

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

APPROVED 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 Taaning, 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 strikeout 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