

*Approved 1/17/24*

## MINUTES

### MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

#### Primary Location

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

#### Teleconference Locations

*City of Point Arena - 451 School Street, Point Arena*

*City of Fort Bragg – Engineering office, 416 N. Franklin Street, Fort Bragg*

*City of Willits – Community Development Dept., 111 E. Commercial Street, Willits*

#### Members Present

Mark Cliser, Co. DPBS  
Chantell O' Neal, City of Fort Bragg  
Dean Meester, Caltrans  
Tim Eriksen, City of Ukiah  
Jacob King, MTA  
Jason Wise, County DOT (Alternate, Non-Voting, due to agenda posting)  
Paul Andersen, City of Point Arena – Arrived Late

#### Members Absent

AQMD Representative  
Alicia Winokur, County DOT  
Dusty Duley, City of Willits

#### Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration  
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning  
James Sookne, MCOG Planning  
Alexis Pedrotti, MCOG Planning  
Jesus Rodriguez, MCOG Planning  
Michael Villa, MCOG Administration  
John Speka, Lake APC Planning  
Dave Shpak, Gualala MAC  
Kyle Finger, Caltrans  
Tyler Egerer, Caltrans  
Alex Walton, Caltrans  
Jacob Rightnar, Caltrans  
Brian Weekly, Caltrans  
Jason Benson, City of Ukiah

November 15, 2023

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at approx. 10:10 p.m.
2. **Public Expression** – None.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments' Representatives** – None.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 10/25/23** –  
Motion by Chantell O' Neal, seconded by Tim Erikson, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 ayes – Meier, O'Neal, Eriksen, Meester, Cliser), to approve the minutes of 10/25/23.
5. **2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)**

James presented the 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The TAC chose a different option than originally suggested, because of scoring issues, to fund projects at Ackerman Creek, North State Street, and Mountain View Road. Funds for Ackerman Creek were set aside since the County already had programed funds for 2023-24.

Nephele pointed out scoring problems, especially in areas like funding leverage and traffic volume. James also mentioned public concerns about the North State roundabout and advised objectors to contact the Board of Supervisors.

The draft RTIP will have small changes, and agencies involved will be contacted to confirm project locations.

A question about the risk of exceeding the RTIP budget was raised. The response was that the overage was small and MCOG often stays under budget, which is beneficial. The importance of funding leverage and partnering with Caltrans was stressed. It was noted that delaying project programming might be riskier than not approving them at all.

Paul Anderson enters via Zoom at 10:25 a.m.

Jason Wise enters via Zoom at 10:26 a.m.

**Motion by Jacob King, seconded by Chantell O’Neal, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 ayes – O’Neal, Eriksen, King, Meester, Cliser. 1 Abstain – Anderson), to recommend approval of the Draft 2024 STIP/RTIP with alternative 2 to be presented to the MCOG board for approval.**

**6. California Transportation Commission (CTC) Town Hall in Fort Bragg, April 17-18, 2024**

Nephele noted that the CTC staff had shown interest in conducting a town hall meeting in Fort Bragg, a location previously unvisited by them. The meeting in Fort Bragg presents an opportunity to highlight various projects across Mendocino County, both completed and upcoming ones. The emphasis is on selecting projects that demonstrate the county's needs and successes, both within and beyond Fort Bragg. There was an open invitation for suggestions on projects to highlight and for volunteers to join the planning group, which would include representatives from Caltrans, Fort Bragg, and the County. Additionally, the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) was mentioned as a potential transportation provider for the CTC commissioners during their visit. A discussion followed about the types of topics to be presented and discussed at the town hall. Various ideas for the town hall presentations were brainstormed, including highlighting projects like the Ukiah rail trail and downtown streetscape, discussing challenges related to zero-emission vehicle implementation in the county, and addressing resilience and emergency evacuation routes, especially given Mendocino County's diverse needs. The possibility of using technology, such as drones, for remote presentations was discussed, alongside the presentation of various projects, including those related to transit.

Chantell volunteered to reserve Fort Bragg town hall on both days, April 17-18, for this event.

Mark Cliser excused at 10:44 a.m.

## 7. Staff Reports

### 7a. Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP)

Nephele said there is a large amount of funding coming to these programs, over a four-year period, from the SB 125 trailer bill. She noted that information on programming the funds is due to the State by the end of December so this item will be on the December MCOG agenda for approval. She reviewed MTA's project list and explained that MTA is facing challenges due to the California Innovative Clean Transit (Cal-ICT) regulation which requires a shift to zero-emission vehicles by 2040, estimated to cost around \$40 million. This is in addition to the existing \$11 million budget. Tim Eriksen asked about managing funding streams and requirements. Nephele noted that the \$11.5 million discussed is formula-based and separate from competitive TIRCP grants. However, this formula funding could be used as a matching contribution for TIRCP grants. There was also a mention on regional city councils' involvement in transit issues, with an interest in exploring their contributions and engagement, especially outside Ukiah, to develop a collaborative approach for transit needs in Mendocino County. The need to involve MTA staff in the Noyo Harbor study was mentioned.

### 7b. 2025 Active Transportation Program (ATP) – Site Visits & Potential Projects

Nephele reported on the importance of virtual site visits for potential applicants. The TAC was strongly encouraged to apply for this phase of the program and to schedule site visits. Chantel and John had reported on a recent ATP workshop, and based on examples from Mendocino and Sonoma counties, funded projects invariably had received prior site visits. Chantel noted that competition for funding was so fierce that projects would need to score exceptionally high to be considered. The TAC discussed the high scoring cutoff expected for this cycle. The TAC discussed the impact of the 2020 census on funding categories, with Santa Barbara moving out of the small and urban category, potentially creating more opportunities for competitiveness in this category for areas like Mendocino County. Despite the intense competition, everyone was encouraged to apply, as it would signal ongoing need and potentially attract additional funding. The TAC discussed strategies to improve application scores, focusing on demonstrating clear connections between health needs, safety needs, and the proposed projects. The importance of showing recent public engagement and leveraging various data sources, like the Street Story platform, to substantiate safety needs was noted. Discussion also touched on specific project types, like downtown road diet projects, and the necessity of capturing every possible point to be competitive.

### 7c. Local Road Safety/Action Plan Updates – Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) Discretionary Grant

Loretta addressed the need for updating and expanding Local Road Safety plans in order for County and City agencies to be eligible to apply for Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) funding. Existing plans lack elements required by federal programs. A Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) grant was received to update these plans, and a Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued. However, challenges due to delays in processing Overall Work Plan (OWP) amendments hinder progress. The goal is to hire a consultant quickly to meet the SS4A cycle deadline, despite an optimistic timeline.

Dave Shpak requested to be on the stakeholder group, and also requested that the Gualala MAC be involved, once outreach for this project begins.

### 7d. FY 2024-25 Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants

Loretta gave a reminder about the grant submission deadline on January 18th. The committee reflected on previous successes, mentioning Ukiah's successful application. Internal discussions at MCOG about potential grant sponsorship were ongoing and staff expressed openness to discussing project ideas with

interested parties. The Redwood Valley bus stop project was mentioned, and Dean clarified that while the project aimed for beautification, it did not secure funding through the Clean California initiative. Jacob mentioned that the MTA board expressed a strong desire for mobility solutions studies for coastal areas, noting that there are communities outside the service area seeking service and solutions. The committee recognized the need to consider the entire county in their planning and not just focus on areas with vocal public comments. MTA was encouraged to apply for the grant, despite previous unsuccessful attempts. Nephele said MCOG staff could help with an application.

**8. Miscellaneous**

Alex and Jacob from System Planning presented the first electronic corridor management plan for State Route 222, showcasing its GIS-based, interactive web format with diverse media and mobile-friendly design. The draft plan, focused on complete street features for Talmage Road, includes bike paths, sidewalk improvements, and traffic calming, aiming for a 2030 implementation.

Questions were raised about plan access, public release, and stakeholder involvement, especially concerning the City of 10,000 Buddhas. It was confirmed that MCOG would have an opportunity to review the plan before it's released to the public.

A follow-up town hall was scheduled for December 7th for community feedback.

Dean reported on Clean CA grant awards for Anderson Valley, which received a significant grant of \$4.7 million for a school project. Fort Bragg was awarded \$267,000 for art and recycling beautification, while Willits received over \$2.7 million for a beautification grant. Dean also announced upcoming dump days, vouchers were distributed during the Ukiah Pumpkin Festival on November 1st. Further voucher distributions were scheduled for December 15th at the Laytonville Food Line, targeting underserved communities, and on December 16th at Casper.

Nephele advised that there will be a Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) call for projects in January.

Jacob reported that past collaboration between City of Willits and MTA, a bus was used for a site tour and show-and-tell field trip. Jacob recommended this practice to other cities for their planning groups or consultants.

8a. Next Meeting – 12/20/23, if needed.

**9. Adjournment** – approx. 11:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jesus Rodriguez

/jr