

MINUTES

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom Meeting/Teleconference

March 16, 2022

Members Present

Dusty Duley, City of Willits
Alicia Meier, County DOT
Mark Cliser, Co. DPBS
Jacob King, MTA
Paul Andersen, City of Point Arena
Tasha Ahlstrand, Caltrans
John Smith (*for Chantell O'Neal*) City of Fort Bragg
Andrew Stricklin (*for Jason Benson*) City of Ukiah

Members Absent

AQMD Representative

*Note: NCRA was replaced by new Great Redwood Trail Agency
on 3/14/22 (will not be listed in future minutes)*

Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning
James Sookne, MCOG Planning
Jesus Rodriguez, MCOG Planning
Charlene Parker, MCOG Planning
Jody Lowblad, MCOG Administration
Lisa Davey-Bates, MCOG Planning
Alexis Pedrotti, MCOG Planning
Danielle Casey, MCOG Administration
Dean Meester, Caltrans
Kyle Finger, Caltrans
Andrea Trincado, City of Willits
Lucy Bartholomew, Blue Zones
Patricia Rabano, Round Vly Indian Tribes
Jessica Stull-Otto, Round Vly Area MAC
Ramon Billy, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m. Individuals present were identified.
2. **Public Expression** – Patricia Rabano, Round Valley Indian Tribes, said she attended the January and February TAC meetings and requested information on the Covelo trail project, but has not been contacted. Nephele apologized and offered to follow up on this. She also offered to add Patricia to the Project Development Team for this project.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments' Representatives** – Patricia Rabano asked to be notified of any road/bridge projects within tribal areas, so she could inform the community. She said she had received information about the Caltrans District 1 Tribal Summit scheduled for next week. Jessica Stull-Otto, Round Valley Area Municipal Advisory Committee, invited Patricia to participate in MAC meetings and advised there is room on the MAC for another tribal representative.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 2/16/22** – Motion by Paul Andersen, seconded by Jacob King, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*8 ayes – King, Cliser, Andersen, Stricklin, Smith, Duley, Ahlstrand, Meier*) to approve the minutes of 2/16/22.
5. **Innovative Concept Proposals – Caltrans Request for Feedback on “Aligned” Projects**
Nephele said MCOG received a request from Caltrans last July to submit “innovative concept proposals” in planning for potential federal funding. There was a quick turnaround and projects were selected by staff based on how well they aligned with Caltrans’ criteria. MCOG submitted six

proposals, and the City of Fort Bragg submitted one. Caltrans has provided feedback, listing projects as “aligned” or “not aligned” with State criteria, and is asking about interest in moving projects forward.

Nephele reviewed the following projects, and detailed discussion ensued. There was a *consensus* to place the projects in a tiered priority list based on how well they fit with the criteria for this program.

Great Redwood Trail, Ph. 5 – Brush Street to Ford Road, Ukiah area (Aligned) – This phase of the rail trail would provide a closer bike and pedestrian connection to Mendocino College (via North State Street), with an ultimate connection to Lake Mendocino Drive. Due to limited staff resources, Alicia said these types of projects are lower priority for her department than roads, storms, bridge, and Safe Routes to School projects. Nephele said the NCRA has recently transitioned to the new Great Redwood Trail Agency and she is hopeful the new agency may be able to implement rail trail projects.

Brooktrails Second Access (Aligned) – This project includes safety benefits for vehicles, emergency ingress and egress, and bicycle and pedestrian access on narrow Sherwood Road (the only road in and out from Willits). Nephele thought it should be kept on the list because of its magnitude, and asked Alicia for input. Alicia suggested contacting Transportation Director Howard Dashiell, since he’s been involved with this project. Dusty commented on previous planning studies undertaken for the Brooktrails Second Access, with no implementation. He supported this project as a top priority.

Ukiah Transit Center, with accompanying multi-modal improvements (Aligned) – This project includes both planning and construction. The location analysis study could also potentially be funded through the transit reserve in MCOG’s Overall Work Program, or through a future Caltrans planning grant. The importance of having a central transit center in Ukiah to encourage transit use and connect to other systems and modes was noted. The project would also look at bike and pedestrian access, EV charging stations, park and ride areas, and bike storage. Nephele noted the importance of keeping this large project on the list because construction funding is hard to come by.

Mobility Solutions in Rural Areas (Aligned) – Nephele said MCOG has a current Caltrans grant project to study mobility solutions in Hopland, Potter Valley, Brooktrails, Laytonville and Covelo. The study will identify potential mobility solutions for providing service to these remote communities, and this project would be to implement the study’s recommended solutions.

Noyo Harbor Multimodal Improvement Project (Not aligned) – This project was submitted by both MCOG and the City of Fort Bragg. Due to increased multimodal traffic into the harbor, improvements are needed as there is no safe place for bikes and pedestrians on the narrow roadway. The concept is to potentially change traffic to one way, connect North Harbor Drive to Noyo Point Road, and construct a roundabout at SR 1/Main Street. Caltrans deemed the project “not aligned” because they focused on the road connection and roundabout rather than improved multi-modal access. Nephele said she asked if the “non-aligned” determination could be challenged, and Tasha replied that Caltrans is open to that. John Smith noted this project would also help with tsunami escape routes.

Orchard Avenue Extension (Not aligned) – This project would provide an extension from Brush Street to Lake Mendocino Drive. It would include multimodal improvements, and could open up areas for housing and economic development. The first phase would be on the south end, and although it would provide evacuation benefit, it would be hard to make the case for alignment with State criteria. It was noted that this may not be a good fit for this program, but the project is important to the region. The federal RAISE grant would be a potential funding source for these massive projects.

After discussion, there was a consensus to place projects in priority tiers. Nephela requested a recommendation to Caltrans and the MCOG Board noting there may not be time to take the list to MCOG before it is submitted to Caltrans.

Motion by Tatiana Ahlstrand, seconded by Alicia Meier, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 ayes – King, Cliser, Andersen, Stricklin, Smith, Duley, Ahlstrand, Meier) to recommend to Caltrans and the MCOG Board approval of the three tier project list: Tier 1 - Brooktrails Second Access; Ukiah Transit Center with Multimodal Facilities; Noyo Harbor Multimodal Improvement Project; Tier 2- Great Redwood Trail, Ph. 5 (Ukiah area); Mobility Solutions in Rural Communities – Implementation of Service Improvements; Tier 3 - Orchard Ave Extension.

6. Bicycle & Scooter Share/Rental Programs

Loretta said MCOG staff is following up on an MCOG Board directive to research grants that would fund bike and scooter share programs. She said she's had calls with current and former Walk and Bike Mendocino staff and has participated in a webinar for Clean Mobility grants. A "call for projects" for Clean Mobility grants is expected this summer, and she would like to begin talks with local agency staff to see what kind of interest there may be in looking into grants or a pilot program. She said a meeting on March 25 is planned with staff from the larger cities, MTA, Walk and Bike Mendocino, and MCOG, and noted it might be good to include staff from Air Quality in future meetings.

Nephela said this topic originated from MCOG's Transit Productivity Committee meeting, where there was interest in looking at affordable micro-mobility solutions in the larger cities. She noted there are a range of implementation options from commercial companies to programs operated by public agencies. Loretta said she met with staff from the Redding bike share program, and received a copy of their feasibility study which listed four business models: (1) privately owned and operated; (2) publicly owned and privately operated; (3) publicly owned and non-profit operated, and (4) non-profit owned and operated. The two models listed as having the most support in the study were #2 and #4.

A brief discussion ensued. Loretta mentioned the need to start planning, if not for a grant application this year, to be ready for a future cycle. Dusty said he is unable to attend the March 25 meeting, and noted the general feeling by Willits' staff that this would not be a good fit for Willits as it does not have the population base, but he supported looking into it for other jurisdictions. Jessica Stull-Otto suggested partnering with other programs to educate and encourage participants, and she thought a mix of pedal bikes plus e- bikes would be good. She said she has a lot of ideas and asked to be invited to the meetings. Loretta invited all who want to be included in the March 25 meeting to let her know.

7. Staff Reports

7a. Covelo Trail Project – Additional Surface Transportation Block Grant Partnership Funding

Nephela reported the MCOG Board, upon recommendation from the Covelo adhoc committee, approved a request at their last meeting for approximately \$61,000 in additional right of way funds, for a necessary amendment with the ROW consultant (BRI). She said the consultant has worked more than anticipated because of a change in roles and oversight with Caltrans involvement in the right of way process, and put in more hours to wrap up the ROW certification for the January CTC meeting. She added there are still things that remain to be done.

7b. Local Road Safety Plans (LRSP) – Loretta said she's been working with the consultant to schedule safety plan presentations before the four City Councils, and noted the County will place this item on a consent calendar rather than having a presentation. She said she had sent Alicia information from HSIP guidelines which said "it is strongly recommended" that the plans be approved by a local

board. Alicia said presentations are not currently being allowed at Board of Supervisors' meetings, and she intends to put the plan on the consent calendar for acceptance, rather than adoption.

Loretta said staff has asked the consultant for additional time for Willits' staff to review their priority projects. She and Nephele reiterated that MCOG wants to make sure they have enough time for review, noting these are the local agencies' plans, not MCOG's. Dusty and Andrea expressed appreciation and noted their staff's been focused on the Blosser Lane project.

7c. Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Grants – James said he's been in contact with local agencies, and although there has been some delay, they are on track to finish by the expenditure deadline. He advised he will prepare the yearly report for HCD. Nephele asked about invoicing, and said local agencies will need to provide the required backup information so MCOG can submit it to HCD. James will check, but he thought the only agency that may be ready to invoice is Point Arena. Nephele confirmed that MCOG will seek reimbursement for local agencies. She said CALCOG is working to see if it may be possible to extend the expenditure deadline, but that's still unknown.

8. Miscellaneous

Caltrans – Tasha reported (1) the Governor has added \$100m in the 2023/24 budget for the Clean CA grant program, so there will be a second round. Also, Caltrans is offering to do a debrief for those not selected in the first round. (2) Caltrans (*through the Minor B program*) is partnering with MTA on a new bus stop at West Road in Redwood Valley, which will include parking spaces, a bus shelter, and landscaping. (3) She also mentioned the upcoming tribal summit.

MTA – Jacob reported that MTA has two new electric buses operating in Willits, funded through the Volkswagen mitigation funds. The two old buses were crushed yesterday, as the program requires the old vehicles to be made unusable.

Co. DOT – Alicia advised that the RFP for PA&ED and PS&E for the North State Street STIP project (*roundabouts at KUKI Lane and 101 interchanges*) was posted to the County's website yesterday, with a closing date of April 12.

STIP – Nephele reminded all that STIP funds programmed for this year that have not yet been allocated must be allocated or extended by the June CTC meeting, and materials must be submitted about two months in advance. She also said if projects programmed for next fiscal year need to be changed, the last opportunity to submit an amendment request is Monday.

Round Valley Area MAC – ATP application – Jessica asked Alicia if she would like to be scheduled on the April Round Valley MAC agenda to discuss the ATP project, or if she would like to have a separate meeting. Alicia confirmed she would like the item included on the MAC agenda.

8a. Next Meeting – 4/20/22, if needed.

9. Adjournment – 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Loretta Ellard
Deputy Planner