



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

525 South Main Street~ Ukiah~ California~ 95482
www.mendocinocog.org

NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Administration: Suite B
(707) 463-1859
Transportation Planning: Suite G
(707) 234-3434

AGENDA

Monday, June 1, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

Primary Location:

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 1070, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah

Teleconference Locations:

525 S. Main St., Suite B, Ukiah
Fort Bragg City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg
Willits City Hall, 111 E. Commercial St., Willits
Point Arena City Hall, 451 School St., Point Arena
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

General Public Teleconference:

Zoom videoconference link is provided by request. Please submit access request to info@mendocinocog.org or call MCOG Administration at (707) 463-1859.

Audio Call-in Option: 1 (669) 900-6833 (in CA)
Meeting ID: 837 3786 8430 Passcode: 052039

Attachments Posted

[Board of Directors - Mendocino Council of Governments \(mendocinocog.org\)](#)

Additional Media

For live streaming and later viewing:

[Mendocino County Video](#) or find
[YouTube link at http://www.mendocinocog.org](http://www.mendocinocog.org) under Meetings

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) meets as the Board of Directors of:

Mendocino Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and
Mendocino County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)

NOTICE: Mendocino Council of Governments meets in person, in a hybrid format. Staff and a potential quorum meet in the Board of Supervisors chambers in Ukiah. Also, board members join remotely by teleconference (audio and video) from City Hall locations in Fort Bragg, Willits and Point Arena. Policy Advisory Committee member(s) usually join from Caltrans District 1 office in Eureka. The general public may join from any of these posted locations or by calling in to the teleconference.

Several ways to make public comments to MCOG's Board of Directors are available:

- In advance of the meeting: comments may be sent by email to info@mendocinocog.org or by using the form at <https://www.mendocinocog.org/contact-us>, to be read aloud into the public record. Please submit by 10:00 a.m. on the meeting date to ensure comments are received timely, and include the agenda item number(s) addressed.
- During the meeting: make oral comments in person, or on the conference call by phone or video, when public comment is invited by the Chair.

Thanks to all for your interest and cooperation.

NOTE: *All items are considered for action unless otherwise noted.*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Assembly Bill 2449 Notifications and Considerations – *to receive and address requests from Board members to participate in the meeting from a non-posted location, subject to conditions set forth in AB 2449*
3. Regional Housing Needs Assessment
 - a. Adoption of Resolution No. M2026-__ Approving the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Methodology
 - b. Issuance of Draft Allocation
4. Acceptance of the FY 2026/27 Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) Work Plan

SAFE MEETING

5. Convene as SAFE – Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
 - a. Report of Motorist Aid Call Box Program Status
 - b. Adoption of FY 2026/27 Mendocino SAFE Budget
6. Recess as SAFE – Convene as RTPA; Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items are considered for approval in accordance with Administrative Staff, Committee, and/or Directors' recommendations and will be enacted by a single motion. Items may be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate consideration, upon request by a Director or citizen.

7. Approval of May 4, 2026 Minutes
8. Acceptance of the corrected April 13, 2026 Transit Productivity Committee Minutes

PUBLIC EXPRESSION – *Please refer to notice at top of this Agenda.*

9. Participation is welcome in Council meetings. Comments will be limited to three minutes per person and not more than ten minutes per subject, so that everyone can be heard. “Public Expression” time is limited to matters under the Council's jurisdiction that may not have been considered by the Council previously and are not on the agenda. No action will be taken. Members of the public may comment also during specific agenda items when recognized by the Chair.

REGULAR CALENDAR

10. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-__* Approving Mendocino Transit Authority's SB 125 Long-Term Financial Plan
11. Adoption of Resolution No. M2026-__ Approving the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) & Active Transportation Plan (ATP)
12. Fiscal Year 2026/27 RTPA and COG Budget
 - a. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-02 Allocating Fiscal Year 2026/27 Funds and 2025/26 Carryover Funds for Reserves, Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, and Planning
 - b. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-03 Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2026/27
 - c. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-04 Allocating Fiscal Year 2026/27 Local Transportation Funds, State Transit Assistance, and Capital Reserve Funds to Mendocino Transit Authority
 - d. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-05 Allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funds for Fiscal Year 2026/27 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution By Formula to Member Agencies

- e. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-06 Allocating SB 125 Formula-Based Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) Funds for Fiscal Year 2026/27
- f. Adoption of Resolution #M2026-07 Allocating Fiscal Year 2026/27 Funds for Northern Rural Energy Network Programs

RATIFY ACTION

- 13. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee

REPORTS

- 14. Reports – Information – *No Action*
 - a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information
 - b. Mendocino Transit Authority
 - c. Great Redwood Trail Agency
 - d. MCOG Staff – Summary of Meetings
 - e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. Miscellaneous
 - ii. Next Meeting Date – Monday, August 24, 2026 – Regular Business
 - f. MCOG Planning Staff
 - i. Work Element 5 – Mendocino County Sea Level Rise Roadway Impact Study-*verbal report*
 - ii. Work Element 11 – Pavement Management Program (PMP) Update -*verbal report*
 - iii. Work Element 8 – Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Regional Mitigation Study-*verbal report*
 - iv. Miscellaneous
 - g. Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) Staff
 - h. MCOG Directors
 - i. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates

ADJOURNMENT

- 15. Adjourn

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) and TRANSLATION REQUESTS

Persons who require special accommodations, accessible seating, or documentation in alternative formats under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or persons who require interpretation services (free of charge) are advised to contact the MCOG office at (707) 463-1859, **at least five days** before the meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento especial, asientos accesibles, o documentación en formatos alternativos de acuerdo con la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades, o personas que requieren servicios de interpretación (sin cargo) deben comunicarse con MCOG (707) 463-1859, por lo menos cinco días antes de la reunión.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

The Brown Act, Section 54954.2, states that the Board may take action on off-agenda items when:

- a) a majority vote determines that an “emergency situation” exists as defined in Section 54956.5, **or**
- b) a two-thirds vote of the body, or a unanimous vote of those present, determines that there is a need to take immediate action and the need for action arose after the agenda was legally posted, **or**
- c) the item was continued from a prior, legally posted meeting not more than five calendar days before this meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

If agendized, MCOG may adjourn to a closed session to consider litigation or personnel matters (i.e. contractor agreements). Discussion of litigation or pending litigation may be held in closed session by authority of Govt. Code Section 54956.9; discussion of personnel matters by authority of Govt. Code Section 54957.

POSTED 5/26/2026

* Next Resolution Number: M2026-08





MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS STAFF REPORT

TITLE: Discussion and Adoption of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Methodology and Issuance of Draft Allocation

DATE PREPARED: 5/22/26

SUBMITTED BY: James Sookne, Program Manager

MEETING DATE: 6/1/26

BACKGROUND: The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process is used to develop a projection of additional housing units needed to accommodate projected household growth of all income levels for a set eight-year period (new cycle to cover 2027 to 2035). It began with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) issuing a RHNA Determination to the regional Council of Governments (MCOG) on August 15, consisting of the projected number of new housing units needed throughout the region over that period. This number is developed based on a variety of factors including demographic projections and the propensity of population groups to form households.

The August 15 letter from HCD assigned the Mendocino County region a total allocation of 6,456 units for the new planning period, a roughly 250% increase in needed units from the previous RHNA planning period. In collaboration with regional community development officials, a letter of objection along with an alternative determination was sent to HCD citing regional demographics and characteristics, impacts of climate change, and the reliability of the data that HCD used to calculate some of the factors impacting the allocation. Unfortunately, HCD denied MCOG's appeal of the determination.

The next steps involve the allocation of units to individual jurisdictions. As part of that process, MCOG must develop and eventually approve a methodology for the allocation. According to statute, a public hearing is required during the methodology's development. Following the public hearing and outreach, the draft methodology is submitted to HCD to begin their 60-day review. A public hearing on the original draft methodology, which was essentially the same methodology that we've used for the last several cycles, was held at the October 6, 2025, Board meeting and subsequently submitted to HCD for review. MCOG received a letter from HCD on October 28, 2025, stating that MCOG's draft methodology was not acceptable.

MCOG worked with community development staff from the local jurisdictions to revise the draft methodology. The second iteration, one that we believed would address their concerns and is attached for reference, was submitted to HCD on December 4, 2025. This version went into more detail on which factors would be considered, included base calculations, and stated that some manual adjustments would be made during the allocation process. On January 8, 2026, MCOG received correspondence from HCD stating that they were unable to complete their review process until all manual adjustments were made. Staff again met with the Methodology Committee on January 23 to discuss further changes. A third iteration was submitted to HCD on February 10, 2026, officially starting HCD's 60-day review period.

On April 3, staff received a letter from HCD detailing their review of the draft methodology. HCD determined that what staff submitted in February didn't further two of the five statutory objectives. Staff met with HCD on April 7 and May 6 to discuss their findings and what further changes were needed to get their approval. Following each meeting with HCD, staff met with the Methodology Committee to discuss HCD's findings and the additional changes they were requiring. During the meetings with the Methodology Committee, the local agencies and MCOG staff expressed serious concern about the way that HCD staff is interpreting and implementing the statutes and the overall RHNA process. The committee agreed that a letter from MCOG and the local agencies should be submitted to HCD expressing these concerns and how the current process is unrealistic and potentially detrimental to the region. Staff agreed to draft the letter with input from the agencies. The methodology was submitted to ensure compliance with the statutorily

imposed timeline, and we will be drafting the letter to submit prior to final allocation approval. MCOG submitted the final draft methodology on May 15, which HCD approved on May 18. HCD’s findings have been attached for reference.

Developed as part of the draft methodology, the draft allocation will be as follows:

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	5	218	52	215
Extremely Low	891	108	6	207	85	485
Very Low	677	97	5	120	32	423
Low	1,151	137	8	291	95	620
Moderate	648	52	3	145	35	413
Above Moderate	2,556	231	8	519	174	1,624
TOTAL	6,456	668	35	1,500	376	3,780

At this meeting, staff is asking the Board to take the following action: 1) adopt the methodology for the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Housing Needs Allocation and 2) issue the draft RHNA allocation to the local agencies. A draft resolution adopting the methodology for the RHNA methodology has been prepared and is included with this report. Upon approval of the methodology, staff will notify the local agencies of the draft allocation and inform them of the subsequent appeal period.

ACTION REQUIRED:

- A. Discuss and consider adoption by resolution of the revised methodology for the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Housing Needs Allocation
- B. Issuance of Draft RHNA Allocation

ALTERNATIVES: Continue adoption of the methodology of the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Housing Needs Allocation and issuance of the draft RHNA allocation to a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. By resolution, adopt the methodology for the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Housing Needs Allocation.
- B. Issue Draft RHNA Allocation

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

651 Bannon Street, Ste. 400
Sacramento, CA 95811
(916) 263-2911 / FAX (916) 263-7453

www.hcd.ca.gov



May 18, 2026

Nephele Barrett, Executive Director
Mendocino Council of Governments
525 South Main Street, Suite B
Ukiah CA 95482

Dear Nephele Barrett,

**RE: Review of Draft Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA)
Methodology**

Thank you for submitting the revised draft Seventh Cycle Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) Methodology for the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG). Pursuant to Government Code section 65584.04(i)(2), the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is required to review the revised draft RHNA methodology to determine whether the methodology furthers the statutory objectives described in Government Code section 65584(d).

The revised draft RHNA methodology submitted to the department on May 15, 2026, begins with the total regional determination provided by HCD of 6,456 units. The methodology first allocates units to each jurisdiction based on its share of Mendocino County's population across the six income categories. Next, the base allocation is adjusted according to each jurisdiction's existing distribution of population by median household income levels. Additional adjustments are made by comparing regional cost burden and overcrowding data with jurisdiction-specific cost burden and overcrowding data.

Furthermore, the methodology applies a series of manual adjustments. The first manual adjustment transfers a small number of units to the City of Ukiah from the Unincorporated County to account for the Western Hills Annexation. Second, the methodology applies a small manual adjustment to the low-income category based on each jurisdiction's opportunity score, as identified in the 2025 COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map. As a result, the City of Point Arena receives an increase in its lower-income categories, the City of Willits receives a decrease in its lower-income categories but an increase in its above moderate category, and the City of Fort Bragg receives a decrease in its above moderate category. Third, the methodology applies a manual adjustment shifting 50 percent

of low-income units needed to match each jurisdiction's low-income jobs to housing units ratio with the regional ratio. Next the methodology applies small manual adjustments to the county's low-income allocations to align with the HCD determination. Finally, the methodology applies a manual adjustment of 135 units transferred to Ukiah from the County to improve jobs access and promote infill development.

HCD has completed its review of the revised methodology and finds that the draft RHNA Methodology furthers the statutory objectives described in Government Code section 65584(d).¹ Further, the revised methodology, after consultation with the department, has been found to be acceptable, pursuant to Government Code section 65584.04(i)(2). MCOG's revised draft methodology directs more RHNA units – particularly lower income units – to jurisdictions with a high share of higher income households, to jurisdictions with more single-family homes, and to jurisdictions with a greater percentage of their population living in high or highest opportunity areas. Additionally, the draft methodology purposefully allocates an increased share of RHNA units to job-rich jurisdictions with greater access to jobs in infill areas with lower average vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Below is a brief summary of findings related to each statutory objective described within Government Code section 65584(d):

1. Increasing the housing supply and the mix of housing types, tenure, and affordability in all cities and counties within the region in an equitable manner, which shall result in each jurisdiction receiving an allocation of units for low- and very low-income households. The regional housing needs allocation plan shall allocate units for extremely low and acutely low-income households in a manner that is roughly proportional to, and within a range of 3 percent of, the housing need for very low-income households.

MCOG's revised draft methodology results in higher-income jurisdictions receiving a greater proportion of the lower-income RHNA. Jurisdictions with a higher percentage of single-family homes receive more lower-income RHNA. Additionally, jurisdictions with higher owner-occupied home values and higher rents receive a larger share of the regional RHNA allocation.

2. Promoting infill development and socioeconomic equity, the protection of environmental and agricultural resources, the encouragement of efficient development patterns, and the achievement of the region's greenhouse gas reductions targets provided by the State Air Resources Board pursuant to Section 65080.

The revised draft methodology promotes infill development and efficient development patterns by ensuring that jurisdictions with lower per capita

¹ While HCD finds this methodology furthers statutory objectives, applying this methodology to another region or cycle may not necessarily further the statutory objectives as housing conditions and circumstances may differ.

VMT receive larger shares of the regional RHNA allocation. Additionally, the revised draft methodology allocates a larger share of the regional RHNA to jurisdictions with the largest number of jobs accessible within a 60-minute commute via transit and automobile.

3. Promoting an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing, including an improved balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low-wage workers in each jurisdiction.

The draft methodology proportionally allocates more RHNA units to jurisdictions with a higher share of the regional jobs. It assigns a significantly larger proportion of the regional RHNA units to jurisdictions with the highest jobs-to-housing ratios, ensuring that more housing units are directed to areas with the greatest employment opportunities. The draft methodology allocates more of the lower income RHNA units to jurisdictions with a greater share of jobs earning less than \$3,333 per month (a proxy for lower-income households ²).

4. Allocating a lower proportion of housing need to an income category when a jurisdiction already has a disproportionately high share of households in that income category, as compared to the countywide distribution of households in that category from the most recent American Community Survey.

On average, jurisdictions with a larger existing share of higher-income households³ receive a higher allocation of lower-income RHNA compared to those with fewer higher-income households in MCOG's draft allocation methodology. This approach helps ensure jurisdictions with concentrations of higher-income households receive more of the lower-income RHNA.

5. Affirmatively furthering fair housing, which means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

Affirmatively furthering fair housing requires that the draft methodology improves access to opportunity within the region. In MCOG's draft methodology, jurisdictions with greater access to opportunity receive a proportionally larger share of the lower-income RHNA. In the context of MCOG's draft methodology, jurisdictions with a higher percentage of their population in high or highest opportunity areas, as indicated in the 2025

² Lower-income households is defined as households with incomes less than 80% of Area Median Income.

³ Higher income households are defined as having incomes greater than 80 percent of the area median income.

COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map⁴, receive a proportionally greater share of the lower-income regional RHNA. MCOG's methodology ensures that the lower-income RHNA is generally allocated to jurisdictions with the most opportunity.

HCD appreciates the active role of MCOG staff in providing data and input throughout the consultation process, as well as their collaborative work in revising the draft RHNA methodology to ensure compliance with Government Code section 65584(d). HCD especially thanks James Sookne for their significant efforts and assistance.

HCD looks forward to continuing our partnership with MCOG to help its member jurisdictions meet and exceed the planning and production of the region's housing needs.

In the coming months, HCD, in collaboration with MCOG members, will prepare and carry out a technical assistance plan geared to support local governments in preparing the 7th cycle of the housing elements. Further, support opportunities available for the MCOG region this cycle include, but are not limited to:

- Prohousing Designation Program – Ongoing awards distributed over-the-counter to local jurisdictions with compliant Housing Elements and prohousing policies. Those awarded receive additional points on application processing preference when applying to housing and non-housing funding programs including the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC), Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG), and Transformative Climate Communities (TCC). HCD's Prohousing Designation Program can be found at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-research/prohousing>.
- HCD also encourages all Mendocino County local governments to consider the many other affordable housing and community development resources available to local governments, such as the Permanent Local Housing Allocation program. HCD's programs can be found at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/funding/nofa-calendar>.

If HCD can provide any additional assistance, or if you, or your staff, have any questions, please contact Balaji Balaganesan, Senior Specialist at Balaji.balaganesan@hcd.ca.gov.

⁴ Opportunity score is obtained from the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps, specifically the COG Geography version, which can be accessed here: [COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map - Composite Score \(2025\) - Overview](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marisa Prasse".

Marisa Prasse
Fair Housing Section Chief

cc: Lisa Davey-Bates, Planning Principal, Mendocino Council of Governments
Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner, Mendocino Council of Governments
Jaclyn Christian, Associate Planner, Mendocino Council of Governments
James Sookne, Program Manager, Mendocino Council of Governments
Hector Ortega, Regional Project Analyst, Mendocino Council of Governments

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION NO. M2026 - _____

ADOPTING THE METHODOLOGY FOR THE 2026 MENDOCINO COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION

WHEREAS,

- The State of California has determined that the Council of Governments is the appropriate agency to conduct the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Process;
- MCOG is required to adopt a methodology to be used in development of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation;
- MCOG staff met with a RHNA Methodology Committee made up of local agency community development officials on September 4, November 25, January 23, February 2, April 28, and May 11, to formulate and revise a workable draft methodology;
- MCOG released a draft RHNA Methodology to local agencies on September 22, 2025, with subsequent revisions released on December 5, 2025, February 10, 2026, and May 18;
- MCOG had an extended public comment period and held noticed public hearings on the RHNA Methodology on October 6, 2025, and February 2, 2026;
- MCOG distributed the draft methodology to local agencies and community-based organizations who work with underserved populations;
- Local agencies had the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Methodology, which have now been incorporated into a final document, attached as Exhibit A;
- The RHNA Methodology will result in a draft allocation of housing units as follows:

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	5	218	52	215
Extremely Low	891	108	6	207	85	485
Very Low	677	97	5	120	32	423
Low	1,151	137	8	291	95	620
Moderate	648	52	3	145	35	413
Above Moderate	2,556	231	8	519	174	1,624
TOTAL	6,456	668	35	1,500	376	3,780

- Section 65584.05(a) of the California Government Code states that “It is the intent of the Legislature that the draft allocation should be distributed before the completion of the update of the applicable regional transportation plan”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED THAT:

The Mendocino Council of Governments hereby adopts the Methodology to be used in the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION was moved by Director _____, seconded by Director _____, and carried this 1st day of June, 2026, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINING:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chairman declared the resolution adopted, AND SO ORDERED.

ATTEST: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director

Chair

Mendocino Council of Governments
Regional Housing Needs Allocation
Cycle 7: 2027 – 2035
Draft Methodology



Introduction

Overview

The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is a state-required process that seeks to ensure cities and counties are planning for enough housing to accommodate all economic segments of the community. The process is split into three steps:

1. **Regional Determination:** The State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provides each region with a Regional Determination of housing need, which includes a total number of units split into six income categories. Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) received the Final Regional Determination for Cycle 7 (2027 – 2035) on August 15, 2025.
2. **RHNA Methodology:** Council of Governments are responsible for developing a RHNA methodology for allocating the Regional Determination to each jurisdiction in the region. This methodology must further a series of State objectives.
3. **Housing Element Updates:** Each jurisdiction must then adopt a housing element that demonstrates, among other things, how the jurisdiction can accommodate its assigned RHNA number through its zoning. The state reviews each jurisdiction's housing element for compliance.

This document describes the Draft Methodology for Mendocino County's 2027 – 2035 RHNA Cycle 7. The Final Regional Determination for Mendocino County is 6,456 units and includes adjustments, as required by state law, for vacancy, overcrowding, cost-burden, replacement, homelessness, and units lost during a state of emergency.

State law requires the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to show how its methodology advances the five RHNA objectives, as described in Government Code (GC) Section 65584(d). Additionally, GC Section 65584.04(b)(1) requires that MCOG survey its member jurisdictions for information to inform development of the RHNA Methodology. To address this, MCOG formed a RHNA Methodology Committee comprised of community development representatives from the County of Mendocino and the cities of Fort Bragg, Point Arena, Ukiah, and Willits. Multiple committee meetings were held between September and November 2025 where the information regarding the factors listed in GC Section 65584.04(e) was discussed to help guide the development of the methodology. Furthermore, GC Section 65584.04(d) requires that MCOG conduct at least one public hearing to receive oral and written comments on the proposed methodology. MCOG held a public hearing on the first iteration of the draft methodology at the October 2025 Board meeting. Following substantial changes to the draft methodology, an additional public hearing was held at the February 2026 Board meeting. As part of the outreach process, MCOG sent the draft methodology to agencies (Redwood Coast Regional Center, Area Agency on Aging, etc.) that assist vulnerable populations with housing. The draft methodology was also posted on MCOG's website where it was accessible to all interested parties.

Implications of RHNA for Local Governments

California requires that all governments (cities and counties) adequately plan to meet the housing needs of everyone in the community. The RHNA quantifies the need for housing at all income levels and informs local land use planning in addressing existing and future housing needs resulting from population, employment, and household growth. As such, in addition to the total overall housing need number of 6,456 units, the Final RHNA Determination includes units required to meet housing needs across six income categories which are

defined in terms of local area median household income (AMHI). These housing needs by income level are found in Table 1.

Table 1 Final HCD RHNA Determination for MCOG

Income Category	Income Limits of AMHI	Percent	Housing Unit Need
Acutely Low	<15%	8.3%	533
Extremely Low	15% - 30%	13.8%	891
Very Low	30% - 50%	10.5%	677
Low	50% - 80%	17.8%	1,151
Moderate	80% - 120%	10.0%	648
Above Moderate	<120%	39.6%	2,556
Total		100.0%	6,456

Base RHNA Calculation

The initial step in the development of the RHNA methodology was to determine each jurisdiction’s total base RHNA allocation, broken down by income category. The first step in doing this was to determine the percentage of the county’s population within each jurisdiction using the 2025 Department of Finance Population Estimates found in HCD’s Regional Housing Need Allocation Workbook. Table 2 below shows the percentage distribution of population between the four incorporated cities and the unincorporated County as a percentage of the total population.

Table 2 Regional Population Distribution

2025 Dept. of Finance Population Estimates		
Jurisdiction	Pop.	% of Pop.
Fort Bragg	7,187	8.00%
Point Arena	452	0.50%
Ukiah	16,325	18.17%
Willits	4,838	5.39%
Unincorporated	61,025	67.94%
Total	89,827	

The percentages found in Table 2 were then multiplied across the units for each income level identified in Table 1 to determine each jurisdiction’s initial total RHNA allocation, broken down by income category. Table 3 below shows each jurisdiction's base allocation of units.

Table 3 Base RHNA Allocation Based on Population Distribution

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	3	97	29	362
Extremely Low	891	71	4	162	48	605
Very Low	677	54	3	123	36	460
Low	1151	92	6	209	62	782
Moderate	648	52	3	118	35	440
Above Moderate	2556	205	13	465	138	1,736
TOTAL	6,456	517	32	1,173	348	4,386

Allocation Adjustment Factors

The RHNA methodology is designed to advance each of the statutory objectives. The first two objectives are intrinsically addressed through the assignment of units for each income category during the base RHNA calculations. The remaining objectives will be addressed through various adjustment factors approved by the Methodology Committee.

Median Household Income Adjustment

Following the base RHNA calculation, an adjustment factor was added based on the jurisdictions' percentage of Median Household Incomes (MHIs) in each income category compared to regional averages. Multiple jurisdictions were found to have disproportionate shares of units across the income categories. Table 4 shows the income level distribution across the income categories for each city and the unincorporated area of the county compared to the region. Table 5 highlights the difference between the jurisdictions compared to the region.

Table 4 Median Household Income Distribution

	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated County	County Total
Categories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Acutely Low	6.7%	3.4%	13.2%	11.9%	6.9%	8.3%
Extremely Low	16.8%	15.0%	12.5%	19.5%	13.3%	13.8%
Very Low	15.2%	10.7%	7.2%	7.3%	11.0%	10.5%
Low	21.6%	13.9%	17.6%	21.9%	17.1%	17.8%
Moderate	11.1%	3.2%	10.1%	12.0%	9.8%	10.0%
Above Moderate	28.5%	53.9%	39.5%	27.4%	41.9%	39.6%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5 Median Household Income Comparison

Categories	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	-1.5%	-4.8%	4.9%	3.7%	-1.3%
Extremely Low	3.0%	1.2%	-1.3%	5.7%	-0.5%
Very Low	4.7%	0.2%	-3.3%	-3.2%	0.5%
Low	3.7%	-4.0%	-0.3%	4.0%	-0.7%
Moderate	1.1%	-6.9%	0.0%	2.0%	-0.2%
Above Moderate	-11.0%	14.3%	-0.1%	-12.2%	2.3%

The resulting percentage adjustments found in Table 5 were added to the base RHNA allocations as a means of balancing the current shares by income category within each jurisdiction.

Overcrowding and Cost Burden Adjustments

The Methodology Committee discussed overcrowding and cost burden data for the region provided by HCD in the Regional Housing Need Allocation Workbook. Similar to the regional averages and jurisdictional deviations for the MHI adjustments above, Table 6 shows the "overcrowding" and "cost burden" percentages for each jurisdiction that were identified by HCD and compared to the region as a whole.

Table 6 Additional Adjustment Factors

Categories	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Overcrowding	2.2%	0.4%	-2.2%	7.2%	-0.3%
Cost Burden	10.0%	-0.1%	2.2%	9.6%	-2.8%

The percentages for each jurisdiction found in Table 6 were then multiplied across the corresponding jurisdiction’s MHI percentages for the income categories found in Table 4, allowing for the adjustment factors to be distributed across the six income categories.

Table 7 Overcrowding Adjustment Factors

Categories	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	0.1%	0.0%	-0.3%	0.9%	0.0%
Extremely Low	0.4%	0.1%	-0.3%	1.4%	0.0%
Very Low	0.3%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.5%	0.0%
Low	0.5%	0.1%	-0.4%	1.6%	-0.1%
Moderate	0.2%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.9%	0.0%
Above Moderate	0.6%	0.2%	-0.9%	2.0%	-0.1%

Table 8 Cost Burden Adjustment Factors

Categories	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	0.7%	0.0%	0.3%	1.1%	-0.2%
Extremely Low	1.7%	0.0%	0.3%	1.9%	-0.4%
Very Low	1.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	-0.3%
Low	2.2%	0.0%	0.4%	2.1%	-0.5%
Moderate	1.1%	0.0%	0.2%	1.2%	-0.3%
Above Moderate	2.9%	-0.1%	0.9%	2.6%	-1.2%

Overcrowding and Cost Burden metrics can both be used as measures of affordability. An increase in the housing supply as well as a healthy mix of housing types can work to alleviate these dual barriers, addressing Objective 1 in GC Section 65584(d), as well as factors discussed under GC Section 65584.04(e)(6) and (7).

The table below shows RHNA allocation after the MHI, overcrowding, and cost burden adjustment factors have been applied.

Table 9 RHNA allocation with MHI, Overcrowding, and Cost Burden Adjustment Factors applied

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	44	3	92	28	366
Extremely Low	891	71	4	164	47	606
Very Low	677	53	3	127	38	456
Low	1151	91	6	210	62	783
Moderate	648	52	3	118	35	440
Above Moderate	2556	234	11	465	161	1,674
TOTAL	6,456	545	30	1,176	371	4,325

Manual Adjustments

Following discussion of the aforementioned adjustment factors, the Methodology Committee discussed applying manual adjustments to account for: the Western Hills Annexation, targeted adjustments based on the jurisdictions’ Neighborhood Opportunity scores, availability and preservation of land, and to account for rounding errors.

The Western Hills Annexation between the County and City of Ukiah transferred 14 low-income and 13 moderate-income units from the County to the City.

Table 10 RHNA allocation with manual adjustment for Western Hill Annexation

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	44	3	92	28	366
Extremely Low	891	71	4	164	47	606
Very Low	677	53	3	127	38	456
Low	1,151	91	6	224	62	769
Moderate	648	52	3	131	35	427
Above Moderate	2,556	234	11	465	161	1,674
TOTAL	6,456	545	30	1,203	371	4,298

Measurements of educational, economic, and environmental “opportunities” are provided in the 2025 Opportunity Map (CTAC/HCD), which identifies Census Block Groups with higher or lower resources associated with positive economic, educational, and health outcomes for low-income families, particularly long-term outcomes for children.

The average “Neighborhood Opportunity” scores among the five jurisdictions, as seen in the table below, range from 3.7 to 7.0.

Table 11 Neighborhood Opportunity scores

	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated County	County Average
Score	5.29	7.00	5.00	3.67	4.76	4.84

The cities of Fort Bragg and Ukiah and the unincorporated county have scores within 10 percent of the county average, while the cities of Point Arena and Willits have scores approximately 44 percent higher and 24 percent lower than the county average, respectively. Based on these scores, the Methodology Committee was comfortable making manual adjustments to accommodate more acutely low, extremely low, very low, and low units in the City of Point Arena relative to the City of Willits, where opportunity resources are more limited, and an adjustment to accommodate more above moderate units to the City of Willits. This targeted adjustment aligns with and advances the State’s Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) objectives by directing more lower-income capacity toward higher opportunity neighborhoods, while avoiding unjustified concentration in lower-opportunity areas.

Table 12 RHNA allocation including adjustments for Western Hills Annexation & Neighborhood Opportunity scores

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	44	5	92	26	366
Extremely Low	891	71	6	164	45	606
Very Low	677	53	5	127	36	456
Low	1,151	91	8	224	60	769
Moderate	648	52	3	131	35	427
Above Moderate	2,556	229	8	465	169	1,674
TOTAL	6,456	540	35	1,203	371	4,298

Next, a manual adjustment that was applied was to account for rounding errors that arose during the process. Applying the allocation adjustment factors described above led to one additional extremely low unit, one additional low unit, and a deficit of 11 above moderate units. The extremely low unit was deducted from the unincorporated County, and the low unit was subtracted from Ukiah’s total. The additional 11 above moderate units were distributed across four of the jurisdictions, with two each going to Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and the unincorporated County, and five to Willits. The adjustments to account for rounding were made in an effort to balance the above moderate units while trying to adhere to GC Section 65584(d)(1) as best as possible. The table below shows the allocation of units for each jurisdiction after all adjustment factors, both formula and manual, have been applied.

Table 13 RHNA allocation including all adjustment factors

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	44	5	92	26	366
Extremely Low	891	71	6	164	45	605
Very Low	677	53	5	127	36	456
Low	1,151	91	8	223	60	769
Moderate	648	52	3	131	35	427
Above Moderate	2,556	231	8	467	174	1,676
TOTAL	6,456	542	35	1,204	376	4,299

Lower-income Jobs-to-Housing Ratio Adjustment

After an initial review by HCD of the potential allocation figures, additional consultation followed with MCOG staff concerning available employment/housing opportunities within the Cities of Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Willits. Based on lower-income jobs-to-household ratio data provided by HCD in their letter dated April 3, 2026, MCOG staff was able to calculate the number of jobs in those three jurisdictions as well as the unincorporated County. Staff then used the jobs data from Table 14 to determine the lower-income jobs to RHNA units for the jurisdictions and the region.

Table 14 Lower-income jobs-to-household ratios

	Jobs/HH ratio	HH	Jobs
Fort Bragg	1.46	1,793	2,618
Ukiah	1.55	3,063	4,747
Willits	1.56	1,187	1,852
Unincorporated County	0.65	11,256	7,316
Total	0.96	17,299	16,533

Table 15 Lower-income jobs-to-RHNA unit ratios

	Jobs/RHNA ratio	RHNA	Jobs
Fort Bragg	10.11	259	2,618
Ukiah	7.83	606	4,747
Willits	11.09	167	1,852
Unincorporated County	3.33	2,196	7,316
Region	5.12	3,228	16,533

Using the data from Table 15, staff calculated the number of lower-income units each jurisdiction would need to add to their proposed allocation to achieve the regional ratio of 5.12. Based on this, new lower-income RHNA unit allocations were calculated by applying a 50% factor to the units in Table 16. Table 17 below shows the new lower-income units and the updated jobs-to-RHNA unit ratios.

Table 16 Number of RHNA units needed to achieve the regional ratio of 5.12

Fort Bragg	252
Ukiah	321
Willits	195
Unincorporated County	-768

Table 17 New lower-income RHNA allocations & lower-income jobs/RHNA ratios

	Jobs/RHNA ratio	RHNA	Jobs
Fort Bragg	6.80	385	2,618
Ukiah	6.20	766	4,747
Willits	7.02	264	1,852
Unincorporated County	4.04	1,812	7,316
Total		3,227	

Based on data in Table 18 from HCD’s Regional Housing Need Allocation Workbook, Table 19 shows the distribution percentage of lower-income household units for the jurisdictions based on data for the region.

Table 18 Distribution of lower-income households

Categories	Mendocino County	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	2,853	200	9	800	234	1,610
Extremely Low	4,771	501	40	758	381	3,091
Very Low	3,624	452	28	438	143	2,562
Low	6,165	640	37	1,066	428	3,993
TOTAL	17,413	1,793	114	3,062	1,186	11,256

Table 19 Distribution percentage of lower-income household units

Categories	Mendocino County	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	16.4%	11.2%	7.9%	26.1%	19.7%	14.3%
Extremely Low	27.4%	27.9%	35.1%	24.8%	32.1%	27.5%
Very Low	20.8%	25.2%	24.6%	14.3%	12.1%	22.8%
Low	35.4%	35.7%	32.5%	34.8%	36.1%	35.5%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Using the data in Table 19, staff then distributed the lower-income allocations from Table 17 across the four lower-income categories. The following manual adjustment was then made to the County’s allocation to align the jurisdictions’ totals for each income category with HCD’s original determination:

- -26 units from Acutely Low
- +4 units to Extremely Low
- +21 units to Very Low
- +1 unit to Low

Tables 20 and 21 show the new distribution of lower-income RHNA units and total RHNA units, respectively.

Table 20 New distribution of lower-income RHNA units

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	5	200	52	233
Extremely Low	891	108	6	190	85	502
Very Low	677	97	5	110	32	433
Low	1,151	137	8	267	95	644
TOTAL	3,252	385	24	767	264	1,812

Table 21 New distribution of total RHNA units

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	5	200	52	233
Extremely Low	891	108	6	190	85	502
Very Low	677	97	5	110	32	433
Low	1,151	137	8	267	95	644
Moderate	648	52	3	131	35	427
Above Moderate	2,556	231	8	467	174	1,676
TOTAL	6,456	668	35	1,365	473	3,915

Finally, additional manual adjustments were made between the County and City of Ukiah, shifting a total of 135 units from the County to Ukiah, helping to further Objective 2. This final adjustment was the result of HCD review and direction to shift units from the unincorporated area into the City of Ukiah in an effort to reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase access to jobs, including out of county jobs. Although units within the unincorporated county could also provide access to jobs, HCD looks at a jurisdiction’s average per capita VMT when conducting their assessment, which is higher in the unincorporated area. Table 22 shows the distribution of the 135 units across the income categories based on Ukiah’s data in Table 4. Table 23

incorporates the noted additions/subtractions, which will also be proposed as the final allocation for the region. These final adjustments should ensure compliance with state Objectives 2, 3, and 5 under Government Code Section 65584(d).

Table 22 Manual adjustment of 135 units from the County to Ukiah

Categories	Uninc. County	Ukiah
Acutely Low	-18	18
Extremely Low	-17	17
Very Low	-10	10
Low	-24	24
Moderate	-14	14
Above Moderate	-52	52
TOTAL	-135	135

Table 23 Final distribution of RHNA units after all adjustments

Categories	HCD Determination	Fort Bragg	Point Arena	Ukiah	Willits	Unincorporated
Acutely Low	533	43	5	218	52	215
Extremely Low	891	108	6	207	85	485
Very Low	677	97	5	120	32	423
Low	1,151	137	8	291	95	620
Moderate	648	52	3	145	35	413
Above Moderate	2,556	231	8	519	174	1,624
TOTAL	6,456	668	35	1,500	473	3,780

Consistency with State Housing Law

Pursuant to GC Section 65584.04(b), the methodology discussed herein is the product of multiple meetings of the Methodology Committee and incorporates information to demonstrate compliance with State statutes, objectives identified in GC Section 65584(d), and goals with respect to housing policy.

RHNA Objectives

As previously mentioned, state law requires MCOG to show how its methodology advances the five RHNA objectives, as described in GC Section 65584(d). The objectives listed below include a brief discussion of how they have been addressed within the methodology:

Objective 1. Increasing the housing supply and the mix of housing types, tenure, and affordability in all cities and counties in the region in an equitable manner, which shall result in each jurisdiction receiving an allocation of units for low- and very low income households. The regional housing needs allocation plan shall allocate units from extremely low- and acutely low income households in a manner that is roughly proportional to, and within a range of 3 percent of, the housing need for very low income households.

As previously discussed, the methodology includes several adjustment factors designed to consider equitable distribution of units for various income specific categories. For instance, data on the median household income (MHI) of existing units will be used to adjust the final allocation in order to bring local

housing markets into balance with respect to the six income categories. Additionally, jurisdictional deviation above or below average Overcrowding or Cost Burden factors will also be used to level the playing field.

Objective 2. Promoting infill development and socioeconomic equity, the protection of environmental and agricultural resources, the encouragement of efficient development patterns, and the achievement of the region’s greenhouse gas reductions targets provided by the State Air Resources Board pursuant to Section 65080.

Equity, efficiency, and environmental considerations were included in developing the methodology by considering “opportunity” scores in the final allocation. Based on the 2025 Opportunity Mapping Tool, the cities of Fort Bragg and Ukiah and the unincorporated County have roughly the same amount of general amenities (e.g., services, educational opportunities, etc.) and have opportunity scores within 10 percent of the County average. However, Point Arena had a significantly higher score, and Willits had a significantly lower score, when compared to the county average. Manual adjustments to the acutely low, extremely low, very low-, and low-income units from Willits to Point Arena will be applied at the end of the process to help with socioeconomic equity. Conversely, Willits is seeking a larger share of above moderate accommodations so that higher skilled, better paid professionals may be able to locate within the city, shortening commute times and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related impacts. Furthering this objective are the adjustments made regarding the lower-income jobs to housing units ratio, which transferred units from the unincorporated County to the Cities of Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Willits, as well as the additional manual transfer of units from the County to the City of Ukiah as directed by HCD. Both adjustments promote infill, thereby further reducing VMT and GHG emissions. It’s important to note that while the adjustments made to further this objective may reduce VMT and GHG emissions, the portion of Objective 2 regarding achieving GHG reduction targets provided by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) pursuant to Section 65080 does not apply to the Mendocino County region. The targets referenced in Section 65080 are set by CARB for areas under the jurisdiction of a metropolitan planning organization, which Mendocino County is not.

Objective 3. Promoting an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing, including an improved balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low-wage workers in each jurisdiction.

Similar to the discussion under Objective 2 above, the methodology includes efforts to balance jobs and housing within the region. As noted earlier, the jurisdiction with the highest “neighborhood opportunity” score in the 2025 Opportunity Mapping Tool was Point Arena. Their accommodation of higher shares of lower income household units helps to advance this objective. Furthering this objective is the transfer of low-income household units from the County to the City of Ukiah as part of the Western Hills Annexation. This transfer helps improve the balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low-wage workers within the City of Ukiah. Additionally, the adjustments made regarding the lower-income jobs to housing units ratio further improves the intraregional relationship between jobs and housing by transferring units from the unincorporated County to the Cities of Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Willits.

Objective 4. Allocating a lower proportion of housing need to an income category when a jurisdiction already has a high share of households in that income category, as compared to the countywide distribution of households in that category from the most recent American Community Survey.

Based on data from HCD, the median household income levels for existing households in each jurisdiction were analyzed, finding the cities of Fort Bragg and Willits to hold smaller shares of above-moderate units and disproportionately large percentages of acutely low, extremely low, very-low, and low-income units. The methodology supports this objective by aiming to correct the imbalances, where deemed appropriate.

Objective 5. Affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH). Per GC Section 65584(e), this means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics.

The 2025 Opportunity Mapping Tool discussed within this methodology was used to evaluate “disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity” for all residents of the region, regardless of race or ethnicity, in an effort to equalize the allocation of income tiered units among the jurisdictions. The intention is to incorporate AFFH concepts into its overall distribution.

RHNA Factors for Consideration

Government Code Section 65584.04(e) requires that MCOG, to the extent that sufficient data is available from the local jurisdictions, consider 13 factors when developing the allocation methodology for regional housing needs. The following list provides a summary of these considerations based on information received from the region’s five jurisdictions:

1. Relationship between existing and projected jobs and housing affordability.

Specific data on local “jobs/housing affordability” was not available for the region as a whole or for the individual jurisdictions. This was discussed by the Methodology Committee and they chose to look at other factors in determining the final allocation.

2. Constraints due to the availability of sewer, water, developable land, land preservation policies, and impacts caused by climate change.

Data was not available, nor provided by local community development agencies with respect to constraints based on infrastructure availability or development policy. Given the proposed distribution of units from factors that were used, the Methodology Committee did not feel these to be significant obstacles to overcome in determining the final allocation.

3. Distribution of household growth as a means of maximizing public transportation or existing transportation infrastructure.

Infill development is emphasized in policy language found within the current housing elements of the region’s jurisdictions and will continue to be a consideration when determining residential zoning objectives within each jurisdiction. However, growth rates overall are expected to remain relatively flat over the next decade, and the existing transportation infrastructure will be able to accommodate housing production scenarios over this span. As such, the Methodology Committee didn’t consider this to be a significant factor in determining the allocation of units.

4. Agreements between jurisdictions directing growth toward incorporated areas and away from areas used for agricultural purposes.

While no official growth boundary agreements exist between jurisdictions, policies within current housing elements contain language directing growth inward, towards established communities and away from agricultural or rural areas.

5. Loss of units contained in assisted housing developments.

Data was not readily available, and the Methodology Committee did not consider this a significant factor in determining the allocation of housing units.

6. Housing cost burden at each relevant income level.

While information was not readily available from the local jurisdictions with respect to housing cost burden, data used by HCD to calculate the initial housing needs of the region found this to be a significant factor in their overall assessment. Relative cost burdens for homeowners and renters were considered by the Methodology Committee, and adjustments will be made to the number of housing units assigned to the five jurisdictions and distributed across the six income categories.

7. Rate of overcrowding

Similar to cost burden factors, relative rates of overcrowding were considered by the Methodology Committee, and adjustments will be made to the number of housing units assigned to the five jurisdictions and distributed across the six income categories.

8. Housing needs of farmworkers.

Data was not readily available on the housing needs of farmworkers, and the Methodology Committee did not consider this to be a significant factor in determining the allocation of housing units.

9. Housing needs of college students at private schools, state schools, or universities.

Mendocino College is largely considered to be a “commuter” school, and the student population is not expected to have a large impact on housing needs within the region. Therefore, the Methodology Committee didn’t consider this to be a significant factor in determining the allocation of units.

10. Housing needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness

Data was not readily available, and the Methodology Committee did not consider this a significant factor in determining the allocation of housing units.

11. Loss of units during a state emergency during the previous (current) planning period that have yet to be rebuilt.

Data was not readily available, and the Methodology Committee did not consider this a significant factor in determining the allocation of housing units.

12. Consideration of the region’s greenhouse gas emission targets.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions aren’t expected to reach a level of significance in the Mendocino County given the relatively flat growth rates and smaller existing population numbers. As such, the Methodology Committee didn’t consider this to be a significant factor in determining the allocation of units. Additionally, the Mendocino County region doesn’t have any GHG emission targets set by the California Air Resources Board.

13. Other factors adopted by MCOG

No other policy factors have been adopted by MCOG with respect to housing needs allocation.



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



STAFF REPORT

TITLE: Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) FY 26/27 Work Plan **DATE PREPARED:** 5/25/26

MEETING DATE: 6/1/26

SUBMITTED BY: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director

MCOG's program implementation work as part of the Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) is guided by several documents that have previously been developed and approved by the NREN Governing Partners and Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) as the Portfolio Administrator and are consistent with the NREN four-year business plan approved by the California Public Utilities Commission. These guiding documents include the Implementation Agreement between RCEA and MCOG, Program Implementation Plans, and Program Task Orders which outline work to be performed in six month periods. Because the NREN programming and budget is based on a calendar year rather than our standard fiscal year, the more detailed Task Orders and associated advanced allocations are in six-month increments.

Included in this packet is MCOG's NREN Work Plan for FY 26/27, which provides a basic outline of the tasks that we will be working on within each program for the year. We are implementing a total of six programs—Residential Equity, Residential Resource Acquisition, Public Equity, Non-Residential Resource Acquisition, Finance, and Energy Careers, Education, & Training (formerly Workforce Education & Training and incorporating Codes & Standards). Similar to the planning Overall Work Program, the NREN Work Plan is organized by program.

Because the overall program implementation work has already been laid out and approved in other documents and by other organizations, this Work Plan is presented for acceptance rather than adoption. However, the document can be changed as long as it's consistent with the guiding documents. This is an opportunity for Board members to provide comment.

ACTION REQUIRED: Discuss and accept the MCOG NREN FY 26/27 Work Plan.

ALTERNATIVES: None.

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss and accept the MCOG NREN FY 26/27 Work Plan.



MENDOCINO COUNTY S.A.F.E.

SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

TITLE: MENDOCINO County SAFE Call Box System Update

DATE: 5/22/2026

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Villa, Deputy Director/Fiscal Manager

MEETING DATE: 06/01/26

Background: The Mendocino County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (S.A.F.E) call box program covers 141 locations throughout Mendocino County, with call boxes situated along State Routes 1, 20, 128, 101, 162, 175, and 253. The program consists of 89 active cellular call boxes and 31 boxes that utilize satellite technology.

The Mendocino SAFE has successfully completed around 80% of the 4G radio upgrades across the county, including the recent completion of 10 upgrades from 3G to 4G and the transition of 11 satellite radios to 4G cellular. Updated satellite box locations span State Routes 1, 20, 101, 128, and 162. There are still 21 remaining upgrades to be finished, primarily located along State Routes 128 and 1. Although financial constraints are an ongoing challenge, the upgrade process is also impacted by very limited availability of necessary parts for the boxes. For some of our completed repairs and upgrades, we've been able to benefit from refurbished parts left from removed boxes in other areas, which also result in cost savings. However, the continued availability of these used parts is unknown. Next steps include a meeting with CHP to update the phone numbers that correspond with the call boxes being updated.

Mendocino SAFE has been using Knightscope, a US-based developer of autonomous security robots and emergency communication systems, to install upgrades and provide repairs to the system. Call boxes may occasionally encounter service disruptions and problems that are not directly related to the 4G radio upgrades or transition from satellite to cellular. Common issues include battery depletion, outdated equipment malfunction, and physical damage such as knock-downs. Another common problem has to do with boxes losing power as nearby tree growth results in blocked solar panels. As our system ages, we are experiencing these issues more frequently, which can impact service reliability. Our staff is able to make certain very minor repairs, but for anything more complicated, we rely on Knightscope.

We had been fortunate for many years to work directly with Robert Lucio, a technical expert from Knightscope's Sacramento office, who possessed extensive knowledge of our system and was instrumental in providing responsive and helpful support. Mr. Lucio has recently transitioned to a higher-level position within Knightscope and is no longer available to serve as our technical contact. At this time, it is unknown who will be assigned to support our system going forward or the extent to which Knightscope will be able to continue these services in our area.

In the next few months, staff will be engaging in discussions and collaboration with other SAFE entities across the state to explore potential next steps for our partnership with Knightscope or another contractor. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor the condition of the system, provide routine maintenance, and move forward with the 4G radio upgrades as appropriate.

Action Required: No action necessary, informational update only.

Alternatives: None.

Recommendation: None.



MENDOCINO COUNTY S.A.F.E.

SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

TITLE: Mendocino County SAFE Budget

DATE: 5/26/2026

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Villa, Deputy Director/Fiscal Manager

MEETING DATE: 06/01/26

Background:

In 1985 the California Legislature passed Senate Bill 1190 to enable counties to generate revenue for the purpose of purchasing, installing, operating and maintaining an emergency motorist aid system. Senate Bill 1199, enacted in January 1986, provided the basic format for the formation of SAFEs, and Assembly Bill 1390, enacted in October 1991, authorized a county and its cities to designate a Council of Governments to serve as a SAFE for the county. Mendocino Council of Governments was designated as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE).

The program is funded by a \$1 fee, included with the annual vehicle registration fee, collected by the California Department of Motor Vehicles and forwarded to the SAFE on a monthly basis. The annual \$1 DMV fee is supplemented by any revenue not utilized in the year it was collected (known as Fund Balance), the interest earned on the fund balance, and occasional reimbursements from motorists who damage call boxes. The stream of DMV revenues has remained steady over the past five years.

Revenues are projected at \$278,036 for the 26/27 Fiscal Year. This includes DMV fees, Interest, and Carryover of the prior year.

Expenses are projected at \$127,390 for the 26/27 Fiscal Year. The expenses cover the administration and planning contracts. The remaining funds will be allocated to new installations and upgrades, maintaining existing systems, cellular and satellite services, CHP contract which serves as the primary answering service., and direct expenses for CALSAFE.

Action Required:

Approve the 26/27 Mendocino SAFE Budget.

Alternatives:

The Board may identify adjustments to be made prior to adoption.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Board approve the FY 26/27 Mendocino SAFE Budget as presented.



MENDOCINO
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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May 22, 2026

To MCOG Board of Directors
From: Michael Villa, Deputy Director/Fiscal Manager
Subject: Consent Calendar of June 1, 2026

The following items are recommended for approval/action:

7. Approval of May 4, 2026, Minutes – attached
8. Acceptance of the corrected April 13, 2026 Transit Productivity Committee Minutes – attached

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MINUTES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Primary Location:

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 1070, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah

Teleconference Locations:

Fort Bragg City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg
Willits City Hall, 111 E. Commercial Street, Willits
Point Arena City Hall, 451 School St., Point Arena
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

General Public Teleconference by Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. with a quorum present in the primary location. Directors present: John Haschak, Heather Criss, Maureen Mulheren, and Matthew Alaniz in Ukiah; Director Rafanan in Fort Bragg; Tatiana Ahlstrand for Caltrans/PAC in Eureka; Chair Haschak presiding. Director Hansen attended in Point Arena, although he did not actively participate due to recent illness. Chair Haschak presiding.

Staff present in Ukiah: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Michael Villa, Deputy Director; Janet Orth, CFO/Admin Advisor; Julie St. Pierre, Administrative Assistant; James Sookne, Program Manager; Alexis Pedrotti, Project Manager; and Orion Walker, Energy Program Manager, arrived later for Agenda item #15.g.

Staff present by Zoom: Hector Ortega, Regional Project Analyst.

Guests present by Zoom: Jacob King, Executive Director, Mendocino Transit Authority, for Agenda item #15.b.

2. Assembly Bill 2449 Notifications and Considerations. This item is to receive and address requests from Board members to participate in the meeting from a non-posted location, subject to conditions set forth in AB 2449. There were no such requests.

3. Convene as RTPA.

4. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee.

5 - 7. Consent Calendar. Upon motion by Mulheren, second by Criss, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Rafanan, Mulheren, Alaniz, Criss, Ahlstrand/PAC and Haschak; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining – Hansen; 0 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

5. Approval of April 6, 2026, Minutes – as written

6. Approval of April 13, 2026, Transit Productivity Committee Minutes – as written

7. Acceptance of 2024/25 Fiscal Audit of Mendocino Transit Authority – as presented

8. Public Expression. [Clerk’s Note: This item was numbered twice on the agenda as both Item #8 and #9.] Jesse Tanning, resident of Redwood Valley, requested a speed limit sign to be posted on Laughlin Way and a better system for school-related traffic management on North State Street and West Road. She also expressed concerns about congestion and litter from parked trucks, and wrong-way drivers at the West Road Exit. She suggests a roundabout at this exit, and improved systems for roadside litter cleanup.

Another Redwood Valley resident (name not provided), who lives on West Road, echoed Jesse’s concerns about traffic and litter on West Road. She mentioned there is dangerous speeding on West Road impacting residents. She requests that more traffic enforcement and speed limit signs be put in place along this road.

Steve Henderson (a.k.a. Gizmo) thanked the attendants of the meeting. He discussed the solar panels on county property, and suggested charging county vehicles using that solar power, as well as giving the solar power to PG&E and then buying it back from them. He additionally mentioned surface street traffic studies, and requested that they also include walking, biking and equestrian traffic.

Chair Haschak asked Nephele Barrett, Executive Director, a question regarding an overall traffic study regarding traffic calming policies. He also mentioned speed tables being implemented in Covolo.

10. Adoption of Resolution Approving The 2026 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) & Active Transportation Plan (ATP) – Continued from April 6, 2026. *(Note: The report for Agenda Item #15.f.i was taken concurrently with this item.)*

Mr. Sookne summarized the connection between RTP adoption and the ongoing Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. He stated that there is no plan to adopt the resolution today due to delays with the RHNA process, nor is there a specific date known for HCD approval, but the RTP will be brought back. Agenda Item #15.f.i will also be brought back on a future date.

Ms. Barrett and Mr. Sookne gave further information about the State Department of Housing and Community Development’s requirements for approval, and expressed concerns regarding the RHNA process and regulations. No action was taken.

11. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Recommendations of April 15, 2026: Adoption of Final Fiscal Year 2026/27 Planning Overall Work Program (OWP). Project Manager Alexis Pedrotti reviewed her written report. Staff has addressed minor comments received from Caltrans on the Draft OWP, which have been incorporated, and are shown in bold or strikethrough throughout the document.

Alexis reported on additional changes to the following specific work elements:

Work Element 2 – Planning Management & General Coordination (Non-Rural Planning Assistance): Following the receipt of the 2026/27 cost proposal from Davy-Bates Consulting, \$35,000 of the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) was removed from this element and moved into the Project Reserve.

Work Element 5 – Mendocino County Sea Level Rise Roadway Impact Study: The carryover, currently estimated at \$100,000, is a placeholder for the project to continue moving forward. The actual amount will be reflected in the amendment.

Work Element 7 – Planning, Programming, & Monitoring: Increased by an estimated \$25,000 for carryover funding to allow use of expiring funds and to help avoid potential funding constraints later in the fiscal year.

Work Element 8 – Regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Mitigation Program: This is another placeholder for carryover estimated at \$200,000, to allow the program to continue into the new fiscal year, with the actuals to be reflected in the upcoming amendment.

Work Element 10 – SR20 Willits Multimodal Circulation and Intersection Improvement Study: As a pending Caltrans Sustainable Communities’ grant applicant, this element also remains as a placeholder since the recipients won’t be notified until this summer. If awarded a grant, funds will be allocated accordingly.

Work Element 11 – Pavement Management Program (PMP) Update. Although this program continues to move forward, approximately \$35,000 of carryover is proposed for 2026/27 to provide for final closeout tasks with the consultant.

Work Element 16 – For Multi-Modal Transportation Planning: An estimated \$5,000 for rural planning assistance funds has been added to the Mendocino Council of Governments’ planning staff activities. Since Caltrans likes to see some Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) carried over into the work program, this element provided a small amount to move forward.

The new total for the Final 2026/27 Overall Work Program (OWP) is \$1,251,084.

In Board discussion, clarifications were made about how the changes are reflected so that Caltrans, the Technical Advisory Committee, and/or staff can recognize any changes made since the last document – additions are in bold type and deletions appear in strikeout type.

Chair Haschak invited public comments, hearing none.

Upon motion by Alaniz, second by Criss, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Rafanan, Mulheren, Alaniz, Criss, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Haschak; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining – Hansen*): IT IS ORDERED to accept the TAC’s recommendation to adopt the 2026/27 Final Overall Work Program, authorize the Executive Director or designee to sign certifications and the OWP Agreement and forward to Caltrans as required.

12. Fiscal Year 2026/27 RTPA & COG Budget Presentation & Workshop – MCOG Staff

Michael Villa, Deputy Director, gave the report. The total revenues are \$16.7 million, and the total proposed allocations are \$10.3 million.

- a. Report of Revenues Fiscal Year to Date 2025/26.** Local Transportation Fund (LTF) sales tax receipts from July 2025 through February 2026 total \$2,799,142, for an increase of \$25,142 (0.6%) compared to the budget estimate of \$2,774,000 for the same period. Any surplus revenue from this current year will go into the FY 2027/28 budget.
- b. Executive Committee Recommendations of February 26, 2026 – Revenues & Allocations.** The Executive Committee unanimously recommended a draft budget that allocates LTF funds for Reserves, MCOG Administration (\$613,366), 2% Bicycle & Pedestrian (\$72,913), Planning (\$125,000), and the remainder available for Transit (\$3,565,492), consistent with established priorities for Local Transportation Funds. The recommendation includes an

allocation to LTF Reserve for transit of fifteen percent (\$639,000), from the existing fund balance.

- c. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation of April 15, 2026 – Final Planning Overall Work Program.** The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reviewed and recommended the Draft Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP), which was forwarded to Caltrans for comment. A total of \$1,251,084 is proposed from all funding sources for the Planning program. This amount is expected to be amended as new grants and unexpended 2025/26 funds to carry over are identified for multi-year projects.
- d. Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) Recommendations of April 13, 2026 – Mendocino Transit Authority’s Annual Transit Claim and Unmet Transit Needs.** The TPC met and reviewed the annual transit claim from Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA). The total LTF request is \$3,565,429, with \$2,923,652 for MTA, and \$641,777 for Senior Centers. LTF funds available for both MTA and Senior Centers show an increase of 1.5% from the previous year. Other sources of funding were mentioned, including state funding from SB 125, and Caltrans planning grants. Mr. Villa also reported that the TPC discussed the annual Unmet Transit Needs. As noted in the staff report, the committee recommended a finding that there is one need that is reasonable to meet for FY 2026/27. There will also be a recommendation from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC).
- e. Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) Funding.** For the third year, this program is added to MCOG’s budget. The total FY 2026/27 draft budget is \$780,000, an increase of \$144,000 from last year’s budget.

13. Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) Recommendations of April 13, 2026

- a. Approval of Transit Performance Standards with Adjusted Passengers per Hour.** Mr. Villa reported that the only standard due for update is the passengers per hour for short-distance bus routes. Previously, The Short Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP) recommended that the minimum be set at six, with a target of eight. MCOG’s current standard is 10.2. The TPC recommended that the standard be set at seven.
- b. Acceptance of Annual Transit Performance Review.** Mr. Villa and Ms. Barrett gave a summary of the performance review and mentioned that several performance standards are close to being met, and the recommended change is targeted at the standards which are farthest from being met.
Director Mulheren asked a question about ways MTA and MCOG are planning to increase ridership of public transportation. Ms. Barrett and Jacob King, MTA Executive Director, responded with a few programs and plans in development.

Upon motion by Director Alaniz, second by Director Rafanan and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 Ayes – Rafanan, Mulheren, Alaniz, Criss, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Haschak; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining - Hansen): IT IS ORDERED that the update of MCOG’s transit performance standard for Passengers per Hour for Short Distance Bus Routes from 10.2 to 7.0 as recommended by staff is approved, and the TPC’s report of the Annual Transit Performance Review through December 31, 2025, and the recommended action for MTA, is accepted.

14. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Rafanan, second by Criss, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – Rafanan, Mulheren, Alaniz, Criss, and Haschak; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining - Hansen):

IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

15. Reports – Information

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. PAC Member Ahlstrand reported that the 2026 Urban Greening Grant Program opened its concept proposal solicitations, and the Safe Streets for All call for applications closes on May 26th. It is expected that the local HSIP will have a late spring or early summer opening, as well as increased funding capacity. A consultant will be brought on board for the Mendocino State Route 128 Flood and Feasibility Study within the next month or two. Allocation for the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Enhancement Project is expected in August, with advertising in September, and award in October. Work on this project will likely begin in 2027. Caltrans District 1 Transportation Planning Open House will be hosting a public meeting in Ukiah on July 15th.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. Mr. King reported that the MTA is currently working on a Transit and Inter City Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant application for the Transit Center. MTA has taken delivery of six new all-electric buses, which will be used in Fort Bragg. MTA is concluding a Title VI survey that is related to countywide fare change.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Mulheren reported that there was a ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening Phase 4 and a fun run on the Ukiah section of the Great Redwood Trail.
- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written staff report.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. *Miscellaneous*
 - ii. *Next Meeting Date*. Monday, June 1, 2026 Adoption of Budget
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
 - i. *Regional Housing Needs Assessment*. Taken earlier with Agenda Item #10.
 - ii. *Work Element 5 – Mendocino County Sea Level Rise Roadway Impact Study*. Hector Ortega, Regional Project Analyst, reported that community input resulted in several sites being moved up in ranking, and the list of priority sites was refined. Next, the consultant team will finalize the list and distribute it.
 - iii. *Work Element 11 – Pavement Management Program (PMP) Update*. Mr. Ortega reported that data collection for Fort Bragg and Willits has been completed, and collection for county roads is 50% complete.
 - iv. *Work Element 8 – Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Regional Mitigation Study*. Mr. Ortega reported that proposals have been requested and are due on May 18th. Staff will then review proposals and a consultant selection committee will be formed.
 - v. *Miscellaneous*. None.
- g. Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) Staff. Orion Walker, Energy Program Manager, reported that the NREN partners had a recent planning meeting. A training day was hosted on HVAC, heat pumps and energy efficiency for high school seniors who are entering the trade. He reported that a

large portion of finance funds have been reallocated into the incentives budget, allowing for more funding to be available through the rebate programs. He provided further information on both residential and commercial rebates programs.

Chair Haschak asked a question about the Laytonville Resource Fair.

- h. MCOG Directors. Director Mulheren expressed gratitude for MCOG's role in creating bike lanes and other means of active transportation.
- i. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. None.

16. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mendocino Council of Governments

MINUTES - *Corrected* Transit Productivity Committee – TPC

Monday, April 13, 2026

10:00 a.m. to appx. 12:00 p.m.

Teleconference Locations:

MCOG / Dow & Associates, 525 S. Main St., Suite B, Ukiah
Mendocino Transit Authority, 241 Plant Rd., Ukiah
Mendocino County Administration Ctr., 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah
648 Willow Avenue, Ukiah
Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, Willits
15168 Caspar Road, Caspar
City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg

General Public Teleconference by Zoom

PRESENT:

MCOG Board Members: John Haschak, Heather Criss
MTA Board Members: Tess Albin-Smith, Jim Tarbell
Senior Centers Rep.: Jill Rexrode, Redwood Coast Seniors (Alternate)
Staff & Others: Nephele Barrett, Janet Orth, Michael Villa, and Julie St. Pierre, MCOG
Dawn White and Luis Martinez, MTA

ABSENT:

Jacob King, MTA and Richard Baker, Willits Seniors

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. After brief discussion about who would chair the meeting, Director Haschak yielded to Nephele Barrett, who proceeded to call the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and asked the teleconference participants to introduce themselves.

Technical issues noted with Jill Rexrode reconnecting to the teleconference.

2. Public Expression. None

3. Review and Recommendation on MTA's Analysis and Prioritization of 2026/27 Unmet Transit Needs. Michael Villa reviewed the statutory transit development process and current stage of analysis per Transportation Development Act (TDA) requirements. For the upcoming fiscal year, MCOG has determined that there are needs, which were forwarded to MTA for analyses to be prepared outlining operational costs, ability to provide service. The report was received with categorization of needs defined as either high, medium, or low priority.

- **Item P-2** – Add additional route to Santa Rosa to align with the extended times added by SMART Train. Jim Tarbell pointed out that the proposed Transit Center in Central Ukiah (Item S-7) is listed as low priority, adding that in his opinion, it has become a high priority. Luis Martinez responded that after MTA's analysis, the transit center did not qualify as a transit need, as defined in the TDA. Nephele clarified that the transit center would be considered a capital, not an operational "service" need, and suggested another category may be necessary to identify types of needs that don't meet the TDA's specific definition.
- **Item S-3** – Non-emergency Medical Service, including after-hours/weekends for hospital release and out-of-county. Nephele noted that although this unmet transit need was categorized as low priority, the fixed-route service doesn't fully address

hospital release times or out-of-county needs, suggesting the recommendation be reworded to reflect that some, but not all, of the associated needs are being met. Luis stated that they would reprioritize and incorporate into the recommendation that a partial need has been met, and to undertake what needs to be done to fully assess that priority.

- **Item S-6** – the Covelo and Laytonville Mobility Solution, and **Item S-1** – the Microtransit Service to Brooktrails, including Brooktrails Lodge. John pointed out that these two items are somewhat related and asked about their status. Luis answered that MTA is currently working on the routes, and that the purchase of new vehicles is pending; the most challenging issue is with staffing, as there is a shortage of drivers preventing the implementation of that service. Nephele added that MTA Executive Director, Jacob King, has been exploring options for an appropriate vehicle for these routes, which Luis confirmed.
- **Item S-5** – the Service to Noyo Harbor and downtown Fort Bragg central business district. Tess Albin-Smith pointed out that MTA still doesn't provide this service. Emphasizing weekend tourist congestion and a lack of parking, Tess proposed that the creation of weekend and seasonal service be elevated to medium priority. Nephele shared that this item came out of the SSTAC meeting – where neither weekends nor peak service had been specified – and suggested adding a note to indicate that the Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) considered this as a higher need, rather than “Low Priority.”

Although received too late for inclusion, Michael shared a new public comment requesting alignment of the Santa Rosa route with SMART Train schedules, adding that this particular comment will be moved to consider during next year's process of identifying unmet transit needs.

Janet questioned whether any of the identified transit needs can be met in the coming fiscal year, either with funding, partnerships, or other alternatives. Nephele pointed out that they will be meeting the need identified in Item P-2, for an additional route to Santa Rosa to align with the extended times added by SMART Train. Discussion followed about whether this item would be considered reasonable to meet in the coming budget year 2026/27, even though service on that additional route began in 2025/26.

The committee determined that the recommendation to MCOG be revised. Nephele suggested an alternative, stating that there are unmet transit needs, including one or more that are reasonable to meet for potential funding in 2026/27 MTA Allocation, or by other means. And then specify that that particular unmet need will continue to be met through adjustment to existing routes.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Haschak, seconded by Criss, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (*3 Ayes: Haschak, Criss, and Tarbell; 0 Noes; 2 Abstaining: Albin-Smith, and Rexrode/Alt.*), the TPC recommended a finding that “there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet” for Fiscal Year 2026/27 through a planned adjustment to existing routes, as identified on the FY 2026/27 list:

- #P-2 Add additional route to Santa Rosa to align with the extended times added by SMART Train – *To be met as an adjustment to an existing route*

Nephele reported that although Tess Albin-Smith and Jill Rexrode would have to abstain from voting due to unposted locations, it was also noted that we have a quorum with three out of five members voting.

4. Review and Recommendation on the Fiscal Year 2026/27 Transit Claim. Michael reviewed his written report, highlighting that total TDA funding available for MTA and FY 2026/27 is about \$4.75 million, up roughly 3% from last year. The claim was received on time and staff deemed it acceptable. A summary of the funding sources was provided:

- The County Auditor’s Fund Estimate of \$4,259,000 is up 2.4% (\$98,000) from the revised FY 2025/26 budget estimate.
- The Executive Committee recommended setting the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Reserve balance at \$639,000 (15% of the fund estimate).
- Under the Executive Committee’s recommendations, LTF balance available for allocation is \$3,565,429, up 1.7% (\$60,679) from the 2025/26 budget for MTA.
- The preliminary State Transit Assistance (STA) revenue estimate has declined as expected due to increases in fuel-efficient and electric cars, makes \$876,829, down 9.8% (\$94,741) from last year’s revised estimate. Without a carry-over balance from last year, MTA is claiming the full amount for operations.
- The proceeds from SB125’s four-year Allocation Plan are estimated at \$11,063,615. In FY 2025/26, \$2,988,941 will be expended to purchase three electric buses.
- The Capital Reserve has an available fund balance of \$308,575, which MTA is claiming for Long-Term Capital.
- Funds associated with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 are uncertain, pending Caltrans’ estimate.

Sharing MTA’s Claim for Funds for FY 2026/27, as well as MCOG’s Budget Summary Page, Michael reported that the total amount of TDA funding for MTA comes to \$4,750,883, an increase of 3.1% (140,903) from the 2025/26 budget. John commented it was good that the claim for Senior Centers showed an increase.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Haschak, seconded by Criss, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (3 Ayes: *Haschak, Criss, and Tarbell*; 0 Noes; 2 Abstaining: *Albin-Smith, and Rexrode*, the TPC recommended that MCOG make the following transit allocations:

LTF Reserve at 15 percent of Auditor’s revised estimate	639,000	
Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	2,923,652	
Unmet Transit Needs	0	
Senior Center Operations	641,777	
Total LTF		3,565,429
State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)		
MTA Operations	876,829	
MTA & Seniors Capital	0	
Transit Capital Reserve	0	
Total STA		876,829
Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)		
MTA Capital, Current Year	0	

Senior Capital, Current Year	0	
Long-Term Capital Reserve	308,575	
Total CRF		308,575
Total Recommended FY 2026/27 Transit Allocation		4,750,833

5. Review and Recommendation on MCOG Standards. Michael cited that the most recent TDA Triennial Performance Audit, released in May 2025, pointed to recommended standards in the June 2024 Short Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP). Compared with MCOG’s report, Michael stated that that TDA’s audit provides more detailed information, breaking down individual routes.

Michael next reviewed the history of standard adjustments, going back to 2022, when the Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) approved the reduction of the Passengers per Hour standard to 73% of the adopted levels for Dial-A-Ride, Short Distance Bus Routes, and Senior Centers. In 2019, farebox recovery was lowered to 10% for all service types, in line with the State’s requirement for rural operators. The requirement was then waived, or relaxed, by State legislation post Covid, but those waivers expire July 1, 2026, which means the farebox standard will again apply to MTA.

In 2014, the Board adopted the [Consumer Price Index] “CPI Adjusted Rolling Average” method for cost standards, which averages three years of actual performance data adjusted for inflation. Michael noted that this method is still working well; and notably, this year’s rolling average brought cost standards down as a result of 2021’s higher cost data being dropped.

Staff is suggesting that we lower the Passenger per Hour standard for Short Distance Bus Routes from 10.2 down to 7, aligning with the SRTDP recommendation of a minimum of 6 and a target of 8 for Short Distance Bus Routes. There was a brief discussion of the implication of lowering this standard to provide a better chance of being able to meet it, since there is a greater discrepancy for this service type when compared with the others.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Criss, seconded by Haschak, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (*3 Ayes: Haschak, Criss, and Tarbell; 0 Noes; 2 Abstaining: Albin-Smith and Rexrode*), the TPC recommends adjusting the Passengers per Hour standard for Short Distance Bus Routes.

6. Annual Review of MTA Performance Reports Compared to MCOG Standards. Referring to the staff report, Michael stated that the annual performance review of MTA against MCOG’s adopted standards for the current report period from January 1 through December 31, 2025, used the three-year “CPI Adjusted Rolling Average” method, where a new year is added and the oldest one drops off the chart.

Michael reported that MTA needs to meet at least two of three core standards – **Passengers per Hour**, **Farebox Ratio**, and **Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour** – and apply the fourth standard, **Cost per Passenger**, if two of the three standards are not met. Michael shared that ridership is a persistent problem, adding that none of the service types met Passenger per Hour in 2023, 2024, or 2025 – even though the standard was lowered in 2022. Consistent with the what the TDA auditor found statewide, because many operators still haven’t recovered pre-pandemic ridership levels. The **Farebox Ratio** has generally been achievable, though it’s been waived since

Covid. When the waiver expires July 1, 2026, MTA will have to prepare to meet that 10% farebox standard again.

All service types met the **Cost per Hour** standard in 2025 – except for long-distance routes – though they did meet that standard in 2024; the three-year average shows overall improvement.

None of the service types have met the **Cost per Passenger** standard consistently, though Senior Centers did in 2025, which is directly associated with ridership levels. Performance has been fairly dependable, with ridership recovery being the greatest challenge. If ridership improves, the **Cost per Passenger** numbers would follow.

Janet noted that all the Senior Centers are grouped together, but their performance varies widely. Redwood Coast Seniors and Willits Senior Center are doing the best, meeting all their standards and increasing the average, with Redwood Coast having the highest Farebox Ratio of 19.9%. It was noted that the other senior centers have challenges such as being smaller and having higher staff turnover.

Service Type	2025	3-Year Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) maintained same 3-year average of 2 out of 3 standards; Farebox and Cost/Hour improved in 2025, meeting those standards.	2 of 3	2 of 3
Short Distance Bus Routes maintained the same 3-year average annual performance as 2024, meeting Farebox and Cost per Hour.	2 of 3	2 of 3
Long Distance Routes improved from 0 of 4 to 1 of 4 (Cost per Hour) in 3-year average, and declined from 1 of 4 in 2024 to 0 of 4 in 2025, missing Cost/Hr.	0 of 4	1 of 4
Senior Centers again maintained the same 3-year average, meeting Farebox and Cost/Hour; they also met Passengers/Hour in 2025.	3 of 3	2 of 3

Janet reviewed how 3.1% was the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate that’s been used for the past year to calculate the annual average by using increases from a past period, applied through 2025.

Michael invited further discussion and stated that this item needs no action. Janet stated that a report should come out of this committee – whether it’s a recommendation or just reporting some of the findings.

Janet continued, saying that she was surprised by the short-range service, thinking that in-town services would do better, adding that costs have come down on the short-distance routes, and they went up a lot on the long-distance. Janet added that these are just things that she doesn’t understand and doesn’t have enough information – just things to notice. Michael added that the figures for the long-distance routes Cost per Service Hour also went up.

John asked if we can say that we reviewed the data. Janet answered yes, we have reviewed the data and mentioned MTA’s performance and context in the greater community of transit operators. Janet said that that is statewide and that everybody is suffering and having a hard time in transit – it’s not just MTA having these issues. Nephela added how much cost increases are really hurting transit operators.

Janet next raised considerations of productivity improvement opportunities for all service types such as ways to increase ridership and how everyone struggles with that. Noting that last year MTA was moving in the right direction in taking some positive actions and steps. Nephela

mentioned the simplification of the fare structure, and said that she wasn't sure if it's been implemented, but knows it's in the works. Luis confirmed that it hasn't started yet, and Dawn reported that they are in the process of doing their fare review survey now, and that should be ready to review shortly. And that there are a few things that they have to do before they can implement it.

Janet asked if there were any takeaways from this review. Nephele expressed curiosity whether there have been any discussions about potential productivity improvements or ways to increase ridership coming from the MTA Board or out of those meetings. Tess couldn't recall doing that recently, but thinks that services such as the Bragabout could benefit from more advertising, adding that this should be brought up at a future meeting.

Nephele thought that a recommendation coming out of this group could be to explore options for improving community awareness, or explore options for increased advertising. Janet mentions she hears MTA ads on the radio quite frequently. Jim said they have been improving since the pandemic and that the transit agency could generate revenues from renting out office space at the new transit center. Nephele mentioned that the project Jim was referring to, if the proposal is successful, is a mixed use with senior housing that could increase ridership. John mentioned that housing being built across from the Library for Mendocino College students could increase ridership to the college.

Janet mentioned the State is big on the idea of Transit Oriented Development (TOD), the idea of all new housing having a transit component. It's a strategy to link housing, jobs and transportation together more.

Janet brought up how we are trying to build a recommendation of exploring options to build ridership and look at opportunities with housing development. Janet stated that one of the unmet needs met last year was adding service to the college, MTA was able to partner with the student body association. They raised funds to help MTA pay for the unmet need and how it's a way to generate funds to meet unmet needs. Tess mentioned that one of the issues is that not all satellite campuses are served equally. Janet proceeded to go over the different campuses and discussed what was added last year to the main campus. Tess brought up that kids from coastal areas wanting to go to a Junior College can't afford to live away from home and how students need to go to the main campus. Luis mentioned they haven't received anything about the evening and brought up the frequency is every hour to the main campus until 5pm.

Janet said the recommendation could be to continue to explore ridership where John agreed. Janet brings up the performance review and how the lack of ridership prevents the other standards from being met.

Nephele said the recommendation could be to continue to explore opportunities to increase ridership including coordination with housing and transit center development. Report consistent with ongoing performance by dial a ride and short distance bus routes and senior centers specialized services as a whole while long distance routes need improvement on productivity. Janet mentioned that is a two part and Nephele clarified that one is a recommendation and the other is to report out.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Criss, seconded by Haschak, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (*3 Ayes: Haschak, Criss, and Tarbell; 0 Noes; 2 Abstaining: Albin-Smith and Rexrode*), the TPC recommends the following:

- Continue to explore opportunities to increase ridership including coordination with housing and transit center development.
- Report consistent ongoing performance by dial a ride and short distance bus routes and senior centers specialized services as a whole while long distance routes need improvement on productivity.

7. Miscellaneous / Members' Concerns / Announcements – *No Action*

8. Adjournment: 11:13 a.m.



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

STAFF REPORT

Agenda # 10.
Regular Calendar
MCOG Meeting
6/1/2026

TITLE: SB 125 Long-Term Financial Plan

DATE PREPARED: 5/22/26

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Villa, Deputy Director/Fiscal Manager

MEETING DATE: 6/1/26

BACKGROUND: SB 125 (Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023) established formula-based funding through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero-Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP), distributing \$5.1 billion statewide to Regional Transportation Planning Agencies. MCOG will receive an estimated \$11,063,615 over the program period for allocation to public transit projects and services. MCOG approved an initial allocation package identifying how funds would be utilized, which included a short-term financial plan in December of 2023. The plan was subsequently amended in May of 2025 to add additional activities and projects.

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) requires each RTPA to also submit a Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) by June 30, 2026, as a condition of continued program eligibility. The plan must address the region's approach to sustaining transit operations absent additional state funding and include: (1) a demonstration of ridership retention and recovery strategies, such as policies prioritizing safety, cleanliness, and coordination between transit operators; and (2) a five-year forecast of operating funding requirements detailing all funding sources, including any new local or regional funding being pursued. MCOG prepared the LTFP in consultation with the MTA. Upon Board adoption, the Executive Director will transmit the plan to CalSTA.

ACTION REQUIRED: By resolution, adopt the 2026 MTA Long-Term Financial Plan

ALTERNATIVES: Adopt the 2026 SB 125 Long-Term Financial Plan with adjustments provided by the Board.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the 2026 SB 125 Long-Term Financial Plan

Mendocino Council of Governments

SB 125 FORMULA-BASED TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM & ZERO EMISSION TRANSIT CAPITAL PROGRAM

Long Term Financial Plan

June 2026

Introduction

SB 125 (Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023) established formula-based funding through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero-Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP), distributing \$5.1 billion statewide to Regional Transportation Planning Agencies. The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) will receive an estimated \$11,063,615 over the program period for allocation to public transit projects and services. MCOG approved an initial allocation package identifying how funds would be utilized, which included a short-term financial plan in December of 2023. The plan was subsequently amended in May of 2025 to add additional activities and projects.

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) requires each RTPA to submit a Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) by June 30, 2026, as a condition of continued program eligibility. The plan must address the region's approach to sustaining transit operations absent additional state funding and include: (1) a demonstration of ridership retention and recovery strategies, such as policies prioritizing safety, cleanliness, and coordination between transit operators; and (2) a five-year forecast of operating funding requirements detailing all funding sources, including any new local or regional funding being pursued.

The Region

Mendocino County is a geographically large county, lying within the northern extension of California's coast mountain ranges. These mountains are characterized by a series of southeast to northwest ridges that are separated occasionally by narrow valleys. Transportation routes tend to be located within valleys, and east-west travel is especially difficult, since parallel ridges must be traversed. The size and mountainous nature of the County is a challenge for public transit in the region.

Most of the population in Mendocino County is concentrated in a few locations. Ukiah, Talmage, and Redwood Valley make up the largest single population concentration in Mendocino County. Fort Bragg and the coastal area southward to the Navarro River is another population cluster. Willits, the Little Lake Valley, and the Brooktrails subdivision are also large settlement areas in the County. Smaller community clusters include Hopland, Gualala, Covelo, Boonville and Laytonville.

The US Census Bureau estimated a total population of 89,175 for Mendocino County in 2024. This data includes the following population counts in the incorporated cities: Ukiah (16,072), Fort Bragg (6,919), Willits (4,843), and Point Arena (449).

The 2024 American Community Survey results indicate that the county average median household income was \$64,688, less than 68% of the statewide median. It is estimated that 15.2% of households in the County live at or below the federal poverty level.

Transit in Mendocino County

The Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) is the only public transit operator in Mendocino County and serves as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). MTA's main facility is located at the sound end of Ukiah, and houses MTA administration, maintenance, and dispatch, as well as serving as the operation base for the Inland Services. Because of distance, the Willits, South Coast, and North Coast Services are operated from separate sites. MTA's Diana Stuart Fort Bragg Division houses a bus barn with an office, a conference room, remote meeting technology and other amenities.

The MTA service area covers approximately 2,800 square miles (*out of total County area of 3,510 square miles*) plus the northern Sonoma County Coast to Bodega Bay, and into Santa Rosa. MTA serves a population of nearly 90,000, plus visitors to the area. Its vehicles travel more than 881,000 mile per year. A wide variety of vehicle types, sizes, and configurations are operated, reflecting the range of transportation services provided and communities served.

MTA operates nine fixed bus routes connecting the Mendocino Coast, the inland valleys, towns and communities to Ukiah, the County seat. Their fixed route service includes intracity routes in Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Willits, with the Fort Bragg and Ukiah routes carrying the highest number of riders across the entire system. MTA also provides Dial-a-Ride services in Ukiah and Fort Bragg, and one flex route in Ukiah. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service is available for persons with disabilities who live within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of MTA's local Fort Bragg, Willits or Ukiah bus routes. ADA paratransit service is provided by MTA in Ukiah and Fort Bragg, and is provided in Willits by Willits Seniors, Inc.

MTA provides daily connections in Santa Rosa with Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa City Bus, Amtrak, SMART (Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit) train, and Golden Gate Transit for interregional service to Marin and San Francisco counties, and beyond. MTA also provides daily connections with the Sonoma County Airport Express for service to and from Bay Area airports. In Ukiah, MTA connects with Lake Transit and Humboldt Transit service to provide service to and from Lake and Humboldt Counties, Monday through Saturday, as part of the North State Express (NSE). The NSE is currently in its early stages, but once fully implemented, it will connect the US 101, I-5, SR 299, and SR 20 corridors, providing continuous service from the Oregon border to Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Under contract with MTA, five senior centers currently provide specialized transportation services in Mendocino County targeted toward the needs of the elderly and disabled. They are: Anderson Valley, Redwood Coast in Fort Bragg, Coastal Seniors in Point Arena, Ukiah and Willits. All senior centers services are designed to provide a higher level of driver assistance ("door through door") than MTA Dial-a-Ride can provide.

Regional Policies and Strategies

MCOG has a long history of supporting transit in Mendocino County. MCOG does not allocate Local Transportation Fund revenues to streets and roads projects in order to maximize funding available to transit. Other efforts to bring additional funding to transit in the region include grant assistance, funding of transit planning in the Overall Work Program, and exploration of potential sales tax measures.

MCOG also regularly makes efforts to improve efficiency and performance of transit in the region. Each year, our Transit Productivity Committee analyses public transit performance in the region and compares it to our performance standards. The committee makes recommendations for productivity improvements and helps identify ways the operator might increase ridership.

The Mendocino County Regional Transportation and Active Transportation Plan, adopted June 1, 2026, includes several Policies and Objectives that support ridership retention and recovery strategies, including safety, cleanliness, and the rider experience.

Objective TSSER 2: Encourage the provision of safety measures for all modes of the regional transportation system.

Policy TSSER 2.1. Consider safety features when planning new transportation projects, such as lighting, fencing, and refuge islands, that would improve safety and security of travelers.

Policy TSSER 2.2. Consider new technologies to improve security, such as on-board security equipment for transit and changeable message signs for roads and highways.

Objective T 2: Ensure that transit operates in an efficient and effective manner.

Policy T 2.1. Prepare coordinated transportation plans as required, identifying opportunities for coordination or consolidation in services.

Policy T 2.2. Fund and coordinate triennial performance audits and annual fiscal audits of MTA.

Policy T 2.3. Conduct annual meetings of the Transit Productivity Committee to review transit system performance and review/adjust performance standards.

Policy T 2.4. Consider the needs of the transit system (bus stops and bike/pedestrian access) when planning roadway improvements.

Progress Since the Last Submitted Financial Plan

Since the short-term financial plan was developed, MCOG has allocated funds to MTA for zero emission vehicle purchases and continuation of existing services. The operating funds for continued services have allowed MTA to avoid service cuts for the last two years. Planning has been ongoing for a new pilot project, anticipated to start toward the end of 2026. MCOG and MTA have worked together to continue planning for a new transit center in the Ukiah area, for which MTA submitted a competitive TIRCP grant application in May 2026. If successful, the transit center will be part of a new mixed use, infill development, co-located with senior housing. The site was one of the top recommendations from a site analysis and feasibility study conducted by MCOG several years ago.

Transit Operator Strategies, Policies, and Financial Forecast

Provided on the following pages are the strategies, policies, and financial forecast specific to Mendocino County's only public transit operator, the Mendocino Transit Authority. Financial data in this plan is drawn from MTA operating budget materials, SB 125 operator worksheets, ridership reports, service schedules, and MCOG/MTA planning records. The forecast uses the MTA-provided planning assumption of 5 percent annual escalation across operating expense categories, while operating revenues are assumed to remain flat for planning purposes and may stagnate or decline.

Long Range Financial Plan

Required Pursuant to SB 125 Guidelines

Mendocino Transit Authority

Submitted by MCOG to CalSTA - June 2026

Purpose

Submitted by the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) in fulfillment of Government Code section 13987(d) and (g). The statute requires two elements: (1) demonstration of ridership retention and recovery strategies already underway, and (2) a five-year forecast of operating funding requirements with detail on all sources, including new sources being pursued and progress since the last short-term financial plan.

Government Code section 13987(g)(1) requires demonstration of the implementation of ridership retention and recovery strategies, including policies that prioritize safety and cleanliness and streamlined coordination between transit operators - specifically schedule coordination, operational management, and site sharing - to improve the rider experience.

All financial data in this plan is drawn from MTA operating budget materials, SB 125 operator worksheets, ridership reports, service schedules, and MCOG/MTA planning records. The forecast uses the MTA-provided planning assumption of 5 percent annual escalation across operating expense categories, while operating revenues are assumed to remain flat for planning purposes and may stagnate or decline. The analytical adjustments are the separation of nonrecurring SB 125 and one-time LTF repayment funds from recurring structural revenue, and the inclusion of an approximately \$899,000 annual systemwide redesign savings/cost-avoidance scenario beginning in FY 2026-27.

1. Ridership Retention and Recovery Strategies

1.1 System Performance - Ridership and Fare Revenue

MTA ridership is recovering but remains uneven by route and market. FY 2023-24 ridership reached 167,956 riders, an increase of 20 percent over the prior year. FY 2024-25 year-to-date ridership reached 114,633, an increase of 8 percent over the prior-year period. FY 2025-26 year-to-date ridership reached 118,954, an increase of 4 percent over the same prior-year period.

The route-level pattern is important for long-range planning. Route 9 Ukiah Local remains the system backbone, while Route 65 CC Rider, Route 60 Coaster, and Ukiah Evening service show strong strategic value for intercity mobility and rider recovery. At the same time, several local and regional routes show weaker or mixed trends, indicating that the system should preserve transfer-critical trips while reducing lower-productivity off-peak service.

FY 2025-26 first-quarter fixed-route and DAR ridership was 46,839 compared with 45,314 in the prior-year quarter. College ridership increased from 5,668 to 7,217 over the same period, showing the importance of preserving student access and local Ukiah connections. Farebox ratio performance remains constrained, with total farebox ratio reported at 10 percent in the first quarter and 8 percent in the second quarter of FY 2025-26. The long-range strategy therefore treats ridership recovery and fiscal sustainability as connected: service must be easier to understand, better coordinated, and less costly to operate in low-demand periods.

1.2 Safety and Cleanliness Policies

The statute specifically names safety and cleanliness as ridership retention priorities. MTA has implemented several operational actions in the current planning period:

- Expanded the Transit Vehicle Operator break room to support cognitive recovery, rest, and safe operating conditions between assignments.
- Hired a second vehicle cleaner to improve vehicle cleanliness and rider experience.
- Required operators to conduct surface cleaning as part of post-trip activity on fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride vehicles.
- Continued investment in training, safety supplies, worker support, and facility maintenance through the operating budget.

These steps are low-cost, high-value service-quality measures. They help protect operator readiness, improve customer confidence, and reduce the risk that cleanliness or perceived safety becomes a barrier to ridership recovery.

1.3 Systemwide Redesign - Board and Management Strategy

MTA is preparing a systemwide redesign to align service with current ridership patterns, driver availability, and long-term fiscal capacity. The redesign is not intended as an across-the-board reduction. It is intended to preserve the highest-value mobility while reducing low-productivity off-peak cost and protecting interagency connections.

The redesign organizes MTA service into three tiers:

- Local backbone service: Route 9 Ukiah Local, Route 1 Willits Local, and Route 5 Fort Bragg Local.
- Regional corridor service: Route 20 Willits-Ukiah, Route 60 Coaster, Route 65 CC Rider, Route 75 South Coast-Ukiah, and Route 95 South Coast-Santa Rosa.
- Specialized and coverage service: Dial-A-Ride, reduced evening service, lifeline South Coast connections, and special-event or school-oriented service where warranted.

The redesign should preserve the required transfer hubs in Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, Navarro River Junction, and Santa Rosa. Cuts should be made first to trips that do not carry strong ridership, do not protect work/medical/school access, and do not feed another MTA or partner-agency service.

1.4 Off-Peak Savings, Run Cut, and Position Impacts

MTA has identified a near-term operating efficiency package estimated to net approximately \$899,000 in annual savings or cost avoidance under current trends. This package includes selected trip reductions and staffing efficiencies. The current planning concept includes:

- Removal of five Route 9 off-peak trips that do not serve priority transfer or peak-period needs.
- Consolidation of the regular day-shift run cut from 14 to 12 assignments.
- Reduction of evening bid assignments from 5 to 3.
- Dispatch reorganization into 2 regular dispatch positions plus 1 relief dispatch assignment.
- Possible job reductions if operating revenue does not stabilize and if attrition/reassignment cannot fully absorb the redesigned run cut.

These actions should be implemented only after validating the final public timetable, transfer windows, operator report and relief times, and labor agreement requirements. The financial forecast in this plan treats the \$899,000 as a planning-level annual savings/cost-avoidance scenario beginning in FY 2026-27.

1.5 Schedule Coordination Between Transit Operators

MTA service is part of a broader North Coast and US 101 mobility network. MTA is coordinating with Redwood Coast Transit Authority, Humboldt Transit Authority, Lake Transit Authority, Amtrak, SMART, and Sonoma-area

transit providers to preserve intercity service between Crescent City and Santa Rosa and to streamline transfers across the corridor.

The current schedules show existing transfer dependencies that should be protected in the redesign:

- Route 65 CC Rider connects Fort Bragg, Willits, Redwood Valley, Ukiah, Hopland, and Santa Rosa, with schedule notes identifying connections to Route 5, Route 60, and RCX.
- Route 95 provides South Coast-Santa Rosa service with connections to SMART, Sonoma Transit, and Santa Rosa CityBus.
- Route 75 connects the South Coast with Ukiah and explicitly connects with Route 60 at Navarro River Junction for North Coast access.
- Route 60 explicitly connects with Route 75 at Navarro River Junction.
- Route 1 and Route 5 provide local pulse structures in Willits and Fort Bragg that can feed Route 20, Route 60, and Route 65.

1.6 Mixed-Use Transit Center and Site Sharing

MTA is pursuing a mixed-use transit center directly across from the new courthouse in downtown Ukiah. The proposed project is a five-story mixed-use development. MTA would own and operate the entire first floor, approximately 22,000 square feet, dedicated to transit operations and passenger services. Operationally, this location is considered a prime site for a transit center and is one of the top locations previously recommended by the feasibility study and supported by the MTA Board of Directors.

The transit center is central to long-range SB 125 objectives. It supports ridership recovery by improving the passenger experience; supports schedule coordination and site sharing by hosting MTA and partner services; and supports long-term financial sustainability through the potential for rental revenue associated with the mixed-use development. The project is a priority candidate for TIRCP funding.

1.7 Fare Integration and Ease of Payment

MTA is in the process of systemwide fare realignment. Existing fares vary across routes and service areas, which can confuse passengers and complicate administration. Fare realignment is intended to simplify the rider experience, improve affordability for cost-sensitive riders, rebuild ridership, and strengthen intercounty travel.

MTA has had contactless payments on board since 2022. This is an important implementation advantage because fare simplification can be paired with existing payment technology rather than introduced as a separate future project. The long-range strategy should evaluate a simplified local fare, a service-based fare for longer intercity routes if needed, consistent reduced-fare categories, and interagency transfer policies as regional partners move toward more coordinated fare products.

1.8 Progress Since the Regional Short-Term Financial Plan

Action	Status	Operational Impact
SB 125 operating support	Implemented / bridge support in current period	Averted major service reductions and protected key routes serving students, seniors, low-income riders, and intercity travelers.
Fare realignment and simplification	Board discussion underway	Improves rider understanding, administrative efficiency, and regional fare coordination.
Contactless payments	Implemented since 2022	Supports easier payment, less cash handling, and future fare-capping or transfer policies.
Mixed-use Ukiah transit center	In planning / grant strategy	Creates downtown passenger hub, partner-agency site sharing, and future rental revenue opportunity.
Systemwide redesign / run cut	Planning scenario	Targets approximately \$899,000 in annual savings or cost avoidance while preserving transfer-critical trips.
US 101 corridor coordination	Ongoing with partner agencies	Builds intercity connectivity from Crescent City to Santa Rosa.

Safety and cleanliness initiatives	Implemented / ongoing	Improves rider experience and operator readiness.
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2. Five-Year Operating Funding Forecast

Government Code section 13987(g)(2) requires a five-year forecast of operating funding requirements with detail on all sources of funding proposed for operations, including new local and regional funding sources being pursued and progress and improvements implemented since the last submitted regional short-term financial plan.

The forecast horizon shown in this report runs FY 2026-27 through FY 2030-31. The current year is excluded from the display tables. Future years apply the MTA-provided assumption of 5 percent annual growth across expense categories, while revenues are assumed to remain flat for planning purposes and may stagnate or decline. SB 125 operating support and the MCOG FY22/23 LTF repayment are separated from the structural recurring baseline because they are not assumed as ongoing recurring revenues in the structural test.

2.1 Budget Escalation Rates

Cost / Revenue Category	FY26-27 to FY27-28	FY27-28 to FY28-29	FY28-29 to FY29-30	Notes
All operating revenue categories	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Flat planning assumption; revenues may stagnate or decline
All operating expense categories	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	MTA planning assumption for long-range forecast
SB 125 / one-time bridge funds	0.0% assumed	0.0% assumed	0.0% assumed	Shown as reference only unless new allocation is approved
Systemwide redesign savings	Flat planning estimate	Flat planning estimate	Flat planning estimate	Approximately \$899,000 annually beginning FY 2026-27

2.2 Operating Resources - Full Budget and Forecast

Table 2A presents MTA operating resources by source. Structural recurring revenues are separated from nonrecurring SB 125 and one-time LTF repayment resources.

Operating Resource	FY 2026-27 Forecast	FY 2027-28 Forecast	FY 2028-29 Forecast	FY 2029-30 Forecast	FY 2030-31 Forecast	Basis / Notes
Fixed Route Farebox Revenue	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Dial-A-Ride Farebox Revenue	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Redwood Coast Regional Center	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Sonoma County Contract	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Local Transportation Fund (LTF)	\$2,923,652	\$2,952,888	\$2,982,417	\$3,012,241	\$3,042,364	Recurring; 1% yearly increase
State Transit Assistance (STA)	\$876,829	\$832,987	\$807,997	\$784,357	\$760,827	Recurring; declining

						forecast
FTA 5310 Operating Assistance	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
FTA 5311 Operating Assistance	\$753,956	\$753,956	\$753,956	\$753,956	\$753,956	Recurring; flat planning forecast
FTA 5311(f) Operating Assistance	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Advertising Contract	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Senior Center Payments	(\$641,777)	(\$648,194)	(\$654,676)	(\$661,223)	(\$667,835)	Recurring; 1% yearly increase
Senior Center Reimbursements	\$641,777	\$648,194	\$654,676	\$661,223	\$667,835	Recurring; 1% yearly increase
Senior Center Administration	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$26,500	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Maintenance Fuel Revenue	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$30,500	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Investment Income	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Other - Fuel Rebates, etc.	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Local Operating	\$293,485	\$293,485	\$293,485	\$293,485	\$293,485	Recurring; flat planning forecast
Total Structural Recurring Revenue	\$6,211,422	\$6,196,816	\$6,201,355	\$6,207,539	\$6,214,132	Sum of recurring operating resources; flat planning forecast
SB 125 Operating Support (reference)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Temporary bridge funding not assumed in future-year forecast
MCOG FY22/23 LTF Repayment (reference)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	One-time prior-year resource not assumed in future-year forecast
Grand Total Resources	\$6,211,422	\$6,196,816	\$6,201,355	\$6,207,539	\$6,214,132	Future-year recurring

						resources only
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2.3 Operating Requirements - Full Budget and Forecast

Table 2B presents MTA operating requirements by category and the systemwide redesign savings scenario. The redesign savings line is a planning estimate and must be validated through final blocking, run cutting, labor review, and public schedule development.

Operating Requirement	FY 2026-27 Forecast	FY 2027-28 Forecast	FY 2028-29 Forecast	FY 2029-30 Forecast	FY 2030-31 Forecast	Basis / Notes
Salaries	\$4,186,377	\$4,395,696	\$4,615,481	\$4,846,255	\$5,088,568	5% annual forecast
Benefits	\$2,210,158	\$2,320,666	\$2,436,699	\$2,558,534	\$2,686,461	5% annual forecast
Services / User Fees	\$515,550	\$541,328	\$568,394	\$596,814	\$626,655	5% annual forecast
Materials / Supplies	\$934,028	\$980,729	\$1,029,765	\$1,081,253	\$1,135,316	5% annual forecast
Utilities	\$154,455	\$162,178	\$170,287	\$178,801	\$187,741	5% annual forecast
Insurance	\$420,000	\$441,000	\$463,050	\$486,203	\$510,513	5% annual forecast
Taxes	\$1,680	\$1,764	\$1,852	\$1,945	\$2,042	5% annual forecast
Miscellaneous	\$69,300	\$72,765	\$76,403	\$80,223	\$84,234	5% annual forecast
Leases / Rentals	\$12,600	\$13,230	\$13,892	\$14,587	\$15,316	5% annual forecast
Total Requirements - before redesign savings	\$8,504,148	\$8,929,356	\$9,375,823	\$9,844,614	\$10,336,845	Future-year expense forecast at 5%
Systemwide redesign savings / cost avoidance	(\$899,000)	(\$899,000)	(\$899,000)	(\$899,000)	(\$899,000)	Off-peak trip reductions, run-cut efficiencies, and dispatch reorganization
Total Requirements - after redesign savings	\$7,605,148	\$8,030,356	\$8,476,823	\$8,945,614	\$9,437,845	Planning scenario for sustainability test

2.4 Structural Revenue-Expenditure Gap Analysis

Table 2C measures sustainability as required by SB 125: structural recurring revenues versus total operating requirements, excluding nonrecurring SB 125 and one-time LTF repayment funds. The table also shows the effect of the systemwide redesign savings scenario.

Structural Gap Analysis	FY 2026-27 Forecast	FY 2027-28 Forecast	FY 2028-29 Forecast	FY 2029-30 Forecast	FY 2030-31 Forecast	Notes
Total Structural Recurring Revenue	\$6,211,422	\$6,196,816	\$6,201,355	\$6,207,539	\$6,214,132	Excludes SB 125 and one-time repayment

Nonrecurring SB 125 + LTF repayment (reference)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Not assumed in future-year forecast
Total Requirements - before redesign savings	\$8,504,148	\$8,929,356	\$9,375,823	\$9,844,614	\$10,336,845	Shows cost pressure before mitigation
Structural Surplus / (Deficit) before redesign	(\$2,088,377)	(\$2,513,585)	(\$2,960,052)	(\$3,428,843)	(\$3,921,074)	Recurring revenue less baseline requirements
Total Requirements - after redesign savings	\$7,605,148	\$8,030,356	\$8,476,823	\$8,945,614	\$9,437,845	Includes approximately \$899,000 annual savings/cost avoidance
Structural Surplus / (Deficit) after redesign	(\$1,393,726)	(\$1,833,540)	(\$2,275,468)	(\$2,738,075)	(\$3,223,713)	Size of remaining annual recurring gap
Budget Balance after nonrecurring reference funds	(\$1,393,726)	(\$1,833,540)	(\$2,275,468)	(\$2,738,075)	(\$3,223,713)	No future-year nonrecurring bridge funds assumed

2.5 New Local and Regional Funding Sources Being Pursued

1. TIRCP for the mixed-use Ukiah transit center: MTA is pursuing TIRCP funding for the downtown Ukiah mixed-use transit center. The project advances ridership, mode connectivity, passenger amenities, and regional coordination.
2. Transit center rental revenue: The proposed mixed-use development creates an opportunity for new rental revenue that can help diversify MTA resources over time.
3. Fare realignment and contactless payment utilization: MTA has had contactless payments on board since 2022. Fare simplification can improve ease of payment, support ridership recovery, and reduce administrative burden.
4. Regional operating and transfer coordination: MTA will continue working with MCOG, RCTA, HTA, LTA, Amtrak, SMART, and Sonoma-area partners to strengthen intercity service and pursue cost-effective corridor operations.
5. State and federal operating assistance: MTA will continue to advocate for enhanced state and federal transit operating support and pursue grants that offset capital costs which would otherwise pressure the operating budget.

3. Structural Sustainability - Risks and Required Actions

MTA is entering the SB 125 long-range period with improving ridership but continued operating pressure. The current-year operating budget establishes the baseline for the future-year forecast, and the future-year outlook shows widening structural deficits when expense growth continues at 5 percent annually while recurring revenues remain flat or decline.

The most important sustainability risk is that SB 125 and one-time funds are functioning as bridge funding, not recurring structural revenue. Removing those nonrecurring sources exposes a larger underlying gap. MTA is therefore pursuing a two-part strategy: (1) reduce recurring costs through systemwide redesign, off-peak savings, and

run-cut efficiency, and (2) pursue new recurring or semi-recurring revenues through the mixed-use transit center, rental revenue, fare realignment, and ongoing state/federal advocacy.

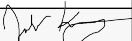
Required actions:

- Complete the systemwide redesign with a validated public timetable, run cut, transfer protection plan, and equity review.
- Preserve the transfer-critical trips connecting Route 60 to Route 75, Route 65 to Route 5 and Route 60, and Route 95/65 to SMART, Amtrak, Sonoma, and regional partner services.
- Advance the mixed-use transit center through TIRCP and related funding opportunities, with a rental revenue strategy that supports long-term operating sustainability.
- Complete fare realignment and simplify customer-facing fares while protecting low-income riders, seniors, students, riders with disabilities, and transit-dependent passengers.
- Monitor quarterly ridership, farebox recovery, cost per passenger, cost per hour, and route-level productivity to determine whether additional action is needed before FY 2027-28.
- Maintain safety, cleanliness, and operator support initiatives as ridership retention strategies rather than discretionary add-ons.

Certification

This Long Range Financial Plan is submitted by the Mendocino Council of Governments in fulfillment of Government Code section 13987(d), requiring submission to CalSTA by June 30, 2026. The plan addresses the two required elements of section 13987(g): (1) demonstration of ridership retention and recovery strategies being implemented, and (2) a five-year forecast of operating funding requirements with detail on all sources, new sources being pursued, and progress since the short-term financial plan.

MCOG certifies that the financial data in this plan is drawn from MTA budget and planning records, with future-year forecast assumptions provided by MTA for long-range planning purposes. Ridership retention strategies documented herein are sourced to MTA operating materials, ridership reports, schedules, Board materials, and project information available through the current planning period.

Authorized Signature	Title	Agency	Date
	Executive Director	Mendocino Council of Governments	June 2026
Jacob King 	Executive Director	Mendocino Transit Authority	June 2026

Sources

- MTA FY 2023-24 Operating Budget.
- MTA FY 2024-25 Operating Budget and wage tables.
- MTA FY 2025-26 Operating Budget.
- Mendocino SB 125 Transit Operator Worksheet.
- MCOG SB 125 Allocation Plan, December 2023.
- MTA SB 125 Operating Expense Funding Request, FY 2025-26.
- MTA FY 2023-24, FY 2024-25, and FY 2025-26 ridership reports.
- MTA Fares Realignment and Simplification Board materials.
- MTA current public schedules for Routes 1, 5, 7, 9, 20, 60, 65, 75, and 95.

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD of DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. M2026-__

ADOPTING THE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN FOR THE SB 125 TIRCP AND ZETCP

WHEREAS,

- The Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) competitive program was created in 2014 and modified in 2015, to provide grants from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to fund transformative capital improvements that will modernize California’s intercity, commuter, and urban rail systems, and bus and ferry transit systems, to significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, vehicle miles traveled, and congestion;
- SB 125 (Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023) and Assembly Bill 102 (Chapter 38, Statutes of 2023) amended the Budget Act of 2023 to appropriate \$4 billion of General Fund to the TIRCP over the next two fiscal years as well as \$910 million of GGRF funding and \$190 million of Public Transportation Account funding over the next four fiscal years to establish the Zero-Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP);
- SB 125 guides the distribution of TIRCP funds on a population-based formula to regional transportation planning agencies, which will have the flexibility to use the money to fund transit operations or capital improvements, and AB 102 is to be allocated to regional transportation planning agencies on a population-based formula and another formula based on revenues to fund zero-emission transit equipment and operations;
- Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) is the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Mendocino County and will receive an estimated total of \$11,063,615 in a separate cash account over the four-year period, including \$110,636 for Administration of the program, and shall be responsible for reporting of data and expenditures and other requirements;
- The initial Final SB 125 Formula-Based TIRCP and ZETCP Guidelines, published by CalSTA on September 29, 2023 (the “2023 Guidelines”), first established the requirement for each RTPA to develop a regional Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for transit within its jurisdiction, and authorized the use of up to 1% of total multi-year SB 125 funding for RTPA administration and planning expenses related to preparing and implementing the short-term and long-term financial plans;
- The 2023 Guidelines first established, and the 2025 Guidelines reaffirmed, the requirement for each RTPA to develop and submit to CalSTA a Long-Term Financial Plan approved by the RTPA Board of Directors; the 2025 Guidelines further specified a submission deadline of June 30, 2026;
- The LTFP is required to cover a multi-year planning horizon, identify existing and anticipated funding sources for transit operations and capital within the region, describe how the region’s transit operator(s) plan to maintain or increase transit service and ridership beyond the SB 125

bridge funding period, and address how long-term operating needs will be met in a fiscally sustainable manner;

- MCOG has developed the Long-Term Financial Plan in consultation with the MTA, the STA-eligible transit operator within MCOG’s jurisdiction, incorporating ridership projections, revenue forecasts, funding sustainability strategies, and the identification of priority capital and operating needs consistent with the objectives of the TIRCP and ZETCP;
- The LTFP reflects MCOG’s commitment to expanding and preserving transit service for Mendocino County residents, including those in disadvantaged and low-income communities, consistent with the equity objectives of SB 535 and AB 1550; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT:

MCOG hereby adopts the SB 125 Long-Term Financial Plan for the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program and Zero-Emission Transit Capital Program, as prepared by MTA staff in consultation with the Mendocino Council of Governments, and authorizes the Executive Director to transmit the adopted Long-Term Financial Plan to the California State Transportation Agency in fulfillment of the requirements set forth in the Final SB 125 Formula-Based TIRCP and ZETCP Guidelines dated January 10, 2025.

ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION was moved by Director _____, seconded by Director _____, and approved on this 1st day of June, 2026, by the following roll call vote:

- AYES:
- NOES:
- ABSTAINING:
- ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chairman declared the resolution adopted, AND SO ORDERED.

ATTEST: Nephela Barrett, Executive Director

John Haschak, Chair



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS STAFF REPORT

TITLE: Adoption of 2026 Regional Transportation
Plan & Active Transportation Plan (RTP & ATP)

DATE PREPARED: 5/22/26

SUBMITTED BY: James Sookne, Program Manager

MEETING DATE: 6/1/26

BACKGROUND: The Regional Transportation Plan/Active Transportation Plan (RTP/ATP) is the region's long-term planning document covering a 20-year time span intended to promote a safe and efficient transportation system for the movement of people and goods throughout the region. The primary purpose of the plan is to identify transportation needs and priority projects in all modes of transportation including streets, highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, aviation and transit. Updated every four years, the RTP/ATP covers present and future transportation needs, deficiencies and constraints, as well as providing estimates of available funding for future transportation projects in the region.

On September 16, staff released the Public Draft RTP/ATP. Staff presented the draft at the October 6 Board meeting. As part of the public outreach process, staff hosted four in-person public workshops around the county between September 22 and October 6. There was also a county-wide virtual workshop on October 7. In addition to workshops, staff attended community events throughout the county to gather public input. Virtual engagement options were also provided, including an interactive mapping tool. Comments on the public draft were accepted from the Board, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) interested agencies, and the public through November 5. Public comments were also accepted at the public hearing in December, where the Board adopted the Initial Study/Negative Declaration and continued adoption of the RTP/ATP to the February 2026 meeting.

Following the public hearing, staff incorporated comments received from Caltrans and additional public feedback as appropriate into a revised draft, which went before the TAC at their January 2026 meeting. The TAC provided additional feedback and made a recommendation to take the RTP/ATP, as amended, to the Board for adoption. Minor changes and corrections have been incorporated into the final document, which is presented today for proposed adoption. The revised final RTP/ATP and appendices are available on the MCOG website for review.

Staff had originally anticipated bringing the RTP/ATP to the Board for adoption in December. However, due to timing issues related to new authority given to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) as part of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process, adoption was delayed. Per Government Code 65584.05(a), the final RHNA methodology and draft allocation should be released prior to adoption of the updated regional transportation plan. Unfortunately, HCD did not provide their approval of the proposed methodology until very recently, which delayed both the RHNA and RTP/ATP adoption. Staff submitted the final iteration of the draft methodology on May 15 and received approval from HCD on May 18, enabling both the RHNA process and RTP/ATP approval to move forward.

At this meeting, staff is asking the Board to adopt the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan. A draft resolution adopting the RTP/ATP has been prepared and is included with this report.

ACTION REQUIRED: By resolution, adopt the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

ALTERNATIVES: Continue adoption of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan to a future meeting (not recommended).

RECOMMENDATION: By resolution, adopt the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION NO. M2026 - _____

ADOPTING THE 2026 MENDOCINO COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHEREAS,

- The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) is the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Mendocino County;
- State law requires the preparation of Regional Transportation Plans by regional transportation planning agencies to address transportation issues and to assist local and state decision makers with shaping California's transportation infrastructure;
- In accordance with Government Code Section 65080, MCOG is required to regularly adopt a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP);
- The last RTP for the Mendocino County region was adopted February 7, 2022;
- MCOG prepared, in accordance with the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, a Draft 2026 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan, which was distributed for review and comment;
- The State's Active Transportation Program Guidelines identify specific components that should be included in an Active Transportation Plan, which have been incorporated into the Active Transportation Element and Plan section of the document;
- Throughout the RTP and ATP update process MCOG has made efforts to include and consult with Tribal governments, other governmental agencies, community organizations, the private sector, and members of the public, consistent with the adopted Public Participation Plan;
- At their meeting of December 1, 2025, MCOG found that there was no substantial evidence that adoption of the RTP and ATP would have a significant effect on the environment, and adopted a Negative Declaration for the Plan, pursuant to CEQA; therefore, be it
- MCOG's Technical Advisory Committee reviewed the RTP and ATP at their meeting of January 21, 2026, and recommended approval; and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Mendocino Council of Governments hereby adopts the 2026 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION was moved by Director _____, seconded by Director _____, and carried this 1st day of June, 2026, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINING:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chairman declared the resolution adopted, AND SO ORDERED.

ATTEST: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director

Chair



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

STAFF REPORT

TITLE: Fiscal Year 2026/27 Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) & COG Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Villa, Deputy Director/Fiscal Manager DATE PREPARED: 5/21/2026

BACKGROUND:

I have prepared the stand-alone budget document, attached separately, including an overview, reference material, and the resolutions for adoption with all of the exhibits that detail the budget.

On May 4, I made a presentation to the Council, as an opportunity for input and questions. Staff and council members participated in a workshop to better understand the budget proposals and how these were developed.

The draft budget included recommendations from four committees* during budget development, which are documented in the staff report, presentation, and committee meeting minutes.

All information to date is summarized for the record in the allocating resolutions. The summary spreadsheets (one-page and four-page formats) have been updated. Total revenues are **\$16,805,063**, and total proposed allocations are **\$10,701,344**. There is a substantial balance for later allocation, primarily from SB 125 transit funds in the Amended Allocation Plan programmed for future years.

Final notes and changes since the May draft budget workshop include:

- #12b. Unmet Transit Needs. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) met May 18, 2026 (minutes to follow when available) to review MTA's report and recommended that "*there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet*" for Fiscal Year 2026/27, concurring with the Transit Productivity Committee recommendation of one need that was reasonable to meet, where the SSTAC added an additional need for a total of two needs that are reasonable to meet.
- #12c. Public Transit. Staff has collected all necessary data to make the findings required by the Transportation Development Act (TDA) for funding of Mendocino Transit Authority's annual claim. Supporting documentation for the resolution will be on file and available for verification and audit. After MTA adopts their final budget, we expect to have remaining information required to be submitted with the claim for funds, including MTA's budget, before FY 2026/27 funds are released.
- #12d. Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. The resolution details fund balances and carryover not entirely reflected in the budget spreadsheets. STBG comprises three separate MCOG programs: Partnership Funding, Local Assistance, and Formula Distribution. The resolution narrative (second page) identifies cumulative amounts in the Partnership program.

#12e. SB 125 Formula Transit Programs. For the Final Budget proposal, staff confirmed expenditures anticipated in FY 2026/27, consistent with the Amended Allocation Plan adopted by MCOG on May 5 and submitted to CalSTA May 20, 2025. Of the total multi-year fund estimate of \$11,063,615, the proposed 2026/27 allocations are \$283,459.

The Council as a whole has taken no action on the budget during this process. The budget before you now is the result of deliberations by committees and staff. At this June meeting, action is required to adopt the budget, by way of allocating resolutions, for the coming fiscal year.

ACTION REQUIRED:

- a. Adopt the resolution to fund MCOG activities: Reserves, Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian program, and Planning. The budget component for Planning will fund the Overall Work Program, adopted at the May 4, meeting.
- b. Adopt the resolution to make the annual finding of Unmet Transit Needs. This documents the process that began the budget cycle with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council's workshop in November and will conclude with this finding by resolution.
- c. Adopt the resolution to fund Mendocino Transit Authority operations, senior center transportation contracts, and long-term capital projects.
- d. Adopt the resolution to allocate STBG funds for MCOG's Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution by Formula to Member Agencies.
- e. Adopt the resolution identifying SB 125 Formula-Based TIRCP and ZETCP funds, allocating a third year of Administration and a second year of projects by Mendocino Transit Authority.
- f. Adopt the resolution to allocate Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) funds for program services and direct costs.

ALTERNATIVES:

- a. If the Council chooses to make changes to the budget for Reserves, Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian program, or Planning, direct staff to adjust the allocating resolutions accordingly and authorize the Chair to execute them, so that funds can be released on time. The next opportunity for Council approval would be the August 24 meeting (unless a special meeting is called), and delay could cause hardship for the entities that receive funds to be allocated. Or, the Council could release portions of individual budget line items as needed until the budget is adopted. – *changes not recommended*
- b. The Council could adopt an alternative finding that “*there no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet,*” however one of the recommended needs is funded by the Board approved SB 125 Allocation Plan and the other recommended need is being met with a route adjustment and does not require new funding. Or you could choose not to make any finding, thereby not concluding the annual process. – *not recommended*
- c. The Council could request that MTA further revise their claim. Note that MTA may revise or submit another claim during the year. – *not recommended at this time*

- d. The Council could revise its established policy for allocation of STBG funds. The resolution notes, “*It is MCOG’s intention to reevaluate its STBG formula for distribution to the member agencies if a forthcoming federal transportation legislative bill substantially changes the amount of, or designated use of, STBG funds.*” There have been no such changes made to date, although the authorization was under the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, a.k.a. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will expire in September. Also, the Council could revise the policy for “off-the-top” allocations to the Partnership Funding Program and Local Assistance. – *not recommended*
- e. No alternatives are identified for the SB 125 Formula-Based TIRCP and ZETCP programs.
- f. No alternatives are identified for the NREN energy efficiency program funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff concurs with the four committee recommendations. Approve the FY 2026/27 RTPA & COG Budget by adopting the six resolutions for execution by the Chair. If desired, this action can be made in a single motion.

Enclosure: 2026/27 Budget (as separate PDF digital document)

NOTE: A limited number of print copies of this Budget are made available by request. Copies of the final adopted Budget will be produced and distributed as needed. The digital version will be available for download on MCOG’s website.

- * The committees recommending on the budget are:
- Executive Committee
 - Technical Advisory Committee
 - Transit Productivity Committee
 - Social Services Transportation Advisory Council



MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Agenda #14.d.

Reports

MCOG Meeting

6/1/2026

STAFF REPORT

TITLE: Summary of Meetings

DATE PREPARED: 5/20/2026

SUBMITTED BY: Julie St. Pierre, Administrative Assistant

BACKGROUND: Since our last regular MCOG meeting packet, MCOG Administration and Planning staff have attended (or will have attended) the following meetings on behalf of MCOG:

Date	Meeting/Event	Staff
May 4	MCOG Board Meeting	Barrett, Orth, Villa, Pedrotti, Sookne, Ortega, & Walker
May 5	MCOG Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN) Marketing Meeting	Walker & Felice
May 6, 19	MCOG NREN Admin Check-in	Barrett, Walker, Felice, & St. Pierre
May 6, 19	NREN Marketing Sub-committee	Walker & Felice
May 6	NREN Programs/Admin Meeting	Barrett, Walker, & Felice
May 6	Pavement Management Program (PMP) Status Update	Barrett & Ortega
May 7	Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Steering Committee	Barrett
May 7	Energy Careers Education & Training (ECET) Construction Corp Palace Hotel Tour	Walker
May 8	D1 Transit Plan Engagement	Sookne
May 8	Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF)	Barrett, Villa, & Davey-Bates
May 11	Housing & Community Development (HCD) & MCOG Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Meeting	Barrett & Sookne
May 11	NREN Finance Committee Meeting	Barrett, Walker, & Felice
May 11	North State Super Region (NSSR) Working Group	Barrett
May 11	Urban Greening Technical Advisory (TA) Workshop	Barrett
May 11	NREN Public Equity Program Team Meeting	Walker & Felice
May 12	NREN Mendo at Laytonville Community Resources Fair – Kit Event	Felice
May 12, 26	Community Resource Acquisition (RA) Breakout	Walker & Felice
May 12	Brooktrails' Project Development Team (PDT)	Barrett
May 13, 27	MCOG x Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) Data Check-in	Walker & Felice
May 13	Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) Group Meeting	Barrett
May 14	NREN Working Hands at Redwood Empire Fairgrounds – Kit Event	Walker, Felice, & Lowblad
May 14	California Transportation Commission (CTC) Meeting – SF Bay Area	Barrett
May 14, 28	NREN ECET Program Team Meeting	Walker & Felice
May 14, 28	NREN Residential Resource Acquisition (RA) Development	Walker & Felice
May 18	Hopland Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Project Meeting	Barrett
May 18	NREN California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Workforce Standards Webinar	Barrett, Walker, & Felice
May 18	MCOG Social Services Transportation Advisory (SSTAC) Meeting	Barrett, Villa, Orth, Sookne, & St. Pierre
May 19	Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Workshop	Villa
May 19	NREN – California Regional Energy Networks (CalRen) Meeting	Barrett
May 19	Redwood Region RISE (RRRISE) Voting Meeting	Barrett

May 20	NREN Mendo at Willits Food Bank – Kit Event	Felice
May 20	NREN Unregulated Fuels Meeting	Walker & Felice
May 21	Home Energy Advisor – Operations Meeting	Felice
May 21	MCOG Civic Spark meeting	Barrett
May 26	MCOG Sea Level Rise (SLR) Project Meeting	Barrett, Ortega, & Pedrotti
May 27	NREN Governing Partners (GP) Meeting	Barrett, Walker, & Felice

We will provide information to the Board regarding the outcome of any of these meetings as requested.

ACTION REQUIRED: None.

ALTERNATIVES: None identified.

RECOMMENDATION: None. This is for information only.