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*Ben van der Meer*

With a primary election next Tuesday, the general election in November may seem a long way away. But in Placer County, a measure may appear on the fall ballot with big potential implications for development. The [Placer County Transportation Planning Agency](#), local leaders and members of the business community are in the final push to qualify a sales-tax measure to pay for transportation projects.

“We have great plans, if I say so myself,” said [Celia McAdam](#), executive director of the transportation planning agency. “The problem is we don’t have the money to pay for it. There are aggressive development fees in place, but they only go so far, and they don’t pay for existing problems like maintenance and transit.”



Dennis McCoy | SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL

Celia McAdam, executive director of the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, says a proposed sales-tax is needed to pay for proposed roads as well as maintenance projects.

Three projects would benefit from the sales-tax measure.

The proposed Placer Parkway, running east-west from highways 65 to 99, would open up significant amounts of land for development planned for universities, homes and other uses, McAdam said.

The measure also would pay for improvements at two notorious trouble spots for Placer County commuters: Highway 65 north of Interstate 80, and the interchange between the two freeways.

McAdam said she already has met with the county economic development board, developers and chambers of commerce in the various municipalities and has heard strong support for the ballot measure.

But in a big county, with many residents hostile to new taxes, McAdam said she also will have to demonstrate benefits for others besides Roseville, Rocklin and Lincoln commuters.

One way to do that is to emphasize that the measure will make more money available for road repairs. Overall, Placer County roads have a rating of 69 on the 1-to-100 scale of the Pavement Condition Index, developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. But roads are in worse condition in the county's unincorporated areas. And in Colfax, the roads have a condition index ranking of 40, which represents roads that are "crumbling," McAdam said.

Recent opinion polling shows 63 percent approval for the ballot measure, putting it in "striking distance" of the two-thirds majority required for approval, she said. "We're going to need a strong private campaign. We have good projects. It's a matter of getting the word out."