

MINUTES

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom Meeting/Teleconference

March 17, 2021

Members Present

Mark Cliser, Co. DPBS
Tasha Ahlstrand, Caltrans
Jacob King, MTA
Alicia Meier, County DOT
Richard Shoemaker, City of Point Arena
Jason Benson, City of Ukiah

Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning
Alexis (Lexi) Pedrotti, MCOG Planning
James Sookne, MCOG Planning
Charlene Parker, MCOG Planning
Tim Eriksen, City of Ukiah
Kyle Finger, Caltrans Local Assistance

Members Absent

Mitch Stogner, NCRA (*Non-Voting*)
Barbara Moed, AQMD
Chantell O'Neal, City of Fort Bragg
Dusty Duley, City of Willits

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Individuals present on the Zoom meeting/teleconference were identified.
2. **Public Expression** – None.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments' Representatives** – No tribal representatives were present. Nephele advised that a District 1 Tribal summit is scheduled to be held this afternoon.
4. **Approval of 2/17/21 Minutes - Motion by Jason Benson, seconded by Richard Shoemaker, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – Cliser, Ahlstrand, King, Meier, Shoemaker, Benson) to approve the minutes of 2/17/21.**
5. **2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program – Proposed Amendment** – James explained the need for an RTIP amendment to allow the City of Ukiah to move some funding out of construction into design for their Low Gap/Bush Street intersection project, and to allow the City of Fort Bragg to push out construction for their Main Street project from FY 21/22 to FY 22/23.

He reviewed Ukiah's request to move funds from one phase (construction) to another (design) for the Low Gap/Bush Street intersection project, and advised the City Council recently approved a traffic study which recommended a roundabout for the intersection. Additional funds are now needed in the design phase, but the construction budget can be decreased. The proposed amendment will move \$178k from construction to design, with no increase to the overall project total.

Nephele said staff typically handles schedule changes administratively, however, since this amendment includes moving funds between components, it's being brought to the TAC for recommendation. James advised that due to CTC timelines which require two meetings (one for notice, one for action) he will be submitting the amendment to the CTC today, but it can be pulled if not approved.

Motion by Richard Shoemaker, seconded by Jason Benson, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – Cliser, Ahlstrand, King, Meier, Shoemaker, Benson) to recommend approval of the proposed amendment to the 2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

6. Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) Funding – Nephele said she received a message from Dusty Duley advising that Willits and Caltrans staff met regarding the Highway 20/Walnut Street crossing project, but the virtual meeting setting didn't allow for full evaluation so they set up a site meeting and are not yet ready to move forward. It was noted that other potential projects previously mentioned for this funding include Ukiah's Downtown Streetscape, Ph. 2, and the County's Ackerman Creek bridge project.

Nephele advised there is now an unanticipated fourth year of funding, for a total available of \$169,176 (\$93,208 FY 19/20 + \$75,968 FY 20/21). She suggested postponing this discussion until the next meeting to allow Willits staff to participate after the site meeting with Caltrans, since there is no urgency with the funding source, unless agencies have schedule urgencies. The September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024 obligation deadlines were noted.

Tasha said she also attended the meeting between Caltrans and the City of Willits, and it was thought to be premature to tie any funding to the project at this point. She followed up with Caltrans Office of Traffic Safety and said they are looking to schedule the site review before the next TAC meeting.

Brief discussion ensued. TAC members expressed no urgency concerns, and there was a *general consensus* to continue this item to the next TAC meeting.

7. Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act of 2021 (HR 133) Funding – Nephele reviewed her staff report regarding federal transportation stimulus funding (passed by Congress in December) that will be coming to the regions, through distribution by the State.

She reported California Transportation Commission staff have been working on funding distribution formulas, including variations on RSTP/STBG and STIP formulas, and she reviewed the range of available funding for the region (from \$847,750 - \$2,396,263, depending on formula). She said MCOG and other rural regions have expressed support for the STIP formula (based on center lane miles and population) but the CTC has received pressure from large urban regions to go with a hybrid distribution (50% STIP and 50% RSTP/STBG) which is heavily weighted on population.

She said once a formula is approved by the CTC there will be a quick turnaround process for getting projects programmed, so she would like to discuss potential projects. If funds are processed through the STIP, options include: advancing currently programmed projects, adding funds to existing projects,

or programming the funds as part of the next RTIP to be developed this fall. She noted the next STIP Fund Estimate may be low due to reduced gas tax revenues during the pandemic.

Nephele advised she received an inquiry from Richard Shoemaker about the possibility of a local distribution formula, rather than a competitive cycle. She agreed that approach was reasonable, and MCOG staff prepared some options for preliminary discussion. James reviewed (*via screenshare*) a spreadsheet with potential funding scenarios based on a 100% STIP distribution, as well as a 50/50 split between STIP and RSTP/STBG. Options included base amounts of (1) \$50,000; (2) \$100,000, and (3) \$150,000, in order to guarantee a minimum threshold for the smallest agency (Point Arena).

Nephele explained these were starting points for discussion, and after more information is received the TAC could make a recommendation to MCOG on formula distribution vs holding a competitive cycle. The funding is federal but there may be an opportunity to exchange for state funds.

Tim, Alicia, and Richard expressed support for a formula distribution, rather than competitive cycle. Richard appreciated consideration of a base amount for Point Arena, and supported scenario 3 (\$150,000 base amount). Tim also supported scenario 3. Alicia acknowledged that scenario 1 is better for the County but does not provide much funding for Point Arena, so she supported scenario 2 or 3.

Nephele asked about potential projects that could be programmed quickly. Richard inquired if the funds could be used as local match for LPP, and Nephele said RSTP funds might qualify but she would need to get clarification on STIP funds. Richard mentioned two potential projects for Point Arena: Mill Street (additional funding), and Windy Hollow Road. Tim said Ukiah has overlay projects on South State and South Dora. Alicia said possible County projects include the Corrective Maintenance program and possible extension to the East Side Potter Valley Road project.

Nephele summarized that she will let the TAC know once the CTC decides on a formula so members can be prepared to make a recommendation at the next TAC meeting.

In response to an inquiry, she said the recent COVID stimulus bill did not include transportation infrastructure funding, but did include funding for transit. She said another infrastructure bill is in the works, and whatever formula is used for these funds could possibly be replicated next time.

James agreed to send TAC members the formula scenario spreadsheet that he reviewed.

8. FY 2020/21 Overall Work Program – Proposed Fourth Amendment – Lexi explained the City of Ukiah is requesting an amendment to the FY 2020/21 Overall Work Program to allow an exchange of their currently programmed ADA Curb Ramp Inventory project (W.E. 12) for a higher priority project (Trench Cut Fee study). She explained the current project is funded with \$45,000 in LTF (Local Transposition Funds) which has no expiration deadline, and there are no eligibility concerns with the proposed trench cut fee study. The City's letter of request, including a new OWP application for the trench cut fee study, was included in the agenda packet materials.

Tim reviewed the request, explaining that the City has spent a lot of Measure Y sales tax funds on street repairs and construction, and they want to preserve their investment. A trench cut fee study is needed in order to recover costs from utilities and contractors trenching in streets that have been rehabilitated or repaired. He said the ADA Curb Ramp Inventory will re-prioritized in the future.

A brief discussion ensued. A question was asked if the trench cut study would be applicable throughout the County, and Tim replied that the County has a trench cut fee which is not often imposed. He doubted this study would be useful to other agencies, but it could be made available for adjustments. Nephele noted that RFP could be replicated by others, and Tim agreed.

Motion by Richard Shoemaker, seconded by Alicia Meier, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – Cliser, Ahlstrand, King, Meier, Shoemaker, Benson) to recommend to MCOG approval of the fourth Amendment to the FY 2020/21 Overall Work Program.

9. Staff Reports

9a. 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Active Transportation Plan Update – Loretta noted this will be an ongoing agenda item to keep the TAC apprised of progress on the RTP/ATP update. She said collection of local agencies’ Capital Improvement Programs is continuing, with a few agencies still needing to submit information, and work continues with tribes to collect their information.

Loretta and Nephele reported on the public outreach platform “Social Pinpoint” that MCOG is using to gather information for the needs assessment, which includes a transportation survey and interactive online tools for mapping and budgeting. Nephele shared an example of Social Pinpoint being used on a project in Daly City. A flyer which directs people to MCOG’s website is being created, and staff asked TAC members to post the flyer on agency websites/social media pages. A pre-recorded video will also be posted to MCOG’s website with information about the RTP/ATP update. The goal is to have everything posted on MCOG’s website within the next week or so. Several members expressed willingness to post information on agency websites/social media pages.

Nephele advised that adoption of the updated RTP is planned for the end of this calendar year.

9b. Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update – Loretta reported the draft Coordinated Plan is posted on MCOG’s website, and adoption by MCOG is planned for the May meeting, to allow additional time for review by the TAC, SSTAC, and public.

9c. Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP) – Update – Loretta encouraged local agency staff to provide the information requested by the consultant (TJKM), if not yet submitted, and advised that the next TAG check-in meeting is scheduled for March 22.

9d. FY 20/21 and 21/22 STIP Programming Review – James reviewed projects programmed in the current year and next year, advising that he will follow up with local agency staff. Alicia said there are some questions about the roundabout for the 101 interchange on North State Street, and Nephele asked that she and James be included in conversations with the County and Caltrans on that project. Tasha offered to follow up with Rex on that project.

Nephele said extension requests are due in about a month, and the CTC would like to know as early as possible if extensions will be requested, as they are trying to avoid having an allocation plan.

10. Miscellaneous

Call Boxes – Nephele gave a brief update on call boxes, advising that staff put out a press release last week about system changes resulting from Verizon switching from a 3G network to 4G. Some boxes are inoperable due to the change, and staff has been working on getting new radios which were in limited supply. Radios have now been received, but sim cards are still pending. MCOG has heard from the public that some boxes are not working, and there was also an article in the Anderson Valley Advertiser. Lexi reported on progress with Case and Verizon, stating she hopes everything will be upgraded within the next week or so, but there could still be some issues. She noted the in-house call box maintenance computer continues to receive reports, and problem boxes will be checked as they are reported. There are still a lot of unknowns and staff will continue to monitor.

Local Partnership Program – Nephele said she and Richard Shoemaker had discussed the timing of when LPP projects get programmed vs when construction takes place, and how that's working for other agencies. Richard said he has contacted Willits staff and will be contacting others. Nephele advised that the LPP is for agencies that have a transportation sales tax (Cities of Willits, Fort Bragg, and Point Arena). She said she had reached out to Local Assistance about extensions but has not yet received an answer.

10a. Next Meeting – 4/21/21.

11. Adjournment – at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Loretta Ellard
Deputy Planner

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