



MENDOCINO
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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January 31, 2023

To: MCOG Board of Directors
From: Janet Orth, Deputy Director / CFO
Subject: Information Packet of February 6, 2023 Meeting - No Action Required

The following items are attached.

1. MCOG Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Meeting minutes of September 21, 2022.
2. MCOG Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) – Meeting minutes of November 28, 2022.

Approved 1-18-23

MINUTES

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom Meeting/Teleconference

September 21, 2022

Members Present

Dusty Duley, City of Willits
Tim Eriksen, City of Ukiah
Paul Andersen, City of Point Arena
Alicia Meier, County DOT
Jacob King, MTA
Dean Meester, Caltrans
Mark Cliser, Co. DPBS, *arrived during item #6*
Heather Gurewitz, (for Chantell O’Neal) City of
Fort Bragg, *arrived during item #6*

Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning
Jesus Rodriguez, MCOG Planning
James Sookne, MCOG Planning
Kyle Finger, Caltrans
Lucy Bartholomew, Blue Zones
Christa Unger, Caltrans
James Linderman (*for item #6*)
Janet Orth, MCOG Administration (*for item #7a*)

Members Absent

AQMD Representative

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at approx. 10:03 a.m. Individuals present were identified.
2. **Public Expression** – None.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments’ Representatives** – No tribal representatives were present.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 5/18/22** – Motion by Tim Eriksen, seconded by Paul Andersen, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – Duley, Eriksen, Andersen, Meier, King, Meester), to approve the minutes of 5/18/22.
5. **FY 2022-23 LTF 2% Bike & Pedestrian Program Application (Review/Recommendation)**
Loretta reviewed her staff report explaining that only one application had been received in response to MCOG’s “call for projects” for LTF 2% Bicycle and Pedestrian program funds, as follows:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Request</u>
Mendocino Co. Dept. of Transportation	Mendocino County Roadway Systemic Improvements I - S. State St., Ukiah (Laws Ave. – Beacon Lane) Crawford Rd., Covelo (Biggar Lane to Foothill Blvd.)	\$175,000

Alicia was invited to review the application, and she explained the request was for a portion of the local match for a larger HSIP (Highway Safety Improvement Program Project) application recently submitted by the County. She corrected the totals on the application to reflect that the bike and pedestrian components total \$2,821,200, while the overall total of all features is \$2,864,600. She noted

the County will need to identify the remainder of the required local match for this project, as well as for two other submitted HSIP projects.

Alicia mentioned the County's ATP Safe Routes to School application for Covelo, along with MCOG's trail project, stating she was happy to see projects planned for Covelo. Funding recommendations are expected to be known in October for ATP, and in December for HSIP.

Motion by Tim Eriksen, seconded by Dusty Duley, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – Duley, Eriksen, Andersen, Meier, King, Meester) to recommend approval of the County's LTF 2% Bike & Pedestrian application "Mendocino County Roadway Systemic Improvements I - S. State St. (Ukiah) and Crawford Rd. (Covelo)."

6. **SB 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)** – Loretta said this issue is on the agenda to allow for discussion of any SB 743 VMT related issue members would like to discuss. MCOG is interested in knowing if jurisdictions have adopted local VMT thresholds, and whether or not the screening tool that was developed is being used, as MCOG pays an annual fee of \$5,000 to Fehr and Peers to host the tool. She also noted staff received an inquiry asking if there's been any development regarding "mitigation banks".

Nephele said Caltrans is working on possibly taking on hosting the screening tool. She noted the eligibility of using Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) funds to develop mitigation plans came up in yesterday's District 1 RTPA directors' meeting, so it's something that's starting to be discussed.

Tim said Ukiah hasn't done anything about mitigation banks. Dusty said Willits hasn't done anything about mitigations banks, and hasn't adopted thresholds. They don't plan to follow Fehr and Peers' recommendations, as those don't work for Willits. They will be using the screening tool to support the environmental work for their land use element update, and are looking to expand their sphere of influence and ultimately annex land for new housing. He noted Fehr and Peers staff is on their project team to update the land use element, and they are aware of the issues with the model. Adoption of thresholds is on their list but he was not sure when that would happen.

Paul said Point Arena has not adopted a threshold and does not plan to do so, unless forced. Heather said Fort Bragg has no plans to adopt a threshold, and she did not think anything was planned for mitigation banks.

Alicia said her department has not been using the screening tool and they don't have mitigation banks. She was unsure if adoption of VMT thresholds would be a County Planning and Building action. James Linderman (*who briefly joined the meeting with Alicia*) said he thought both agencies would probably need to agree on a threshold for the County as a whole. They have not done anything so far, and he did not think County Planning and Building had either.

Loretta asked about the SB 743 agenda item on tonight's Ukiah City Council agenda, and Tim said he was not involved with it. He said Public Works has not done anything with thresholds, but the Community Development Department may be doing something related to the General Plan.

Dusty said he's had conversations with other jurisdictions regarding alternate ways of establishing thresholds that are a better fit for rural jurisdictions. He plans to follow up with them to see if there have been challenges to the thresholds, and he will report back to this group.

Mark noted the screening tool doesn't work well for projects in outlying areas. Country Planning has been reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis, and it's worked so far because they haven't received anything that would generate a high enough number of daily trips to require a traffic study. He was concerned, however, with how they would mitigate projects that don't pass the screening. He would like the County to adopt thresholds, and he's working on that. He said they've discussed mitigation banks, and exchanges are looking for mitigation options, but he's unsure how that would work.

Nephele acknowledged the good feedback, noting it's unfortunate things haven't worked out as hoped with the screening tool. MCOG will continue to follow up on this, perhaps with a more focused meeting with planning department representatives, and possibly in conjunction with REAP.

7. **Staff Reports**

7a. **Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Grants** – James said he hoped agencies are moving forward with their REAP 1.0 projects. He said the expenditure deadline had been extended by one year to 6/30/24, so MCOG's deadline to submit a final invoice is 3/31/24, with invoices from local agencies needed before then. He reported REAP 2.0 application and final guidelines came out in late August/early September for REAP 2.0, and he will email the information to local agencies. REAP 2.0 includes \$30 million for rural agencies and tribes statewide, and Mendocino County is included in a north coast section that includes \$6.6 million for five counties. There's a \$5 million maximum and \$100,000 minimum per project, and projects must demonstrate a nexus. He reviewed the four funding goals: accelerating infill housing, work on building multi-modal communities, reducing VMT, and increasing transit ridership, and said applications are due December 31, 2022. Unlike REAP 1.0, all cities and counties and tribes in Mendocino County are eligible applicants. Funds must be encumbered by 6/30/24 and expended by 6/30/26. He plans to set up a meeting with local agencies.

Dusty reported that local planning directors recently held a housing summit and started discussing the need to create a regional housing strategy. He thought the REAP 2.0 funds might be a good funding source for that effort. He said the City of Willits is using their SB 2 funds to support the Land Use element update and Sphere of Influence amendment, which he hopes will be completed by next September. James and Nephele expressed interest in MCOG staff (as the agency with Regional Housing Needs Assessment authority) being included in housing meetings, and Dusty advised the initial meeting was for a narrow audience but an expanded audience will be invited to future meetings.

Janet Orth reported that she is working on updating the subrecipient agreements with member agencies. She noted the master agreement has now expired, so this is a good time to add in the housing funds, which will be part of the annual budget exhibit. She will be working with local agencies' administrative staff to get the agreements processed.

7b. **Feasibility Study - Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County**
Loretta reported on the progress of this Caltrans grant-funded study, which is looking at developing alternatives to traditional transit service in the rural inland communities of Covelo, Laytonville, Potter Valley, Brooktrails, and Hopland. She said the consultant has held community listening sessions in all five communities, and input gathered is being analyzed. An online survey is being developed to go live in October (through Social Pinpoint, linked on MCOG's website) and a second household mailer will soon be distributed to advertise the survey. The project is scheduled to go through next summer, with presentation of the final plan anticipated at the August MCOG Board meeting.

7c. **Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program – FY 2023/24 Cycle** – Loretta advised the draft guidelines for this program are expected in October, with a 30-day comment period.

In addition to the usual planning grants (approx. \$32- \$34 million), \$50 million is expected to be available for climate adaptation planning grants. MCOG staff is interested in knowing if local agencies need assistance or want to partner on applications, and are asking local agencies to begin thinking of potential projects. MCOG staff will be assisting the City of Ukiah with a School Street planning grant since their School Street OWP application was not funded during the last cycle. Once the application cycle is announced, there is expected to be a six-week application cycle.

7d. Tire-Derived Aggregate (TDA) Grant Program – Applications Due 12-7-22 – Loretta briefly reported that this grant program (*for which the TAC received a presentation in May from a program representative*) is now soliciting grant applications, and the deadline to apply is December 7, 2022. The website for more information is www.calrecycle.ca.gov.

Christa Unger, Caltrans District One, said there is a growing body of research regarding storm water run-off and compounds found in tire aggregate that shows signs of mortality in juvenile salmon. She said streams in Mendocino County are heavily affected by storm water run-off and there is a big disconnect between the CalRecycle program that incentivizes the use of TDA and what the environmental agencies are finding. She expects to see an increased awareness of this issue with Regional Water Quality Board and California Department of fish and Wildlife, and said a future quarterly Local Assistance meeting may include a presentation on this issue. She invited members to contact her with questions at christa.unger@dot.ca.gov.

8. Miscellaneous

Clean CA Grant - Dump Days – Nephele said Caltrans has been coordinating local dump days through the Clean CA grant program, and there have been several in District 1. She reported on Covelo’s successful “dump week” which broke the record for participation, and thanked Caltrans for coordinating the program. More dump days are planned for next year.

8a. Next Meeting – 10/19/22, if needed.

9. Adjournment – approx. 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Loretta Ellard
Deputy Planner

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MINUTES SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

November 28, 2022

Teleconference - Remote Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dawn White, Mendocino Transit Authority
Christine Sookne, Redwood Coast Regional Ctr.
Jacob King, Mendocino Transit Authority

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sheila Keys, Redwood Coast Regional Center
Richard Baker, Willits Harrah Senior Center
Jill Rexrode, Redwood Coast Seniors

STAFF PRESENT

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Executive Director
Janet Orth, MCOG Deputy Director & CFO
Jody Lowblad, MCOG Administrative Assistant
Dean Meester, Caltrans District 1

MEMBER VACANCIES

Potential “handicapped” transit user
Potential transit user at least 60 years of age
Local social service provider for the handicapped
that provides transportation

1. Call to Order & Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. with self-introductions, Nephele presiding.

2. Public Expression. None.

3. Minutes. The meeting minutes of May 17, 2022 were provided for information. No action was taken.

4. Annual Review of SSTAC Membership. Janet reviewed openings on the membership roster. There were three vacancies and three seats due to expire in April 2023. Jacob nominated Dawn, with Luis as Alternate, for reappointment to the expiring CTSA seat, which is intended for MTA staff. The “potential transit user” seats have been chronically vacant; recently there has not been a concerted effort to fill them. Jacob noted that post-Covid, MTA is better positioned now to recruit for those positions and offered to put up flyers and refer any interested parties to MCOG staff. Janet confirmed that staff can nominate members at any time. Dean asked about requirements of the “potential transit user” seats; discussion of the value of hearing from both current transit riders and those who might consider it if their transit needs were met.

Cris of RCRC had served a partial term and indicated her willingness to be reappointed. It was her understanding that Sheila of RCRC would not continue serving, leaving a seat open. Discussion of possible recruits for the remaining agency vacancies. Duties of membership were included in the agenda packet. Appointments are to be confirmed at MCOG’s February board meeting on Consent Calendar.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by King, seconded by Sookne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*3 Ayes – White, Sookne and King; 0 Noes, 3 Absent*), the SSTAC nominated Dawn White and Luis Martinez (Alternate), Mendocino Transit Authority, for reappointment as “Representative of local Consolidated Transportation Services Agency” and Christine Sookne, Redwood Coast Regional Center, for reappointment as “Local social service provider for persons of limited means” through April 2026.

5. Information: Feasibility Study – Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County. Nephele gave a verbal report of this grant-funded work in progress under MCOG’s FY 2022/23 Transportation Planning Overall Work Program. A consultant, AMMA Transit Planning, has been engaging the communities of Covelo, Laytonville, Brooktrails, Hopland and Potter Valley through in-person community listening sessions and other methods to identify potential mobility solutions other than traditional transit services for each locale, such as expanded Dial-a-Ride, vanpools, or rideshare. Outreach has been successful, with good turnout and 339 survey responses received, including some in Spanish. The project originated with unmet transit needs on the annual list. While a final report will be made in August 2023, proposals will be accelerated to take advantage of upcoming grant cycles to fund any preferred solutions. No action was taken.

6. 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs Workshop and Recommendation – *Compile a list of Unmet Transit Needs and identify other transportation needs and potential solutions.* Janet reviewed the annual process of identifying needs, and the adopted definition, as detailed in the agenda packet. Today’s workshop is the first step of the funding cycle for the coming fiscal year. Items to be reviewed were needs compiled by MTA from public input during the past year, the previous year’s list and analysis for reference, and any other new information. Discussion of unmet needs included the following.

MTA’s list of four new needs was available from public input at their board meetings. Jacob described needs on the list from MTA’s October board packet and shared screen for discussion. The group reviewed the previous year’s MTA analysis for status of ongoing needs. Discussion included several needs that will be addressed by 1) MCOG’s mobility study in remote communities, 2) Ukiah Transit Center currently under study, and 3) MTA’s post-pandemic restoration of services in progress, funded in 2022/23.

Other highlights reported were the Far North Transit Working Group’s efforts to develop interregional service between Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino Counties deploying all-electric busses, and current grant funding opportunities through the federal Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), a \$4 billion fund with small and rural focus this cycle.

The developing list included:

- MTA’s list
- Ukiah Senior Center Wednesday service
- Westport/north coast limited service
- Affordable public transit link to Humboldt County (stopping in Piercy, Leggett, Laytonville)
- Mobility solutions/transit/micro-transit service to Covelo, Laytonville, Brooktrails, Hopland, Potter Valley
- Restore evening service in Ukiah Valley for people to get to/from work
- Anderson Valley service to the coast with same-day return

Non-Service Needs

- Ukiah Transit Center
- MTA Administration Building

Staff will bring any additional public testimony received to the February public hearing. Six needs were recommended for the list. It was agreed to also recommend the four new needs from MTA’s public outreach, for a total of ten needs, and the two additional recommendations.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by King, seconded by Sookne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (3 Ayes –White, Sookne and King; 0 Noes, 3 Absent), the SSTAC recommended submittal of the attached list of ten (10) Unmet Transit Needs as testimony for MCOG’s public hearing, and two additional recommendations to develop a Ukiah transit center and a new MTA administration building.

7. Discussion: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Program – *The next Call for Projects is anticipated to be released via the [BlackCat Transit Data Management System](#) in mid-late 2023.* Nephele gave an update of status and will keep members informed. The grants are for both capital and operational service for the elderly and disabled. Most of the local senior centers, as well as agencies such as Consolidated Tribal Health, have been successful with the program. She encouraged Ukiah Senior Center to apply for the Wednesday service unmet need.

In related discussion, Janet reported the new AB 49 law now allows federal funds to be counted toward the required fare revenue ratio. Nephele noted this could help the senior centers transportation programs. Jacob described his work on the bill’s development and how this transit agency relief will help MTA and others to meet the requirement while ridership remains low post-pandemic. So the legislation is a win for all. Nephele planned to host another senior center workshop in early 2023 to assist with these issues.

Jacob reported that while MTA has not yet been able to secure the appropriate insurance coverage for senior centers contracts, MTA is allowed to do their vehicle inspections, though not maintenance. There may be changes coming in 2023. No action was taken.

8. Miscellaneous / Information / Announcements. The FTA will host a webinar November 30 on the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) 2023-2026 Strategic Plan; Dawn plans to attend.

Jacob reported working with Cal ICP, a Caltrans program, on a contactless payment system for MTA's fixed routes, as a demonstration project funded by a TIRCP grant. Riders will be able to use any credit card to pay fares while boarding the bus. A similar system will be provided for DAR service. Another MTA project will soon issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for electronic fare boxes, which will provide more accurate data on riders, miles and hours, as well as more efficiency in processing the data. These upgrades are expected to make transit more attractive to new riders.

9. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Submitted by Janet Orth, Deputy Director

Attached:

FY 2023/24 SSTAC recommendations



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

FY 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs
Recommended by
MCOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

Identified at Annual SSTAC Workshop
(not in any order of priority)

November 28, 2022

Needs Identified by SSTAC:

1. Wednesday service for Ukiah Senior Center transportation
2. Westport/North Coast limited service
3. Affordable public transit link to Humboldt County, stopping in Piercy, Leggett, Laytonville
4. Mobility solutions/transit/micro-transit service for Covelo, Laytonville, Brooktrails, Hopland, and Potter Valley
5. Restoration of evening service in Ukiah Valley for people to get to/from work
6. Anderson Valley service to the coast with same-day return.

Needs Identified by Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA):

1. Bus stop at Waugh Lane & Talmage Avenue, for both northbound and southbound Ukiah Local Route 9
2. Saturday service between Ukiah and Willits, round trip
3. Saturday service for Willits Local Route 1
4. Brooktrails connection for commuters AM and PM.

TOTAL of 10 Recommended Unmet Transit Needs

Additional SSTAC Recommendations:

1. Develop a Ukiah Transit Center for multimodal connections and coordinated services.
2. Develop a new Mendocino Transit Authority administration building.