

Approved 8/23/23

MINUTES

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Primary Location

MCOG Office – 525 S. Main St., Ukiah (Upstairs Conference Room)

Teleconference Locations

City of Ukiah, Public Works Dept., 300 Seminary Ave., Ukiah
City of Willits, Community Development Dept. – 111 E. Commercial St. Willits
City of Fort Bragg, Engineering Office, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg
City of Point Arena, 451 School Street, Point Arena
Co. of Mendocino, Planning & Building Services, 860 N Bush St., Ukiah
Mendocino Co. Dept. of Transportation, 340 Lake Mendocino Drive, Ukiah
Mendocino Transit Authority, 241 Plant Road, Ukiah

June 21, 2023

Members Present

Tim Eriksen, City of Ukiah (*Rep Jason Benson*)
Dusty Duley, City of Willits
Mark Cliser, Co. DPBS
Chantell O’Neal, City of Fort Bragg
Paul Andersen, City of Point Arena

Members Absent

AQMD Representative
Jacob King, MTA
Alicia Meier, County DOT
Dean Meester, Caltrans

Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning
Lisa Davey-Bates, MCOG Planning
James Sookne, MCOG Planning
Alexis Pedrotti, MCOG Planning
Jesus Rodriguez, MCOG Planning
Michael Villa, MCOG Administration
Dave Shpak, Gualala MAC
Blake Batten, Caltrans
Javier Silva, Yokayo Tribe
Ron Milam, Fehr & Peers
Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers
+ approx. 15 Others

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at approx. 10:06 a.m.
2. **Public Expression** – None.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments’ Representatives** – Javier Silva, representing the Yokayo Tribe, said the tribe is doing an upgrade on their water system, and looking for assistance with their infrastructure. He is attending today’s meeting to listen.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 5/24/23** – Motion by Chantell O’Neal, seconded by Tim Eriksen, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 ayes – O’Neal, Andersen, Eriksen, Duley, Cliser), to approve the minutes of 5/24/23.
5. **Presentation: Fehr & Peers - Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Tool (VMT+)**
Nephele introduced the presentation by Fehr & Peers on their free Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Tool (VMT+). The tool provided by Fehr & Peers covered the entire state and was based on ArcGIS. Fehr & Peers representatives Ron Milam and Ian Barnes gave a presentation and described

the geography boundaries displayed on the map as census block groups. While the publicly available tool contained a wide variety of data, they mentioned the possibility of making updates to obtain more specific geographies. They noted that the tool was particularly useful for overcoming the limitations of VMT analysis, such as truncation of trips at county lines. Ian provided an overview of the tool, explaining its capabilities and applications. The inherent capture of land use decisions over time as the tool is updated periodically was mentioned.

A discussion ensued, with Fehr & Peers staff responding to questions. Juliana Cherry asked about the significance of the 15% threshold in the tool. Ron explained that falling 15% below the citywide average for residential VMT would allow projects to screen out of further analysis and presume a less than significant impact for VMT.

A question was raised regarding the census block group geography and its limitations for unincorporated territories. Ron Milam acknowledged this challenge and suggested using a proxy approach by identifying three other census block groups that closely resemble the project's context. It was explained that local jurisdictions could undertake this process and utilize GIS data and other demographic information to support their selection of proxy sites.

In response to an inquiry about the origin and nature of big data used in the tool, Ron and Ian clarified that the data primarily came from Streetlight, which collected information from devices moving around a network. The data was based on GPS technology and provided insights into vehicle trips, including trip purpose and distance traveled.

Dusty Duley addressed the question about significant changes in the data pre and post-pandemic. Ian mentioned a behavioral shift towards recreation trips statewide, which likely impacted tourist-focused areas along highways and state parks, including those in Mendocino County. He emphasized the importance of rolling baselines and how the 2022 data source could capture the shift in travel behavior that might not be captured by the travel model.

Hosting options for MCOG's current VMT tool, including academic institutions, were mentioned as possible alternatives to the current arrangement of Fehr & Peers hosting the tool for an annual fee. Nephele thanked the Fehr & Peers team for the presentation.

6. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) & State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Policies

Nephele provided a presentation on the proposed modifications to the project selection criteria for the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) policies. The presentation highlighted the need to update the criteria to align with the current local and state priorities, particularly focusing on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction and environmental considerations.

Nephele explained the proposed changes were based on discussions held during the previous month's TAC meeting. A general discussion ensued. One suggestion was to decrease the weightage of the air quality and environmental benefit category and increase the weightage of the safety benefit category. It was debated whether the responsibility for environmental considerations should lie with transportation infrastructure projects or if it should be prioritized in line with state policies. Tim Eriksen acknowledged the importance of environmental benefits but also recognized the need to balance them

with other priorities, such as safety. After a thorough discussion, a motion was made to recommend the proposed project selection criteria with the following modifications: reducing the weightage of the air quality and environmental benefit category from 15 points to 10 points, increasing the weightage of the safety benefit category from 20 points to 25 points, and adding clarifying language regarding safety data and scoring transit projects under traffic volume. It was also suggested to include more clarifying language in the criteria regarding safety data and scoring transit projects under traffic volume.

Motion by Tim Eriksen, seconded by Dusty Duley, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 ayes – O’Neal, Andersen, Eriksen, Duley, Cliser), to recommend to the Executive Committee the proposed criteria with changes as follows, reduce Air Quality/Environmental Quality Benefits to 10 points, increase Safety Benefits to 25 points, and adding clarification to Safety Benefits and Transit regarding Traffic Volume.

7. Staff Reports

7a. Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) – Update

James Sookne provided an update on the REAP program, stating that an extension request would be submitted to extend the deadline from December 23 to December 24. The report mentioned that Point Arena has completed their part of the project, the City of Ukiah is two-thirds of the way through, and the County's progress needs to be checked. It was also noted that an invoice from the City of Willits is expected to be submitted soon. Sarah from Fort Bragg expressed interest in the deadline extension as well.

Dusty gave an update on his team’s position which is in the middle of fast-tracking this project and also expressed interest in an extension. This extension is only for REAP funds.

7b. Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County – Feasibility Study

Loretta gave a brief update on the feasibility study for mobility solutions in rural communities. The study, which focuses on Laytonville, Covelo, Brooktrails, Potter Valley, and Hopland, is scheduled to be completed this summer. The final recommendation will be presented to the MCOG board in August.

7c. MTA Ukiah Transit Center – Feasibility Study

Loretta gave an update on the progress of the feasibility study for the new Ukiah Transit Center. The consultant's survey received around 130 responses from transit riders and potential riders, and the team is currently working on scoring criteria for potential locations. Some locations have been eliminated based on the willingness of property owners to sell. The study is ongoing, and further updates will be provided in future meetings.

7d. Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A) – Planning Grant

Michael and Loretta provided an update on the Safe Streets and Roads for All planning grant application. The federal grant application is in progress, and they are working on obtaining a UEI number to submit the application. The deadline for the application is July 10.

8. Miscellaneous

Dean proposed scheduling a training date on the TDM (Travel Demand Model) model for Mendocino and Lake counties. It was decided to check with the consultant and determine the most suitable date for the training session.

8a. Next Meeting – 7/19/23, if needed.
August meeting was moved to the 4th Wednesday, 8/23/23.

9. Adjournment – approx. 11:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jesus Rodriguez

/jr