

# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES  
Monday, April 5, 2021

Teleconference Only  
*In compliance with Governor's Executive Order N-29-20*

**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)

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. with Directors Jim Brown, Greta Kanne, Scott Ignacio, Tess Albin-Smith, John Haschak, Rex Jackman (Caltrans/PAC), and Dan Gjerde present by Zoom teleconference; Chair Gjerde presiding. [Clerk's note: the Public Appointee seat was vacant.]

Staff present on the call: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director / CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Lisa Davey-Bates, Planning Principal; James Sookne, Program Manager; Danielle Casey, Project Coordinator, and Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant.

**Note:** Public comment was invited via online comment form; staff monitored for incoming comments throughout the meeting, reporting periodically.

**2. Convene as RTPA**

**3. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee**

**4. Public Expression** – None.

**5. Presentation: Gualala Downtown Streetscape Enhancement Project.** Ms. Barrett gave a brief overview of the project, describing the area characteristics and explaining that there are various alternatives in the plan. Frank Demling, Caltrans Project Manager; Eliza Walker, Caltrans Senior Environmental Planner; and Elias Karam, Caltrans Design Senior were present to give a slide presentation and to help answer questions. The initial construction project was described as well as alternatives 4A and 4B.

Ms. Barrett then shared the results of the public survey. There were 189 total responses, 89.4% of which were South Coast residents. Full results are available on the Caltrans website. She went on to give a breakdown of the project funding available.

In Board discussion, Director Haschak commented on the lengthy decision process, and Director Gjerde asked clarifying questions about funding. Ms. Barrett explained that \$3 million of the project has been funded, while another \$4 million remains unfunded. Following a question from Director Albin-Smith, Ms. Barrett informed the board that new funding will be available from HR 133, the federal Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA).

The Chair then opened public comment.

- Tom Murphy, Vice Chair of the Gualala Municipal Advisory Council, expressed his support of the project due to safety needs and suffering businesses, urging action. He provided photos to demonstrate potential parking zones in the area.
- John Bower of Gualala expressed concern over the need for parking spaces in Gualala, describing status of his property in the project area.
- Dave Shpak of Gualala urged the Board to take action and move the project along, to complete environmental and design phases for shovel-ready funding opportunities.

- George Provencher of Gualala called for priority on funding and completion of design, stating people would adjust to the best recommendation based on all input.

Further Board discussion included:

- How far can the project progress before receiving the full amount of funds? (Brown) – The Right of Way component can be started while construction funding is being secured.
- Can the Board give direction to choose a certain option? (Brown) – Yes, the project should be ready for a decision in late summer or early fall.
- Was the ATP grant application scored, and what can be done to improve the score in the future? (Gjerde) – Yes, some tips included additional promotion through public outreach and adding non-infrastructure components, among other things.
- Encouragement to Gualala with this long-term project; Willits waited 50 years for its bypass, opened several years ago. (Kanne)

The item was not agendized for action at this meeting; no action was taken.

## 6. Executive Committee Recommendations of February 25, 2021

- a. Draft FY 2021/22 Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) Budget. Ms. Orth gave an overview of the Executive Committee’s budget meeting. She referred to the provided draft budget, one of two options the committee recommended as drafted by staff, for further development during the annual budget process. Actual Local Transportation Fund sales tax revenues for FY 2019/20 topped \$4 million for the first time and are projected to go higher in the year ahead. The County Auditor’s 2021/22 estimate of LTF sales tax revenue is \$4,525,780. While public officials were bracing last spring for revenue losses to result from the pandemic, those losses have impacted fuel taxes rather than sales taxes. Transit would be the beneficiary of the increase in revenue under this proposal, as Administration and Planning are not requesting more funds. Allocations from other sources for the Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP) are as recommended by staff and Technical Advisory Committee. Total revenues from all sources are estimated at approximately \$9.3 million to date, All MCOG program allocations are recommended at \$1.3 million. The total balance available for public transit comes to over \$7 million including federal CARES Act funds. The May Council meeting will include a budget workshop, and the final budget will be on the June agenda for adoption. This report was for information only; no action was taken.

- b. Approval of Extensions to Professional Services Agreements through September 30, 2022

- i. Administration & Fiscal Services – Dow & Associates

- ii. Planning Services – Davey-Bates Consulting

Ms. Barrett explained that Dow & Associates and Davey-Bates Consulting contracts with MCOG are for a five-year period with five one-year extensions; the current extension of contracts will expire in September 2021. In discussion, Director Kanne asked about procedures following the extension limit and suggested starting to plan now for the next contracts procurement. Ms. Barrett suggested allowing at least one year, and noted that MCOG staff could not be involved in that process due to the conflict of interest.

**Upon motion** by Director Haschak, second by Director Kanne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the existing contracts for Administration & Fiscal Services and Planning Services are extended for one year.

## 7. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations of March 17, 2021

- a. Approval of Amendment to 2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Mr. Sookne reported that, following the adoption of the 2020 RTIP, the City of Ukiah

concluded a traffic analysis that included the intersection of Low Gap and Bush Street. The analysis recommended a single-lane roundabout to improve circulation and reduce queuing at the intersection. Based on recommended design of the proposed roundabout, City engineering staff has determined that the cost of the engineering and right-of-way phases would be approximately \$300,000 and the construction costs for the new design would be approximately \$500,000. Staff supports the City's request to modify the existing programming for this project. At their March 17 meeting, the TAC recommended approval of this RTIP amendment. The Project Programming Request (PPR) for the RTIP amendment was provided in the agenda packet. To adhere to the California Transportation Commission's preparation schedule, MCOG staff submitted the STIP amendment to Caltrans on March 15. Director Brown noted that the topic came before the City Council, and there was a unanimous decision to move forward with the new design.

**Upon motion** by Director Kanne, second by Director Ignacio, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the amendment to the 2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program is approved.

- b. Approval of Fourth Amendment to Fiscal Year 2020/21 Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP). Ms. Barrett referred to Ms. Pedrotti's staff report. She reported that the fourth amendment came at the request of the City of Ukiah, and that its purpose is to reprogram unexpended planning funds. She reviewed the list of work elements as their funding would be utilized in the new fiscal year. The amendment would reallocate the City's \$45,000 of Local Transportation Funds (LTF) in Work Element 12, from Sidewalk Maintenance and ADA Curb Ramp Inventory to a new project, Trench Cut Fee Study and Implementation Services.

**Upon motion** by Haschak, second by Brown, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the Fourth Amendment to the FY 2020/21 OWP is approved as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Executive Director is authorized to sign appropriate certifications and revised OWP Agreement (as needed), and forward to Caltrans as required.

**8. Discussion/Direction: Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (HR 133) Funding Distribution to Local Agencies.** Ms. Barrett explained that California's apportionment of the funding is \$911.8 million. The CTC approved a distribution based 50% on the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) formula and 50% on the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) formula. This scenario results in a total of \$1,622,007 for the Mendocino County region, with \$423,875 flowing through the STBG and \$1,198,132 through STIP (including Planning, Programming & Monitoring of \$59,907). Due to the low total amount of STIP funding, staff is recommending that the full amount of funding (less PPM) be awarded to local agencies on a formula basis. The Technical Advisory Committee discussed the CRRSAA funding at their March meeting, and although the amount of funding was unknown at that point, all TAC members present indicated their preference for a formula distribution. Staff anticipated presenting a recommendation from the TAC for Board approval in May, before the CTC's adoption of a mid-cycle STIP at their June 23 meeting. Following a question from Director Haschak, Ms. Barrett explained that no projects would be negatively impacted by the formula distribution method of funding.

**Upon motion** by Haschak, second by Brown, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that staff is directed to develop formula funding scenarios to grant CRRSAA funding to local agencies for review and recommendation by the Technical Advisory Committee and adoption by the Council at a future meeting.

**9. Consideration of Letter Opposing Assembly Bill 786.** Ms. Barrett reported that she had drafted a letter in opposition to Assembly Bill 786, which would require the Executive Director of the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to be appointed by the Governor. She explained that appointments of commissioners are political, while staff is hired by the commission based on qualifications, so are bipartisan and independent. This bill could degrade that impartiality. She predicted that a director appointed by the Governor might not voice the needs of rural agencies and cause them even more struggle to attain funds.

**Upon motion** by Brown, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that staff will send the letter of opposition to Assembly Bill 786.

**10. Annual Appointment to Standing Committees: California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) – continued from February 1, 2021.** After a brief review of duties, Director Haschak volunteered to be the Alternate attendee for CALCOG and was nominated by Director Ignacio. **Upon motion** by Ignacio, second by Albin-Smith, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that Director Haschak is nominated as the CALCOG Alternate Delegate.

**11-14. Consent Calendar.** Upon motion by Brown, second by Kanne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, Jackman/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

**11. Approval of February 1, 2021 Minutes - as written**

**12. Approval of Second Fiscal Year 2020/21 Budget Amendment: Releasing Temporary Reserves of Local Transportation Funds to LTF 2% Bicycle & Pedestrian Program by Amending Budget Tables and Resolution No. M2020-04, Formalizing Board Action of February 1, 2021**

**Resolution No. M2020-04 - Amended**

Allocating Fiscal Year 2020/21 Funds and  
2019/20 Carryover Funds for Administration,  
Planning and Reserves

(Reso. #M2020-04 as amended is incorporated herein by reference)

**13. Approval of February 25, 2021 Executive Committee Minutes - as written**

**14. Acceptance of 2019/20 Fiscal Audit of Mendocino Transit Authority - MTA received a clean audit**

**15. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee.** Upon motion by Ignacio, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 Ayes – Brown, Kanne, Ignacio, Albin-Smith, Haschak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

**16. Reports - Information**

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Director Jackman stated he would come to the next meeting with new information on the Blosser Lane project. The Chair expressed appreciation toward the amount of active projects Caltrans had listed.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. No report.

- c. North Coast Railroad Authority. Director Haschak reported that the NCRA is holding quarterly meetings, and reported the transition to a new board for the Great Redwood Trail forming soon, replacing NCRA according to legislation. Senator McGuire's SB 1029 (NCRA Closure and Transition to Trails Act of 2018) will turn the NCRA into the Great Redwood Trail Agency headed by the Senate Transportation Committee on April 13. The bill will transfer NCRA funds to Sonoma-Marine Area Rail Transit (SMART).
- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to her written staff report.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
  - i. *April 15, 2021 – Mendocino Express Corridor Virtual Ribbon Cutting Ceremony*. Ms. Orth reported that ChargePoint Inc., in partnership with MCOG, now has installed electric vehicle fast charging stations in Laytonville, Ukiah, Cloverdale and Santa Rosa, completing a five-year project funded by a grant from the California Energy Commission. Another grant was awarded to Recargo, Inc.'s project, with sites in Leggett, Willits and Hopland. She invited all to attend the online statewide celebration, where she will represent MCOG on a speaker panel. In response to a question from Director Albin-Smith, the grant funded sites on the 101 corridor, while new sources have funded other charging locations in Mendocino County. Further discussion ensued.
  - ii. *California Transportation Foundation (CTF) Forum, March 16, 2021*. Ms. Orth reported that some topics of discussion included investing in disadvantaged communities, electrifying rail, differences between transportation bills and infrastructure bills, climate, equity, safety, transit and economic recovery. The work of President Biden's transition team and Caltrans' strategic plan were highlighted. Director Albin-Smith added that the people who need public transportation the most were impacted most by the pandemic.
  - iii. *Miscellaneous*. Ms. Barrett reported that \$2 million of Complete Streets funding was acquired for the Covelo SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail project.
  - iv. *Next Meeting Date - Monday, May 3, 2021*. Agenda highlights are a Virtual Transportation Tour of Ukiah Area, Coordinated Plan Adoption, and Budget Workshop.
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
  - i. *2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Action Transportation Update – Outreach through Social Pinpoint*. Ms. Ellard reported that staff aims to bring the draft plan to the Board in December. She added that staff is using the new outreach tool known as Social Pinpoint, which has provided considerable public feedback.
  - ii. *Miscellaneous*. None.
- g. MCOG Directors. None.
- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Director Albin-Smith briefly noted the annual Regional Leadership Forum of March 22-23.

**17. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant