is unlikely to increase its population enough to attract sufficient funding from the federal or state government or raise enough money through any type of transportation tax. Yolo County is discussing the possibility of a road impact fee with our cities, which – if successful – could help to fund needed maintenance and improvements.

ISSUE #1: The use of county roads has changed from primarily serving agricultural needs to urban-based uses. Increasingly, city residents use county roads to commute between cities and for travel to rural destinations, increasing traffic and conflicts with agricultural vehicles.

ISSUE #2: Yolo County's commitment to the Blueprint and preserving agricultural land reduces access to transportation funding. Yolo County directs growth to the cities, thereby reducing the population in the unincorporated area and generally decreasing all forms of funding for county activities, including transportation funding. Yolo County does not yet have a mechanism to share the costs of maintaining county roads with cities.

ISSUE #3: Heavy trucks and agricultural vehicles have an unusually heavy impact on roads, creating as much as 10,000 times the damage a car would cause.

ROAD 98

Road 98 has one of the highest rates of accidents in Yolo County. It also has one of the highest traffic counts because it is one of the major arterial routes connecting the City of Davis and the University of California at Davis with the City of Woodland. It has a mixture of high-speed commute traffic, low-speed farm vehicles, material supply trucking, and farm-to-market transportation. The road has inadequate room to allow vehicles, such as slow farm equipment, to pull off the traveled way to allow other vehicles to pass or for bicyclists to share the road. Yolo County recently received funding to acquire right-of-way to widen Road 98, but will need approximately \$12 million to complete construction. The project received state environmental clearance in December 2007 and federal clearance in September 2008. Yolo County has been seeking funding for these improvements for over five years.