

2022

MENDOCINO COUNTY

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

& ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Final  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This overview of the transportation system elements presents the highlights of the key actions presented in this document. Goals, objectives, and policies are presented in the full text accompanied by detailed information regarding needs assessment, action plan and financial/funding constraints.

### STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM ELEMENT

The Significant Highway Corridors are facilities that connect the region to the rest of the state and country. The facilities include US-101, State Route 20, State Route 1 (north of SR 128), and State Route 128 for travel through, and to, Mendocino County. Highlights of activities planned for these corridors include:

#### Short-Range Improvements

- Project to address closure of SR 1 during flooding of the Garcia River
- Operational and/or safety improvements at US 101/North State Street interchange in the Ukiah area
- Safety improvements at intersection of SR 20/Blosser Lane in Willits
- Gualala Downtown Streetscape Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on SR 1

#### Long-Range Improvements

- Construction of various interchange improvements on US-101 in the Ukiah area.
- Construction of two-way left turn lane on SR 1 from Pudding Creek to 0.1 mile south of Odom Lane – Fort Bragg area
- Construction of roadway improvements and non-motorized facilities on SR 222 Talmage Road

### COUNTY ROADS & CITY STREETS ELEMENT

This system is comprised of the county roads and city streets. The following are highlights of improvement projects for this modal system:

#### Short-Range Improvements

- Construction of the East Side Potter Valley Road reconstruction, Ph. I (MP 5.38-6.37)
- Gobbi Street/Waugh Lane Intersection Signalization – Ukiah
- Ukiah Downtown Streetscape Improvements, Ph. II
- Construction of Roundabout at Low Gap Road/Bush Street – Ukiah
- North State Street Intersection Improvements/Roundabouts, Ph. I – Ukiah area
- Road Rehabilitation and Construction of Sidewalks at Baechtel/E. Hill Road – Willits
- Mill Street Reconstruction Project – Point Arena
- Maple Street Storm Drain & Alley Rehabilitation – Fort Bragg
- Various Rehabilitation and Maintenance, including Bridge Rehabilitation

### Long-Range Improvements

Some of the more significant identified long-range improvement projects, although many are unfunded or only partially funded, are as follows:

- North State Street Intersection Improvements/Roundabouts, Phase II – Ukiah area
- East Side Potter Valley Road Widening, Phase II (MP 2.61-5.38) – Potter Valley
- Orchard Avenue Extension – Ukiah area
- Brown’s Corner Intersection Improvements – Traffic signal, roundabout, or other intersection improvements at intersection of Main Street/Highway 20 and Baechtel Road – Willits
- Railroad Avenue Extension – Extension of Railroad Avenue south to Shell Lane or Baechtel Road to create an alternative north-south route – Willits
- Development of route parallel to Main Street through the Georgia-Pacific property to meet future development needs – Fort Bragg
- Noyo Harbor Emergency Access Route – Fort Bragg area
- Roundabout at Lake Street and SR 1 – Point Arena

## **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**

The Active Transportation System is made up of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the county. Facilities may be alongside county roads, city streets, or State highways or independent of those facilities. Highlights of the projects contained in this plan are as follows:

- Lake Street Sidewalks – Point Arena
- South Main Street Bike & Pedestrian Improvements – Fort Bragg
- Noyo Harbor Access - Fort Bragg
- NWP Rail Trail, Phase IV - Ukiah
- Orr Creek Trail Design and Construction – Ukiah
- NWP Rail Trail, Phase I – Willits
- Blosser Lane/SR 20 Intersection Improvements – Willits area
- Safe Routes to School project in Covelo – Sidewalks, intersection improvements, enhanced crossing – Covelo
- Hopland Main Street/US 101 ADA Project – Correct non-compliant ADA pedestrian facilities
- SR 162 Corridor Multi-Use Trail – Covelo
- Gualala Downtown Streetscape
- MacKerricher State Park Haul Road Repair & Enhancement

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE SYSTEM**

Public transit services in Mendocino County are provided by the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA). Service includes a mix of fixed routes, flex routes and dial-a-ride throughout much of the county. Additional paratransit for the elderly and disabled are provided by local senior centers through funding from MTA.

The action plan for the public transit system will focus largely on replacing their fleet as necessary while ensuring compliance with state and federal mandates regarding zero-emission buses. Other projects include revamping their existing solar canopy and building an additional one, bus stop improvements, and the planning and construction of a new transit center within the Ukiah area.

## **AVIATION SYSTEM**

There are five publicly owned, and one privately owned, airports in Mendocino County that provide aviation service in the region: Ukiah Municipal Airport, Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field), Round Valley Airport, Little River Airport, and the Boonville Airport. All of these airports provide general aviation service for recreation and charter small aircraft users. The Ukiah Municipal Airport is also used by Federal Express and United Postal Service jet aircraft and serves as a staging area and refueling depot for California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) air tankers when fighting fires in the region. The Round Valley Airport plays a unique role in the Round Valley community due to the geographic isolation of the area. The airport frequently provides a site for emergency medical helicopter transportation, CAL FIRE, and United States Forest Service (USFS) essential services.

The action plans of the airports will focus on projects from the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Capital Improvement Plan, and be subject to grant funding availability from the State and Federal government.

## **MARITIME TRANSPORTATION**

Noyo Harbor, located in the city of Fort Bragg, and the Point Arena Pier, in the City of Point Arena, represent the two sources of commercial maritime activity in Mendocino County. The limited funding available for capital improvements to these facilities will limit what can be done within the timeframe of this plan to all but basic maintenance and operations. Perhaps the most critical action for the harbors in the near future will be to find a funding source to enable needed improvements.

## **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

The rail system in Mendocino County is going through significant changes. The county has two railroad corridors—the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP), which is overseen by the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), and the Skunk Train, a private company owned by Mendocino Railway. The “Skunk Train” line extends east to west, from the City of Willits to the City of Fort Bragg, a distance of approximately 40 miles, operating solely as an excursion railroad. The immediate need of the Skunk Train is restoration of tunnels along its line. The NWP is a 316-mile long corridor, extending from Lombard in Napa County in the south, to Samoa in Humboldt County in the north, traversing the entire length of inland Mendocino County. The NCRA is in the process of being dissolved, per SB 1029 (McGuire, 2018), which set in motion a plan to disband the agency and eventually create a successor agency to manage development of the “Great Redwood Trail” throughout the railroad corridor. Follow-up legislation, SB 69 (McGuire) was passed in 2021 to rename the NCRA as the Great Redwood

Trail Agency, establish a new governance structure, and transfer rights and responsibilities to the new agency (for the portion north of the Mendocino/Sonoma County line) and to the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) District (for the portion south of the Mendocino/Sonoma County line) by July 1, 2022. The NCRA has filed abandonment proceedings with the Surface Transportation Board for the northern portion of the line, which are currently underway.

## **TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION**

A Tribal Transportation System Element has been included in the RTP in an effort to better identify the transportation needs of the tribes and pave the way for expanded government to government relations between MCOG and the ten Mendocino County Native American tribes. The actions in this section focus on establishing government to government relationships with *all* tribes in Mendocino County and strengthening existing relationships. In addition to expanding relations with tribal governments, MCOG will seek out funding sources that may be utilized by the tribes.



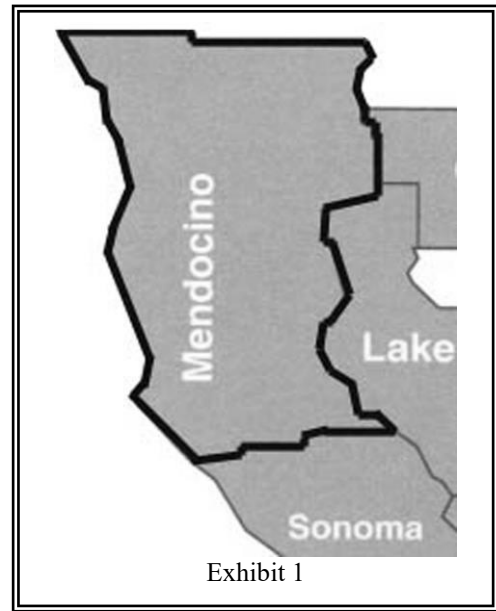
## INTRODUCTION

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY

#### Mendocino Council of Governments

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) was first established as a joint powers agency in 1972, as mandated by the Transportation Development Act. The Council primarily serves as the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for the region, and consists of seven members—two county supervisors, a countywide representative appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and one council member from each of the four incorporated cities (Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg and Point Arena). Exhibit 1 shown below outlines the boundaries for the MCOG region.

Five standing committees aid the Mendocino Council of Governments in performing its transportation planning functions. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) consists of each member of the Board of Directors plus a representative from Caltrans, District 01. The Executive Committee consists of the MCOG Chair, Vice Chair, and one MCOG member from a city or the County. The Executive Committee may carry on the administrative and executive functions of the Council between regular meetings, and may also be used to make recommendations to the full Council. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is composed of planning and public works representatives from each of the Joint Powers entities, the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) General Manager, representatives from rail transportation and air quality, and a Caltrans transportation planner. The TAC is heavily involved with Regional Transportation Improvement Program development, the Regional Transportation Plan, the annual work program, public transit, as well as other technical functions. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) represents interests of the elderly, disabled, and persons of limited means. The SSTAC has statutory responsibility to advise the RTPA on transportation-related issues such as unmet transit needs. Membership consists of a potential transit user 60 years of age or older, a potential transit user who is handicapped, two representatives from social services providers for seniors, two representatives from local social service providers for the handicapped, one representative from a local social service provider for persons of limited means, and two representatives from the local Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (MTA). The Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) is composed of two representatives each from the MTA Board and the MCOG Board, plus one senior center representative. The purpose of the TPC is to review transit performance and productivity in accordance with adopted standards. The TPC also reviews and makes recommendation to MCOG on the annual transit claim and provides input on the annual unmet needs process.



## COORDINATION & OUTREACH EFFORTS

### Interagency Coordination

In preparing this Regional Transportation Plan, Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) staff coordinated with the public and staff from Caltrans, the Mendocino County Department of Transportation, the Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services, the City of Ukiah, City of Willits, City of Fort Bragg, and City of Point Arena.

Other agencies such as the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA), North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), Mendocino Railway, the Noyo Harbor District, Air Quality Management District (AQMD), several airports that serve the region, and Walk & Bike Mendocino were also contacted in preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan.

In addition to direct input from these agencies, several supporting documents developed jointly among the above-mentioned agencies and Caltrans were also used in preparing this document.

### Inter-Regional Coordination

Inter-regional coordination involves development of working relationships beyond the border of the region. To some extent, inter-regional coordination has been occurring for many years due to active participation in the following groups and organizations

- **Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) Group:** This group meets prior to California Transportation Commission meetings (approximately 10 times per year) to discuss the CTC agenda, formulate responses to CTC policies, and network on issues of common concern. Attendance provides MCOG staff opportunities for inter-regional coordination with staff of other regional transportation agencies, Caltrans, and the Federal Highway Administration. MCOG staff regularly attends RTPA meetings.
- **Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF):** This group has been sponsored by the California Transportation Commission since 1987 to provide a forum for the State's 26 rural counties. It meets bi-monthly in Sacramento to discuss common issues and to some extent provide a vehicle of input to the California Transportation Commission. Due to inherent small staffing, budget constraints, and travel distances, few rural counties have the resources to regularly attend the RTPA Group meetings. MCOG staff attends regularly and has had a history of involvement since RCTF inception. Sub-committees of the RCTF are often assigned to work on inter-regional issues of common concern.
- **California Transportation Commission (CTC) Meetings:** The CTC usually meets 10 times per year at various locations around the state. Although the primary purpose of the CTC is not inter-agency coordination, the venues regularly provide opportunities for such coordination. MCOG staff regularly attends CTC meetings.
- **California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT):** CalACT is an association of private companies, individuals, organizations, regional transportation planning agencies and transit agencies committed to improve transit in California. MCOG staff regularly attends one of the two CalACT conferences per year and has been active in program development.

- **California Association of Councils of Government (CALCOG):** CALCOG is an association that generally meets bi-monthly in conjunction with the Caltrans-Regional Coordination Meetings. Although transportation issues are often a focus, the meetings also include discussion and action on other issues that are commonly addressed at the regional level. MCOG is a member of CALCOG and the Executive Director regularly attends.
- **North State Super Region:** The “Super Region” is a collaboration of 16 single-county regional transportation planning agencies in far northern California. Its purpose is to communicate needs and direct change for this area that represents over 27% of the state’s land area and encompasses over 35% of California’s State and federal highways.

## Public and Stakeholder Involvement

Public and stakeholder involvement, including disadvantaged communities, is a major component of the Regional Transportation Planning process. Mendocino Council of Governments has an adopted Public Participation Plan (updated 12/7/20) from which a public and interagency participation strategy was designed for the RTP that included a number of components. As part of the 2020 Public Participation Plan update, strategies and tools were updated to allow for advances in technology that have occurred since development of the last plan in 2008, including expanded use of MCOG’s website as a means of alerting the public to opportunities for public involvement.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in lieu of in-person community workshops, public input was gathered virtually through remote meetings (video and teleconference), and through Social Pinpoint, an on-line public outreach tool posted on MCOG’s website. Through this online tool, individuals were able to take a survey, identify needs on a map, and provide additional comments. Public comments were also received through MCOG’s website, email and by telephone. A pre-recorded video presentation on the RTP/ATP update and other opportunities for public comment were provided on MCOG’s website. Individual virtual presentations on the RTP/ATP update were provided to the Westport, Round Valley, Redwood Valley, and Laytonville Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs), many of which are located in disadvantaged communities. A virtual presentation was also provided to the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee, and at a quarterly Caltrans District 1 Tribal meeting. A report on the RTP update was provided to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) and to the Hopland Municipal Advisory Council (MAC). A summary of the public input received can be found in the Needs Assessment sections of this document.

The intent of these online public outreach tools and virtual meetings was to collect public input, assess needs, and identify priorities for projects in the Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan. At these virtual meetings, council/committee members and members of the public informed MCOG of their most pressing transportation-related concerns, and had the opportunity to ask questions and get information from MCOG staff. These public input opportunities were advertised in a number of ways including press releases, email lists, social media, and on the MCOG website.

In addition to the virtual presentations, online mapping and budget tools, and survey, MCOG staff regularly provided updates and information at the regularly scheduled MCOG board and Technical Advisory Committee meetings. In addition to local and State agencies, members of the public and private sector, as well as tribal governments, are included in mailing lists for these meetings and have had opportunities to provide input.

The input gained from these outreach efforts has been used in the development of this plan. A total of 126 mapping comments, 113 surveys (with 70 separate survey comments), and 45 budget responses were received. Key findings from the survey data collected show the following:

- Nearly 62% of respondents said their “main form of transportation on a typical weekday” was to drive alone in an automobile, while 21.24% drove with at least one other person. Approximately 13.27% either walked or biked, and 3.54% used transit.
- Approximately 51% of respondents listed “not enough bike paths and lanes” as a very serious problem; nearly 47% listed “pavement condition of local streets and roads (i.e. potholes)” as a very serious problem; and, nearly 39% listed “unsafe streets, roads, and highways” as a very serious problem.
- Nearly 16% of respondents indicated that someone in their household owned an electric vehicle
- Approximately 69% of respondents listed “traffic danger” as the reason they do not use walking or bicycling as a mode of transportation, with over 56% indicating “lack of sidewalks or bike lanes” as the reason

Table 1 shows a complete listing of MCOG’s virtual outreach activities for the 2022 RTP update, including opportunities for public, interagency, and Native American involvement:

**Table 1**  
**Virtual Public Outreach Process for the 2022 RTP Update**

Date	Participant/Audience	Activity
10/5/2020	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
10/21/2010	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
11/16/2020	MCOG/SSTAC/Public	Draft RTP discussion at SSTAC meeting
12/14/2020	MCOG/Tribes	Sent letters to all 10 tribes informing of RTP update, offering consultation & requesting info.
1/20/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
1/25/2021	MCOG/Public	Posted RTP project webpage on MCOG website
1/26/2021	MCOG/Caltrans/Tribes	Draft RTP presentation at Caltrans Quarterly Tribal Meeting
2/1/2021	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
2/17/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
3/4/2021	MCOG/Tribes	Sent follow up emails to all 10 tribes
3/17/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
3/30/2021	MCOG/Public	Posted Social Pinpoint survey & tools on MCOG website
March-June 2021	MCOG/Public/Local Agencies/News Media/Tribes/SSTAC/Caltrans	Notified media, public, stakeholders, agencies, tribes of virtual engagement and input options – press release, website, email, social media, partner agency websites, MTA transit vehicles

3/30/2021	MCOG/MTA/Public	Announced RTP update at MTA meeting
4/5/2021	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
4/7/2021	MCOG/Public	Posted video on RTP update on MCOG website & County YouTube channel & notified subscribers
4/21/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
5/3/2021	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
5/19/2021	MCOG/Hopland MAC/Public	Draft RTP discussion at Hopland MAC meeting
5/19/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
6/1/2021	MCOG/WMAC/Public	Draft RTP presentation at Westport MAC Meeting
6/2/2021	MCOG/RVAMAC/Public	Draft RTP presentation at Round Valley Area MAC Meeting
6/7/2021	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
6/9/2021	MCOG/RVMAC/Public	Draft RTP presentation at Redwood Vly MAC meeting
6/18/2021	MCOG/MCCAAC/Public	Draft RTP presentation at Mendo. Co. Climate Action Advisory Committee Meeting
6/23/2021	MCOG/LAMAC/Public	Draft RTP presentation at Laytonville Area MAC Meeting
8/16/2021	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
9/15/2021	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
10/4/21	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
10/15 – 10/19/21	MCOG/Public/Local Agencies/News Media/Tribes/SSTAC/Caltrans	Notified media & stakeholders of Draft RTP posted on MCOG website for review
10/20/21	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
11/1/21	MCOG/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting
11/17/21	MCOG/Local Agencies/Public	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting
12/6/21	MCOG/Public	Public hearing to adopt Negative Declaration & Final Plan at MCOG meeting

Examples of materials and documentation of MCOG’s public outreach efforts can be found in Appendix A. Public and agency notification requirements of CEQA were also followed. The following agencies received notice of the public hearing and availability of the Draft Negative Declaration for public review for this 2022 Regional Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan: Mendocino Co. Dept. of Planning & Building; City of Ukiah; City of Fort Bragg; City of Willits, City of Point Arena; Caltrans District 1; Caltrans Division of Aeronautics; California Highway Patrol; California Department of Fish and Game; California Trucking Association; Mendocino Transit Authority; Cahto Tribe of Laytonville; Coyote Valley Rancheria; Guidiville Indian Rancheria; Hopland Band of Pomo Indians; Manchester-Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians; Middletown Band of Pomo Indians, Pinoleville Pomo Nation; Potter Valley Tribe; Redwood Valley Rancheria; Round Valley Indian Tribes; Sherwood Valley Rancheria; USDA Forest Service; NOAA Fisheries, and Mendocino County Air Quality Management.

## NATIVE AMERICAN COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

MCOG began its coordination and consultation with Tribal governments in December 2020. Letters and follow-up communications were sent to Tribal governments notifying them of the

update to the Regional Transportation Plan, along with information about the plan. The Tribes were invited to provide information regarding Tribal transportation needs and any existing transportation planning efforts. Consultation, including presentation to Tribal Councils was offered to all the tribes in the region. MCOG gave a presentation on the RTP update at the January 26, 2021 quarterly tribal meeting hosted by Caltrans District 1. Each tribe was also sent a draft plan for comment prior to scheduled adoption by MCOG.

It is the goal of MCOG staff that coordination and consultation with the Native American tribes in the regional transportation planning process can become more regular in the future, and that a strong, symbiotic government-to-government relationship be developed.

## **PURPOSE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The regional transportation planning process is a long-range (1-20 year) planning effort that involves federal, state, regional, local and tribal governments, public and private organizations, and individuals working together to plan how future regional transportation needs can be met. Regional Transportation Plans are planning documents required by State legislation, and are developed by RTPAs in cooperation with Caltrans and other stakeholders. RTPs are developed to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, policies, objectives, and strategies. In addition, the RTP should also:

- Provide an assessment of the current modes of transportation as well as identify potential new travel options for the region
- Predict future needs for travel and goods movement
- Identify specific actions and improvements in order to address the needs of mobility and accessibility
- Identify guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing
- Identify needed transportation improvements to serve as a foundation for development of other programs such as the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)
- Promote consistency between other transportation plans developed by local, state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs
- Involve community-based organizations as part of the public, federal, state and local agencies, tribal governments, as well as elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation

## **MENDOCINO COUNTY REGION**

Mendocino County lies 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. The coastline is also rugged and rocky, offering spectacular views of the ocean. Much of the land area is taken by State and National Forest lands, with the remainder used for agriculture, residential and other uses. Transportation routes tend to be located within valleys, and east-west travel is especially difficult, since parallel ridges must be traversed. The mountainous nature of the County tends to minimize ground transportation options throughout the region.

## Population

The majority of the population in Mendocino County is concentrated in a few areas of the County. 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 rest of Mendocino County is rural and undeveloped.

The US Census Bureau estimated a total population of 86,749 for Mendocino County in 2019. This figure includes the following figures in the incorporated cities: Ukiah (15,995), Fort Bragg (7,291), Willits (4,890), and Point Arena (449).

## Economy

According to the “Mendocino County 2018-2019 Economic Assessment” developed by the Economic Development and Financing Corporation (EDFC), between 2007-2017 there was a shift from larger to smaller employers in Mendocino County. The County’s economy is now made up mostly of microbusinesses, or businesses with less than 10 employees. These include downtown merchants, restaurants, cosmetologists, and other “Main Street” businesses. They also include everything from fine wood workers to small wineries, to internet service providers, and small manufacturers. According to the California Employment Development Department (EDD), the County’s unemployment rate in May 2021 was 5.9%.

## Disadvantaged Communities

Several grant sources that may be available for funding projects include benefits to disadvantaged communities as criteria for funding. An area can be considered a disadvantaged community if it has a median household income which is less than 80% of the statewide income, if at least 70% of the public school students qualify for free or reduced lunch, or by qualifying through the EPA’s CalEnviroScreen tool. Because the CalEnviroScreen method relies heavily on air quality factors, it is not applicable in Mendocino County. However, nearly all communities in Mendocino County qualify under the other criteria. The 2015-2019 American Community Survey results indicate that the county average median household income was \$51,416. The per capita income in 2019 was \$29,035. The California median household income is \$75,235, making the Mendocino County average less than 69% of the statewide median. It is estimated that 14% of households in the County live at or below the federal poverty level.

## Traffic and VMT Forecasts

Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultant completed in October 2010 a countywide travel demand model, with the out-year to 2030. Significant traffic flow constraints (LOS 0.75 to 1.00) identified by the model for the out-year are summarized below:

- In Fort Bragg on SR 1 on the Noyo Bridge, extending further north to South Street and further south to Ocean View Drive.
- In the Ukiah area on North State Street between KUKI Lane and US 101 northbound ramps, on Airport Boulevard between Commerce Drive and Talmage Road, on Commerce Drive, on Orchard Avenue north of Perkins Street, and on Talmage Road between Betty Street and US 101 northbound.

The same model provided data on Vehicle Miles Traveled for the region, as shown in the following table:

Table 2  
MCOG Travel Demand Forecasting Model VMT Estimates, 2030

Subregion	Residents	Employees	Students	Service Population	Total VMT	Total VMT per Service Population <sup>1</sup>	Home-based VMT	Home-Based VMT per Resident <sup>1</sup>
Ukiah	16,063	12,863	5,855	34,781	1,051,718	32.4	163,574	10.2
Ukiah adjacent	19,429	10,040	8,314	37,783	924,937	27.1	334,851	17.2
Willits	5,771	4,359	2,778	12,907	296,904	24.5	50,712	8.8
Willits adjacent	6,925	265	56	7,245	279,465	40.4	255,908	37.0
Fort Bragg	8,424	6,000	3,574	17,998	324,276	19.8	56,078	6.7
Fort Bragg adjacent	8,187	1,666	70	9,923	194,694	21.2	134,935	16.5
Point Arena	501	330	542	1,373	29,334	22.4	10,553	21.0
Other coastal	9,066	3,431	645	13,142	480,407	45.3	291,321	32.1
Other US 101 corridor	12,084	2,295	846	15,225	495,333	37.3	368,455	30.5
Other unincorporated	13,360	2,855	1,506	17,722	624,432	43.2	486,502	36.4
MCOG model area	99,810	44,103	24,186	168,099	3,387,947	31.4	2,152,888	21.6

Note: <sup>1</sup> VMT per service population or resident is expressed as a generation rate and not a ratio. For example, VMT per resident is how much VMT is generated by the residents of a location. It does not include VMT on the model roadway network that is generated by other sources such as external trips that do not stop in the County.

Source: Fehr & Peers 2019

The Final Model Development Report for the MCOG Travel Demand Forecasting Model can be found on the MCOG website. Caltrans has offered to include an update of MCOG's dated travel demand model as part of their traffic model updates in District 1, which is currently underway.

In January 2015, the Mendocino Council of Governments retained a consultant to develop and calibrate a traffic microsimulation model covering the greater Ukiah area, known as the Greater Ukiah Area Microsimulation Model (GUAMM). It covers the US 101 corridor from approximately 5 miles south of the center of Ukiah, to approximately 8 miles north, as well as the City of Ukiah and Mendocino County streets in between.

The GUAMM is a microscopic traffic simulation model. It is capable of simulating route choice in response to shifting congestion patterns that may result from changes in land use or demographic growth. The scale of the GUAMM and its approach to route choice are critical to analyzing the domino effects that changes in demographics and land use may have across and beyond Ukiah and on US 101, that are otherwise difficult to foresee. The GUAMM is designed to work closely with the MCOG travel demand model. The GUAMM and MCOG model are



built on a shared GIS platform. The GUAMM will make it simpler and more cost-effective to perform traffic analysis for projects in and around Ukiah on a consistent basis.

## **Land Use**

Large-scale land use changes are not anticipated in Mendocino County. Development is expected to produce rather localized impact. Land use policies tend to protect open-spaced lands such as agriculture and forestlands. There is a recognized need for housing across all income levels in the more urbanized areas of the region.

MCOG has been involved in land use planning for many years through development of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The link between transportation and housing/land use was further enhanced in 2014 when MCOG adopted a four year update cycle for the Regional Transportation Plan in order to align with development of RHNA.

Recently, MCOG's role in RHNA implementation took a step forward when the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) program was created by the State through adoption of AB 101. With funding from this program, MCOG is working with and supporting the Cities and County to better plan for housing and implement RHNA. Providing housing near jobs supports GHG and VMT reduction goals.

Prior to REAP, MCOG's land use related activities included the Wine Country Interregional Partnership (IRP) and Vision Mendocino 2030. The IRP studied land use and transportation across Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma and Napa Counties. The IRP looked at the imbalance of jobs and housing throughout the four counties and the role that transportation plays in that system. It included an initial jobs and housing study, an origin and destination study, and a four county traffic model. MCOG's Vision Mendocino 2030 was a regional blueprint plan which examined the interworkings of land use, transportation, the environment, local economy, and many other factors. The project included a community driven visioning process and scenario planning to determine the future impacts of planning decisions.

## **COUNTYWIDE ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) & Climate Change**

Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, required the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set statewide GHG emission reduction targets and to develop regulations and market mechanisms to reduce California's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 25 percent by 2020. This was strengthened by Senate Bill 32 which requires a reduction in GHG emissions to 40% below the 1990 levels by 2030. In 2007, CARB established a statewide Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions cap for 2020 of 427 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, based on 1990 emissions, as required by the bill.

Additional GHG and climate-related guidance was provided by California Governor Executive Orders issued in 2012 and 2015. Executive Order B16-12 set a 2050 GHG emissions reduction goal for the transportation sector to achieve 80 percent less than 1990 levels. Executive Order B-32-15 works toward achieving GHG reduction targets with the California Sustainable Freight

Action Plan, an integrated plan that establishes clear targets to improve freight efficiency, transition to zero-emission technologies, and increase competitiveness of California’s freight system. In addition, Executive Order B-30-15 established a new interim statewide GHG emission reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. All state agencies are required to implement measures to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the reductions targets. Furthermore, State agencies shall take climate change into account in their planning and investment decisions.

More recently, California Governor’s Executive Orders N-19-10 and N-19-20 address a variety of actions to support the State’s bold climate goals and actions to mitigate climate impact and support a sustainable and resilient future. MCOG’s past and future activities will continue to support these efforts, as evidenced in the Goals, Objectives, and Policies section of this RTP, and as addressed in the activities summarized below.

Transportation is responsible for generating a considerable portion of the carbon dioxide produced in California. Carbon dioxide is the most prevalent GHG. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Guidelines require that the issue of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions be addressed during the RTP process. While predominately rural areas such as Mendocino County are not subject to the same requirements as urban regions, discussion of the issue in the RTP provides the opportunity to identify existing and future efforts that will contribute to the emission reduction targets. Obvious strategies to reduce GHG generation entail expanded transit use, improving streets/roads efficiency, and expanding non-motorized travel opportunities. These strategies have been and will continue to be employed in Mendocino County throughout the time frame of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan. But in fact, there are a wide range of activities in which the Mendocino Council of Governments has been engaged that have and will continue to have a positive effect on greenhouse gas generation in Mendocino County. These activities are briefly discussed below under various headings.

### Planning

- MCOG conducted a Regional Blueprint Planning process to better link land use with transportation planning
- MCOG administered a multi-year non-infrastructure Active Transportation Program grant to conduct safe routes to schools activities throughout the county
- MCOG has adopted an Active Transportation Plan identifying needs and projects to benefit non-motorized transportation. Prior to the ATP, MCOG produced the Regional Bikeway Plan for member entities to expand the bikeway system.
- MCOG administered and participated in the development of grant-funded Community Action Plans in Gualala, Laytonville, Point Arena, Westport, Round Valley, and Anderson Valley, each of which emphasizes an expanded network of non-motorized transportation.
- MCOG funded Safe Routes to School Plans for the City of Willits and the County, which will facilitate future Safe Routes to School Grant applications
- MCOG has supported various Mendocino Transit Authority planning studies in order to increase transit use and efficiency
- MCOG has consistently supported the preservation of the rail corridors in Mendocino County for future transportation uses should rail activity permanently cease

- MCOG developed a Rails with Trails Corridor Plan to develop non-motorized facilities within the rail right-of-way from the Sonoma County Line to Willits, which has led to construction of three portions of the trail in the Ukiah area, with a fourth section in progress. Construction of the first section of the Willits rail trail has also been funded and is currently underway.
- MCOG developed the Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Regional Readiness Plans and studies, including the ZEV and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan Update
- MCOG will be conducting a feasibility study for “Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities in Inland Mendocino County” in FY 2021-22 – FY 2022/23. This study will research mobility solutions for remote communities unable to be served by traditional transit, and will support efforts to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gases (GHG).

### Funding

- MCOG applied for and was awarded funding for construction of a multi-use trail along SR 162 in the community of Covelo
- MCOG consistently allocates the maximum amount authorized under the Transportation Development Act toward the development of pedestrian and bikeway projects
- MCOG has given full consideration to the claim for transit funding from the Mendocino Transit Authority, ensuring that the county-wide transit authority receives the maximum amount available from MCOG
- MCOG created a Transit Reserve Account to minimize the effect of revenue shortfalls of the provision of stable transit service
- MCOG has funded a number of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) projects in several communities to improve access to the pedestrian network
- MCOG has provided funding to member agencies to provide local matching funds for bicycle and pedestrian grant-funded projects
- MCOG funded a bicycle rack program to purchase and deploy bike racks in Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, Point Arena, and unincorporated communities
- MCOG regularly awards Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds to local jurisdictions for construction of non-motorized/active transportation projects
- MCOG annually distributes Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds to local jurisdictions for capital projects, which may include non-motorized/active transportation projects.

### Transportation Monitoring

- MCOG initiated an interregional effort (Wine Country Inter-Regional Partnership) to monitor, evaluate, and mitigate the transportation effects of jobs/housing imbalance between Lake, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties
- MCOG developed a transportation model of the Ukiah Valley, linking the unincorporated area surrounding Ukiah with the City of Ukiah. This model is being currently updated by Caltrans, as part of their traffic model updates in District 1. MCOG developed a county-wide transportation model that with the capability of projecting GHG production for alternative transportation networks

### Facilitation

- MCOG routinely disseminates information it acquires regarding various outside funding opportunities (Active Transportation Program, SB 1, Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation, etc.) to Native American tribes and member entities
- MCOG provides grant development and assistance for member agencies to enhance opportunity to acquire funding for local priority projects
- MCOG routinely offers to review grant applications prepared by member entities to enhance their competitiveness for outside funding
- MCOG has expanded opportunities for videoconferencing and teleconferencing for Board meetings, committee meetings and other public meetings
- MCOG has provided training to member agency personnel and public officials on topics that feature expansion of transportation alternatives (especially bicycle/pedestrian projects)
- MCOG routinely funds the entire Pavement Management Program for all entities to ensure limited funds for streets/roads paving is utilized in the most effective manner and that roadway wearing surfaces contribute positively toward maximizing miles per gallon

### Circulation and Access Improvements

- MCOG has worked with local agencies to implement operational projects that reduce vehicle idling on both the State and local system
- MCOG has promoted, supported, and funded modern roundabouts within Mendocino County

### Alternative Fuels & Renewable Energy

- In 1998 MCOG became the first rural transportation planning agency in the nation to research and test electric vehicle practicality in a rural environment. Also in 1998, MCOG was responsible for construction of two electric vehicle charging stations in the region.
- MCOG has supported efforts of Mendocino Transit Authority to diversify fuels for its transit fleet, including support for a TIGGER application for electric busses and solar power canopies; and continues to support their efforts to convert to a fully electric transit fleet
- In 2013, MCOG developed the Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Regional Readiness Plan, and in 2015, MCOG prepared the Mendocino County ZEV Regional Readiness Plan Phase 2 – Feasibility Report
- From 2014 to 2017, MCOG provided support and funding to the Mendocino Land Trust’s project “Bringing Electric Vehicle Charging Stations to Mendocino County State Parks”
- In 2015, MCOG sponsored a free ride-and-drive event as part of National Drive Electric Week, providing the opportunity to demonstrate current electric vehicle makes and models
- From 2014 to 2016, MCOG participated in the five-county Northwest California Alternative Transportation Fuels Readiness Project to develop strategies for deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure
- In 2016, MCOG partnered with ChargePoint on the Mendocino Express Interregional Corridor Project to install electric vehicle fast chargers along US-101 through northern Sonoma and Mendocino counties as part of a statewide network
- In 2017, MCOG participated in the North Coast and Upstate Fuel Cell Readiness Project to prepare nine of California’s northernmost counties for the introduction of fuel cell electric vehicles

- In 2019, MCOG completed the Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) and Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan Update
- MCOG initiated and leads the North State ZEV Working Group.

In summary, prior and ongoing efforts that result in reduced GHG emissions involve the following:

- Providing an effective public transit system or alternative mobility solutions
- Expanding non-motorized modal alternatives
- Promoting the expansion of alternative fuels
- Investing in projects that reduce congestion
- Participating in long term planning efforts that are likely to reduce sprawl and promote infill
- Identifying funding to implement all of the above
- Expanding infrastructure to support utilization of zero emission vehicles

MCOG had established a high base line of investment in planning and project implementation that produced positive impacts on GHG production long before Assembly Bill 32 was signed into law in 2006. It is very likely that efforts similar to those identified above will be employed in Mendocino County through the 20-year time frame of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan.

Although much has been done to reduce GHG emissions in the region and reduce future impacts to the environment, the region and its transportation systems are already dealing with the effects of climate change and increasing extreme weather events in the forms of droughts, flooding, landslides, and fires. Roads and other networks may experience closures, suffer short-and-long-term damage as a result, or be inadequate in times of evacuation. As a result, adaptation efforts are needed in addition to avoidance measures to enhance the resiliency of the transportation system to climate impacts. In 2014, the Mendocino County Region was included in the District 1 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Pilot Study which assessed the vulnerabilities of the State transportation network to climate change throughout District 1 and identified adaptation options at select locations. In 2019, the Caltrans District 1 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment was completed. This report provides District 1 with information on areas of climate change exposure it can utilize to proceed to more detailed, project-level assessments. The report identified where climate change risks are possible in District 1 and where project development efforts for projects in these areas should consider changing future environmental conditions.

In FY 2019-2020, MCOG completed a Fire Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan for the County to better prepare for wildfire emergencies that are likely to continue as a result of climate change. Additional assessments may be needed to adequately assess the vulnerability of local transportation systems and identify adaptation measures.

## **Wildlife, Natural and Historic Resources**

Protecting wildlife and preserving natural and cultural resources is of particular concern in the rural Mendocino County region. The California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) was originally adopted in 2005 and is intended to provide federal funds to states for the conservation

of wildlife diversity. In 2015, the SWAP was updated and included three statewide goals to increase “Abundance and Richness,” “Enhance Ecosystem Conditions,” and to “Enhance Ecosystem Functions and Processes.” A “Transportation Planning Companion Plan,” was also adopted in December 2016 combining the priorities of the SWAP with those of Caltrans when planning and designing transportation projects. Each of the projects within the RTP are subject to environmental review per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which are required to address potential impacts to biological resources. Consistency with the SWAP will be addressed during the environmental review phases of individual projects within the RTP. In rural Mendocino County, it is not unusual for enhancements to be included in infrastructure projects which enhance habitats, such as fish passage improvements or wildlife crossings. Resources such as the Natural Diversity Data Base and Northwest Information Center are utilized when assessing impacts to natural and cultural resources. Implementing agencies work with regulatory agencies at the time of project level development to ensure that these resources are protected. Regulatory agencies will also be included in review of this Plan through the State Clearinghouse process (see Appendix K).

## Intelligent Transportation System

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) refers to a group of information-based technologies which assist in monitoring traffic flow, providing warning and advisory messages to motor vehicle drivers, regulating traffic flow via metering and routing control, and providing rapid emergency incident response capabilities for law enforcement personnel.

In 2018 Caltrans developed the Upstate California Regional Intelligent Transportation System Master Plan (Regional ITS Plan), a roadmap for the application and integration of ITS strategies into the region’s transportation system over the next ten years. The plan covers the North State Super Region, which includes the 16 counties that make up the area north of Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, covering all or part of Caltrans Districts 1, 2, and 3. ITS strategies appropriate for Northern California fall into six categories — (A) Highway Systems Monitoring, (B) Traffic Operations and Management, (C) Traveler Information Management, (D) Maintenance Management, (E) Transit Management, and (F) System Integration and Management. Currently ITS tactics in the Mendocino County region fall into categories B, C, and E.

ITS projects that have been implemented in the region are as follows:

- Deployment of motorist call boxes under the Mendocino Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies. The call box locations have been coordinated with Caltrans and the necessary encroachment agreements have been processed and approved. This includes the first in the state *satellite* call-boxes in areas where cellular phone signals do not reach.
- Installation of changeable message signs by Caltrans, District 1, in Mendocino County. Two signs have been installed on US-101 and one sign on State Route 20. These signs will provide warnings and information for users of these routes.
- Installation of timed/computerized traffic signals
- Utilization of RouteMatch transit software
- Speed detection and enforcement through electronic signs
- School zone flashing beacons

At such time that the Mendocino Council of Governments considers proposing an ITS project, the project will be in conformance with the common structure of the regional architecture as identified in the Upstate California Regional ITS plan.

## **Transportation Security and Emergency Response**

Mendocino County is a sparsely populated rural area with three key issues that impact transportation security and emergency preparedness/response planning: (1) limited access routes due to topography and existing infrastructure which provides limited access/egress points out of/into the County; (2) a population that has limited resources and ability to evacuate on their own, or to shelter in place for the duration of an emergency/security event; and (3) limited security and emergency response resources within the County. For Mendocino County, the potential for fires, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and landslides poses a more likely threat to the safety and security of the population and the transportation system than a terrorist attack. MCOG's 2019-20 Fire Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan was developed to help the County assess the region's vulnerability to wildfires and prepare for emergency evacuation needs. Policies in this Regional Transportation Plan (Climate Change and the Environment, and Transportation Security and Emergency Response) encourage coordination among local and State agencies to secure grant funding to develop and implement emergency evacuation routes as identified in that plan.

Transportation clearly plays a key role in avoiding disaster and responding to emergencies. Key transportation routes will provide evacuation routes as well as routes for emergency responders. In addition to surface transportation, air transportation plays a key role in disaster response in Mendocino County. Airports are often used as staging grounds for fire fighting in rural areas. Many isolated areas in Mendocino County without nearby hospitals also rely on helicopter service rather than ambulances for medical emergencies. Coordination between transportation agencies throughout the county and State and local airports and transportation agencies will be critical in preparing for emergency situations. Goals, objectives, and policies have been included in this document that specifically address concerns regarding security and emergency response.

Implementing improvements that would result in safer and more effective evacuation in the time of emergency such as wildfire is an increasingly prevalent need in the region. Many communities of the county have very limited ingress and egress. Secondary access routes or improvements to existing routes would help for both evacuation as well as provide better access for emergency responders. However, funding for these types of improvements is a challenge. Most transportation funding requires facilities to be built to certain standards that make them more costly and require significantly longer lead times. Funding mechanisms and flexibility in facility design are needed in order to provide new and improve existing evacuation routes in a more timely manner.

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## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

### PREAMBLE

Transportation helps shape an area's economic health and quality of life. Not only does the transportation system provide for the mobility of people and goods, it also influences: air quality, environmental resource consumption, social equity, "smart growth," economic development, safety, security, and overall quality of life. Transportation planning recognizes the critical links between transportation and other societal goals.

This Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is more than a mere listing of capital investments, it is a strategy for operating, managing, maintaining, and financing the area's transportation system in such a way as to advance the long-term societal goals of the communities of Mendocino County and the long-term societal goals of the State of California.

This RTP emphasizes a strategy of investing transportation funds to bring greater mobility and access to services for all residents – including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as drivers and passengers in trucks, buses, and automobiles. Among other things, this strategy will reduce green house gas emissions (GHG) and household expenses by reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This strategy will also bring economic and cultural renewal to every community in Mendocino County – because as public investments improve each community's public spaces, private investments follow.

In summary, this RTP provides a comprehensive strategy – one that leverages regional transportation funds to advance the long-term societal goals of the communities of Mendocino County and the State of California.

### POLICIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT (CCE)

**Goal:** Build a combination of transportation facilities that, when evaluated as a group, will result in improved air quality, reduced transportation-related air toxins and greenhouse gas emissions, reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and a more resilient multi-modal transportation network in Mendocino County. This goal supports the Governor's Executive Orders EO N-19-19 (greenhouse gas reduction goals) and EO-79-20 (zero emission vehicles).

**Objective CCE 1:** Coordinate transportation planning with air quality planning.

Policy CCE 1.1. Continue to include Air Quality representation on the Technical Advisory Committee and in the decision-making process.

Policy CCE 1.2. As feasible, evaluate air quality impacts of proposed transportation improvements in the transportation modeling process.

**Objective CCE 2:** Invest in transportation projects and participate in regional planning efforts that will help Mendocino County residents to proportionately contribute to the California greenhouse gas reduction targets established by Assembly Bill 32 and SB 375, as well as support Governor's Executive Orders EO N-19-19 and EO-79-20.



Policy CCE 2.1. Evaluate transportation projects based on their ability to reduce Mendocino County's transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Policy CCE 2.2. Prioritize transportation projects which lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and reduced vehicle miles traveled, and prioritize projects that can mitigate for VMT increasing projects.

Policy CCE 2.3. Monitor new technologies and opportunities to implement energy efficient and nonpolluting transportation infrastructure.

Policy CCE 2.4. Continue to consider bicycle transportation, pedestrian, and transit projects for funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Policy CCE 2.5. Continue administrative, planning, and funding support for the Region's transit agency, Mendocino Transit Authority.

Policy CCE 2.6. Continue to encourage private and public investment in a countywide electric vehicle charging station network and seek funding to fill gaps in the network; and continue to participate in multi-agency planning efforts to expand EV charging station network.

Policy CCE 2.7. Continue to update MCOG's Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Regional Readiness Plan, as needed.

Policy CCE 2.8. Continue to seek mobility solutions for remote rural areas of the County unable to be served by traditional transit service due to remoteness and low population density.

Policy CCE 2.9. Work with public health agencies and walking and biking groups to encourage more extensive walking and biking for transportation purposes, in support of reducing GHG.

Policy CCE 2.10. Support prioritization of transportation projects that result in reduction of Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Policy CCE 2.11. Support Mendocino Transit Authority's efforts to diversify fleet size, and work toward an all-electric public transit fleet, as feasible.

**Objective CCE 3:** Ensure transportation improvements are subject to adequate environmental review and standards.

Policy CCE 3.1. Monitor transportation projects funded through MCOG to ensure that California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements are being met.

Policy CCE 3.2. Coordinate and consult with resource agencies when implementing transportation projects.

Policy CCE 3.3 Provide tools for local jurisdictions to assist in compliance with SB 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) CEQA analysis requirements.

**Objective CCE 4:** Improve resiliency of the region's transportation system to climate-related impacts.

Policy CCE 4.1. Consider grant opportunities that would provide capital or planning funding for projects to identify and implement climate change adaptation strategies.

Policy CCE 4.2. Encourage implementing agencies to consider strategies for climate change adaptation, when designing improvements or additions to transportation networks.

Policy CCE 4.3. Encourage local agencies to increase planting of street trees when designing or implementing transportation projects, where feasible, to reduce GHG and urban heat island effect, as well as provide shade for pedestrians and cyclists and increase the use of non-motorized transportation options.

Policy CCE 4.4. Coordinate with local and State agencies to secure grant funding to develop and improve emergency evacuation routes as identified in MCOG’s 2020 “Fire Vulnerability Assessment” and “Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan”, to respond to the increased threat of wildfires throughout the region.

## **LAND USE, ACCESSIBILITY AND THE ECONOMY (LAE)**

**Goal:** Encourage coordination of land use and public investments in a way that improves accessibility to services, employment, and housing, thereby strengthening the local and state economies.

**Objective LAE 1:** Encourage local entities to direct private development to priority urbanized areas where services can best be provided at lowest public cost and least environmental consequences.

Policy LAE 1.1. Consider transportation grant programs to encourage Mendocino County governments to support infill construction in identified priority development areas.

**Objective LAE 2:** Encourage infrastructure projects that support compact growth and infill development.

Policy LAE 2.1. Consider prioritizing projects that support infill growth, such as bicycle, pedestrian improvements, or projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled in areas that are already developed.

**Objective LAE 3:** Support non-transportation efforts that support healthy communities and affordable housing.

Policy LAE 3.1. Support local efforts to bring broadband internet services to outlying areas of the county, providing equity to unserved areas.

Policy LAE 3.2. Coordinate with the Economic Development and Financing Commission to encourage consistency with compact growth and infill development principles in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Objective LAE 4:** Encourage regional land use planning to minimize increases to vehicle miles traveled, support implementation of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and support the region’s economy.

Policy LAE 4.1. Seek regional funding for planning efforts to encourage housing implementation, such as the Regional Early Access Program (REAP) grant funding.

Policy LAE 4.2. Coordinate with local planning departments during development of land use planning documents to ensure consistency with regional housing needs and adequate housing supply, infill growth, community design, healthy communities, and the region’s transportation plans.

Policy LAE 4.3. Encourage development adjacent to existing pedestrian and bicycle systems and transit routes.

## COMPLETE STREETS (CS)

**Goal:** Improve our public spaces so the street, road and transportation system meets the needs of all surface transportation modes, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

**Objective CS 1:** Incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements when planning roadway improvements, unless the roadway is exempt by law, or the project receives a specific waiver authorized through a local, public process, or for basic maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Policy CS 1.1. Coordinate funding programs to provide multiple components of an infrastructure project when appropriate.

Policy CS 1.2. Seek funding sources for multiple modes of transportation.

Policy CS 1.3. Facilitate coordination between local transportation agencies and Mendocino Transit Authority.

Policy CS 1.4. Consider waivers in cases where environmental issues constrain improvement options, transit service is not planned or currently provided, or where the benefit/cost ratio of providing bike/pedestrian improvements is low (as would be expected in isolated rural areas).

**Objective CS 2:** Provide new bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities on existing streets and roads where none exist.

Policy CS 2.1. Seek funding to fill gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities adjacent to roadways and provide bus stop improvements along fixed transit routes.

**Objective CS 3:** Encourage Caltrans to include complete street components on transportation projects in Mendocino County, where feasible.

Policy CS 3.1. Identify non-motorized projects on State highways that serve as “Main Street” in rural communities, for funding through Caltrans’ State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP).

Policy CS 3.2. Nominate eligible non-motorized projects for inclusion in Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) Plan.

## GOODS MOVEMENT (GM)

**Goal:** A transportation system allowing the efficient free flow of goods and freight, including agricultural goods, within and through the region.

**Objective GM 1:** Develop State Highway routes and local routes capable of efficiently moving goods and agricultural products to, from, and through the Region.

Policy GM 1.1. Prioritize State Highway and local road projects that improve connectivity and overall mobility, and increase efficiency with which freight can travel throughout the region.

Policy GM 1.2. Encourage local agencies to consider the need for on-site truck parking, as appropriate, for developments that will generate significant goods movement (agriculture, manufacturing, industrial, large retail) to ensure truck drivers’ safety and reduce idling.

Policy GM 1.3. Support State efforts to develop a Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) route to eliminate the only STAA gap between the Bay Area and Eureka. (Note: the

STAA project through Richardson Grove is under appeal in Federal litigation, and is not currently programmed, although STAA access for US Highway 101 in this area remains a goal.)

**Objective GM 2:** Develop options for alternative goods movement.

Policy GM 2.1. Support efforts of the California Western Railroad (Skunk Train) to re-establish freight service between Fort Bragg and Willits, if feasible.

Policy GM 2.2. Support development of electric vehicle (EV) or other clean energy goods movement opportunities. This may include electrification of automobiles, medium-duty trucks, and heavy-duty trucks, as well as alternate fueling projects.

## **TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (TSER)**

**Goal:** Provide a safe transportation system and enable rapid and safe evacuation and emergency response.

**Objective TSER 1:** Coordinate with local and state agencies on security and emergency response planning efforts.

Policy TSER 1.1. Encourage local agencies and airports to work with Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services to prepare for emergency response and security.

Policy TSER 1.2. Identify key transportation routes for evacuation as well as emergency responder access.

Policy TSER 1.3. Encourage local agencies to implement recommendations in MCOG's 2020 Fire Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Evacuation Plan, as appropriate.

Policy TSER 1.4. Encourage Caltrans to prioritize improvements to State Highways that will enhance safety during emergency evacuations.

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

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

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

Policy TSER 2.3. Support and assist local agencies' development of Local Road Safety Plans.

Policy TSER 2.4. Advocate for, and seek funding to build new emergency evacuation routes, and improve/harden secondary evacuation routes.

## **STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM (SH)**

**Goal:** Provide safe, efficient transportation for regional and interregional traffic while maintaining quality of life for residents of the county.

**Objective SH 1:** Provide timely improvements to the Principal Arterial (major highway) system consistent with statewide needs and regional priorities.

Policy SH 1.1. Identify improvements to the major corridors consistent with route concepts.

Policy SH 1.2. Seek funding for priority improvements identified on major corridors and interregional routes, including the consideration of Regional Improvement Program (RIP) programming and pursuit of other State and Federal funding sources.

Policy SH 1.3. Identify, prioritize, and seek funding for access improvements (interchanges & intersections) to the Principal Arterial System.

Policy SH 1.4. Consider funding participation in staged widening of two-lane segments of U. S. 101 south of Ukiah.

**Objective SH 2:** Provide a system of Minor Arterial Highways consistent with statewide needs and local priorities.

Policy SH 2.1. Encourage State funding for maintenance of Minor Arterial Highway segments within the County.

Policy SH 2.2. Coordinate with Caltrans to identify and program needed operational and safety improvements.

Policy SH 2.3. Consider local funding partnership to correct safety concerns as appropriate.

**Objective SH 3:** Provide safe traveling conditions on all State Highways within Mendocino County.

Policy SH 3.1. Prioritize projects that correct safety issues (particularly in locations with high accident rates) for support and funding consideration.

Policy SH 3.2. Continue to implement and maintain a system of motorist aid call boxes consistent with the Call Box Implementation Plan per MCOG's role as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Mendocino County.

**Objective SH 4:** Provide for efficient, free-flowing travel on all State Highways in Mendocino County.

Policy SH 4.1. Maintain a minimum Level of Service C on rural segments of the Principal Arterial System and a minimum Level of Service of D in "urbanized" areas as measured by the current Highway Capacity Manual.

Policy SH 4.2. Maintain a minimum Level of Service D on the "main line" at all interchanges and at-grade crossings on the state Highway System.

Policy SH 4.3. Consider a lower standard for Level of Service along segments of State Routes that serve as "Main Street" through communities.

**Objective SH 5:** Balance the needs for transportation improvements with quality of life for residents of and visitors to the region.

Policy SH 5.1. Consider context sensitive solutions when planning and designing highway improvements, particularly in communities where a State highway serves as "Main Street."

Policy SH 5.2. Consider "complete streets" strategies when planning major corridor improvements that include the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

Policy SH 5.3. Pursue multiple funding sources (State Transportation Improvement Program - STIP, Active Transportation Program - ATP, State Highway Operation Protection Program - SHOPP) on corridor projects to fund multi-modal aspects of the project.

## LOCAL STREETS & ROADS (LSR)

**Goal:** Provide a safe and efficient transportation network, connecting local community roads and major transportation corridors and meeting the transportation needs of the communities served by these facilities.

**Objective LSR 1:** Identify and prioritize capital improvements to the regional road system.

Policy LSR 1.1. Conduct planning activities to identify critical, high priority improvements.

Policy LSR 1.2. Seek funding for needed improvements, including consideration of RIP funding and other state and federal grant sources.

Policy LSR 1.3. Prioritize improvements to principal local roadways, particularly those providing primary access to communities, those that connect to the State Highway system, or those that relieve the impact on the State Highway system.

**Objective LSR 2:** Balance the need for safety and operational improvements with the need for maintenance of the existing system.

Policy LSR 2.1. Maintain a Pavement Management Program to analyze and determine the best use for funds available for pavement maintenance and rehabilitation.

Policy LSR 2.2. Assist local agencies in identifying, prioritizing, and funding safety improvements on local streets and roads systems, including projects identified in Local Road Safety Plans.

Policy LSR 2.3. Seek reliable funding sources for ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation efforts in order to protect investment in existing system.

Policy LSR 2.4. Consider “fix-it-first” projects when considering funding sources that are appropriate for maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing system, such as SB 1 funding.

**Objective LSR 3:** Support timely delivery of projects on local streets and roads systems.

Policy LSR 3.1. Provide local agencies with tools and technology to analyze impacts of transportation projects on network.

Policy LSR 3.2. Conduct transportation planning projects that prepare local and state agencies to deliver projects.

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (AT)

The Active Transportation System element of this RTP, along with these goals policies and objectives, also serves as the region’s Active Transportation Plan. Some of the goals from that plan fall under the Complete Streets section of goals and policies, and are therefore listed in that section.

**Goal:** Provide a safe and useable network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the region as a means to lessen dependence on vehicular travel and improve the health of Mendocino County’s residents through increased walking and biking.

**Objective AT 1:** Maximize funding opportunities for local agencies to develop and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Policy AT 1.1. Update the regional Active Transportation Plan on a timely basis to ensure local agency eligibility for Active Transportation Program funds and other grant programs.

Policy AT 1.2. Provide support to local agencies in pursuing grant funding such as Active Transportation Program funding for needed improvements.

Policy AT 1.3. Continue to reserve and allocate 2% of Local Transportation Funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Policy AT 1.4. Consider RIP funding for priority active transportation projects.

**Objective AT 2:** Provide a non-motorized transportation network that offers a feasible alternative to vehicular travel.

Policy AT 2.1. Prioritize improvements providing access to schools, employment, and other critical services.

Policy AT 2.2. Prioritize projects that link to an existing facility or provide connectivity, including first mile and last mile connections to transit.

Policy AT 2.3. Fund planning activities in MCOG's annual Overall Work Program to identify priority improvements for commute purposes, such as safe routes to schools plans.

Policy AT 2.4. Consider the addition/improvement of bicycle and pedestrian facilities when planning and implementing local street and road improvements.

Policy AT 2.5. Encourage implementation of identified priority projects, such as projects from the "Pedestrian Needs Assessment & Engineered Feasibility Study" and segments of the Great Redwood Trail.

Policy AT 2.6. Maximize use of the non-motorized transportation facilities through support of and participation in non-infrastructure activities that increase awareness of and encourage use of these facilities.

**Objective AT 3:** Improve property value and strengthen local economies through more accessible commercial and residential areas.

Policy AT 3.1. Encourage the addition of pedestrian and bicycle improvements in local business areas and existing residential areas.

**Objective AT 4:** Provide context sensitive facilities.

Policy AT 4.1. Encourage flexibility of design standards in order to allow facilities in very rural or built-out areas.

Policy AT 4.2. Work with State or Federal agencies to allow design exceptions when needed.

**Objective AT 5:** Maximize investment in non-motorized transportation facilities through maintenance. Maintain active transportation facilities in order to ensure their continued use and availability.

Policy AT 5.1. Each local agency shall be responsible for conducting the maintenance of active transportation facilities within their jurisdiction, unless an alternative agreement exists. A variety of funding sources should be considered for maintenance activities.

Policy AT 5.2. If appropriate, local agencies may enter into maintenance agreements with other agencies or organizations for continued maintenance of active transportation facilities.

## TRANSIT (T)

The Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) is the Consolidated Transit Service Agency (CTSA) for Mendocino County and provides the majority of transit services throughout the county, including support for paratransit services provided by non-profit organizations. Although MTA has its own board of directors which sets policies for the transit agency, MCOG does have an active role in transit. The following are MCOG's goals, objectives and policies related to transit. MTA's goals and policies may be found in their Short-Range Transit Development Plan.

**Goal:** Provide a coordinated and effective public transit system, which serves the needs of the citizens of Mendocino County, to the extent feasible.

**Objective T 1:** Fund public transit services to the extent that there are demonstrated transit needs, existing service demonstrates good performance, and resources are available.

Policy T 1.1. Conduct annual unmet transit needs process.

Policy T 1.2. Continue to maximize Transit Development Act funding for Mendocino Transit Authority and maintain a capital reserve fund.

Policy T 1.3. Pursue all available funding for transit operations and capital needs, including consideration of RIP funds for transit capital needs when appropriate, as well as acting as official grant applicant when appropriate.

Policy T 1.4. Continue funding the Local Transportation Funds (LTF) Reserve Fund to ensure transit continuity when LTF revenues fail to meet projections.

**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.

Policy T 2.5. Assist MTA in applying for Caltrans transportation planning grants to facilitate transit planning studies that lead to increased efficiency and operations.

**Objective T 3:** Support transit needs of seniors, the disabled, and low-income individuals.

Policy T 3.1. Coordinate annual grant programs such as FTA Section 5310 programs, and provide assistance to agencies, including senior centers providing transportation, in preparing applications as appropriate.

Policy T 3.2. Conduct meetings of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee (SSTAC) a minimum of once each year. Involve the SSTAC in transportation planning activities as appropriate.

Policy T 3.3. Provide support to transportation services provided by senior centers and similar organizations as appropriate.



**Objective T 4:** Provide mobility solutions in remote areas of the county not served by traditional transit.

Policy T 4.1. Consider alternatives to traditional transit, such as micro-transit or shared mobility services in remote rural areas not served by traditional transit service.

## **RAIL TRANSPORTATION (R)**

**Goal:** Protect and support the highest and best use of railroad right-of-way in order to serve the public throughout Mendocino County.

**Objective R 1:** Encourage full use of railroad right of way with development of rail-with-trails and/or rail-to-trails projects, where feasible.

**Objective R 2:** Provide support to rail operators as appropriate.

Policy R 2.1. Support California Western Railroad’s efforts to re-start passenger and freight rail operations between Fort Bragg and Willits.

Policy R 2.2. Support efforts to make critical repairs to the California Western Railroad infrastructure.

**Objective R 3:** Improve economic vitality of the region through rail and rail-trail related tourism.

Policy R 3.1. Support coordination between the tourist industry and service providers to boost tourism-related revenues and enhance recreational opportunities.

## **AVIATION (A)**

**Goal:** Provide a safe, efficient, and well-maintained system of airports that meet the aviation needs of Mendocino County residents, visitors, commerce, and emergency services.

**Objective A 1:** Ensure the long-term stability of the region’s airports through resolution of land use issues.

Policy A 1.1. Encourage adoption and periodic update of Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) for each airport.

**Objective A 2:** Improve air facilities and maintain each airport at an acceptable level of service and in good repair.

Policy A 2.1. Support airport facility owners in grant application processes and with communication/coordination with the Division of Aeronautics, the California Transportation Commission, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), as appropriate.

## **MARITIME (M)**

**Goal:** Provide an adequate, well maintained, safe and efficient system of maritime facilities that meet the regional and interregional needs of commercial, recreational, and emergency services maritime vessels.

**Objective M 1:** Maintain and improve existing publicly owned maritime facilities.

Policy M 1.1. Support the identification and allocation of resources for maritime facilities at Noyo Harbor and Arena Cove.

Policy M 1.2. Consider projects that enhance economic viability of harbor facilities and strengthen local economies.

**Objective M 2:** Develop future maritime facilities based upon adopted master plans.

Policy M 2.1. Support the development of future maritime facilities that are based upon established needs, are financially viable, and are consistent with general plans.

**Objective M 3:** Provide adequate public access to maritime facilities.

Policy M 3.1. Support the maintenance and improvement of public access (streets/roads, bikeways, pedestrian facilities, and transit) to established maritime facilities.

## **TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION (TT)**

**Goal:** For Tribal residents within Mendocino County to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.

**Objective TT 1:** Implement activities in a knowledgeable, sensitive manner respectful of tribal sovereignty.

Policy TT 1.1. Consult with and involve the tribes in the development of planning documents. Routinely, this applies to development of the Regional Transportation Plan and the biennial State Transportation Improvement Program.

Policy TT 1.2. Provide the tribes with information regarding various Federal, State, and local transportation grant programs for which they may qualify.

Policy TT 1.3. Routinely transmit MCOG's policy and program recommendations, actions, and information having potential effects on the tribes' land or resources to the tribes.

**Objective TT 2:** Establish and maintain government-to-government relationships with the tribes in order to establish clear and open, ongoing communication between MCOG and the tribes.

Policy TT 2.1. Meet with the tribes to review the status of the government-to-government relationships and exchange information, as appropriate.

**Objective TT 3:** Provide a transportation network that safely and sufficiently provides access between tribal lands and their surrounding communities.

Policy TT 3.1. Coordinate with tribes to consider financial partnership on projects that serve tribal lands.

Policy TT 3.2. Coordinate with tribes and surrounding communities to identify safety concerns on the transportation network serving their areas.

**Objective TT 4:** Provide opportunities for tribes to have early input on regional transportation issues.

Policy TT 4.1. Include a standing agenda item on MCOG's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) monthly agendas to receive tribal input on transportation issues.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH & EQUITY (PHE)**

**Goal:** Provide a multi-modal transportation system that offers mobility options and supports positive public health and equity for all residents.

**Objective PHE 1:** To encourage healthier lifestyles through increased walking and biking.

Policy PHE 1.1. Coordinate with health organizations to promote alternative forms of transportation.

Policy PHE 1.2. Support educational programs to promote increased walking and biking.

Policy PHE 1.3. Encourage provision of bicycle parking facilities in appropriate locations throughout the community.

Policy PHE 1.4. Encourage consideration of health and health equity in the design and prioritization of projects, and include transformative active transportation projects that support connected communities.

Policy PHE 1.5. Encourage and support improved connectivity and access to local parks, recreational trails, and facilities in support of healthy community and quality of life concepts.

**Objective PHE 2:** Encourage equity in providing transportation services and facilities.

Policy PHE 2.1. Prioritize transportation projects that ensure residents – regardless of income – have equitable access to vital services, employment, and educational opportunities.

Policy PHE 2.2. Consider transportation projects and planning efforts in under-served, geographically remote communities, in addition to more populated areas of the region.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES (F)**

**Goal:** Provide proper stewardship of transportation resources and maximize the effectiveness of these resources to fulfill RTP goals and objectives.

**Objective F 1:** Maximize the effectiveness of transportation funding resources.

Policy F 1.1. Prioritize transportation projects which fulfill multiple RTP goals and objectives, when selecting or nominating projects for funding.

Policy F 1.2. Reserve a portion of funds made available through the Surface Transportation Program (or subsequent program adopted by Congress) for the purpose of partnering with local agencies and Caltrans to construct regional priority transportation projects.

Policy F 1.3. Direct Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to capital projects: (1) on State Highways, (2) on major local highways that connect to State Highways, (3) on major local highways that facilitate through traffic or otherwise relieve State Highways, or (4) on major local highways that serve communities not served by the State Highway system.

**Objective F 2:** Ensure planning and construction funds are awarded to projects with a plausible financing plan that will lead to timely construction of projects.

Policy F 2.1. Require funding plans to be submitted as a component of all applications for MCOG planning, project development, right-of-way, and construction funding. Funding plans

are to be commensurate with project complexity and are to ensure that regionally funded projects are feasible, fundable, and timely.

**Objective F 3:** Diversify funding sources for transportation projects.

Policy F 3.1. Encourage agencies to federalize transportation projects that are eligible for federal funds, if feasible.

Policy F 3.2. Prioritize projects within those agencies that have provided matching funds for a project, not limited to transportation funding.

Policy F 3.3. Assist local agencies in identifying and obtaining local funding sources such as transportation development fees and local transportation sales taxes.

Policy F 3.4. Encourage and assist local agencies in applying for state and federal grants, for planning and capital projects.

**Objective F 4:** Secure grant funding for local transportation planning projects and capital transportation projects from competitive, state, and federal sources.

Policy F 4.1. Conduct planning activities that promote capital grant eligibility, such as the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

Policy F 4.2. Apply for planning and capital grants that support or enhance the region's multi-modal transportation system.

Policy F 4.3. Consider providing local grant match or sponsorship for local agencies' transportation planning or capital grant projects.

Policy F 4.4. Consider funding sources, such as the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program, for conducting project development activities, including environmental review and design, in order to have construction ready projects.

**Objective F 5:** Secure reliable, ongoing funding for systems preservation efforts on local streets, roads, and bridges in order to protect investment in existing system.

Policy F 5.1. Support and participate in statewide and regional efforts to examine the rehabilitation and maintenance needs of existing transportation networks.

Policy F 5.2. Continue to fund the periodic update of the Pavement Management Program (PMP) for local agencies, supporting effective use of agencies' limited rehabilitation funding.

Policy F 5.3. Pursue local funding options for maintenance and rehabilitation, such as a transportation sales tax for agencies that do not have such a tax.

# STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM ELEMENT

## SYSTEM DEFINITION

In Mendocino County, there are approximately 391 centerline miles of State Highway. This system is made up of major highway corridors of interregional significance as well as many miles of rural highways that still play a major role in the region as they act as Main Street to many communities. In the past, Caltrans prepared Transportation Concept Reports (TCRs) to study issues on state routes. Caltrans has shifted away from developing TCRs to focus on developing Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plans (CMCPs). Corridor Planning is a multimodal transportation planning approach that recognizes that transportation needs are based on the complex geographic, demographic, economic, and social characteristics of communities. The process is collaborative and done in partnership with local communities and transportation partners. Appendix H presents the region's State highway corridors.

Four highway corridors in Mendocino County are components of the Interregional Road System and are of regional significance as well:

US 101 – The corridor of preeminent importance is the US 101 Highway Corridor, serving as the major north-south route connecting the region to the rest of the state. This corridor is quite literally the lifeline for economic and social activity in the region, and as such, improvements to this corridor have the most direct impact on residents of the County. US 101 serves as “Main Street” in the communities of Hopland and Laytonville. The Willits Bypass (2016) re-routed US 101 to the east around the City of Willits. This route is on the national Highway System (NHS) and is recognized in the 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) as the primary transportation facility for interregional travel in the North Bay and North State.

SR 20 – State Route 20 is also a corridor of interregional and regional significance, providing a generally east-west route from the coast near Fort Bragg to Interstate-80 in the Sierras, passing through Lake County on our eastern boundary. Route 20, a two-lane conventional highway, is an essential link to the coastal areas for summer recreational travel, and is an important goods movement route connecting the US-101 Corridor with the I-5 Freeway in the upper central valley. The segment that runs through the southern end of Willits serves as a portion of “Main Street” in that community. The SR 20 segment between US-101 and Interstate-5 is also recognized in the draft 2021 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan as an important east-west highway facility.

SR 1 – State Route 1 is also a corridor of interregional and regional significance. In Mendocino County, it begins at the Sonoma/Mendocino County line and continues north along most of the Mendocino Coast, serving several rural communities as well as the cities of Point Arena and Fort Bragg. Route 1 turns east just north of the community of Westport, and terminates at the junction of Route 1 and U.S. 101 in the community of Leggett. SR-1 is an important recreational access route and has been designated as the Pacific Coast Bike Route. In addition to being interregional, this route also serves as Main Street to several communities.

SR 128 – State Route 128 is also a corridor of interregional and regional significance. Route 128 is an east west route that connects rural unincorporated communities through the Anderson Valley. In District 1 Route 128 travels from its junction with Route 1, 20 miles south of the city of Fort Bragg, to the Sonoma County line. In addition to being an interregional route, SR 128 also serves as Main Street to several communities and is the primary non-motorized corridor through the Anderson Valley. As such, the route provides non-motorized linkage between the local communities, the Navarro River Redwoods State Park, Hendy Woods State Park, and smaller county parks. SR 128 also serves as a route for logging trucks and other heavy vehicles related to the timber industry and viticulture. The concept for Route 128 is to maintain on the existing alignment.

Other Routes – In addition to the major highway corridors, there are a number of rural State highways that run throughout the county, many of which act as “Main Street” to some of the unincorporated communities of Mendocino County. Because of the role these highways play in local communities, their needs are sometimes just as critical as those of the major highway corridors. These routes include:

SR 162 – State Route 162 is generally a two-lane conventional highway that runs through mountainous terrain. The route is a Rural Major Collector and provides a connection to US Route 101 for the communities of Dos Rios, Covelo, and the Round Valley Indian Reservation. A portion of this route serves as “Main Street” in the community of Covelo. An unconstructed segment of the route traverses Mendocino Pass Road as a US Forest Service route and provides a seasonal connection to the Central Valley.

SR 222 – State Route 222 is an east-west route located entirely in Mendocino County. The route begins near the US 101/SR 222 interchange in the City of Ukiah, and continues east into the community of Talmage, where it serves as “Main Street”. SR 222 is a conventional two-lane facility, approximately 1.7 miles in length, and functionally classified as an Urban Minor Arterial. The State’s long-term concept for this route is relinquishment to Mendocino County.

The remaining State highways in Mendocino County are:

SR 175 – State Route 175 is a rural conventional two-lane highway that runs from U.S. 101 in Hopland along mountainous terrain to Route 29 near Lakeport, in Lake County.

SR 253 – State Route 253 is a north-south conventional two-lane highway located entirely within Mendocino County, which provides access to Anderson Valley. The route begins at the junction of SR 128 and SR 253 south of the community of Boonville, and continues northeast to US 101 south of the City of Ukiah. SR 253 is approximately 17.2 miles in length and is functionally classified as a Rural Minor Arterial.

SR 271 – State Route 271 is functionally classified as a Rural Minor Arterial, consisting of two discontinuous segments on the old US 101 alignment in northern Mendocino and southern Humboldt counties. The route is a bypassed alignment of U.S. Route 101 and the corridor generally parallels the South Fork of the Eel River. The combined segments of SR 271 are approximately 15 miles in length.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT: ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Two major principles emerge in addressing needs assessment for the State Highway corridors: Filling the gaps in the existing highway segments, and implementing high priority safety/mobility improvement projects on the existing highway system. The role of Highway US 101 is critically important to Mendocino County for economic and primary access needs. Indeed, this route is the very “lifeline of the North Coast”, from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Oregon border. The 2017 Transportation Concept Report (TCR) for US 101 calls for the highway to be developed as a four-lane freeway/expressway facility throughout Mendocino County, with the exception of the stretch from Leggett to Red Mountain. It is expected that this TCR will transition into a corridor plan when updated, and planned improvements to this facility will consider corridor needs and other factors, such as environmental and fiscal constraints, in developing improvement projects within the US 101 corridor.

With the increased emphasis at the state level to expand opportunities for active transportation and non-motorized travel, the challenge of safely accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians on state highways is an emerging issue that will need to be addressed as these highways are improved and maintained.

As California moves toward strict measures to combat climate change impacts, a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is an often-mentioned strategy to address impacts caused by the transportation sector. SB 743 (2013) started a process to fundamentally change how transportation impacts are analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), with VMT identified as the preferred transportation metric. Meeting statewide VMT reduction goals and developing appropriate mitigation strategies involves unique challenges in rural communities where individuals must travel long distances to access basic services, and non-motorized travel is often not a viable option. In 2020, MCOG developed an “SB 743 Regional Baseline Study” to assist local jurisdictions in complying with the new CEQA requirements.

### The State Highway as “Main Street”

In many Mendocino County communities, the State highway also serves as “Main Street”. Community values must be balanced with transportation needs to ensure that these communities are truly “livable.” These communities (including Hopland, Willits, Boonville, Navarro, Philo, Yorkville, Fort Bragg, Elk, Point Arena, Gualala, Laytonville, Talmage, and Covelo) may all benefit through the implementation of “complete street” concepts through partnership with Caltrans. Speeding is a concern in some of these communities, especially in areas such as Point Arena where there are 55 mile per hour speed limits immediately adjacent to residential areas and city hall. The need for safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities is also a recognized need in these “Main Street” communities. Enhanced livability in these communities can be attained through a number of traffic calming features and design strategies as outlined in “Main Street California: A Guide for Improving Community and Transportation Vitality” (Caltrans 2013) which advocates for flexibility in design, and outlines transportation features appropriate for state highways.

## Safety and Operating Issues

State Route 20 - Over the timeframe of this plan, there will be capacity and safety concerns on SR 20 (in particular the Principal Arterial segment into Lake County) that will need to be addressed. Planned improvements along this corridor are shown on the SHOPP list included in Appendix B.

State Route 20 – Blosser Lane - A safety issue of particular concern is the intersection of SR 20 and Blosser Lane/Coast Street in the Willits area. This intersection lies along an elementary school route, and its width and high speeds make it hazardous for school children. Walking and biking to school is discouraged by the school due to the unsafe conditions. Improvements for pedestrian safety at this intersection were among the biggest concerns during multiple public outreach efforts in the area. A Project Initiation Report (PIR) was signed in January 2021 to improve this intersection (Non-SHOPP). Caltrans has initiated a curve warning sign for this location, and will continue to work with the City of Willits and MCOG to identify funding for this project. A project to address this need is included in the Active Transportation section of this plan.

State Route 1 - The Caltrans Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Summary Report (2019) and Technical Report (2019) identified flooding at Garcia River and other sections of SR 1 along the Mendocino Coast that are at high risk of bluff erosion, sea level rise, storm surge, increase in the average maximum temperatures, wildfire, and other events due to climate change impacts. Addressing the issue of SR 1 closures caused by flooding of the Garcia River was the biggest concern expressed in public comment in the South Coast area in various outreach efforts. Regular flooding of the area leaves residents cut off from their homes or work, and also cuts off access for emergency services. Garcia River flooding also impedes commerce from the inland areas.

The Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory & Engineered Feasibility Study (TrailPeople, 2019) identified a list of priority non-motorized improvement projects throughout the County, including potential projects on SR 1. Those projects are included in the Active Transportation Plan section of this document.

Ongoing challenges along many segments of State Route 1 include the lack of shoulder and right of way width, combined with hillside and topographical constraints which can prevent construction of roadway improvements. Additional challenges include open drainage facilities in the Point Arena area.

State Route 175 - Russian River Bridge - Replacement of the Russian River bridge is needed to accommodate non-motorized users, and provide a safe connection to old Hopland. Short-term solutions to accommodate non-motorized users could include sharrows and a user-activated warning system. This need also is included in the Active Transportation element of this document.



## Other Issues

US 101 Bypass of Willits, Ph. I & II – The US 101 bypass of Willits (Phase I) re-routed through traffic and trucks from the downtown area to a new segment of US 101 just east of the city. Phase I of the project was opened to the public in November of 2016, and included the construction of a 5.9-mile, two-lane facility. Phase I also included right-of-way and environmental clearance for a four-lane facility in Phase II, however, construction of Phase II is not expected to occur within the timeframe of this plan. The Phase I bypass has addressed many of the traffic congestion issues the city faced, and has improved the character of its downtown.

US 101 North Hopland – Small scale incremental projects that address safety and operational concerns in the North Hopland segment may be considered in the 10-20 year period as warranted by collision history.

US 101 Interchanges in the Ukiah Valley – An interchange study conducted for MCOG several years ago identified a range of short- and long-term improvements to the US 101 interchanges throughout the Ukiah valley. Over the past several years, some improvements have been made to local streets that have relieved congestion in certain locations, however, some needs remain and are included in this plan as short- or long-range projects. Implementation of other previously identified needs will depend on the growth in the area and may not be realized during the time frame of this plan.

US 101 through Richardson Grove (in Humboldt County) – Although not in Mendocino County, the corridor through Richardson Grove is an important regional and interregional goods movement route. The key transportation issue in this area is freight planning and STAA (Surface Transportation Assistance Act) operational issues. It is recognized that there are environmental concerns with creating a four-lane section through Richardson Grove State Park into Humboldt County, however the preservation of rights-of-way and the protection of existing route designations is essential to the long-term well-being of the region. STAA access in this area remains a goal, and the following operational improvement project is programmed in the current 2020 SHOPP: Near Garberville, from 0.5-mile south to 0.5-mile north of Richardson Grove Undercrossing – Realign Roadway (PA & ED only) (Project Approval and Environmental Document).

## Public Comment

### RTP Outreach

Public comment received during outreach for this RTP identified the following needs and concerns on State highways:

SR 162 – hazards from falling rocks and speeding; speeding throughout downtown Covelo; safety and visibility concerns at intersections of SR 162/Howard, and safety concerns at SR 162/Commercial, and SR 162/Biggar Lane.

SR 1 – Point Arena Area – need more pedestrian crossings throughout town; Fort Bragg area – safety concerns at intersection of SR 1/Main Street and Pudding Creek; Gualala area – implement complete street including connection to California Coastal Trail, reduce speed limit, and focus operational emphasis on pedestrian mode; Mendocino area – southbound Hwy 1 needs a left turn lane at Larkin Street. Fort Bragg area – need a crosswalk near Hwy 1 and Airport Road; Miscellaneous – need for public restrooms along Hwy 1.

SR 20 – Willits Area – Blosser Lane/SR 20 intersection – unsafe pedestrian crossing due to speeding; SR 20 (S. Main Street)/Walnut Avenue intersection – safety concerns for pedestrians; SR 20 (S. Main Street) – speeding near Burger King.

SR 128 – Boonville Area - shoulders needed for bicyclist safety and for emergency response and pullouts; South of Yorkville – need to plan for EV charging stations.

US 101 – Ukiah Area – North State Street northbound on-ramp – unsafe due to poor visibility/short merge for drivers entering the highway; Laytonville Area – need flashing beacons at two crosswalks in town; and concerns with speeding on Lakeview Road.

US 101 – Hopland Area – speeding; traffic calming is needed.

SR 175 – Hopland Area – SR 175 near the Hopland Rancheria needs improvement.

### Other Outreach

Additional public comment received during development of the County and Cities’ Local Road Safety Plans identified the following needs and concerns:

SR 162 – Covelo area – this roadway has a high number of traffic safety concerns, including human behavior, including distracted driving, driving impaired, spinning brodie’s, speeding, and running stop signs. Larger signs may be needed. Intersection of SR 162/Biggar Lane is an intersection with safety concerns.

SR 1 – Point Arena Area – Intersections with safety concerns include SR 1 (Main St)/School Street; SR 1 (Main Street)/Iverson Avenue (reduced sight distance and blind area); and SR 1/Lake Street. Concerns were also expressed regarding the need for more pedestrian crossings throughout town; speeding; and, concerns with inconsistent speed limits in the area (20 mph in town, 40 mph near Lake Street, and 55 mph nearby); Fort Bragg area - safety concerns at intersection of SR 1/Main Street and Pudding Creek, SR 1/Noyo Point Road – safety concerns at intersection; and, safety concerns associated with traffic on SR 1, particularly during the summer when traffic attempts to bypass SR 1 congestion and spills onto small residential roads.

SR 20 – Willits Area – Blosser Lane/SR 20 intersection – unsafe pedestrian crossing due to speeding and very wide crossing, and heavy traffic; SR 20 (Main Street)/Walnut Avenue intersection – safety concerns for pedestrians

US 101 – Ukiah Area – Perkins Street on ramps and off ramps – safety concern for bicyclists and pedestrians that cross the freeway. Hopland – speeding through town is an issue, traffic calming is needed. ADA improvements in Hopland are planned by Caltrans.

During development and data analysis for the Local Road Safety Plans, the following high injury intersections and high injury corridors throughout the county were identified. This analysis included State Highways for some jurisdictions, dependent on local agency preference. Additional intersections and corridors were identified; however, only the highest locations based on Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO) scores, are included here. Contrary to what the term implies, EPDO scores are calculated based on the severity of a crash in terms of injury and fatality in addition to property damage. Accidents involving fatalities or severe injuries will receive the highest scores. These scores are significant because they are used by the Highway Safety Improvement Program to select projects for funding.

**Table 3**  
**High Injury Intersections – State Highways**

Intersection	Total Collisions	EPDO Score*
Redwood Ave and SR 1/Main St. (Fort Bragg)	5	171
Oak St and SR 1/S. Main (Fort Bragg)	2	165
Boat Yard Dr and SR 20 (Fort Bragg)	1	165
Pine St and SR 1/S. Main St. (Fort Bragg)	1	165
South St and SR 1/S. Main St. (Fort Bragg)	1	165
North State St and US 101 On Ramp/Off Ramp (Ukiah area)	1	165

\*Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)

**Table 4**  
**High Injury Corridors – State Highways**

Corridor	Total Collisions	EPDO Score*
Comptche Ukiah Rd: SR 1 to Mendocino Headlands Sate Park – Big River Property (Mendocino area)	9	702
Main St/SR 1: Jane Ln to SR 20 (Fort Bragg)	1	165
SR 20: SR 1 to S. Harbor Dr. (Fort Bragg)	1	165
Eastside Calpella Rd: Marina Dr to SR 20 On Ramp/Off Ramp (Calpella area)	10	80
Riverside Dr: Main St/SR 1 to Pine Reef (Point Arena)	2	22
School St/SR 1: Northern City Limits to Lake St (Point Arena)	1	6

\*Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)

## **ACTION PLAN: PROPOSED PROJECTS**

### **Short-Range Projects (10 years)**

Short-range is defined as a time frame of one to ten years into the future. However, given the amount of time involved in developing funding, preparing planning studies, integrating project design and environmental impact and mitigation actions, and then implementing construction of a highway facility, it is difficult to deliver a major project in less than ten years.

The projects identified in this section of the Regional Transportation Plan are those that improve vehicular travel and safety on State Routes. Projects on these routes that primarily benefit

bicycle and pedestrian transportation are identified in the Active Transportation Element of this plan.

In addition to projects listed here, a number of projects will be implemented through the Caltrans SHOPP program during the short-range timeframe. These projects are from funding identified expressly for safety, operations, maintenance, or rehabilitation needs on the state highway system. Although MCOG is allowed input in development of the SHOPP, the State has sole discretionary authority over the use of SHOPP funds; therefore listing of these projects in the RTP does not constitute approval by MCOG. A list of these projects can be found in Appendix B. A list of planned bridge projects is also included in Appendix B.

In addition to the projects listed below, some potential infrastructure enhancement projects have been identified in the communities of Covelo, Boonville and Hopland for funding in the Clean CA grant program. Projects are not yet finalized; however, all project elements were pulled from MCOG-sponsored or local agency plans and studies. This “quick-build” grant program requires projects to be completed and open to the public by June, 2024.

Regionwide Improvements – Install electric vehicle (EV) charging and alternative fueling infrastructure projects consistent with MCOG’s Zero Emissions Vehicle Regional Readiness Plan and local priorities, at various locations throughout the region. Locations may include public or private parking sites as well as roadside parking locations.

SR 1 – Point Arena (14.7 – 33.9) – In and near Point Arena, from 0.2-mile south of Iverson Avenue to Philo Greenwood Road, this project will rehabilitate pavement, upgrade guardrails, repair Transportation Management System (TMS) elements, and upgrade curb ramps to ADA standards.

SR-1- Gualala (0.00-1.02) Community based planning efforts administered by MCOG identified community priorities for the SR 1 corridor through downtown that include driveway consolidation, turning bays, crosswalks, sidewalks/pedestrian paths, parking, and bikeways. Caltrans and MCOG have worked extensively with the Gualala community to refine design plans for this project, with the latest public workshop held in January, 2021.

MCOG has programmed Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) funding for this project as follows: environmental (\$340,000) design (\$575,000), and right of way/right of way support (\$900,000). A 2020 estimate identified an additional need of \$7,224,000 to complete the project (*total project \$9,039,000*). MCOG and Caltrans will seek funding through the Active Transportation Program (ATP) for this important project. Another potential funding source is Caltrans Complete Streets reservation of funds in the SHOPP. In addition, MCOG has reserved up to \$3,050,000 in future RTIP funding for portions of construction that are not eligible for ATP or Complete Streets.

SR 1 – Garcia River Flooding The stretch of SR 1 between post mile 17.52 and 18.5 near Point Arena is subject to closure as a result of frequent flooding of the Garcia River. When the closures occur, it leaves the City of Point Arena cut off from residences to the north, splits the Manchester-Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians tribal lands, and blocks emergency services. Addressing this issue was the biggest topic of concern expressed through public input collected

in the South Coast area. Caltrans has identified a short/medium-term alternative that involves raising the grade to address this problem, as follows:

**Programmable Project Alternative: State Route 1 at Gasker Slough PM 17.52 to 17.72** – Replace bridge with grade raise to address the drainage issues in the area near the south end of the floodplain, the Gasker Slough area. This part of the drainage retains the water for long periods of time, compared with the area immediately to the south of the bridge, which sees periodic flooding, but also clears out relatively quickly. Addressing Gasker Slough would solve much of the flooding concerns from a temporal perspective. Caltrans has sought funding for this project through “Protected Betterment” funding, but it was not competitive. They will pursue another potential solution that might be feasible for a lower cost than what was scoped in the feasibility study. There are challenges due to environmental constraints and the Point Arena mountain beaver habitat.

**SR 20 Blosser Lane** – Intersection of SR 20 and Blosser Lane/Coast Street in the Willits area. This intersection lies along an elementary school route, and the wide intersection and high speeds make it hazardous for school children. Caltrans has initiated a curve warning sign for this location, and a Project Initiation Report (PIR) was signed in January 2021 to improve this intersection (Non-SHOPP). Caltrans will continue to work with the City of Willits and MCOG to identify funding for this project. Projects to address this need are included in the Active Transportation section of this plan.

**US-101 (Various) – Ukiah Area Interchanges** – The US 101 interchanges in the Ukiah area have, for many years, been plague by operational problems caused by outdated design, improper spacing, and other issues. An interchange study conducted for MCOG several years ago identified a range of short- and long-term improvements to the US 101 interchanges throughout the Ukiah valley. Over the past several years, some improvements have been made to local streets that have relieved congestion in certain locations, however, some needs remain. During the timeframe of this plan, improvements will be focused on the US 101/North State Street interchange. Other previously identified interchange improvements will depend on the growth in the Ukiah valley, and may not be realized during the time frame of this plan.

Caltrans and the County of Mendocino plan to make the following improvements during the timeframe of this plan:

**US 101/North State Street** – On the northbound ramp, there is insufficient lane length for vehicles to accelerate and match the speed to vehicles on the freeway, and merge into free-flowing traffic. On the southbound ramp, vehicles are queuing past the ramp, onto the shoulder of the freeway. A Programmable Project Alternative identified by Caltrans for the northbound onramp involves widening and seismic retrofit of the northbound bridge to lengthen the northbound merge lane. However, Caltrans is also exploring other options that would lengthen the merge distance. To address issues on the southbound ramp, Caltrans has proposed restriping North State Street to one through lane in each direction to conform to existing striping at the southbound onramp to improve operations and queuing and provide standard bicycle facilities within the project limits. However, the County of Mendocino’s project described below will most likely make this unnecessary.

In follow-up to previous studies conducted over the past several years, in 2019 the County of Mendocino conducted the North State Street Intersection Control Evaluation study (GHD). As a result of that study, the County has identified the need for a series of roundabouts along the North State Street corridor, which includes the area of the US 101 interchange. Phase I of the identified improvements is proposed within the short range of this plan and will result in installation of two roundabouts at (1) KUKI Lane, and (2) southbound US 101 Interchange, including the re-alignment of Lovers Lane.

US-101 Laytonville (68.78-69.51) – Although some improvements have been made through downtown Laytonville as part of a vertical curve realignment in the vicinity the intersection of US 101 and Branscomb Road, (including lighting, sidewalks, and some basic intersection improvements), the community remains concerned about the ability for pedestrians to safely cross US 101 in the downtown area. *See the Active Transportation Plan section in this document for bicycle and pedestrian projects identified in the Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory & Engineered Feasibility Study (TrailPeople, 2019).*

US 101 Hopland (La Franchi Road to 0.2-mile north of First Street) – The Hopland Main Street Corridor Engineered Feasibility Study (2015) identified improvements, including intersection improvements for US 101 at State Route 175. Caltrans has identified a programmable project alternative that would upgrade existing ADA pedestrian facilities to meet current standards, thereby achieving ADA pedestrian compliance; and upgrade roadway pavement, signage, Transportation Management Systems (TMS) assets, and drainage, as follows:

Programmable Project Alternative: The roadway will be reconstructed to achieve standard cross slopes for crosswalks and standard superelevation; new sidewalk will be constructed throughout project limits where existing sidewalks have gaps, and existing sidewalks will be reconstructed to achieve current ADA standard widths; approximately 23 curb ramps will be constructed; approximately 30 driveways will be reconstructed to achieve ADA compliance; eight raised pedestrian bulb-outs are proposed for all four crosswalks across US 101. In addition, at the junction of SR 175 and US 101, a new shorter crosswalk design is proposed for crossing SR 175 that will utilize two raised pedestrian islands to provide refuge for crossing. Project also includes a new census station, new draining facilities, low impact development features, pavement overlay, and guardrail. The project will involve a reduction in the steep slope crossing US 101 through downtown, which will significantly improve conditions for pedestrians. MCOG and the Hopland Municipal Advisory Council will work with Caltrans to ensure that features from the 2015 plan are included in the project to the extent possible.

Project Initiation Documents (PID) are required to be developed and approved by Caltrans before any major or high complexity project can be programmed and constructed on the state highway system. Projects within the portfolio begin PID development so they can be programmed into the SHOPP. The following table includes projects on the 2024 PID list:

**Table 5**  
**Caltrans District 1 2024 PID Project List**

Route	Begin Postmile	End Postmile	Purpose & Need	Improvement Description	Project Type and Funding Candidate
101	50.70	52.20	Reduce Collisions	Oil Well Hill	SHOPP
101	9.50	10.80	Reduce Collisions	La Franchi Left Turn Pocket	SHOPP
101	39.80	40.40	Reduce Collisions	Ridgewood Grade	SHOPP
101	81.37	91.32	Pavement Class 1	Cummings CAPM	SHOPP SB-1
1	0.00	105.50	Drainage	Men 1 Drainage	SHOPP
1	78.90	87.85	Pavement Class 2	DeHaven to Rockport CAPM	SHOPP SB-1
101	26.30	33.70	Pavement	Calpella & Talmage Pavement	SHOPP
101	81.55	82.67	Reduce Collisions	Rattlesnake Curve Improvement	SHOPP
162	20.81	21.06	Reduce Collisions	Curve Improvement	SHOPP
101	51.70	51.73	Reduce Collisions	Ryan Creek Road Left Turn Pocket	SHOPP
101	61.00	81.30	Drainage, Fish Passage, Stormwater	Drainage Men-101 Central	SHOPP

### Long-Range Projects (10 to 20 years)

Long-range projects are those that might be implemented within the next twenty years, but in all likelihood will not be acted upon until well past the twenty-year time frame. These projects are, however, still needed and form the basis of anticipated long-range projects that MCOG would recommend if additional funding becomes available. In addition to the specific projects mentioned below, it is expected that operational and safety improvements including realignment, barrier striping, shoulder widening, turnouts, and other projects will be programmed and constructed as needed throughout the long-term.

#### US-101 Corridor Projects

US-101 (Various) – Ukiah Area Interchanges - As mentioned previously, an interchange study conducted for MCOG several years ago identified a range of short- and long-term improvements to the US 101 interchanges throughout the Ukiah valley. Although some improvements were made to local streets which relieved congestion in certain locations, improvements will be needed in the long term to protect US-101 capacity and operating characteristics, and maintain good quality connections to the local roadway system, as the population of the Ukiah Valley inevitably grows.

Caltrans long term projects may include:

- US 101 at Lake Mendocino Drive
  - Signal at 101 Southbound Ramp/Lake Mendocino Drive intersection
  - Increase acceleration lengths for both N. bound and S. bound on ramps

- US 101 at East Perkins Street
  - 101 at East Perkins – Increase acceleration length of northbound on-ramp
  - Add auxiliary lane connecting northbound off-ramp with upstream northbound on-ramp from East Gobbi St interchange
  - Widen East Perkins Street Overcrossing as needed
- 
- US 101 at East Gobbi Street
  - Add auxiliary lane connecting northbound on-ramp with downstream northbound off-ramp at East Perkins Street interchange
  - Widen East Gobbi St Overcrossing as needed

County of Mendocino long term projects include:

- US 101 at North State Street Intersection and Interchange Improvements (Phase II):  
This will be a second phase of the project identified in the short-range plan for this area. Two roundabouts will be installed at two intersections on North State Street in the Ukiah area – (1) at Ford Road/Empire Drive and (2) northbound 101 Interchange. Roundabouts will likely be single lane.

### State Route 1 Projects

SR-1 (62.1/64.1) Construct a two way left turn lane on State Route 1 from Pudding Creek to 0.1 mile south of Odom Lane.

### State Route 20 Projects

The Willits Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan (City of Willits, 2017) identifies improvements to South Main Street/SR 20, including civic gateway treatments at Brown's Corner, median planting, decorative lighting, access to transit, buffered bike lanes, crosswalks, intersection improvements, wayfinding signs, ADA improvements, and a potential road diet.

### State Route 222 (Talmage Road) Projects

The long-term goal for State Route 222 is to adopt a boulevard concept and include improvements for this east-west travel corridor from the City of Ukiah to the intersection of SR 222 and Old River Road in Talmage. The corridor should include roadway improvements, shoulder improvements, non-motorized facilities, and transit connections.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The State of California has invested a great deal of time and energy in developing applicable performance measures for California's transportation system. However, for the most part these measures are aimed at the large metropolitan areas, with their accompanying problems of traffic congestion, complex roadway systems and significant capacity constraints. The following performance measures are suggested to evaluate corridor goals and objectives:



**Table 6**  
**State Highway Corridors Performance Measures**  
**Mendocino County**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Data Source(s)</b>
<b>Safety/Security</b>		
Improve Traffic Accident Rates for Corridor segments which exceed the statewide average (for comparable facility type) by more than 25% of the base rate to the statewide average or lower.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reduce number of motor vehicle accidents of all categories, (Fatalities, Injuries, Property Damage) over four-year plan lifetime.</li> <li>➤ Reduce severity of collisions over four-year plan lifetime.</li> <li>➤ Implement traffic safety improvement projects from prioritized list of safety enhancement projects, reducing number of high accident locations.</li> </ul>	Accident statistics collected by Caltrans, District 01, Safety Division; accident reports from California Highway Patrol (CHP). Accident data from Mendocino County Department of Transportation coincides with CHP.
Install roadside telephone call boxes on corridor routes as part of implementation of Mendocino SAFE Program on all applicable highway routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fully operational call boxes located at appropriate distances along the designated corridors of Regional Significance; and meeting all design criteria for call box location.</li> </ul>	MCOG management reports for call box performance; contractor progress reports for installation of call boxes throughout Mendocino County.
<b>Mobility/Accessibility</b>		
Number of new lane miles of full design standard facilities based on Facility Concept Plan and/or miles of operational improvements (or number of locations where operational improvements have been made).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lanes of new highway capacity added to existing highway routes that are programmed for construction.</li> <li>➤ Miles of highway improvements that widen shoulders, construct shoulders, construct truck lanes, construct passing lanes, or provide vehicle turnouts that are programmed for construction.</li> </ul>	Caltrans, District 01 planning and programming documents for project improvements in Mendocino County; MCOG RTIP projects; and Caltrans, District 01 Contractor Progress Reports for implementation of corridor projects.
Traffic flow on highway segments and congestion/delay associated with intersections and/or peak hour traffic demand. The action sought in terms of this measure is to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion at critical points on the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Determination of Level of Service on highway segments and seconds of delay at highway intersections per 2000 Highway Capacity Manual and modifications by Caltrans, District 1. Reference to highway intersections level of service can be modified to reflect a goal of maintaining LOS at a minimum of D and the LOS on highway segments at LOS C (unless constrained by topographical and/or environmental factors) in rural areas and D in urban areas. Where intersection turning movement data is not available, the entering volume on each leg of the intersection methodology can be used</li> </ul>	Results of baseline) analysis of corridor segments compared with analysis of same corridor segments at end of RTP update time period.
Travel time on highway segments along Corridors of Significance between major origin and destination points within each corridor. The action sought in terms of this measure is the reduction of travel time by physical improvements to the system or improvement of traffic flow by altering traffic demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Delays during adverse weather conditions and due to major highway construction on corridor facilities. Number of instances of delays will be reduced by 25% by correction of historical weather related maintenance locations and strict adherence to construction zone traffic management plan actions.</li> </ul>	Incident reports from Caltrans and the Highway Patrol will be compiled for the base year and at the end of the RTP planning period.

<b>Corridor Reliability</b>		
Highway closures and delays due to construction and/or repairs on highway facilities that form Corridors of Significance.	➤ Traffic flow delay. For intermittent highway closures, the maximum time delay will be twenty minutes or less. For temporary highway closures of an extended period, detour routes and/or traffic management programs shall not increase travel time by more than twenty minutes.	Highway closure notices and reports from Caltrans, District 01 maintenance and incident response units; closure requests and records from Caltrans highway construction contractors. Data from existing and past highway interruption incidents will be compared with data from the next four years for the RTP planning period. Unusual weather conditions will be factored into this comparison.
<b>Environmental Quality</b>		
Environmental impacts, both short and long term, related to highway corridor operation, programmed improvements, and/or proposed improvements should be fully considered and analyzed; and adverse impacts avoided or mitigated consistent with the environmental review process. This measure is achieved by fully complying with environmental law and regulations.	➤ Environmental Assessment Reports, Environmental Impact Reports, focused environmental documents, and program level EIR findings for RTP elements. These documents, upon adoption, approval or a more formal Record of Decision (ROD) become the objective measures of environmental compliance.	California Office of Research and Planning Clearinghouse for environmental documents; local agency "lead agency" compliance reports; Caltrans, District 01 environmental division documents and reports.
Maintain Air Quality Standards at current levels of emissions, meeting EPA and CARB requirements for designation of MCOG as an Air Quality attainment region. The performance measure of "prevention of significant degradation" of air quality will be the key to maintaining Mendocino County's air quality position.	➤ Several emission particulate and compounds can serve as indicators of environmental health. These include: PM 10 particulate (dust), carbon monoxide (CO), and ozone precursors nitrogen oxides (NOX) and volatile organic compounds (VOC). The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has determined that Mendocino County is in non-attainment for PM-10, primarily because of the high amount of unpaved roads in the county.	Air Quality Emissions Almanac, annual publication of the California Air Resources Board, Air Quality Studies from Mendocino County Air Quality Management District.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

US 101 - Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades – In the City of Willits, at the intersection of Sherwood Road and Main Street, geometric upgrades were constructed. *This section of US 101 was relinquished to the City of Willits, subsequent to completion of the Willits Bypass, Ph. 1.*

SR 162 - Covelo Multi-Purpose Trail – Preliminary components (environmental) were completed.

US 101 – Interchange at SR 222/Talmage Road – Interchange improvements, including adding signals to northbound and southbound ramp intersections, increasing number of travel lanes, and widening the Talmage Road Overcrossing were completed.

SR 20 / Potter Valley Road – This safety project to add an eastbound acceleration lane, remove a merge conflict point, correct drainage issues, install safety lighting, install centerline and edge line rumble stripe, and close cross-highway access to a private driveway was completed

SR 271 - McCoy Creek Bridge Replacement – Bridge replacement completed.

# COUNTY MAINTAINED ROADS AND CITY STREETS ELEMENT

## SYSTEM DEFINITION

The local street and road system is composed of streets within the incorporated cities and roads within the unincorporated areas of the County, both paved and unpaved. Facilities may range from narrow residential roads to highly travelled thoroughfares and roadways providing primary connection and access into a community. They range from fairly extensive in the City of Ukiah to minimal in the City of Point Arena or the unincorporated community of Gualala. While most local streets are two-lane roadways, some four-lane roadway segments are being utilized in response to higher traffic demands in more populated areas.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT: ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

### Pavement Condition

One of the greatest needs for the local street and road system is to address the backlog of deferred roadway rehabilitation and maintenance. The overriding need of the local communities, both incorporated and unincorporated, is to address the deteriorated state of the local serving road and street system. The 2021 Pavement Management Program update, indicated that approximately 53% of the County road system was in “poor” or “very poor” condition. An estimated expenditure of \$91.3 million over the next 10 years would be needed to bring the road system to a “fair” rating with an average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 60. The city of Ukiah has approximately 51% of their system in the poor or very poor category. Fortunately, the City has begun improving their PCI, with a goal of 66, utilizing local sales tax revenues and SB 1 funds. Approximately 26% of the Fort Bragg street system is in poor or very poor condition with a 10-year budget need of \$26.2 million in order to bring the City’s PCI up to 75. Roughly 53% of the Willits street system is in poor or very poor condition with a 10-year budget need of \$12 million in order to bring the City’s PCI up to 60. The Cities of Willits, Fort Bragg and Point Arena have special half-cent sales taxes dedicated to improving the streets. Ukiah has a general half-cent sales tax with an advisory measure directing it towards street maintenance and rehabilitation. In addition to these local funding sources, the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 2017 created a funding source targeted toward street and road maintenance that goes directly to the local agencies. It is anticipated that the local agencies, particularly the cities, will be able to make some improvements to the condition of their pavement networks over the next few years.

While the need for maintenance and rehabilitation of the roadway system has overwhelmed other issues and concerns, there are, nevertheless, other transportation issues that impact the local and regional backbone roadway system. Some of the needs are related to completing gaps in the roadway system, some deal with traffic congestion at specific points on the roadway system and some needs are related to long range planning for changes in the overall roadway system. In recent years, evacuation needs have also become a pressing need, as discussed later in this section.

## Safety and Operational Needs

Safety needs were identified during the public outreach process for this RTP update, as well as during the stakeholder outreach process for development of individual Local Road System Plans (LRSP) for the County and Cities.

The most commonly expressed safety concerns identified during the RTP public outreach were:

### Covelo Area

- Speeding concerns noted on the State Highway (Hwy 162/Covelo Road) as well as many local roads within the community, including Howard Street, Main Street, Greely Street, and East Lane.
- Safety concerns noted on several intersection, including sight distance and visibility concerns at the Howard Street/Hwy 162 intersection; and concerns about intersections at Hwy 162/Biggar Lane and Grange Street/Main Street.

### Laytonville Area

- Speeding concerns noted on Lakeview Road
- Safety concerns (the need for a flashing beacon) noted at two marked crosswalks on US 101 (*also listed in State Highways section*).

### Willits Area/Brooktrails

- Safety concerns noted at Sherwood Road (hazardous conditions, concerns for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety on the narrow, curvy, and hilly roadway; need for a second access road to serve Brooktrails and other communities along Sherwood Road.

### Westport Area

- Concerns noted with striping and signage on Branscomb Road - striping improvements and RV/trailer advisory signs needed.

### Point Arena/Manchester Area

- Safety concerns noted with intersection of Mountain View Road/Rancheria Road - blind spot when turning onto Mountain View Road; need warning signs to alert drivers of the intersection. This is the top safety concern for Manchester Band of Pomo Indians.

The most common concerns identified during public outreach for Local Road Safety Plans included:

### Ukiah Area

- Safety concerns at N. Bush Street/Low Gap Road Intersection, and State Street/Observatory Avenue intersection; and intersection at two-way stop adjacent to Safeway and Co-op
- Safety concerns with missing sidewalks on City section of Brush Street
- Safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing freeway on and off ramps on Perkins Street

### Fort Bragg Area

- Safety concerns re: site distance at alleyways – pedestrian safety concerns; need marked crosswalks and paved crossings
- Safety concerns at Noyo Point Road/S. Main Street intersection; and at Noyo Harbor - pedestrian/vehicle conflicts in parking lot and uncontrolled parking ingress/egress

### Willits Area

- Safety concerns at N. Main Street/E. Commercial Street intersection; N. Main Street/Sherwood Road intersection; and N. Main Street (City boundary - E. Commercial Street) – pedestrian crossings improvements needed
- Safety concerns at Blosser Lane/SR 20 Intersection – pedestrian crossing; SR 20 (S. Main Street)/Walnut Avenue Intersection – pedestrian crossing; SR 20 (S. Main Street) – speeding *(also listed under State Highways)*

### Point Arena Area

- Safety concerns at corner of Main Street and School Street - collisions; Iversen Avenue and Main Street – Intersection site distance/blind area; School Street intersection – speeding; Lake Street intersection – speeding; need for more pedestrian crossings on SR 1 throughout town *(also listed under State Highways)*

### County of Mendocino – Unincorporated Areas

- Safety concerns at Biggar Lane/Hwy 162 intersection (Covelo area)
- Safety concerns on Vichy Springs/Redemeyer Road Corridor – speeding vehicles crossing center line; and missing sidewalks on County section of Brush Street (Ukiah area)
- Safety concerns on Sherwood Road – speeding, vehicles crossing centerline (Willits area)
- Safety concerns on Ramsey Road - sidewalks needed near elementary school (Laytonville area)
- Safety concerns - need improved traffic markings/signage on Road I; need emergency access road for Redwood Valley Rancheria, Road I; need bicycle and pedestrian facilities on East Road and West Road; need stops controls on Road L (Redwood Valley area)
- Safety concerns noted about intersection safety, including site distance and visibility, in various locations throughout the County. (Countywide)
- Safety concerns related to emergency evacuation – need for safe shelter-in-place locations; need for evacuation routes in areas with only one way in and one way out. (Countywide)
- Safety concerns on Old Stage Road near Bower Neighborhood Park – speeding vehicles between the intersections with Ocean Ridge Drive, in spite of posted playground speed limits. The absence of an accessible pathway or paved roadway shoulders in this approach to Bower Park and Ocean Ridge Park frequently force pedestrians and bicyclists into the vehicle travel lanes, where vertical curves and excessive motorist speeds create high risks. (Gualala area)

During development and data analysis for the Local Road Safety Plans, the following high injury intersections and high injury corridors throughout the County were identified. Additional intersections and corridors were identified; however, only the highest locations based on Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO) scores, are included here. Contrary to what the term

implies, EPDO scores are calculated based on the severity of a crash in terms of injury and fatality in addition to property damage. Accidents involving fatalities or severe injuries will receive the highest scores. These scores are significant because they are used by the Highway Safety Improvement Program to select projects for funding.

**Table 7**  
**High Injury Intersections -County Roads & City Streets**

Agency	Intersection	Total Collisions	EPDO Score*
City of Willits	Main St. and Commercial St.	6	364
City of Ukiah	Gobbi St. and State St.	5	358
City of Ukiah	Main St. and Perkins St.	2	330
City of Ukiah	Washington Ave. and Hastings Ave. and S. State St.	11	245
City of Willits	Main St and State St.	3	177
Co. of Mendocino	Foothill Blvd. and Henderson Ln.	2	176
City of Fort Bragg	Redwood Ave. and Route 1/S. Main St.	5	171
Co. of Mendocino	N. State St. and Kunzler Ranch Rd.	2	171
Co. of Mendocino	Pacific Wood Rd. and Friendly Ave.	2	171
City of Point Arena	Port Rd. and Bluff Top Rd.	1	165

\*Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)

**Table 8**  
**High Injury Corridors – County Roads & City Streets**

Agency	Corridor	Total Collisions	EPDO Score*
Co. of Mendocino	Branscomb Rd: Willis Ave to Kenny Creek Rd	34	2197
Co. of Mendocino	Eastside Calpella Rd: Marina Dr to SR 20 on ramp/off ramp	10	870
Co. of Mendocino	N. State St: Moore St to Orr Springs Rd	27	853
Co. of Mendocino	Sherwood Rd: Birch Terr to Willits City Limits	7	837
City of Ukiah	State St: Beacon Ln to Ford Rd	36	728
Co. of Mendocino	Comptche Ukiah Rd: Hwy 1 to Mendocino Head- lands State Park -Big River Property	9	702
City of Fort Bragg	Main St/Route 1: Jane Ln to Hwy 20	29	383
City of Willits	North Main St: Sherwood Rd to E. Commercial Ct.	6	364
City of Ukiah	N. Orchard Ave.: Clara Ave. to E. Perkins St.	4	342
City of Ukiah	Perkins St: Hortense St to Hwy101	11	235
City of Willits	Sherwood Rd: Main St. to City Boundary	3	187
City of Willits	S. Main St: Hazel St to Muir Mill Rd	2	171
City of Fort Bragg	Hwy 20: Route 1 to South Harbor Dr.	1	165
City of Willits	East Hill Rd: between 650' of Haehl Creek Dr and City Boundary	1	165
City of Point Arena	Riverside Dr: Main St/Hwy 1 to Pine Reef	2	22
City of Point Arena	School St/Hwy 1: Northern City Limits to Lake St	1	6

\*Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)

Although there are many minor improvements that are needed on local streets and roads, the following key operational and/or safety needs have been identified.

- Orchard Avenue Extension: In 2020, the County of Mendocino completed a feasibility study of a road extension of Orchard Avenue, to the north, just outside of the Ukiah city limits. The feasibility study examined the best approach to extending Orchard Avenue from its current northerly terminus at the intersection with Brush Street, to approximately 2.4 miles to the north. This extension would help vehicular circulation and provide an opportunity for

improved non-motorized transportation infrastructure connecting multiple commercial areas. It would also provide an alternative parallel route to North State Street and US 101. The feasibility study estimated construction costs for Phase 1 (to Orr Springs Road) at \$44.5 million, and construction costs for the entire alignment at \$91.9 million (*escalated to \$147 million in 2050*). Funding for this major project has not been identified, and the County will need to realistically pursue funding based on a phased approach.

- **North State Street Improvements:** Over the past decade, the County has worked to widen and improve the North State Street corridor from the US-101 interchange to Lake Mendocino Drive. The remaining improvements needed include operational improvements at intersections near the US 101 ramps in the area just north of the Ukiah City Limits. Improvements to North State Street will provide continuous facilities paralleling US-101 that will serve local activity centers on both sides of the freeway. This will be important for preserving future capacity of the freeway corridor through Mendocino County and provide opportunity to improve operations and safety of the freeway on and off ramps. In 2020, the County completed the “North State Street – US 101 Intersection/Interchange Alternative Analysis” which evaluated six intersections near the US 101 ramps just north of the Ukiah City limits. This analysis compared various metrics of signalized intersections vs roundabouts, and recommended roundabouts as the preferred alternative, noting increased capacity and reduced delay compared to traffic signals. Funding for pre-construction phases of this project (environmental, design, and right of way) is programmed in MCOG’s 2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), along with a funding commitment for construction funding of \$1,602,000 from future RTIP funds, for the intersection of North State Street and KUKI Lane and the southbound 101 interchanges.
- **Noyo Harbor Multimodal Improvement Project:** Noyo Harbor in the Fort Bragg area is an active mix of fishing industry, commercial, visitor serving, dining and recreation at the south end of the Fort Bragg area below the Noyo Harbor Bridge on SR 1. Lack of safe bicycle and pedestrian access to and through the area has been an identified problem for years, but has dramatically increased during the pandemic. The area has seen a dramatic year-round increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic, which has continued as pandemic restrictions begin to ease. In addition to recreation opportunities, the harbor provides substantial employment opportunities in the fishing, dining, and other commercial operations. With no safe bicycle and pedestrian access, visitors and employees are forced to take vehicles into the harbor. Inefficient designated parking has resulted in uncontrolled parking along roadways, blocking shoulders for pedestrian use and resulting in narrow vehicle paths. Uncontrolled roadway ingress/egress throughout the harbor increases conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. This multi-modal, collaborative project proposes to provide non-motorized access into and through Noyo Harbor where none currently exists, transition vehicle traffic to one-way, connect North Harbor Drive to Noyo Point Road at the west end of the Harbor, construct a roundabout at the intersection of SR 1 (Main Street), Noyo Point/North Harbor, and implement transit service into the harbor to provide better access for employees and visitors.

## Evacuation Needs

There are many small communities in the County with limited ingress and egress capabilities, with some areas having “one way in, and one way out” of the area. There is an increasing need

to improve emergency access in all such communities, especially in light of the numerous wildfires that have occurred in the region over the last few years, and the ongoing continued wildfire threat. Improvements are needed to make existing exit routes more resilient, and to develop secondary and emergency evacuation routes (public and private) in these at-risk communities.

## **Unsurfaced County Roads**

Dirt (unsurfaced) roads constitute approximately 35% of the County's road network and are an often overlooked yet vital component of the County Maintained Road System. The County Director of Transportation has characterized the dirt roads as Resource/Recreation Access Roads, Very Low Volume, Remote Residential Roads, and Higher Volume Residential Roads.

Resource/Recreation Access Roads (approximately 60 centerline miles) – Such roads typically support non-residential access needs and are truly dirt roads with little gravel surfacing. They were historically used by a relatively small number of landowners to conduct forest or agricultural activities, and limited or no winter access was acceptable. In general, the roads were minimally maintained by the County and were often worked by the landowners as they had need. The roads were historically accepted into the public system, such that public easements assured the owners' rights to access their land.

These roads have now become magnets for 4-wheelers and the roads have become "recreational" in the wintertime. Presently, about half of the roads are closed each winter to prevent unauthorized, recreational usage. Some of these public roads are considered valuable as second emergency routes and there are many people who would like to see these roads improved to gravel road/all-weather status. Proponents also (rightly) point out that if these roads were improved, they would no longer be magnets for 4-wheelers, as the "fun" would be gone.

Very Low Volume, Remote Residential Roads (approximately 250 centerline miles) – These gravel roads serve homes on large lots that are very spread out and lead to private road systems that have additional residences. Historically, the County has applied a little more effort to these roads, as they need to accommodate users year-round. .

Higher Volume Residential Roads (50 centerline miles) – Such gravel roads historically served homes on larger lots, however, higher density development has been allowed in these areas thereby increasing traffic volumes. Some of these roads also serve public lands or private subdivisions. This has started to convert the functionality of the roads from "local road" to "minor collector" status. Generally, these roads require very frequent grading and gravel application.

### Vehicle Wear and Tear

Dirt roads develop chuckholes and washboards, which are hard on vehicles. Such conditions can re-emerge in a short time after grading. Winter weather quickly degrades the surface of these roads, creating the need for grading in the springtime.



As long as these roads are gravel, maintenance crews can run the grader over deteriorated segments and efficiently fill multiple chuckholes. Gravel roads that are to be surfaced need to have adequate pavement structural sections built under them, either an asphalt pavement surface or multiple layers of chip seals applied at frequent intervals towards the beginning of the surfacing process. Otherwise, the newly-surfaced road won't hold up and would have functioned better as a gravel road.

### Environmental Considerations

All dirt road surfaces produce sediment that migrates to streams. Analyses show that only about 15% of the County's road system is in close proximity to aquatic resource (blue line) streams. Limited resources necessitate that the Department prioritize efforts to first address sediment reduction in the more sensitive 15% portion of the road network. In general, the County aims to reduce sediment production from *all* County Maintained Roads. There is no way to eliminate sediment production from a dirt road. Surfacing would greatly reduce sediment, however, sediment production can never be 100% eliminated. Additional information on the County's procedures pursuant to the Clean Water Act can be found in Appendix C.

### **Major Unfunded Needs**

Brooktrails Second Access: A second access to the Brooktrails Township has long been identified as a need. This project would provide an alternate access route to Brooktrails, a Planned Residential Development (PRD) of approximately 4,500-5,000 single-family dwelling units. At present there are an estimated 1,500 dwelling units constructed. A second access would relieve traffic along Sherwood Road, currently the only access to the community, and provide an alternative during times of emergency. The County of Mendocino conducted an initial analysis of a potential project. Funding needs of over \$22 million were identified for the project, which exceed any realistic expectation of available funding in the foreseeable future. Because of the high costs, construction of a Brooktrails Second Access remains an unfunded need at this time. However, steps should be taken by the County and other stakeholders in the near future to reinstate project development and funding efforts. It is likely that a combination of state, federal and local (both County and Brooktrails) funds will be needed. Because formula funds, such as State Transportation Improvement Program, are no longer received in large amounts in the region, it is likely that competitive or federal earmark funding will need to be pursued.

Redemeyer Road Extension: Redemeyer Road extension across the Russian River is a project identified to complete a gap in a parallel route to US-101. The route would connect to Lake Mendocino Drive or North State Street on the north, and to Old River Road on the south at the intersection with Talmage Road. This project would require a bridge across the Russian River and construction of a two-lane arterial with paved shoulders. This project has previously been identified as a need, and remains important for emergency ingress and egress purposes, especially in light of the increased level of wildfires in recent years. However, there is no clear path for funding this project and it is unlikely to be pursued in the timeframe of this plan.

SR 1/Garcia River/Windy Hollow Road: An additional unresolved issue is the problem of flooding on SR 1 at the Garcia River. This segment of highway must be closed during times of heavy rains and high tide, preventing people from traveling to and from their homes, schools,

shopping, and employment. This can occur several times a year for hours at a time. While the problem actually exists on the State highway, the most likely solution lies on the County road system. Due to environmental and topographical constraints in this area, modifying SR 1 to avoid flooding would be extremely difficult and cost prohibitive. A bridge on Windy Hollow Road over the Garcia would provide a second route in times of flooding. The Manchester-Point Arena Rancheria conducted a feasibility study for a bridge at this location through an Environmental Justice grant, which is also discussed in the Tribal Transportation System Element of this plan. The feasibility study determined that a new bridge could be built at the site using conventional bridge types and construction methods. Caltrans is exploring options to address the issues, and has identified a short/medium-term alternative that involves raising the grade to address this problem, as follows: Programmable Project Alternative: State Route 1 at Gasker Slough PM 17.52 to 17.72 – Replace bridge with grade raise to address the drainage issues in the area near the south end of the floodplain, the Gasker Slough area. This part of the drainage retains the water for long periods of time, compared with the area immediately to the south of the bridge, which sees periodic flooding, but also clears out relatively quickly. Addressing Gasker Slough would solve much of the flooding concerns from a temporal perspective. If Caltrans does not pursue and fund this project, improvements would be left to the County to complete, in which case, the \$35 million needed for the project would make it unrealistic for the County to pursue on its own.

## **ACTION PLAN: PROPOSED PROJECTS**

What can actually be done to address the needs of the local communities and the problems on the backbone circulation system is constrained by the amount of total funding available and the restrictions of the various programs from which funding is available. These issues will be explored in detail in the section dealing with financing and funding for transportation improvements. The action plan is divided into a short-range and long-range set of proposals. In general, the short-range program refers to projects that can be implemented in ten years or less, while the long-range has a time frame of approximately twenty years into the future. Historically, much of the short-range program improvements become the long-range program due to funding shortfalls, impacts of weather, engineering staff workload, and project priorities.

### **Short-Range Improvement Program (10 years)**

During the last several years, STIP funding has become scarce. Although SB 1 helped to stabilize the STIP, revenues from fuel taxes continue to decline with improved fuel efficiency. Few new projects have been programmed and existing projects have been delayed into future years. The following tables represent projects on local streets and roads, including those projects currently programmed in the STIP. State highway projects and non-motorized projects in the STIP are listed in other sections of this document.

#### Regionwide Improvements

Install electric vehicle (EV) charging and alternative fueling infrastructure projects consistent with MCOG's Zero Emissions Vehicle Regional Readiness Plan and local priorities, at various

locations throughout the region. Locations may include public or private parking sites as well as roadside parking locations.

### County of Mendocino

Table 9 lists projects that have been identified as priorities for the County of Mendocino Department of Transportation in the short-range improvement program. It is unlikely that the entire list of projects can be implemented within the time frame of the short-range improvement program. Although there is a funding source identified for all these projects, in cases where the funding source is severely inadequate due to rapidly rising project costs, projects may need to be dropped from the programs identified.

**Table 9  
Mendocino County  
Short Range Projects**

<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Anticipated Construction Year</b>
Countywide	2016-17 Storm Damage Repairs, 41sites	FHWA/FEMA & CalOES	\$17.1 million	2018-21
Countywide	2017-18 Fire Damage Restoration, 13 sites	FHWA/FEMA & CalOES	\$6,3million	2018-21
Countywide	2019 Storm Damage Repairs, 7 sites	FHWA/FEMA & CalOES	\$4.7 million	2020-22
Countywide	Annual Corrective Maintenance Preservation Program	RMRA/SB1	\$5.5 million/yr.	Yearly
Eureka Hill Road, MP 4.92	Seismic Retrofit Bridge over Garcia River	HBP/LBSRA/Toll Credits	\$3.3million	2022
North State Street, MP 1.06	Replace Bridge over Ackerman Creek	HBP/RDA/CRRSAA	\$14.3 million	2023/24
Lambert Lane, MP 0.07	Replace Bridge over Robinson Creek	HBP/Toll Credits	\$7.0 million	2022/23
Philo Greenwood Rd, MP 17.33	Rehabilitate Bridge over Navarro River	HBP/Toll Credits	\$17.1 million	2024-25
Hill Road, MP 2.05	Replace Bridge over Mill Creek	HBP/Toll Credits	\$8.9million	2023
Wilderness Lodge Rd, MP 0.72	Replace Bridge over Dutch Charlie Creek	HBP/Toll Credits	\$2.4 million	2025
Briceland Road, MP 0.63	Replace Bridge over Mattole River	HBP/Toll Credits	\$2.8 million	2026
Usal Road, MP 5.93	Replace Bridge over Usal Creek	HBP/Toll Credits	\$5.5 million	2026
Reynolds Highway, MP 0.09	Replace Bridge over Outlet Creek (Barney Schow)	HBP/Toll Credits	\$4.9 million	2027
North State Street Intersection & Interchange	Two Roundabout at (1) KUKI Lane, and (2) southbound 101 interchange, including	STIP	\$2.1 million	2026

Improvements, Ph. 1	realignment of Lover Lane			
East Side Potter Valley Road Reconstruction & Widening, Ph. 1	Road widening and reconstruction from M.P. 5.38 to 6.37	STIP	\$4 million	2021/22

### City of Ukiah

One of the highest priorities of the City of Ukiah over the next several years will be to continue improving the condition of the pavement throughout the City's street network. In 2016 the City passed a half-cent sales tax intended to be used for street improvements. Revenues from that sales tax, combined with revenues from the 2017 passage of Senate Bill 1, provided greater opportunity for the City to improve its deteriorating streets. That improvement effort is now ongoing, and will continue throughout the period of this RTP.

In addition to street maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction, the City of Ukiah has identified the projects shown in [Table 10](#) for the short-range programming period. The projects reflect the immediate needs of the City of Ukiah and the priorities for local street system improvements.

**Table 10**  
**City of Ukiah**  
**Short Range Projects**

<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Anticipated Construction Year</b>
Dora Street	Replace water main and sewer main, and reconstruct Dora St. from Mill St. to Grove St.	Measure Y & Gas Tax	\$2,700,000	2022-23
E. Clay Street	Reconstruct E. Clay from Main St. to railroad crossing. Includes water, sewer, pedestrian facilities, and drainage.	Measure Y	\$750,000	2024-25
Orr Street Bridge	Improve bridge on Orr Street at Orr Creek	Measure Y & CDBG	\$544,438	2021-22
Low Gap Road & N. Bush Street	Construct Roundabout (Environmental, ROW, Design & Construction phases)	STIP	\$896,000	2023-24
E. Gobbi Street & Main St.	Traffic Signal	STIP	\$818,000	2022-23
Main Street	Reconstruct Main Street from Gobbi to Mill	Measure Y	\$500,000	2023
Clara Avenue	Reconstruct Clara Ave. from State Street to Orchard	CDBG	\$2,000,000	2022
Leslie Street	Rehabilitate Leslie St. from Gobbi St. to Perkins St.	CDBG	\$1,500,000	2023-24
E. Perkins	Add storm drain on East	Measure Y	\$2,277,000	2022-23

Street	Perkins and widen intersection at Orchard Ave to add East bound through lane			
Gobbi St/Waugh Ln Traffic Signal	Install traffic signal at Gobbi St/Waugh Ln intersection	STIP	\$532,000	2021/22
Downtown Streetscape Improvements	Streetscape improvements on State, Perkins, and Standley Streets; a road diet between Henry Street and Mill Street; traffic signal modifications at three intersections; pavement overlay, striping, and pavement markings.	STIP/HSIP	\$1,369 STIP/HSIP	2022/23

### City of Willits

In 2004, the City of Willits passed a half-cent sales tax for transportation. The sales tax has made it possible for Willits to accomplish a number of transportation system improvements that would otherwise have been impossible. This voter-imposed transportation sales tax made it possible for the City to also receive Local Partnership Program formula funds which are only made available to “self-help” agencies which have adopted a local transportation tax. Additional funding to address the City’s street system maintenance and improvement needs includes the local share of the gasoline sales tax and the various Federal and State programs, including revenue from the passage of SB 1 (2017).

The following improvements on [Table 11](#) are a realistic appraisal of the City’s needs and highest priority projects:

**Table 11**  
**City of Willits**  
**Short Range Projects**

<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION YEAR</b>
Baechtel/ E. Hill Road	Road rehabilitation, sidewalks	TBD	\$2,000,000	2026-30
Railroad Avenue	Road rehabilitation, sidewalks, drainage improvements	TBD	\$2,000,000	2026-30
Snider Park Vicinity	Road rehabilitation, sidewalks, drainage improvements	TBD	\$1,500,000	2025-26
Blosser Lane	Road rehabilitation, sidewalk, drainage improvements	TBD	\$1,500,000	2022-24
Coast Street	Road rehabilitation, sidewalks, drainage	TBD	\$2,000,000	2026-30

	improvements, utility improvements			
West Mendocino Ave.	Road rehabilitation, sidewalks, drainage improvements, utility improvements	TBD	\$2,000,000	2022-25
Sherwood Road	Road rehabilitation, drainage improvements	TBD	\$1,000,000	2023-25
Blosser Lane/Hwy 20/Coast Street	Partner with Caltrans to enhance non-vehicular safety at the intersection	TBD	\$5,000,000 – \$6,000,000	TBD
Adjacent to Railroad Tracks Between E. Commercial St. & E. Hill Road	Construct 1.6 mile long, 10' wide ADA compliant, dedicated Class I bicycle and pedestrian trail connecting northern and southern ends of town.	ATP	\$6,172,000	2023-25

### City of Fort Bragg

The City of Fort Bragg also has a half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. The revenues generated by this sales tax are to be used primarily for rehabilitation and improvements to the existing transportation system. Projects are selected using a number of different factors, including the recommendations of the Pavement Management Program. This voter-imposed transportation sales tax made it possible for the City to also receive Local Partnership Program formula funds which are only made available to “self-help” agencies which have adopted a local transportation tax. These revenues, combined with the available revenues from the 2017 passage of Senate Bill 1, will provide the City significant funding for street maintenance and reconstruction. Their efforts in the short-term timeframe of this plan will focus on these types of improvements throughout the City, as well as infrastructure improvements for non-motorized transportation.

**Table 12**  
**City of Fort Bragg**  
**Short Range Projects**

<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION YEAR</b>
So. Main St. Bike & Ped Improvements	Bike & Ped improvements (sidewalks, curb ramps, crossings, bike lanes) to both sides of SR 1	STIP	\$1,485,000	2022-23
Various Streets	Street Rehabilitation	LPP, Streets, STBG	\$1,923,000	2022-23
Maple St. SD & Alley Rehabilitation	Storm Drain & Alley Rehabilitation	LPP, Streets, STBG	\$1,750,000	2021-22

City of Point Arena

The City of Point Arena also has a half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. This voter-imposed transportation sales tax made it possible for the City to also receive Local Partnership Program formula funds which are only made available to “self-help” agencies which have adopted a local transportation tax. Additional funding to address the City’s street system maintenance and improvement needs includes revenue available from the passage of SB 1 in 2017. The City has identified the following projects for inclusion in the short-range improvement program:

**Table 13**  
**City of Point Arena**  
**Short-Range Projects**

<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION YEAR</b>
Riverside Drive & Center Street Renovation	1) Completion of Riverside Dr. renovation with 1,000 sq. ft. of dig outs, base replacement asphalt fill followed with a 2” x 420’ AC overlay (approx.); 2) Center Street – Construct a 330’ concrete drainage swale, roadbed reconstruction and AC throughout.	RMRA-SB1, STBG, LPPF-SB1	Est. construction cost including construction management \$312,000	2021-22
East End of Mill Street Reconstruction, Sidewalk, Drainage, and Asphalt Replacement	Remove eastern 500’ of roadway, regrade to even cross slope correcting N side drainage. Install subsurface drainage on S side of st. Replace approx. 450’ of sidewalk on S side. Bring N side sidewalks into more typical residential height ratio & replace where needed. Repave roadway. Consider cul-del-sac development as a new project.	RMRA-SB1, STBG, ATP, LPPC-SB1 & MCOG, CRRSAA	Est. construction costs including construction management, \$1,358,640	2021-22
Port Road Rehabilitation, Main St, to Iversen	Sidewalk replacement & additions, drainage improvements & resurface street. From Main St. W on N side of Port Rd, replace 280’ of sidewalk (ADA). From Iversen to Main construct 425’ of sidewalk on S side. From Iversen toward Main remove 12,600 sq.’ of asphalt, regrade & pave, including subsurface drainage improvements. Past Arena Cove/Road Cut-off on Port Rd, install 140’ of ADA sidewalk down to barrier, past	LPPF-SB1, ATP, RMRA-SB1, STBG	Est. project costs: design, specifications, construction & construction management \$617,032	2022-23*

	barrier, a 6' multi-use path to bike lane on Iversen			
Windy Hollow Road	Rehab or rebuild .6 miles of roadway within City limits. Project A: grind out failed sections, recompact, replace asphalt and seal. Project B: full construction of existing roadway & paved areas. Project C: Project B plus one bike lane.	TBD, Local Partner?	Proj. A \$400,000 Proj. B \$970,000 Proj. C \$1,200,000	2022-23*
Citywide Sidewalk repair, replacement, and new sidewalk program	Sidewalks will be prioritized for replacement or addition. Some sidewalk improvements may be included in other street projects. A sidewalk construction program partnering with property owners may be needed.	RMRA-SB1, STBG, ATP, LPPF-SB1 & other grants	TBD	2021-2025*

PAPT = Point Arena Pothole Tax

STBG = Surface Transportation Block Grant

SB 1 LPPF = Local Partnership Program Formulaic

TBD = To Be Determined

\*Order in which projects are developed may be altered based on availability of funding

RMRA-SB1 = Road Maintenance & Repair Act SB 1

LTF = Local Transportation Fund

SB 1 LPPC – Local Partnership Program Competitive

### Long-Range Improvement Program (20 years)

Maintenance and rehabilitation will continue to be a need in the long-range timeframe. In addition to preserving the existing system, the key priorities will be the focus for improving the functionality and safety of the local systems. The programming of improvements for the long-term is tied to the funding cycles and estimates of funding availability for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), fund estimates for State gasoline sales tax revenues, SB 1 revenues, completion of updates to local jurisdiction General Plans, and local funding sources including sales tax.

#### County of Mendocino

Addressing the backlog of deferred maintenance and rehabilitation projects will continue as a high priority for the County in programming long-range improvements. Specific improvements for the expansion of the County roadway system to meet future needs include:

- North State Street Intersection and Interchange Improvements (Ph. II). This will be a second phase of the project identified in the short-range plan for this area. Two roundabouts will be



installed at two intersections on North State Street in the Ukiah area - (1) at Ford Road/Empire Drive (*City and County*), and (2) at the northbound 101 interchange. Roundabouts will likely be single-lane.

- East Side Potter Valley Road, MP 2.61 to MP 5.38 (Ph. II). This will be a second phase of the project identified in the short-range plan for this area. Improvements will include roadway widening, pavement reconstruction, grading and paving shoulders, and reconstruction of drainage facilities.
- Orchard Avenue Extension. This project will extend Orchard Avenue in the Ukiah area from its current northerly terminus at the intersection with Brush Street, approximately 2.4 miles to the north. It will help vehicular circulation and provide an opportunity for improved non-motorized transportation infrastructure connecting multiple commercial areas. This extension will provide direct access to employment at several commercial and industrial sites. Improving access to existing and future job sites will help keep community members from having to travel out of the area for employment, also helping with vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gases (GHG) reduction. This roadway extension will provide access to some of the last remaining land developable for housing in the Ukiah area. Keeping housing development close to urban boundaries rather than pushing it to outlying rural areas reduces VMT and GHG and keeps new homes out of higher fire risk areas. This roadway extension will also provide an emergency access route and evacuation route when parallel North State Street (to the west) and US 101 (to the east) are inaccessible. In 2020, the County completed a feasibility study. Cost estimate for Phase 1 (to Orr Springs Road) is \$44.5 million, and \$91.9 million (escalated to \$147 million in 2050) for the entire alignment

### City of Ukiah

The 2011 *Ukiah Valley Area Plan* identifies future conceptual roadway improvements for the plan area. Recommendations for projects that will fill gaps in the street system, expand capacity where future congestion levels are anticipated and development of parallel north/south facilities to US-101 are identified in Section 5, Circulation and Transportation (pgs. 5-1 through 5-19) of the plan. The plan area includes the City of Ukiah and the adjacent unincorporated areas of the County of Mendocino. Implementation of these projects will be tied to development impact fees, governmental funding programs, and local area assessment programs. The Ukiah Valley Area Plan will provide guidance for long-term transportation investment for the Ukiah Valley Area.

### City of Willits

With the 2016 completion of US-101 bypass of Willits, the existing downtown commercial district has undergone a major transformation. The improvement of circulation access through downtown Willits provides the City with unprecedented opportunities for shaping future growth and development. The identification of long-range transportation projects will be guided by the Main Street Plan as well as the Streets and Alleyways Plan. Recommended improvements focus on enhancement of the internal circulation for downtown Willits, including improvements for bicycle and pedestrian safety along Main Street. The timing and funding of improvements will

depend on the progress of downtown redevelopment and funding availability from local, State and Federal sources. Currently planned long range projects include:

- East Valley Street Bridge Replacement – Replacement of the existing temporary bridge on East Valley Street, which may include right of way acquisition and reconfiguration of the Railroad Avenue/East Valley Street intersection.
- Brown’s Corner Intersection Improvements – Traffic signal, roundabout, or other intersection improvements at the southerly intersection of Main Street/Highway 20 and Baechtel Road.
- Railroad Avenue Extension – Extension of Railroad Avenue south to Shell Lane or Baechtel Road to create an alternative north-south route through Willits.

### City of Fort Bragg

Long-range transportation improvements for the City of Fort Bragg will be focused on closing the gap in meeting the backlog of deferred maintenance and rehabilitation projects. Development in the City of Fort Bragg is severely restricted due to the lack of fresh water resources and coastal zone restrictions. Long-range projects include:

- The need for a parallel facility to SR 1 route will be dependent on the future development patterns in the Fort Bragg area and the increases in seasonal traffic associated with tourism in the north coast region. Georgia Pacific is nearing completion of a Specific Plan for build out of the old mill site, and one of the major components of the plan is traffic and circulation. The plan takes into consideration major tie in routes to the central business district and access to and from Main Street (State Route 1). As development on the old mill site occurs infrastructure will be installed to address additional traffic movements and create a new north/south alternate to Hwy 1.
- Providing turnarounds or, with the acquisition of right-of-way, connecting dead end streets to the Fort Bragg circulation system. These improvements will be implemented as funding becomes available or by using development environmental mitigation requirements.
- The provision of a second emergency access route to the Noyo Harbor has also been identified as long-range project. The harbor is currently accessed by North Harbor Drive from its intersection with SR-1. The road is a narrow, winding route down to the water’s edge and harbor facilities. The City of Fort Bragg has a recorded easement over Georgia Pacific right-of-way under the Noyo River Bridge that will eventually become a permanent secondary access to the harbor and would ensure that the harbor does not become isolated due to a road closure. At this time, the easement could be used as emergency access with minor improvements if necessary.

### City of Point Arena

Long-range projects for the City of Point Arena will focus on improving access to the cove and pier (which could include secondary access to the cove) associated with recreation and tourism,

and continuing to fund deferred maintenance and rehabilitation projects to the local street system. Important possible long-range projects include:

- A round-about at Hwy. 1 and Lake, as described in the 2010 *Point Arena Community Action Plan*.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

While the appraisal system performance for the backbone circulation and local access system is similar to the identification process used for the Significant Highway Corridors performance measures, there will be key differences in the type of traffic evaluated, the number of agencies involved, and the data collected. Traffic on the county and local roadway system will be more likely to have both trip origin and destination within Mendocino County. The County of Mendocino and the four incorporated cities have responsibility for roadways. In some cases, the County collects data and is responsible for technical evaluations for the smaller cities. The County and cities will be encouraged to begin collecting necessary data, (if they are not already doing so) so that critical performance measures can be implemented.

**Table 14**  
**County Roads & City Streets System**  
**Performance Measures**

Performance Measure	Indicator(s)	Data Source(s)
<b>Safety/Security</b>		
Improve Traffic Accident Rates for the Backbone and Local Street System for roadway segments that exceed the statewide average accident rate (for comparable facility type) by more than 25% to the statewide average rate or lower.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reduce number of motor vehicle accidents of all categories (fatalities, injuries, property damage) per million vehicle miles over four year plan period.</li> <li>➤ Implement traffic safety improvement projects (from priority list of safety enhancement projects), reducing number of high accident locations.</li> </ul>	Accident statistics from Caltrans, District 01, Safety Division; Accident reports and cumulative statistics from Police Departments and California Highway Patrol accident data; statewide traffic accident data reports.
<b>Mobility/Accessibility</b>		
Traffic flow on roadway segments and congestion/delay at key intersections measured at peak hour time periods and total 24-hour time period. Level of Service determinations for the selected roadway segments and intersections will be based on Caltrans and Local Agency criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Level of Service (LOS) estimated for selected roadway segments, using appropriate planning level methodology and intersection LOS values for selected inter-sections. Changes in LOS values can be used to evaluate traffic flow conditions. A goal of LOS C (unless constrained by topographical and/or environmental factors) for roadway segments and LOS D for intersections as minimum levels for PM peak hour performance will be maintained.</li> </ul>	Results of the (2000) baseline analysis of roadway segments compared with traffic volumes at end of RTP update time frame. The analysis will use , MCOG's Travel Demand Model, selected ground counts, and applicable LOS methodology and software.
<b>Sustainability/System Preservation</b>		
Pavement Condition for selected segments and routes of the local roadway system. The postponement of needed maintenance results in deterioration of pavement surface and increased cost of repair. Pavement condition is only one measure of roadway system quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pavement Condition Index (PCI) from Pavement Management Program (PMP) updates as required to maintain PMP database and track progress in improving overall pavement quality.</li> <li>➤ Adoption of a funding strategy and multi-year financing plan for roadway /</li> </ul>	Pavement Management Program (PMP) Report and report updates from consultant and/or local agency sources. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's StreetSaver software was used for the Mendocino County Region's PMP study.

	pavement maintenance and rehabilitation in conformance with PMS guidelines.	
<b>System Reliability</b>		
State highways, county roads and local street closures and/or delays due to construction, road repairs, utility installation, and roadside maintenance.	➤ Traffic flow delay: for occasional roadway closures of temporary nature, a time delay of twenty minutes or less would be the goal. For roadway closures of an extended nature, detour routes and/or traffic management programs shall be implemented that do not increase travel time by more than thirty minutes.	Caltrans, District 01 construction and maintenance traffic control plan reports and filings. Caltrans, District 01 incident management response reports and CHP incident reports; Mendocino County Sheriff's Department, DOT reports; local agency Police Department records and detour plans filed by private contractors and traffic surveillance reports from all law enforcement agencies.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

- Traffic Signal at North State Street/Hensley Road (County)
- Laytonville Pedestrian Bridge (County)
- East Side Potter Valley Road, Ph.1 - *in progress* (County)
- Orchard Avenue Extension Feasibility Study (County)
- East Hill Road Bridge Replacement over Davis Creek (County)
- Reeves Canyon Road Bridge Replacement over Forsythe Creek (County)
- Sherwood Road Bridge Replacement over Rowes Creek (County)
- Powerhouse Road Bridge Replacement over Williams Creek (County)
- Radar Speed Signs at Laytonville High School (County)
- Traffic Signal at Gobbi Street/Orchard Ave (Ukiah)
- Measure Y Master Pavement Rehab Program (Ukiah)
- Downtown Streetscape/Road Diet, Ph.1 (Ukiah)
- Pine & Vicinity Rehabilitation (Willits)
- Downtown Pedestrian Improvement Project (Willits)
- Pavement Preservation Program (2019-2021) (Willits)

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## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT & PLAN

This Active Transportation Element, along with the Active Transportation Goals, Policies and Objectives and relevant portions of the Financial Element in this document serve as the region's 2022 Active Transportation Plan and responds to planning requirements of the State's Active Transportation Program, and aids in project identification for potential grant funding.

This Active Transportation Plan is intended to identify priority bicycle and pedestrian improvements within all jurisdictions of Mendocino County, which include the Cities of Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg and Point Arena and the unincorporated areas of the County of Mendocino. It is directed toward meeting the requirements of the California Active Transportation Program, which was created by Senate Bill 99 and Assembly Bill 101 to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation. The Active Transportation Program guidelines identify required plan elements. A list of these elements and where they can be found in the plan is included in Appendix E.

### Population

The US Census Bureau estimated a total population of 86,749 for Mendocino County in 2019. This figure includes the following figures in the incorporated cities: Ukiah (15,995), Fort Bragg (7,291), Willits (4,890), and Point Arena (449).

### Land Use

Existing zoning maps are available for all unincorporated areas of Mendocino County. Land uses are described by codes which pertain to the maps. Land use maps are included in Appendix H of this plan.

In addition to the zoning maps, the bikeway maps identify land uses relevant to commuter bikeways including schools, business and shopping districts, parks, government offices, transit stops, and other attractors. These are shown through various symbols which are identified on the Existing and Priority Proposed Bikeway Maps for each jurisdiction, shown in Appendix D.

### Disadvantaged Communities

Several grant sources that may be available for funding active transportation projects include benefits to disadvantaged communities as criteria for funding. An area can be considered a disadvantaged community if it has a median household income which is less than 80% of the statewide income, if at least 70% of the public school students qualify for free or reduced lunch, or by qualifying through the EPA's CalEnviroScreen tool. Because the CalEnviroScreen method relies heavily on air quality factors, it is not applicable in Mendocino County. However, nearly all communities in Mendocino County qualify under the other criteria. The 2015-2019 American Community Survey results indicate that the county average median household income was \$51,416, while the California median household income was \$75,235, making the Mendocino County average less than 69% of the statewide median.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Development of this plan involved participation from members of the public, including members of disadvantaged and underserved communities, stakeholders, local agencies, tribal representatives, Caltrans, the MCOG Board, Technical Advisory Committee, Municipal Advisory Councils, and other groups. Due to the Covid pandemic, in lieu of in-person community workshops, public input was gathered virtually through Social Pinpoint, an on-line public outreach tool posted on MCOG's website, and through virtual (teleconference and video) meetings. Public comments were also received through MCOG's website, email and by telephone. Presentations on the RTP/ATP update and opportunities for public comment were provided on MCOG's website and discussed at virtual meetings of Municipal Advisory Councils in Hopland, Westport, Round Valley, Laytonville, and Redwood Valley, many of which are considered disadvantaged communities, and at a meeting of the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee. A summary of the public input received can be found in the Needs Assessment section below.

## **SYSTEM DEFINITION**

Mendocino County offers an ideal environment for walking and/or bicycling within the individual communities of the region. The Mendocino National Forest, Lake Mendocino, and the many coastal communities along the Mendocino County coastline are often desired areas of the region to fulfill outdoor activities. Access is often constrained however, because of the many busy state and county roadways that do not have adequate shoulders or room for safe bicycle travel. The Great Redwood Trail (rail trail), a north-south multimodal trail parallel to the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWPRR), has gained increased popularity in recent years as additional segments have been constructed. As a separated, non-motorized facility, it offers an ideal environment for safe walking and or/biking for both transportation and recreation.

The present status of non-motorized transportation facilities in Mendocino County is piece-meal and incomplete. Local agencies are currently working together to develop projects that encourage the use of alternative routes and facilities that provide safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the region. The City of Ukiah has made great progress in constructing three segments of the "Great Redwood Trail". In addition, a fourth segment has recently been funded, and will soon be constructed. The City of Willits is currently working on constructing the first phase of the Great Redwood Trail parallel to the Northwestern Pacific Railroad in Willits. Additional existing non-motorized facilities include the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail and the Point Arena Coastal Access Scenic Bikeway. Bikeways, pedestrian paths, and multi-modal trails are valuable tools to encourage the use of alternative transportation to improve air quality, relieve localized traffic congestion, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and enhance the role of tourism in the regional economy.

Non-motorized transportation facilities provide for the needs of the region's pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. The State, County of Mendocino, and the cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Willits, and Point Arena are responsible for the maintenance and improvement of these facilities in their respective jurisdictions.

State Route 1 in Mendocino County makes up part of the congressionally designated Pacific Coast Bike Route. Unfortunately, the route remains deficient for safe bicycle travel, with most segments lacking shoulders, adequate sight distance, and guardrails adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. Improvements are needed in order to enhance safety for bicyclists. Specifics on the Pacific Coast Bike Route through Mendocino County can be found in the Caltrans District 1 Pacific Coast Bike Route Study.

Mendocino County is the only jurisdiction in the region that maintains equestrian trails. These trails are generally along County roads in rural areas. Typically, these trails are used as a form of recreation, and do not function as a means of transportation. However, many times equestrians can benefit from improvements for other purposes, such as multi-use trails.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

The following goals, objectives and policies have been developed as policies that are relevant to active transportation modes. They include Complete Streets and Active Transportation policies found in the Goals, Objectives, and Policies element of this RTP, and are numbered the same as in that section. Local agencies may have additional relevant policies in their General Plans or other documents.

### COMPLETE STREETS (CS)

**Goal:** Improve our public spaces so the street, road and transportation system meets the needs of all surface transportation modes, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

**Objective CS 1:** Incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements when planning roadway improvements, unless the roadway is exempt by law, or the project receives a specific waiver authorized through a local, public process, or for basic maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

Policy CS 1.1. Coordinate funding programs to provide multiple components of an infrastructure project when appropriate.

Policy CS 1.2. Seek funding sources for multiple modes of transportation.

Policy CS 1.3. Facilitate coordination between local transportation agencies and Mendocino Transit Authority.

Policy CS 1.4. Consider waivers in cases where environmental issues constrain improvement options, transit service is not planned or currently provided, or where the benefit/cost ratio of providing bike/pedestrian improvements is low (as would be expected in isolated rural areas).

**Objective CS 2:** Provide new bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities on existing streets and roads where none exist.

Policy CS 2.1. Seek funding to fill gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities adjacent to roadways and provide bus stop improvements along fixed transit routes.

**Objective CS 3:** Encourage Caltrans to include complete street components on transportation projects in Mendocino County, where feasible.

Policy CS 3.1. Identify non-motorized projects on State highways that serve as “Main Street” in rural communities, for funding through Caltrans’ State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP).

Policy CS 3.2. Nominate eligible non-motorized projects for inclusion in Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) Plan.

## **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (AT)**

The Active Transportation System element of this RTP, along with these goals policies and objectives, also serves as the region’s Active Transportation Plan. Some of the goals from that plan fall under the Complete Streets section of goals and policies, and are therefore listed in that section.

**Goal:** Provide a safe and useable network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the region as a means to lessen dependence on vehicular travel and improve the health of Mendocino County’s residents through increased walking and biking.

**Objective AT 1:** Maximize funding opportunities for local agencies to develop and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Policy AT 1.1. Update the regional Active Transportation Plan on a timely basis to ensure local agency eligibility for Active Transportation Program funds and other grant programs.

Policy AT 1.2. Provide support to local agencies in pursuing grant funding such as Active Transportation Program funding for needed improvements.

Policy AT 1.3. Continue to reserve and allocate 2% of Local Transportation Funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Policy AT 1.4. Consider RIP funding for priority active transportation projects.

**Objective AT 2:** Provide a non-motorized transportation network that offers a feasible alternative to vehicular travel.

Policy AT 2.1. Prioritize improvements providing access to schools, employment, and other critical services.

Policy AT 2.2. Prioritize projects that link to an existing facility or provide connectivity, including first mile and last mile connections to transit.

Policy AT 2.3. Fund planning activities in MCOG’s annual Overall Work Program to identify priority improvements for commute purposes, such as safe routes to schools plans.

Policy AT 2.4. Consider the addition/improvement of bicycle and pedestrian facilities when planning and implementing local street and road improvements.

Policy AT 2.4. Encourage implementation of identified priority projects, such as projects from the “Pedestrian Needs Assessment & Engineered Feasibility Study” and segments of the Great Redwood Trail.



Policy AT 2.5. Maximize use of the non-motorized transportation facilities through support of and participation in non-infrastructure activities that increase awareness of and encourage use of these facilities.

**Objective AT 3:** Improve property value and strengthen local economies through more accessible commercial and residential areas.

Policy AT 3.1. Encourage the addition of pedestrian and bicycle improvements in local business areas and existing residential areas.

**Objective AT 4:** Provide context sensitive facilities.

Policy AT 4.1. Encourage flexibility of design standards in order to allow facilities in very rural or built-out areas.

Policy AT 4.2. Work with State or Federal agencies to allow design exceptions when needed.

**Objective AT 5:** Maximize investment in non-motorized transportation facilities through maintenance. Maintain active transportation facilities in order to ensure their continued use and availability.

Policy AT 5.1. Each local agency shall be responsible for conducting the maintenance of active transportation facilities within their jurisdiction, unless an alternative agreement exists. A variety of funding sources should be considered for maintenance activities.

Policy AT 5.2. If appropriate, local agencies may enter into maintenance agreements with other agencies or organizations for continued maintenance of active transportation facilities.

## EXISTING FACILITIES & USAGE

### BICYCLE FACILITIES

As used in this plan, "bikeway" means all facilities that provide for bicycle travel. Bikeways are categorized as Class I, Class II, Class III, and Class IV.

Class I (multi-use trails when shared with pedestrians) facilities provide a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflows of motorists minimized. With the exception of rail trail projects in inland areas and the coastal trail along the coast, these will have limited application in Mendocino County, but may be most beneficial along routes where road width does not permit safe sharing of the roadway. Their primary function will be to provide a link between other bikeways where other facilities are impractical, or to provide a direct route to a specific destination (such as a park). Class I bikeways are generally expensive to construct and maintain. Right-of-way must be obtained and the facility must be built with sufficient width and pavement design strength to support maintenance vehicles. Providing Class I facilities through areas where there are visual obstructions also poses some security concerns.

Class II facilities are commonly referred to as "bike lanes". They provide a restricted right-of-way designated for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycle traffic, with through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians prohibited. Adjacent vehicle parking and crossflows by

pedestrians and motorists are permitted. Class II bikeways will have significant application in Mendocino County. They will be used to provide for bicycle travel where vehicle speeds, volumes or other conditions are present which make it desirable to separate bicycle traffic from motorized traffic.

Class II bikeways are generally provided adjacent to existing roadways. Right-of-way costs are usually minimal, but drainage improvements, grading and utility relocation can be significant. Experience in construction of Class II bikeways in similar rural counties indicates that construction of this type of facility adjacent to existing roadways ranges between \$400,000 and \$800,000 per mile. Variations in cost can be a result of complexity of a project, extensive design and engineering work, right of way acquisition, time delays, and whether bikeways are being constructed on one or both sides of a road.

Class III facilities are commonly referred to as "bike routes". They are generally on-street facilities which provide right-of-way designated by signs and/or pavement markings such as "sharrows" and are shared with motorists and sometimes pedestrians. Improvements required to establish Class III facilities may be minimal because right-of-way is shared with vehicular traffic. Shoulder widening may be advisable in some areas, but improvements could be limited to signing and pavement marking installations.

Class IV bikeways were established by the Protected Bikeways Act of 2014. These facilities are separated facilities exclusively for bicycles. The bikeway can be separated by grade separation, posts, physical barriers, or on street parking. Typically, these bikeways are one-way in the same direction as vehicular traffic, although two-way separated facilities can also be used with lower speeds.

In rural areas in Mendocino County it is unlikely that there will be practical applications for Class IV bikeways. In rural areas, it is unusual to have any separate facilities for non-motorized transportation, so when facilities are installed, they will most likely be multi-use. In most developed communities, local streets are narrow, and do not allow for separate facilities for both pedestrians and bicyclists. However, it is possible that Class IV bikeways could be appropriate for some wider, higher volume streets in the more urbanized area within the region.

### Existing Bikeway Network

The existing bikeways in Mendocino County are:

#### Point Arena

Coastal Access Scenic Bikeway  
Iversen/Port Road to Pier

#### Willits

East Commercial Street (101 to City Limits)  
West Commercial Street (101 to North Street)  
Baechtel Road (101 to 101)  
Main Street (South Street to Casteel Lane)

Fort Bragg

Dana (Cedar to Oak) Multi-Use Trail  
 Dana (Oak To Chestnut) Class II  
 Chestnut (Franklin to Dana) (Multi-Use Trail  
 Franklin St (Elm to N. Harbor Drive)  
 Oak Street (Main to Dana)  
 Harrison Street (Fir to Walnut)  
 Harold Street (Maple to Fir)  
 E. Fir Street (Main to Harold)  
 Maple Street (Franklin to Lincoln)  
 Lincoln Street (Chestnut to Willow)  
 Glass Beach Drive to Haul Rd at City limit (Multi Use Trail )  
 Elm Street (N. Coastal Trail to N. Franklin)  
 Main Street/US 101 (Manzanita south to City Limits)  
 California Coastal Trail (Elm Street to Noyo Bridge)  
 Pomo Bluffs Park  
 Walnut Street (Franklin to S. Whipple)  
 Willow Street – Multi Use Trail from Sanderson to Dana

Ukiah

Low Gap Road (State Street to City Limits)  
 Bush Street (Grove to Empire)  
 Dora Street (Grove to Beacon)  
 Grove Avenue (Live Oak to Bush St)  
 Despina Drive (Low Gap to City Limits)  
 Orchard Avenue (Clara St to Perkins St)  
 Gobbi Street (Oak Manor Drive to Oak Street)  
 Oak Manor Trail (Orchard Ave to Oak Manor School)  
 Hastings Avenue (Commerce to 315 ft east of State Street)  
 NWP Rail Trail Phase I (Gobbi Street to Clara Ave)  
 NWP Rail Trail Phase II (Gobbi St to Talmage Rd)  
 NWP Rail Trail Phase III Clara Ave to Brush St)

Mendocino County

Little Lake Road (Hwy 1 to Caspar Little Lake Rd) – Town of Mendocino area  
 Hensley Creek Road – Ukiah area  
 Lake Mendocino Drive Phases I and II – Ukiah area  
 Simpson Lane (Hwy 1 to end) – Fort Bragg area  
 North State Street, Phase I – Ukiah area  
 Vichy Springs Road (portion) – Ukiah area

State Routes

Pacific Coast Bike Route  
 Route 20 – Class III (Fort Bragg to Gravel Pit Road)

Existing bikeways are shown along with priority proposed bikeways in the maps contained in Appendix D of this plan.

## **PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

The extent of existing pedestrian facilities varies widely from one area of the county to another. Within incorporated cities, there are sidewalks on most streets, although typically with segments missing. Due to the age of the network, many sidewalks are narrow and don't comply with current requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Within unincorporated areas of the county, formal sidewalks typically do not exist. Some roadways have wide, paved shoulders on which pedestrians can safely walk.

There is little data available for mapping of the existing sidewalk network. For this reason, only the priority proposed sidewalk projects are shown in maps in this plan.

## **SUPPORT FACILITIES, SIGNAGE, PARKING & TRANSIT ACCESS**

Existing and proposed bicycle parking facilities are depicted on maps for the priority bikeway projects in Appendix D. See maps of each priority bikeway project for details.

Although no formal policies exist regarding bicycle parking, it is generally allowed in public areas. Many public buildings in the more populated areas have a limited amount of bicycle parking available. Most existing bicycle parking facilities are located at schools (indicated on the maps in Appendix D). Many of the bikeway projects identified in the Short Range Implementation Plan are routes which directly serve the commuting needs of students. Where descriptions of parking facilities are needed, they are provided in the narrative description of each priority bikeway project.

Signage is typically provided in the more urban areas, such as the Cities of Ukiah and Fort Bragg—both of which have existing wayfinding signage. Recreational facilities that attract tourists, such as the Coastal Trail, provide the other logical application of wayfinding signage. New facilities in these areas would be likely to include additional signage. The inclusion of signage in proposed projects in this plan will be reflected in the project descriptions.

Public transportation in Mendocino County is provided by the Mendocino Transit Authority, which through a Joint Powers Agreement with the four incorporated cities and the County of Mendocino, is the public transit provider in Mendocino County. Bicycles may be transported on all inland and coastal MTA buses. Each bus has a two-bicycle capacity rack, which is available on a first-come, first-served basis. MTA stops are shown on the maps in Appendix D of this plan.

There are no formal “park and ride” lots in Mendocino County, and bicycle parking facilities at MTA bus stops are very limited.

An intermodal parking facility was completed by the City of Willits in 2004 adjacent to the historic Willits Train Depot. The facility, which includes bicycle parking, provides a connection

for bicyclists, transit, the Amtrak bus service and rail. There is also potential to convert the existing depot building into an intermodal facility providing shelter, ticket sales, restroom facilities and seating areas for users of multiple transportation modes, including bicyclists. The location of this facility is shown on the map for the City of Willits Existing and Priority Proposed Bikeways in the Short Range Implementation section of this plan.

## MODE SHARE: EXISTING BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN TRIPS

In a survey conducted for this plan, 10.6% of respondents indicated that walking is their primary form of transportation on a typical weekday, and 2.7% indicated that bicycling was their primary mode. However, 53% and 22% of respondents indicated that in an average week at least some of their trips are by walking or biking, respectively.

The plan area covered by this Active Transportation Plan consists of all of Mendocino County, including the four incorporated cities (Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Willits, and Point Arena) as well as the unincorporated areas of the County. Bicycle and pedestrian volumes have not been recorded on any of the proposed routes. Estimates of existing and future bicycle and pedestrian use have been included, when available, for those bikeways on the Short-Range Implementation Plan.

Due to the rural nature of Mendocino County and the lack of existing non-motorized facilities, current and future use will be low compared with urban standards. School age children are expected to be the highest category of system users. Of survey respondents with students in their household, 24% indicated that *at least some* school trips are made by walking and 18% said the same for cycling.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In general, communities within Mendocino County tend to have poorly developed pedestrian improvements. Many communities were originally designed to rural standards and have not yet been able to retrofit with pedestrian facilities as urbanization has occurred. These facilities are a safety concern in many areas, where the only alternative for walking is on the roadway. Although limited funds do exist for improvement projects, the amount is insignificant when compared to the improvement needs that exist. During the virtual public outreach conducted for this Regional Transportation Plan update, in a 2021 online survey, 11% of respondents identified walking as their main form of transportation on a typical weekday. The need for pedestrian improvements throughout the County was an often-mentioned comment received during public outreach.

Existing bicycle facilities are limited in Mendocino County. Although there is a lack of official bikeways, it does not mean that people are not riding. The bicycling community has developed their own system of streets and routes that provide connectivity and safety due to the lack of an “official” bikeway network in most areas. During virtual public outreach, in a 2021 online survey, the lack of bike lanes or paths was considered a “very serious” or “somewhat serious” problem by 84% of respondents. This high percentage, which has not changed since the last RTP update, underscores the continuing level of public concern for safe non-motorized transportation facilities.

In 2019, MCOG developed the “Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory & Engineered Feasibility Study” The study was conducted in two phases – the South Coast/Greater Point Arena Area, and the North Coast/Inland Area. Potential projects were identified with stakeholder and community input, and evaluated in part based on the State Active Transportation Program evaluation criteria in order to identify competitive ATP candidate grant projects. Priority projects identified in that study are included in Appendix F. Based on evaluation results, the top tier (tier 1) projects were as follows:

**Table 15**  
**2019 Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory & Engineered Feasibility Study - Tier 1 Projects**

Area	ID	Project	Cost Est.
Point Arena	PA1	Northern Point Arena Sidewalk & Crossing Improvement – State Highway	\$545,529
Point Arena	PA3	Southern Point Arena sidewalk and Crossing Improvement Project – State Highway	\$166,100
Unincorporated South Coast	G2	Gualala North Downtown Sidewalk Crossing Improvement Project – State Highway	\$360,386
Unincorporated South Coast	E1	Central Elk Pedestrian Improvements – State Highway	\$302,870
Fort Bragg & Adjacent	FB2	Elm Street Pedestrian Improvements	\$273,156
Fort Bragg & Adjacent	FB6	South Main Street (State Hwy 1) Corridor Pedestrian Enhancement – Maple St to Cypress St. – State Highway	\$1,146,850
Fort Bragg & Adjacent	FB10	South Main Street (State Hwy 1) Corridor Pedestrian Enhancement - Ocean View Dr.to Hwy 20 – State Highway	\$962,808
Fort Bragg & Adjacent	FB3	Maple Street Pedestrian Improvements	\$460,493
Ukiah & Adjacent	U7	Leslie Street Pedestrian Facilities Improvements	\$12,294
Ukiah & Adjacent	U12	Ukiah Rail with Trail South Segment	\$1,260,689
Ukiah & Adjacent	U23	Talmage Road Sidewalk or Path Improvements – State Highway (unincorporated)	\$2,494,819
Ukiah & Adjacent	U9	South Ukiah School Access Improvements	\$545,569
Ukiah & Adjacent	U5	Clara Avenue Neighborhood Pedestrian Improvements	\$446,065
Ukiah & Adjacent	U8	South Main Street Pedestrian Enhancement	\$237,488
Willits & Adjacent	W8	Walnut Street and South Main Street/Hwy 20 Intersection Crossing Enhancement – State Highway	\$29,695
Willits & Adjacent	W13	Manor Way and Main Street/Hwy 20 Intersection Improvements – Part State Highway	\$67,206
Willits & Adjacent	W16	Enhanced Lighting on South Main Street/Redwood Highway	\$194,400
Willits & Adjacent	W1	East Van Lane and Schmidbauer Lane Pedestrian Alley and Enhanced Crosswalk	\$833,525
Willits & Adjacent	W7	Blosser Lane Pedestrian Improvements	\$43,512
Unincorporated North Coast/Inland	LTV2	Laytonville Highway 101 Pedestrian Improvements	\$162,144
Unincorporated North Coast/Inland	CO2	Southern Highway 162 Pedestrian Improvements	\$1,775,362
Unincorporated North Coast/Inland	LTV3	Laytonville Elementary School Pedestrian Improvements	\$201,716
Unincorporated	HOP1	Hopland Highway101 Complete Street Improvements	\$1,694,050

North Coast/Inland			
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## Public Input

The following are highlights of major topics of discussion specific to active transportation needs and concerns from the public input received.

### Countywide Comments

- Partner with County/other agencies to offer “safe routes to school” educational workshops; partner with government/community groups to obtain/oversee grants to continue Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure projects
- Assist short-staffed County Department of Transportation in obtaining and implementing grants for non-motorized projects
- Offer prizes and incentives to encourage carpooling or bicycling
- Provide bicycle racks in cities’ downtown areas, and at electric vehicle charging stations.
- Work with local jurisdictions and land-owners to increase street trees that provide shade

### Covelo

- Need bike path on Hwy 162 (*in progress*); need walking/biking facilities on Biggar Lane, East Lane, Crawford Road, and Main Street; need sidewalks and crosswalks on Hwy 162 and Howard Street

### Laytonville

- Need walking facilities on Branscomb Road, Willis Avenue, Harwood Road, and near elementary school on Ramsey Road
- Need flashing beacon at two marked crosswalks on Hwy 101

### Willits/Brooktrails

- Need walking/biking facilities on Sherwood Road
- Need pedestrian crossings and improvements on N. Main Street and E. Commercial Street intersection, and N. Main Street and Sherwood Road intersection
- Need pedestrian crossing improvements at Blosser Lane/SR 20 Intersection (*also listed under State Highways*)
- Need pedestrian crossing improvements at SR 20 and Walnut Avenue Intersection (*also listed under State Highways*)

### Redwood Valley/Ukiah/Talmage/Hopland

- Need improved walking/biking facilities on East Road and Wests Road, including crosswalks at intersection of School Way/West Road
- Need rail trail extension, north to Hensley Creek to access Mendocino College
- Need walking/biking facilities on Brush Street (*City & County portions*)
- Need bike lanes from eastern sections of Ukiah to downtown
- Need biking facilities between Talmage and Ukiah; between Ukiah and Hopland; and between Hopland and Old Hopland

- Need pedestrian improvements at S. State Street/Observatory Avenue intersection
- Need biking facilities on Redemeyer Road

#### Westport

- Need walking/biking walking facilities on SR1

#### Fort Bragg

- Need bike and pedestrian improvements on Laurel, Maple, and E. Chestnut Streets; and biking facilities on Pudding Creek Road, Harbor Drive, and Haul Road, and along various sections of SR 1 and SR 20
- Need pedestrian safety improvements at alley exits, and at Noyo Point Road/S. Main Street intersection; need pedestrian crossing on SR 1 north of bridge at Harbor; and SR 1/Airport Road; need pedestrian facilities from Pudding Creek to town

#### Caspar/Mendocino/Albion

- Need wider shoulders and bridges need a bike crossing on SR 1
- Need sidewalk improvements near Main and Kasten Streets
- Need walking facilities on Albion Ridge Road

#### Point Arena Area

- Need more pedestrian crossings on SR 1 throughout town

#### South Coast/Gualala

- Need biking/pedestrian facilities on SR 1
- Need biking/pedestrian facilities along Old Stage Road and Ocean Ridge Drive
- Need to implement Gualala downtown streetscape improvements
- Need pedestrian crossing facilities at Schooner Gulch State Beach parking area/SR 1

### **Existing Planning Documents**

City of Trails Supplemental Trail Feasibility Studies (2017). This City of Fort Bragg document examines the feasibility of both a trail using the Old Mill Road to connect the existing Coastal Trail South Segment with Noyo Harbor and either a Class I or II bicycle trail parallel to North Harbor Drive.

County of Mendocino General Plan (2009). The County's General Plan contains community specific recommendations for Anderson Valley, Covelo, Fort Bragg, Hopland, Laytonville, Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, and Willits in Chapter 6, *Community-Specific Policies*.

Covelo Round Valley Non-Motorized Needs Assessment & Engineered Feasibility Study (2013). This plan evaluated the Covelo community's high priority non-motorized corridors to identify fundable bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Fort Bragg Bike Master Plan (2009). This plan establishes goals and policies, analyzes existing conditions, proposes recommended standards and identifies potential projects for guiding the improvement of the City's bicycle facilities.



Fort Bragg Residential Street Safety Plan (2011). This plan recommends infrastructure improvements that will enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists in the residential neighborhoods of Fort Bragg. It responds to safety concerns identified through public input and City Council direction.

Fort Bragg South Main Street Access and Beautification (2011). This project concept enhances pedestrian crossings of Highway 1, with curb extensions, striping, stop bars, pedestrian signage and median refuge islands. It improves safety by reducing vehicle speeds, as well as beautifies the streetscape with trees and landscape strips. The final project design may also widen sidewalks and include a Class 1 multi-use path on the west side of Highway.

Gualala Community Action Plan & Downtown Design Plan (2009 & 2012). With community participation, a Downtown Design Plan was produced, including streetscape, parking and circulation elements. The final plan was accepted by MCOG's Board of Directors in a public hearing on March 2, 2009. It was recognized that some issues remained to be resolved, notably parking.

Hopland Main Street Corridor Engineered Feasibility Report. Prepared in 2015 as a joint effort between Caltrans and MCOG, this plan identified transportation improvements within the community of Hopland along US 101 and SR 175.

Laytonville Traffic Calming & Downtown Revitalization Plan (2008). This provided a conceptual plan that calms traffic, improves pedestrian and vehicle safety, beautifies downtown Laytonville, improves the economic climate, and addresses future land uses.

Mendocino County Safe Routes to School Plan (2014). This plan was prepared for the Mendocino County Department of Transportation by Alta Planning + Design in partnership with W-Trans and Redwood Community Action Agency, and was funded by MCOG.

Pacific Coast Bike Route/California Coastal Trail Engineered Feasibility Study (2013) & Survey (2016). The purpose of the Engineered Feasibility Study (EFS) was to improve the State Route 1 corridor for bicycles and pedestrians where the Pacific Coast Bike Route and California Coastal Trail are co-located along Route 1. It provided the information to develop preliminary cost estimates to be used to apply for grant funding for priority projects. The survey was conducted in the summer of 2015. A total of 535 touring cyclists were surveyed at locations (and online) in Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. The survey captured data about demographics, use of the route, difficult experiences, potential improvements, navigation tools, and positive feedback. A final report on the survey was completed in January of 2016.

Point Arena Community Action Plan (2010). A community vision was developed, traffic circulation was analyzed, sustainable development scenarios were mapped, improvement strategies and funding sources were identified, and other issues were addressed

Rails with Trails Plan (2012). This plan identifies priority improvements for walking and biking facilities along the existing, currently unused, rail corridor running through Mendocino County.

State Route 128 Corridor Valley Trail Engineered Feasibility Study (2014). The SR 128 corridor extends from the Sonoma/Mendocino County line near Cloverdale to the SR 128/SR 1 junction. The project studied the feasibility of a multi-use path and provided implementable options leading to the eventual construction of a shared-use trail, in prioritized segments.

Ukiah Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan (2015). The goal of the Ukiah Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP or Plan) is to improve bicycling and walking in the City of Ukiah as a comfortable and convenient transportation and recreation option.

Ukiah Downtown Streetscape (2009). The purpose of this plan was to upgrade State Street and Main Street from Norton Street to Gobbi Street to provide for a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly, attractive, and complete downtown core. Phase I of this project was completed in 2021.

Great Redwood Trail – Ukiah Master Plan (2020). In December of 2020, in cooperation with Walk & Bike Mendocino, the City of Ukiah developed and adopted a Master Plan for developing the corridor as the Great Redwood Trail – Ukiah Linear Park. Based on community input the plan outlines a wide variety of amenities deemed appropriate for transforming the corridor into a linear park that will provide benefit to the community for generations to come.

Ukiah Safe Routes to Schools (2014). This plan presents infrastructure and programmatic projects recommended to improve student safety and access to seven public schools in the City of Ukiah. The schools that were part of the plan are Nokomis Elementary, Yokayo Elementary, River Oak Charter School, Oak Manor Elementary, Pomolita Middle School, Frank Zeek Elementary School and Ukiah High School.

Westport Area Integrated Multi-Use Coastal Trail Plan (2011). This plan studied a 21 mile stretch along State Route 1 surrounding the community of Westport. The primary intent of the plan was to identify projects that would provide safe alternatives to vehicular transportation in and around the community of Westport.

Willits Bicycle & Pedestrian Specific Plan (2009). The intent of this plan was to identify bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the City of Willits that would serve residents and visitors. Projects within the plan would enhance tourism, promote health, and improve safety.

Willits Safe Routes to School Plan (2009). This plan includes recommendations to improve the safety for both walking and biking in areas around all seven of the Willits area schools and encourage increased active transportation for students and members of the community.

Willits Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan (2016). This plan was prepared in preparation for the relinquishment of the former stretch of US 101 that serves as Main Street through Willits, north of the intersection with SR 20. The plan identified conceptual designs to provide both motorized and non-motorized improvements to Main Street.

Willits Safe Routes to School Action Plan (2017). This Action Plan is intended to guide the Willits community in strengthening, expanding, and sustaining a Safe Routes to School program that addresses local needs.

Downtown Willits Streets and Alleys Connectivity Study (2017). This Study provides recommendations for improving connectivity that could be implemented in conjunction with the separate but directly-related Willits Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan.

Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory & Engineered Feasibility Study (2019). This plan was developed to explore the needs, priorities, and feasibility of improving identified deficiencies within the pedestrian network of the cities of Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, and Point, and the unincorporated communities in the county.

## ACCIDENT HISTORY

Accident history is an important aspect in selecting projects for implementation. If projects are to be funded using Active Transportation Program grant funding, accident history is a key factor for a project to be competitive. Bicycle and pedestrian accident history is available for the region through 2020. See Appendix L – Accident Data. The following table presents a summary of accidents during the period from 2011 through 2020.

**Table 16**  
**Bicycle & Pedestrian Accident History 2011-2020**

	Total	Fatal	Severe Injury	Other Visible Injury	Complaint of Pain
<b>Ukiah</b>	124	3	27	50	44
<b>Fort Bragg</b>	53	3	5	19	26
<b>Willits</b>	21	1	4	6	10
<b>Point Arena</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Unincorporated County (Local Roads)</b>	80	5	28	28	19
<b>Unincorporated County (State Routes)</b>	70	15	19	20	16

## ACTION PLAN

### EDUCATION, ENCOURAGEMENT, ENFORCEMENT, EVALUATION, AND EQUITY

The Five Es—education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, and equity —have been identified as categories that represent essential components of successful active transportation programs and networks. The following discussion identifies how these principles will apply to active transportation in Mendocino County. Engineering, which is sometimes identified as one of the Es, is addressed in the Priority Improvements section of this element.

#### Evaluation and Assessment

Evaluation is often used with non-infrastructure projects as one of the approaches to promote and enhance Safe Routes to School efforts.

Evaluation and assessment are used to demonstrate how well transportation investments are spent and whether or not transportation policies and programs are effective in addressing the public’s need. Evaluation can also be used to determine the extent of need for improvements.

When evaluating the performance of a project or the need for a project, a number of factors and/or metrics may be considered. For the Mendocino County region, relevant factors include:

- The existing and/or anticipated number of trips made by walking and bicycling
- The number of injuries and fatalities to bicyclists and pedestrians
- The amount of ADA accessible sidewalks and street crossings
- The total amount of sidewalks and bike lanes by jurisdiction
- Public/community support

Other performance measures may be developed as needed to address safety, system preservation goals, mobility, accessibility, reliability, productivity, public health conditions, or other indicators affecting the benefits or services expected from the transportation system.

In the Mendocino County region, bicycle and pedestrian data is not currently collected on a regionwide basis to measure system performance, although accident data is available for reported accidents. Bicycle and pedestrian collisions are only recorded if law enforcement files an incident report, which is less likely to occur for the less severe injuries. Implementing new data collection programs will require additional expense without the benefit of new funding sources.

It is recommended that bicycle and pedestrian data be collected on a project specific basis to support applications for grant funding and assess development of projects. Identification of safety concerns and collection of bicycle and pedestrian count data will help agencies within the region identify obstacles to increased walking and biking and contribute to development of infrastructure projects, thereby increasing opportunities for walking and biking.

### Enforcement

Examples of enforcement activities include the posting of crossing guards, establishing school safety patrols, rewards programs (for good behavior), and sting operations where local law enforcement issues citations for moving violations within the school zone.

The County Safe Routes to Schools Plan identifies the need to work with the California Highway Patrol and the County Sheriff's office to provide increased enforcement during events. The plan also calls for identifying specific areas of concern, increasing enforcement during school travel times, tracking collisions and speed compliance near schools, and increasing speed enforcement if needed.

In Mendocino County, the need for enforcement includes enforcement of animal control laws. In rural areas, particularly in Round Valley, uncontrolled dogs pose a threat which acts as a deterrent for children who might otherwise walk or bike to school.

The majority of enforcement efforts will be the responsibility of law enforcement or animal control agencies. However, MCOG may participate in enforcement through speed zone studies which enable local jurisdictions to enforce speed limits.

### Education

Educational efforts that lead to increased use of active transportation modes include education of children, their parents, and other adult drivers. Students may attend school-wide assemblies focused on pedestrian and bicycle safety, take part in bicycle rodeos or bicycle maintenance workshops, and participate in events such as walking school buses. The intended outcomes of educational activities are to both increase the number of student trips traveling to and from school in the near term and to establish life-long healthful and environmentally-friendly habits. Education efforts may also be geared towards drivers to make people aware of safe “share the road” driving practices. From 2016-2018, MCOG administered an Active Transportation Program Non-Infrastructure project which provided this type of education in seven communities throughout the county. Walk and Bike Mendocino, a local non-profit agency, continues to provide these types of educational events to schools in Mendocino County, as funds are available.

### Encouragement

Encouragement activities have been used to target students to provide an impetus for choosing walking or bicycling as a first step in developing long-term habits of choosing non-motorized modes of transportation. Examples of Encouragement activities include: organizing walking school buses and bicycle trains; holding competitions centered around bicycling and walking; and offering incentives and rewards for students that frequently travel on foot or by bicycle.

While school children make an easy target for developing education, encouragement and enforcement programs, transportation and local government officials in the region are encouraged to seek opportunities to identify and reach out to the broadest possible range of groups within their respective communities.

### Equity

Disadvantaged communities – sometimes referred to as vulnerable communities or communities of concern – may face inequities due to systemic under-investment resulting in a lack of infrastructure, resources, and opportunities, which may lead to unhealthy and unsafe environments. Disadvantaged communities tend to be dependent on active transportation and transit to connect them to economic opportunities and basic needs, and the lack of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities negatively affects mobility. Engaging disadvantaged communities is vital to ensuring that active transportation options are accessible to everyone in California.

Of the 20 census tracts in Mendocino County, 16 are designated as disadvantaged based on median household income according to the 2015-2019 American Community Survey (see Appendix G for complete list). The census tracts that do not qualify as disadvantaged based on median household income include two areas on the perimeter of the Ukiah area, the Redwood Valley area, and an area that includes the communities of Mendocino and Caspar on the coast. The incorporated cities of Willits, Fort Bragg, and Point Arena are completely within a disadvantaged area, as is most of the City of Ukiah. All but one project (the Gobbi and S. Dora

Intersection Enhancement Project) identified in the short-range plan for the incorporated cities lies within a low-income census tract. The majority of the unincorporated area of the region is also disadvantaged based on income. Unfortunately, these rural areas tend to have less developed non-motorized infrastructure, as well as fewer public transit options. All projects identified in the short-range priorities in unincorporated areas fall within low-income census tracts. Residents in disadvantaged communities tend to be dependent on walking, biking, and transit to connect them to economic opportunities and basic services, and the lack of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities negatively affects mobility. Projects that provide access to essential destinations such as school, employment and shopping will particularly benefit these communities. Engaging disadvantaged communities is vital to ensuring that active transportation options are accessible to everyone in Mendocino County. Bicycle and Pedestrian needs identified in these countywide low-income areas are listed under the “Needs Assessment” and “Public Input” sections in this element.

## PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS – SHORT AND LONG RANGE

The projects identified in this plan as priority have been chosen based on agency input, pre-existing planning documents, and public input. They are divided into two groups—short and long range. This does not indicate order of priority. Short range projects tend to be those that can be more easily implemented, are less expensive, or are less complex. Some of the identified projects may already have been at least partially funded. Long range projects are those that will be more difficult to fund, are more complicated, or have unresolved issues to be addressed prior to implementation. It is possible that projects identified as long-term may in fact be implemented in the short term if the opportunity arises.

In order for infrastructure projects to be constructed, there must be a local agency (County or City), or State agency (e.g. Caltrans or State Parks) willing to take on the role of “implementing agency”. MCOG can be involved with planning, but is not able to implement projects.

### Short-Range Priority Improvements

Short range priority improvements are those that are expected to be implemented within the next ten years, pending funding availability. The following table summarizes the potential projects, with additional detail provided in the narrative descriptions which follow. Short Range Priority Improvements, along with their relation to surrounding land uses and destinations, are also shown in the maps in Appendix D.

**Table 17**  
**Short-Range Priority Improvements**

Name – Route No.	Description/Location	Type – Ped/Bike (Class)	Estimated Cost
<b>Point Arena</b>			
Lake Street Sidewalks	Provide sidewalk along Lake Street, between Scott Place and the elementary school (east side); between the elementary school and the high school (north side); and between the high school and approaching	Ped	TBD

Name – Route No.	Description/Location	Type – Ped/Bike (Class)	Estimated Cost
	School Street (south side)		
Sidewalk Repair & Replacement Program	Repair & replacement of sidewalks throughout City – to be prioritized	Ped	TBD
Mill Street Sidewalk Replacement Project	Sidewalk replacement, as part of roadway reconstruction project to remove and regrade roadway & make ADA improvements	Ped	\$1,520,000
<b>Fort Bragg</b>			
S. Main St Bike & Ped	On Route 1 from 550 feet south of Ocean View Drive to Cypress St; new curb, gutter & sidewalk (partially), compliant ramps, striping and signage at Ocean View Dr, North Noyo Point Rd & Cypress St; Improvements at North Harbor Dr; Improvements to one driveway between Ocean View Dr and the Noyo Bridge	Bike & Ped	\$1,585,000
Noyo Harbor Access	Pedestrian access to and through Noyo Harbor. Changes to vehicular circulation may also be needed	Multi-use	unknown
Fort Bragg Sidewalk Infill (completion)	Sidewalk and bicycle improvements on southbound Route 1 from Maple to Cypress.	Bike/Ped	Unknown
<b>County</b>			
Brush Street Multi-Use Path	Create improved walking and biking facilities (possibly non-motorized multi-use path) along Brush Street in unincorporated Ukiah area	Multi-use	Unknown
Safe Routes to School Laytonville	Enhanced crosswalk across Ramsey Rd from parking lot to front of school, with ramp & signs; Sidewalk/walkway on east side of Willis Ave, between Ramsey & existing sidewalk near middle school	Ped	\$7,100 \$37,000
Safe Routes to School Covelo	Sidewalk along Airport Rd and south side of Howard, reconfigure the intersection of Howard & Airport Wy; Reconfigure parking area w/ ped walkway between school and path; Enhanced crossing of northern school driveway connecting with trail	Ped	\$781,000 \$31,400 \$181,000
Anderson Valley Wy Class III Bike Route/Recreational Trail	Class III bike route along Anderson Valley Way connecting to a recreational trail	Bike/ Multi-use	\$420,000
<b>Ukiah</b>			
Downtown Streetscape Project, Phase II – State Street from Norton to Henry and Mill to Gobbi	Sidewalk widening, curb ramps, bulb outs, relocation of drain inlets and street lights	Ped	\$1,521,000
Gobbi and S. Dora Intersection Enhancement	Enhanced intersection with “teaching raingarden” (In design; construction planned for FY 2022/23. Searching for funding,)	Ped	\$175,000
Great Redwood Trail (NWP Rail Trail), Ph. IV	10’ paved path from Commerce Drive to C&S Waste, 3,000’ south of Plant Road (CNRA Grant Award April 2021)	Multi-use	\$3,563,212
<b>Willits</b>			
NWP Rail Trail, Ph I	From East Hill Rd to East Commercial Street, 10’ wide trail	Multi-use	\$6,172,000
East Hill Road	From Baechtel Rd to the East City Limit, sidewalk infill and enhanced crossings near NWP Rail Trail	Ped	\$500,000
Blosser Lane Improvements	Sidewalk infill, high visibility & raised crosswalks, curb extensions/bulb-outs, signage	Ped	\$800,000
Harrah’s Manor Pedestrian Improvements	Corner ramps within the subdivision need to be upgraded to current standards	Ped	\$500,000
Shell Lane Improvements	Connection to new NWP Rail Trail	Ped/Bike	\$430,000
Various Pedestrian Improvements	Install sidewalks and corner ramps in the vicinity of Brookside Elementary School, near the intersection of Pine & Mill Streets, and Elm Street	Ped	Unknown
Coast Street Sidewalks	Class III bike lane signage and striping, sidewalks,	Ped/Bike	\$300,000

Name – Route No.	Description/Location	Type – Ped/Bike (Class)	Estimated Cost
	cross walks, curb extensions, and corner ramps on Coast Street between West San Francisco Street & Highway 20.	(III)	
Locust Street Improvements	Class III bike lane signage and striping, sidewalks, cross walks, and corner ramps on Locust Street in the vicinity of Baechtel Grove Middle School	Ped/Bike (III)	\$250,000
Railroad Avenue	Class III bike lane signage and striping, sidewalks, cross walks, and corner ramps on Railroad Avenue between San Francisco and Barbara Lane.	Ped/Bike (III)	\$600,000
<b>State &amp; Regional Projects</b>			
Hopland US 101 ADA Project	Correct non-compliant ADA pedestrian facilities, improve cross slope at intersections, upgrade signage, guardrail, guardrail end treatments and Transportation Management Systems facilities. Includes bulb outs, bicycle striping, and adjustments to existing cross walk locations.	Ped/Other	\$15,606,000
Westport Bike lanes (project development)	Add 4' shoulders to provide Class II bike lanes along SR 1, between PM 77.48 and 78.15. From just north of the intersection with Omega Drive to the Westport Beach RV Park & Campground.	Bike	\$573,000 (proj. dev. Only)
Laytonville Pedestrian Safety Improvements	Traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian safety across US 101, including short term improvements such as signage or lighting	Ped	Unknown
Gualala Downtown Non-Motorized Transportation & Streetscape	In downtown Gualala along SR 1, from Center Street north to the southerly intersection with Ocean Drive – Class II bike lanes, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements.	Ped/Bike (II)	\$2,930,000
MacKerricher State Park Haul Road Repair & Enhancement	Repave existing Haul Road between Pudding Creek Trestle in Fort Bragg and Ward Ave in Cleone for bike/ped use	Multi-use	\$2,040,000
SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail	Class I multi-use paved, 10 foot wide trail parallel to SR 162 through Covelo, with an east-west extension to Henderson Lane	Multi-use	\$2,578,000 (Phase I) \$1,252,000 (Phase II)

### Usage & Parking for Priority Projects

In rural communities such as Mendocino County, there is little bicycle count data available. It is typically collected on a project-by-project basis if needed for grant applications. In regard to bicycle parking facilities, the first priority in most rural areas is provision of basic, safe bicycle facilities. Bicycle parking is not typically included as part of a bicycle lane or path project, but rather at the points of interest to which these facilities provide access, such as schools, municipal facilities, or businesses. Existing bicycle parking in the vicinity of priority bikeway projects is shown in the maps depicting the Short-Range projects. Available usage data for priority projects is shown below. Current and proposed usage information is available for only a small number of projects identified

**Table 18**  
**Short-Range Priority Improvements – Existing & Proposed Usage Data**

Project Name	Agency	Daily Existing Use	Daily Proposed Use
MacKerricher State Park Haul Rd Repair & Enhancement	State Parks	273	329



SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail	MCOG/Caltrans	47	235
Gualala Downtown Streetscape	Caltrans	11	

## Short-Range Priority Improvement Descriptions

### City of Point Arena

Lake Street Pedestrian Improvements This project would provide sidewalk along Lake Street, between Scott Place and the elementary school (east side); between the elementary school and the high school (north side); and between the high school and approaching School Street (south side).

Mill Street Sidewalk Repair & Replacement Project This project is a component of a renovation project which includes roadway reconstruction and sidewalk repair and replacement. Pedestrian-related components include sidewalk replacement, ADA improvements including elimination/mitigation of extreme curb heights, and improved pedestrian access to driveways.

The project will remove and regrade roadway, install subsurface drainage, replace sidewalks, and repave roadway. The project will improve safety and pavement conditions, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving pavement conditions and increasing active transportation. Construction is anticipated to occur in summer 2021.

Sidewalk Repair & Replacement Project Sidewalks throughout the City will be prioritized for replacement or addition. Sidewalk construction program that may partner with property owners may be needed.

### City of Fort Bragg

South Main Street Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements This project was programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program but deleted due to a statewide funding shortage. The project would provide new curb, gutter and sidewalk, enhanced crossings, curb extensions, compliant ramps, striping and signage at Ocean View Dr, North Noyo Point Road and Cypress Street. Pedestrian improvements, including an island would be installed at North Harbor Drive. Improvements would also be made at driveways between Ocean View Drive and the Noyo Bridge.

Noyo Harbor Access Noyo Harbor in the Fort Bragg area is an active mix of fishing industry, commercial, visitor serving, dining and recreation at the south end of the Fort Bragg area below the Noyo Harbor Bridge on SR 1. This multi-modal, collaborative project concept proposes to provide non-motorized access into and through Noyo Harbor where none currently exists, transition vehicle traffic to one-way, connect North Harbor Drive to Noyo Point Road at the west end of the Harbor, construct a roundabout at the intersection of SR 1 (Main Street), Noyo Point/North Harbor, and implement transit service into the harbor to provide better access for employees and visitors.

Fort Bragg Sidewalk Infill This project would provide sidewalk and bicycle improvements on southbound Route 1 from Oak Street to Noyo River Bridge for a total of 1.5 miles.

### City of Ukiah

Downtown Streetscape Project This project through Downtown Ukiah will provide sidewalk widening, curb ramps, bulb outs, relocation of drain inlets, relocation of street lights, and installation of street furniture and landscaping. Phase I of the project extends from Henry to Mill along State Street and between School and Main Street on Standley and Perkins, and on Henry Street between School and State Street. Phase II of the project will extend the improvements on State Street northerly to Norton Street and southerly to Gobbi. The project will also include pavement rehab, a reduction of travel lanes, and parking improvements which are funded separately.

Gobbi Street and South Dora Intersection Improvements This project would provide an enhanced intersection with a “teaching raingarden” that could be used by students at the adjacent elementary school. This feature would address storm water runoff at the intersection using a natural system. This project was identified in the City’s Safe Routes to Schools plan.

Great Redwood Trail (NWP Rail Trail), Phase IV This phase of the Great Redwood Trail will extend from Commerce Drive to approximately 3,000 feet south of Plant Road. This will be the first phase that is on the rail ballast and not alongside the exiting railroad tracks. The funding for this project is provided by the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), and the City was awarded these grant funds in April 2021. The trail includes many community features such as parks and information boards about the natural surroundings. (City is developing the Request for Proposals for Design phase.)

Orr Creek Trail Feasibility Study This project is to assess the feasibility of constructing an approximately 2 mile long pedestrian and bicycle pathway from Low Gap Park to the Ukiah sports complex along Orr Creek, including a new grade separated Highway 101 crossing.

### City of Willits

Northwestern Pacific Rail Trail, Phase I This project would provide an 8-to-10-foot wide, multi-use path along the Northwestern Pacific Rail line. Phase I would run 1.6 miles between East Hill Road and East Commercial Street, providing an alternate north-south route through town for non-motorized traffic. The railroad right-of-way alignment is already well used by pedestrians and bicyclists, especially between East Valley and East Commercial Streets. It would also provide recreational opportunities. Eventual build-out of the southeast annexation area, including industrial and residential uses, will require this alternative transportation system to help reduce potential vehicular impacts that are associated with urban development.

East Hill Road The East Hill Road area has been developed significantly within the last several years, and several more projects are being developed. The multi-use Willits Rail Trail will begin on East Hill Road and connect the southern portion of Willits to Commercial Street. Substantial non-motorized use is anticipated once this project is complete.

Blosser Lane Improvements Blosser Lane Elementary is surrounded by industrial sites and a

casino, which create significant traffic on this route, including large truck traffic. This project includes traffic calming and pedestrian improvements in the area of Blosser Lane Elementary School to improve safety for students. Improvements would include approximately 2,660 linear feet of sidewalk infill on Blosser Lane, Coast Street and Franklin Avenue. Curb extensions with ramps and high visibility crossings would be installed at intersections along Blosser Lane, and six bulb-outs adjacent to the school for improved pedestrian crossing. The proposed project would also include 8 driveway aprons in an effort to control turning movements in and out of nearby industrial sites and reduce potential conflicts with pedestrian and bicyclists. Raised crosswalks in front of the school are also proposed, connecting to a loading zone on the west side of Blosser Lane, with school zone signage in both directions. In 2009, these improvements were estimated to cost \$691,000.

Harrah's Manor Pedestrian Improvements This will upgrade and install 12-18 pedestrian ramps in the Harrah's Manor subdivision. All existing ramps are outdated and need to be reconstructed to meet current ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards. Some sidewalk infill or replacement for conforms will also be needed

Shell Lane Improvements This will provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Shell Lane, creating a connection from existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Baechtel Road to the proposed NWP Rail Trail. The City is currently working with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership to develop additional details and cost estimates on several of their projects, including this project.

Various Pedestrian Improvements Various locations in Willits need upgraded pedestrian facilities. In the vicinity of Brookside Elementary School, several new ramps and sidewalk, curb and gutter are needed. Four more ramps are needed near the intersection of Pine and Mill Streets. On Elm Street, the sidewalk, curb, and gutter are in good condition, but corner ramps are missing or outdated; six new ramps create a continuous pedestrian path to Evergreen Shopping Center. South Lenore Street and Boscabelle Avenue need new ramps at each corner. These are fairly high-use streets for pedestrians and the existing corners do not have ramps.

Coast Street Sidewalk Improvements This project will create and connect pedestrian access features and bike paths from a dense residential area to a school area. The project would include new and improved sidewalks, bike lanes, corner ramps, extended curbs, and signage. The project would span from West San Francisco Street along Coast Street to the Highway 20 intersection. The improvements from this project would create pedestrian and bicycle access continuity to the Blosser Lane Improvement Project described above.

Locust Street Improvements This project creates pedestrian and bike accessible areas around nearly half of Baechtel Grove Middle School's parameter. New sidewalk, corner ramps, cross walks, striping, signage, and bike lanes would be added. The accessibility features would connect the school zone to the adjacent residential neighborhoods south of the project.

Railroad Avenue Improvements This project creates an accessible pedestrian path along the west side of Railroad Avenue and a class III bike route along the full length of the road between East Valley Street and Barbara Lane. This street is heavily used as it is one of the longer north-

south streets in Willits, connecting both residents and businesses between the Safeway shopping center and Highway 20 and downtown.

### County of Mendocino

Brush Street – Unincorporated Ukiah Area This project would create non-motorized facilities along the unincorporated section of Brush Street in Ukiah. Improved walking and biking facilities (possibly a multi-use facility) are needed to serve this roadway which has seen increased residential (including low income and farm labor housing) and commercial development. A non-motorized facility along this route would also connect to the existing rail trail that at Brush St.

Safe Routes to School – Laytonville This project would provide enhanced crosswalks across Ramsey Road, from the parking lot to the front of the school, with ramps and signs. Sidewalks or pedestrian paths would also be included along the east side of Willits Avenue, between Ramsey and the existing sidewalk near the middle school. This project was identified as a priority in the county’s Safe Routes to Schools Plan.

Safe Routes to School – Covelo This project would provide sidewalk along Airport Road and the south side of Howard. It would also reconfigure the intersection of Howard and Airport Way, reconfigure the parking area with a pedestrian walkway between the school and existing pedestrian path, and provide enhanced crossing of the northern school driveway connecting with the trail. This project was identified as a priority in the county’s Safe Routes to Schools Plan.

Anderson Valley Way Bike Route & Recreational Trail Community members expressed a desire for improved non-motorized access along Anderson Valley Way. This project would provide an approximately four-foot wide, soft surface recreational trail along Anderson Valley Way on one side of the roadway, and connecting with the proposed Class I bike path along SR 128 (long range). The Class III bikeway would connect with the soft surface trail for a total of 2.7 miles of facility.

### State & Regional Projects

Talmage Road, SR 222 This project would provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities between Ukiah and Talmage, which could include a separate facility or shoulder improvements on Talmage Road, SR 222.

Hopland US 101 - ADA Project This project is located in Mendocino County on United States Highway (US) 101 beginning at PM 9.90 and ending at PM 11.20, in and near the community of Hopland. Within the project limits, this project proposes to correct non-compliant ADA pedestrian facilities, rehabilitate existing pavement to improve cross slope at intersection crosswalks, upgrade signage, upgrade guardrail and guardrail end treatments, and upgrade Transportation Management Systems (TMS) facilities. Traffic calming and complete streets features such as bulb outs and bicycle striping will be incorporated, and existing cross walk locations will be adjusted as necessary to enhance safety and functionality. Pavement rehabilitation will consist of a combination of a full roadway reconstruction.

Westport Bike Lanes This project was identified in the Westport Area Integrated Multi-Use Coastal Trail Plan. This project will add 4-foot shoulders along SR 1 to provide for 0.67 mile of Class II bike lanes between PM 77.48 and 78.15. The project will begin just north of the intersection with Omega Drive and extend to the Westport Beach RV Park & Campground. The project will connect the village of Westport with popular destinations to the north and form a priority segment of the Pacific Coast Bicycle Route.

Laytonville Pedestrian Safety Improvements This project would address pedestrian safety concerns along US 101 through the community of Laytonville by providing traffic calming measures. This project would also include interim measures such as centerline pedestrian crossing signs and pedestrian crossing lights. Although specific improvements have not been identified, it is anticipated that the measures would be fairly low cost. This was a need that was high priority for residents of Laytonville in the public outreach process.

Gualala Downtown Non-Motorized Transportation & Streetscape This project would add Class II bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the road along a 0.4 mile stretch of SR 1 through downtown Gualala. Sidewalk aprons will help reduce conflict points for vehicles. Planting strips will be included where feasible pending a maintenance agreement. This project was identified in the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Plan. In addition to the active transportation improvements, the project will also include a center turn lane or pockets. Funding for project development is programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program. Funding for construction has not yet been identified.

MacKerricher State Park Haul Road Repair and Enhancement This project would repave the existing Haul Road from the Pudding Creek Trestle in Fort Bragg to Ward Avenue in the Cleone Area. This 3.3 mile facility would serve as a section of the Pacific Coast Bike Route and extend the Coastal Trail, providing non-motorized access separate from the narrow State Route 1, improving safety for residents and visitors. The bluff top facility would include replacement of two water crossings with culverts and the addition of handrails on the Virginia Creek Bridge. It is anticipated that this project would be implemented by State Parks.

SR 162 Corridor Trail This project will create a new route parallel to but separate from SR 162 through the community of Covelo. SR 162 currently lacks any shoulders and has open ditches along both sides, forcing pedestrians and bicyclists in this disadvantaged community to walk in the lanes of traffic, which often travels at high speeds even through town. Phase I of the project will extend from Howard Street, which provides access to the community schools, to Biggar Lane and include an east-west extension through Tribal lands to Henderson Lane. Phase II of the project will extent from Biggar Lane to Hurt Road. Both phases of the project have been awarded ATP funding and are being implemented by the Mendocino Council of Governments.

## **Long-Range Priority Improvements**

In addition to the short term projects identified above, there are many other needs throughout the region. The projects included in this long range listing are not necessarily lower priority, but may be those that are likely to take longer to develop or require greater amounts of funding that

have not been identified at this time. Several of these projects do not currently have cost estimates developed. Some projects are conceptual, as there is a recognized need but not project details have been developed. Due to funding constraints, it is likely that many projects identified in this plan as short range will in reality be long range projects.

**Table 19**  
**Long-Range Priority Improvements**

Name – Route No.	Description	Type – Ped/Bike (Class)	Est. Cost
<b>Point Arena</b>			
Multi-use Trail from Cove (Harper's Cut-Off Trail)	Widen and improve the existing pedestrian trail right-of-way between School Street and Port Road to create a mixed-use trail that will provide sufficient width (20 feet) and conditions for north-south emergency access	Multi-use	\$127,420
<b>Fort Bragg</b>			
Redwood Ave Coastal Trail Linkage	Multi-use trail from Alder Street trailhead/parking along Chief Celeri Drive to Redwood Ave, with sidewalks & wayfinding on Redwood	Multi-use	\$368,759
Noyo Harbor Access – Old Mill Road	Improve Old Mill Road to multiuse trail, stabilize landslide area. Link to Coastal Trail, include ADA parking.	Multi-use	\$660,000
<b>County</b>			
Safe Routes to School Anderson Valley	Class I multi use path parallel to SR 128 with connection to school	Multi-use	Unknown
Brooktrails to Willits – Multi-Use Trail	This is a recognized need; however, no route or details have been developed		Unknown
Rail Trail – Brush Street to Lake Mendocino Drive	10-foot paved multi-use trail along the NWP rail line, 2.1 miles in length.	Multi-use	\$2,548,670
Windy Hollow Road Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge – Point Arena area	This would provide a bicycle & pedestrian bridge over the Garcia River on Windy Hollow Road.	Multi-use	unknown
Gualala Neighborhood Parks Access Improvements	Provide safe, pedestrian and bicyclist access on Old Stage Rd to Bower Park and Ocean Ridge Park from the Ocean Ridge and nearby neighborhoods. The project could also address erosion and sedimentation problems. Although this has been identified as a need, it is conceptual in nature at this point. The feasibility of implementation would be affected by a number of factors.	TBD	TBD
<b>Ukiah</b>			
Walking trail around Todd Grove Park	8' wide concrete walking path, w/curb, 0.5 mile in length.	Ped	\$400,000
Orr Creek Trail design & construction	Design and construction of a 2 mile long multi-use path along Orr Creek from Low Gap Park to the Ukiah Sports Complex	Multi-use	TBD in feasibility study
Pomolita Middle School Level 3 Access Improvements	Install 16 ADA curb ramps, 3 large curb extensions, and fill priority sidewalk gaps on Cypress Ave, Spring St, and Hazel Ave.	Ped	\$650,000
<b>Willits</b>			
Pedestrian crossing at Walnut &	Enhanced pedestrian crossing for	Ped	Unknown

Name – Route No.	Description	Type – Ped/Bike (Class)	Est. Cost
Main Street	students crossing from school area to shopping center and adjacent residential areas		
Willits Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan projects	This plan identified general improvements such as sidewalk widening, bulb-outs, street plantings and furniture, enhanced crosswalks, and refuge islands. This project includes improvements to the Caltrans portion of Main St./Hwy 20, which has been identified as a priority.	Ped/Bike	Unknown
Brown's Corner Roundabout/Signal	The southern intersection of Baechtel Road and Main St./Hwy 20 is high-use and needs improvement. There are no pedestrian facilities and relatively high vehicle speeds, which create safety concerns for all modes of transportation. This project has been desired by the community for decades.	Ped/Bike	Unknown
<b>Caltrans</b>			
Route 1 Improvements – Pacific Coast Bike Route	Shoulder improvements in various locations	Bike	Unknown
Westport Bike lanes (construction)	Add 4' shoulders to provide Class II bike lanes along 0.67 mile of SR 1, between PM 77.48 and 78.15.	Bike (II)	\$990,000
Roundabout/signal at SR 20 and Blosser Lane in Willits Area	Roundabout (or signal) as a long term improvement for non-motorized traffic at this location.	Bike/Ped	Unknown

In addition to the projects identified above, there is a recognized need for bicycle facilities along several of the State Routes through the region. Where feasible, improvements along these routes should be pursued and incorporated into other non-bicycle related projects. All highway facilities within Mendocino County are currently open to bicyclists, however, on most facilities, the width and roadway design do not lend themselves well to bicycle or pedestrian use.

### California Coastal Trail and Pacific Coast Bike Route

Senate Bill 908 (2001, Chesbro) initiated the development of the California Coastal Trail. The Trail is intended to be a continuous public right of way along the California coastline developed for non-motorized use. The Coastal Conservancy, along with State Parks, the Coastal Commission, and other agencies and groups, produced a document in 2003 entitled *Completing the California Coastal Trail*, which laid out the concept for the trail as well as benefits, costs, and challenges associated with trail development. While such a trail would be a great asset to the County and State, it is unfortunately largely unfunded at this time, although there have been some segments completed, particularly in the Fort Bragg area. Due to topographical and environmental constraints, the implementation of the trail may result in multi-use shoulders on Route 1 in some locations. While the primary purpose of the trail is recreation, implementation may blur the distinction between recreational and general-purpose travel as the route provides access for non-motorized users and connects the fragmented recreational segments.

The Pacific Coast Bike Route and California Coastal Trail Engineered Feasibility study was completed in 2013 in a joint effort between MCOG and Caltrans. The study examined current conditions and needed improvements for the Pacific Coast Bike Route (PCBR) within the Route 1 right of way through Mendocino County, as well as the California Coastal Trail where it is intended to share the right of way. The study included extensive public and stakeholder involvement, and resulted in recommended implementation segments. Costs of construction for the improvements in each segment are very high. Only two of the eleven segment improvements have a cost below \$10 million. The rest range in cost from \$11.7 million to \$51.8 million. Given the high costs associated with these improvements, it is unlikely that anything more than small sections of shoulder improvements will be made during the life of this plan unless a substantial funding source can be found. However, it may be possible to construct some portions of the route outside of the Route 1 right of way. The MacKerricher State Park Haul Road project identified in the short-range improvements of this plan would provide over 3 miles of bicycle route that would serve as the PCBR in that area. Other long term improvements to the Pacific Coast Bike Route in Mendocino County, include turnouts along SR 1, installation of wayfinding signage, and bottle fill stations.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the majority of the projects identified in this plan will be dependent on local agencies and Caltrans. Project completion will be based largely on funding availability. Projects that may be more competitive in certain grant programs will have a better chance of being funded than others, regardless of local priority.

Local agencies, Caltrans, and MCOG should continue to pursue grant funding for project implementation. Other stakeholders, such as Municipal Advisory Councils may be active in seeking funding as well but will require a sponsor for project delivery. Typically, project sponsors will be the County of Mendocino, one of the incorporated cities, or Caltrans.

Projects in this plan have not been presented in any order of priority. The order of implementation of projects will be based almost completely on availability of funding, which will be affected by the individual attributes of each project. Projects that are more competitive in grant programs will likely be implemented first, regardless of local priority. In the case of the Active Transportation Program, safety is a primary criterion for receiving funding, so projects with a documented history of accidents will be more likely to receive funding.

Progress of implementation will be assessed and reported by the Mendocino Council of Governments when the Active Transportation Plan or the Regional Transportation Plan is updated. The Regional Transportation Plan is on a four-year update cycle.

## COMPLETED NON-MOTORIZED PROJECTS

The following projects included in the 2017 RTP have now been completed, or are in the process of being completed:

City of Fort Bragg



- Coastal Trail, Ph II (middle segment) w/ connection to downtown at Alder - trail connecting existing north and south segments
- Fort Bragg Sidewalk Infill - Sidewalk and bicycle improvements on southbound Route 1 – various segments

#### County of Mendocino

- Branscomb Road Multi Use Bridge – Pre-fab 8’ wide bridge over Ten Mile Creek, alongside vehicular bridge
- Safe Routes to School Grace Hudson – Sidewalks on Jefferson between State and School entry; enhanced crosswalk across driveway
- Safe Routes to School Project Calpella – Sidewalks on Moore Street from Calpella Elementary School to State Street and then southward on State to the existing sidewalk.

#### City of Ukiah

- Downtown Streetscape Project, Phase I – State Street from Henry to Mill, Standley & Perkins from School to Main, Henry from School to State (*due to be completed in 2021*)
- NWP Rail Trail, Phase III - 10’ paved path, fencing, lighting from Clara Ave to Brush Street, including bridge over Orr Creek.
- ADA improvements and bulb-outs on various streets

#### City of Willits

- Sidewalk improvements on Main Street

#### Caltrans

- Blosser Lane/SR 20 Intersection Improvements

## PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE ELEMENT

### SYSTEM DEFINITION

The Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) is a Joint Powers Agency (JPA), which was formed in 1976 by the County of Mendocino and four incorporated cities: Fort Bragg, Point Arena, Willits and Ukiah. The MTA is the sole public transit operator in the County, and is responsible for the daily operation of the bus system and related policy decision-making. The MTA Board of Directors meets monthly to decide on operational and policy issues. A General Manager coordinates the system and oversees its day-to-day operations. The Transportation Development Act (TDA) regulates public transit services in California. Under TDA, MTA undergoes annual fiscal audits and a triennial performance audit. MCOG's Transit Productivity Committee (composed of two board members each from MTA and MCOG, plus one Senior Center representative) annually reviews efficiency of services.

The MTA began service on April 12, 1976, with a start-up budget of \$250,000, including \$100,000 for the purchase of five buses. Cross-county routes transported passengers from the inland Ukiah areas to outlying valleys and coastal areas. Over the years, MTA has evolved into a well-managed and operated countywide transit system providing a broad base of transit service within the County as well as regional links. MTA's Mission Statement is "to provide safe, courteous, reliable, affordable and carbon-neutral transportation service."

Based on a recent audited five-year average, 53% of MTA's funding comes from TDA funds allocated by MCOG. This percentage reflects an upward trend from the 41% reported in the 2017 RTP. Other funding includes fare revenue, advertising revenue, contract service revenue, agriculture van leases, and federal and state grants and state bond programs.

MTA's ridership and fare revenues continue to follow the national trend downward. MTA has renovated all of its schedules for continuity and ease of use for the public. In addition, MTA has modernized its web page to be smart phone accessible and streamline its automated telephone information system.

The MTA, which serves as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), (*as designated by MCOG on December 7, 1981*) employs approximately 60 people. MTA's main facility is located at the sound end of Ukiah, and houses MTA administration, maintenance, and the centralized 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 office, conference room, remote meeting technology and other amenities.

Completed in 2012, the Bruce Richard Maintenance Facility (named for MTA's retired general manager) is a state-of-the-art shop building that advances MTA's strategic plan to become a carbon-neutral provider of public transit service. The original shop was 60 years old, overcrowded and hazardous, and wasted energy. The new facility was designed and built to Silver Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) standards. Energy features include rooftop solar photovoltaics, radiant-heated floors, evaporative cooler, daylighting,

insulation, and electric vehicle charge port. Net electrical use is nearly zero. Working conditions are vastly improved. Unique in this rural region, the project received AIA Redwood Empire Chapter's highest award. Subsequently, a solar photovoltaic canopy that covers bus parking and generates electricity was installed.

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. It encompasses three distinct regional divisions – the South Coast, North Coast, and Inland service areas. MTA serves a population of nearly 90,000, and 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. There are a total of 39 gasoline/diesel revenue vehicles in the fleet, including 9 coaches and 30 cutaways. Each MTA bus is equipped with a bicycle rack that holds two to three bicycles, available on a first-come, first served basis. Service animals are allowed on the bus; all other animals must be in a carrier.

MTA operates twelve 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 service to provide service to and from Lake County, Monday through Saturday; and connects with Greyhound which provides service to both northern and southern destinations. MTA's website provides travelers information on other transit connections throughout California, including California Transit Links, SF Bay 511.org, and Zimride. MTA has also been working with Caltrans, Humboldt Transit Authority, Lake Transit Authority, and Redwood Coast Transit to implement a contactless fare payment system.

In 2010, MTA launched the Mendocino Farmworkers Transportation Program—a van pool program for workers in the agricultural industry. Vans accommodating up to 15 passengers, equipped with state-of-the-art vehicle tracking technology and safety features, are used by pre-qualified volunteer drivers to safely transport workers. MTA pays each vehicle's insurance, maintenance, repair and fuel costs up front, and van pool riders cover that cost by paying an affordable daily fare for the service. Volunteer drivers ride for free in exchange for driving the van and managing the van pool. The vans may be used to transport workers to any agricultural-related enterprise, at any time of day, seven days per week.

For specific route, schedule, and fare information, visit MTA's website at <http://mendocinotransit.org>. Since MTA made schedule data available in a standardized format, independent software developers have offered a number of useful tools for riders. Several free applications are available from third-party developers using MTA's open GTFS (General Transit Feed Specifications) data and are listed and linked on MTA's website.

## Special Needs Transit Service

The largest segment of California's population is rapidly growing older, and as the baby boom generation becomes senior citizens, we can expect this trend to accelerate. This will obviously create an increased demand for services for the elderly and disabled. The majority of this segment of the population will be able to use public transit because of the expanded accessibility brought about by implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For citizens living in less populated areas, however, transit service may not be an option due to the inefficiency of serving areas with low population density. MTA operates a Mobility Management Program to match riders with available services.

Senate Bill 335, known as The Brandi Mitock Safe Drivers Act (enacted by the legislature in 2000) specified conditions under which certain persons may lose their driver licenses due to failure to pass a visual, written or behind-the-wheel test. It is likely that this bill disproportionately affected rural areas of the State, where there are not only many older drivers, but transit service is generally sparse or inadequate. MTA, as the designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), strives to assist senior centers in meeting the transportation needs of those individuals with special needs by providing funding, training, vehicle procurement and maintenance services. Through the Mobility Management Program, MTA works to coordinate transportation services of senior centers and other providers.

Five senior centers currently provide transportation services in Mendocino County. They are: Anderson Valley, Redwood Coast in Fort Bragg, Coastal Seniors in Gualala, Ukiah and Willits. All senior centers operate their transportation services under contract with MTA, and are designed to provide a higher level of driver assistance ("door through door") than MTA Dial-a-Ride can provide.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MTA continues to be responsive to the needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities by fully complying with the ADA. All buses are ADA accessible, and passengers with disabilities who are unable to use the standard-equipped vehicles may be eligible for door-to-door ADA paratransit services. MTA routinely assists senior centers in applying for federal grants to replace aging transit vehicles, and provides the local grant match requirement from funds made available from MCOG. MTA takes advantage of opportunities to coordinate transit services to the fullest extent possible in order to maximize available transit resources.

MTA annually produces an Unmet Transit Needs List, which identifies new service requests compiled from various sources, including direct input from the public at MTA's monthly meetings. This list, along with other needs identified by the Social Services Transportation

Advisory Council, is presented to the Mendocino Council of Governments at an annual, legally noticed Unmet Needs public hearing. After the public hearing, MCOG determines (*based on adopted definitions*) whether any of the needs presented qualify as “unmet transit needs” and if so, the needs are referred to MTA for analysis and then to MCOG’s Transit Productivity Committee for evaluation as to “reasonableness”. The following (revised) definitions were adopted by MCOG on 12/7/98:

Unmet Transit Needs: Whenever a need to transport people is not being satisfied through existing public or private resources.

Reasonable to Meet: It is reasonable to meet a transit need if all of the following conditions prevail:

- a. Service will be capable of meeting the Transportation Development Act fare revenue/operating cost requirements and established MCOG criteria for new services.
- b. Transit services designed or intended to address an unmet transit need shall not duplicate transit services currently provided either publicly or privately.
- c. The claimant that is expected to provide the service shall review, evaluate, and indicate that the service is operationally feasible, and vehicles shall be currently available in the marketplace.
- d. Funds are available, or there is a reasonable expectation that funds will become available.

After evaluation, the Transit Productivity Committee makes a recommendation to MCOG on whether any of the “Unmet Transit Needs” are “Reasonable to Meet.” The SSTAC is again convened to make its own recommendation or to comment on the TPC’s. The annual process is concluded with MCOG adopting a resolution which either finds that there are or are not “Unmet Transit Needs that are Reasonable to Meet.” If it is determined that there are such needs, MTA is directed to include those needs in its annual budget and claim to MCOG. Sometimes items may be found conditionally “Reasonable to Meet,” such as if grant funding can be secured. In this case, appropriate steps are taken to seek funding.

The FY 2021/22 Unmet Needs process resulted in a finding that none of the unmet transit needs during the process were deemed reasonable to meet. The results of this process vary from year to year and often none of the unmet needs are found reasonable to meet. Needs are most often met through federal grants and route adjustments, as all available TDA funds for transit are fully allocated to MTA.

In addition to the annual Unmet Needs process, public input regarding transit needs was solicited during the public outreach process for the RTP. Comments included the need for transit service to rural, outlying areas such as Covelo, Hopland, Laytonville, Potter Valley, Brooktrails Township and the south coast. Transit service to rural, outlying communities in Mendocino County has been an unmet need for some time. Service to some of these communities has been tried in the past but was discontinued due to operational and financial infeasibility.

In an effort to address the transportation gaps and barriers in rural, outlying areas in Mendocino County, MCOG successfully applied for a FY 21/22 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant. The project, titled Feasibility Study – Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County, will research mobility solutions and transit alternatives that have been implemented in similar locations for applicability in our region. The study will look at developing innovative solutions, including pilot projects, to meet mobility needs of the remote communities.

Additional needs that were identified during the public outreach process for the 2021 RTP were expansion of existing service and new and improved transit facilities in the greater Ukiah and Redwood Valley areas. One specific facility that was identified was a new transit hub in the Ukiah area. Such a facility would increase operational efficiency and allow riders to seamlessly transfer between local and interregional routes. Bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements would be included, where applicable, in the design and construction of the new transit hub to address the first/last mile barriers that are prevalent throughout rural transit systems.

MCOG has also adopted a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan which guides actions related to human services transportation needs. The Coordinated Plan is a requirement of the Federal Transportation Bill in order to qualify for certain Federal Transit Administration funding sources. The purpose of the plan is to address the transportation needs of elderly, disabled, and low-income individuals. It must assess available services, identify needs, strategies to meet needs and opportunities for coordination, and prioritize implementation of strategies. The priorities identified in the most recent Coordinated Plan, adopted May 3, 2021, are as follows:

- Strategy 1 - Maintain the Current Level of Transportation Services
- Strategy 2 - Expand Demand Response
- Strategy 3 - Establish a Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Service and Increase Paratransit Services
- Strategy 4 - Expansion of Intercity Services, Especially Between Fort Bragg and Ukiah
- Strategy 5 - Expand Weekend Service
- Strategy 6 - Multi-Organizational Approach to Solutions
- Strategy 7 - Conduct a Feasibility Study of Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County

In addition to addition to meeting the needs of the riders, MTA is also addressing the need to transition their fleet to zero-emission vehicles to ensure compliance with the Innovate Clean Transit (ICT) regulations set forth by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 2019. Under the ICT regulations, MTA must meet the following targets: (1) starting January 1, 2026, twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of new bus purchases in each calendar year must be zero-emission buses; and (2) starting January 1, 2029, all new bus purchases must be zero-emission buses. Meeting these targets will ensure that MTA reaches CARB's goal of a full transition to a zero-emission fleet by 2040.

## ACTION PLAN

### Short Range Projects

Proposed Short Range Transit Development Plan (FY 2018/19 – FY 2022/23) – In the Fall of 2021, MTA applied for Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant funds to update its Short Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP), which expired in December, 2016. A Short Range Transit Development Plan serves as the primary planning document for a transit agency. Without a current SRTDP, MTA risks potential loss of ridership and efficiency without a current plan to best determine how to program limited resources, and the Transit Productivity Committee lacks adequate data for its deliberations. In addition, the ability to acquire future federal or state grants may be adversely affected without a current Plan.

Proposed Transit Hub Location Plan – A Transit Hub Location Plan is the first step towards building a new transit hub in Ukiah. This plan will look at various locations to determine which would be best suited to accommodate MTA buses and serve as a transfer point for interregional connections. Once a preferred location is identified, MTA will seek grant funding to acquire the property, then design and construct the new hub. As part of the design and construction of this project, bicycle and pedestrian improvements will be made in the immediate vicinity of the new facility to help address first/last mile gaps.

Rural Mobility Solutions – Following the conclusion of the rural mobility solutions feasibility study conducted by MCOG, funding will be sought to implement a pilot project. The pilot project will help address mobility barriers in rural areas of Mendocino County that are not served by traditional transit services.

Bus Stop Improvements – MTA continues to implement the recommendations from the two-phased Bus Stop Review study completed in 2015 to systematically make improvements to bus stop facilities (i.e. benches, shelters, signs, etc.).

Solar Powered Maintenance Facility – Revamp Solar Canopy – MTA intends to revamp their 2012 solar canopy project (which constructed canopies over parking areas to host more solar panels) to include a 440 Transformer. Additionally, MTA plans to construct a second solar canopy to cover another section of the parking area that wasn't included in the original 2012 project.

Other projects planned during the FY 2022/23 to FY 2027/28 period include acquisition of 37 replacement vehicles with an approximate total cost of \$16,215,000, as follows:

- 1 staff vehicle (hybrid)
- 2 staff vehicles (electric)
- 2 staff vehicles (Mtc Van)
- 10 electric Dial-A-Ride buses
- 13 electric cutaway buses
- 9 electric heavy-duty buses

Purchase of equipment such as replacement computers, telephone/video equipment, passenger waiting shelters and benches, facility upgrades, etc. is expected to total approximately \$2,799,000 over the FY 2022/23 – FY 2027/28 period.

## Long Range Projects

Design and Construction of New Administration and Operations Building – A new state-of-the-art solar powered maintenance facility and solar canopy project (funded with federal “state of good repair” and “TIGGER” grants, matched with TDA and California Prop 1B funds) was completed in 2012. As the final phase of the “Facility Solarization and Modernization Project” MTA plans to construct a new administration and operations building to replace the existing overcrowded and energy inefficient building. The new facility will be designed to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. MTA will be seeking federal competitive and discretionary grants, state funds, and energy-related grants for this project. Estimated budget is \$10,907,000 for design, site work, construction, solar roof and added solar canopies.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Some performance measures are specifically required for public transit and paratransit. For example, transit agencies must track performance for federal reporting requirements (the National Transit Database), for documenting compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and for some federal and state grant applications.

In addition to meeting reporting requirements, performance measures should be used to gauge transit goals, policies, operations, budgeting, and funding. Performance measures will help identify public transportation benefits and needs for the agency, passengers, and the community.

**Table 20**  
**Transit Performance Measures**

Performance Goal	MCOG Adopted Performance Measure	Standard
<b>Cost Effectiveness &amp; Efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farebox recovery ratio</li> <li>Operating cost per passenger<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Operating cost per vehicle revenue hour<sup>3</sup></li> <li>Operating cost per vehicle revenue mile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 10%<sup>1</sup></li> <li>\$7.31 - \$38.35 depending on service<sup>1</sup></li> <li>\$66.43-\$122.72 depending on service<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Use &amp; Productivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passengers per vehicle revenue hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.0-14.0 depending on service<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>

Notes: (1) These are the 2021 Transit Performance Standards that are adjusted by MCOG annually, pursuant to policy adopted by MCOG on 8/18/14, revised 6/3/2019. (2) “Cost Per Passenger” is an additional evaluation tool when 2 of the other 3 standards are not met. This standard is also adjusted annually by the CPI inflation rate. (3) Starting in 2014, “Cost Per Hour” is calculated by averaging the past three years of actual costs, then adjusted annually by the percentage change in the California Consumer Price Index – California, All Urban Consumers. MCOG refers to this method as “CPI Adjusted Rolling Average”.



**Table 21**  
**Additional Transit Performance Measures**

<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>Additional Performance Measure</b>	<b>Standard</b>
<b>Safety &amp; Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miles between preventable accidents</li> <li>• Passenger injuries per 100,000 miles</li> </ul>	Target >500,000 Minimum >100,000 Less than 1
<b>Use &amp; Productivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passengers per vehicle revenue mile</li> <li>• Annual total passengers</li> <li>• Annual passenger miles</li> <li>• Average trip length</li> </ul>	
<b>Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miles between service calls</li> <li>• Maintenance costs as % of operating costs</li> </ul>	
<b>Transit Investment / Climate Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average vehicle age</li> <li>• Percent of Zero Emission Busses (ZEB)</li> <li>• Reduction in Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) based on average trip length and number of passengers</li> <li>• Reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions based on average trip length and number of passengers</li> </ul>	

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A separate environmental document will be prepared for the Regional Transportation Plan. The majority of projects discussed in the Action Plan of the Transit System Element are very likely to produce positive environmental effects. Most of these projects are expected to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) processes. For this reason, there are no foreseeable environmental issues.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The following are highlights of public transit service accomplishments since the last RTP update in 2017:

- Continued a “fare free” program (funded with Low Carbon Transit Operations Program grant funds) to provide fare free transportation to enrolled Mendocino College students.
- Purchased and installed a new telephone system and other office improvements for facilities in Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Willits
- In 2017, MTA purchased components of the RouteMatch software/hardware system, funded by MCOG’s TDA/Local Transportation Funds.
- In 2018, MTA upgraded their IT network and infrastructure by contracting with an independent firm to provide managed IT care (funded by FY 2015/16 Prop 1B Transit System Safety, Security & Disaster Response Account funds approved by MCOG).
- Added new bus stops in Ukiah in 2019, including the hospital loop on the Local 9 and a stop at Costco
- In 2019, MTA replaced their obsolete and unsupported pre-trip and fleet management system to improve methods of reporting, safety inspection and compliance (funded by FY 2016/17 Prop 1B Transit System Safety, Security & Disaster Response Account funds approved by MCOG).
- Upgraded the security systems at all locations in 2020
- Purchased 5 all-electric cutaway buses in 2021.

## RAIL TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

### SYSTEM DEFINITION & BACKGROUND

The rail system in Mendocino County is currently going through significant changes. There are two railroad systems in Mendocino County: The Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP), which stretches across the entire county, north to south, and is currently overseen by the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), and the California Western Railroad (CWR)/Skunk Train, which runs between Willits and Fort Bragg and is owned and operated by Mendocino Railway (a subsidiary of Sierra Railroad Company).

#### Northwestern Pacific Railroad/North Coast Railroad Authority/Great Redwood Trail

The North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) is a California Public State Agency created in 1989 to oversee the 316-mile long publicly-owned right of way known as the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP). However, the NCRA is now in the process of being dissolved, per SB 1029 (McGuire, 2018), which set in motion a plan to disband the agency and eventually create a successor agency to manage development of the newly designated Great Redwood Trail throughout the railroad corridor.

Although the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) was chartered by a state mandate in 1989, operating funding was not provided by the state, and the agency struggled to secure stable funding throughout its existence. In December 1998 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued an Emergency Order to prevent the operation of trains from Arcata to the Napa Valley junction due to unsafe conditions of the railroad. The railroad has been closed essentially since that time, with the exception of limited freight service on the southern segment (outside of Mendocino County), operated under agreement (terminated in June 2021) by NWP Co.

Senator Mike McGuire introduced the North Coast Railroad Authority Closure and Transition to Trails Act (SB 1029, Chapter 934 Statutes of 2018), which was signed into law in September 2018. SB 1029 directed the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), in consultation with the Natural Resources Agency, to conduct an assessment of the North Coast Railroad Authority to provide information necessary to determine the most appropriate way to dissolve the North Coast Railroad Authority and dispense with its assets and liabilities, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the viability of constructing a trail on the entirety of, or a portion of, the property, rights-of-way, or easements owned by North Coast Railroad Authority, and recommendations relating to the possible construction of a trail. The bill also required an assessment of the options for transferring the southern portion of the rail corridor to the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District and recommendations on the specific assets and liabilities that could be transferred, including rights or abilities to operate freight rail.

CalSTA convened a multi-agency SB 1029 Task Force comprised of representatives from the California Department of Transportation, the Natural Resources Agency, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Finance, and the Department of General Services to conduct the required SB 1029 assessment. The Task Force's assessment report is available on the CalSTA website at: <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/reports>

Follow-up legislation (SB 69-McGuire) was signed by the Governor on September 30, 2021 to rename the NCRA as the Great Redwood Trail Agency, amend the governance structure, and transfer all of the NCRA's rights, interests, and responsibilities for the portion south of the Mendocino/Sonoma County line to the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) District. Among other duties, to the extent funding is available, the new trail agency is required to initiate and complete the federal railbanking process for the rail rights-of-way for the northern portion of the line; prepare and implement a master plan; and, plan, design, construct, operate and maintain the northern portion of the Great Redwood Trail.

In November 2020, the NCRA authorized its legal counsel to pursue abandonment and railbanking of the northern section of the line (right of way north of MP 139.5, near Willits). All required filings have been made before the Surface Transportation Board (STB), and the NCRA is currently awaiting a final determination by the STB.

On July 6, 2021, the law firm of Baker & Miller PLLC filed a letter with the Surface Transportation Board on behalf of Mendocino Railway (the parent company of California Western Railroad/Skunk Train) opposing NCRA's request for certain abandonment exemptions in the case North Coast Railroad Authority – Abandonment Exemption – In Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt Counties, Cal. AB -1305X. The letter argued that the NCRA's request would preclude Mendocino Railway from being afforded an opportunity to file an "Offer of Financial Assistance" (OFA) to acquire portions of the line and restore it to operating condition. Additionally, on August 16, 2021, Baker & Miller PLLC filed a "Verified Reply in Opposition" to this case with the Surface Transportation Board, on behalf of Mendocino Railway. It is expected that the proceedings before the Surface Transportation Board will encompass a lengthy legal process as the complex issues of railroad abandonment are considered.

Depending on the outcome of several factors (i.e. abandonment proceedings, pending legislation, transition from NCRA Board to new trail agency, etc.), significant changes to the rail system in Mendocino County are expected to occur over the four-year time frame of this Regional Transportation Plan. MCOG will continue to follow the activities of the NCRA and its successor trail agency, as well as any other potential purchasers of the NWP, as developments occur along this important transportation corridor.

### California Western Railroad/Skunk Train

The California Western Railroad/Skunk Train is a Class III common carrier public utility railroad providing both freight and passenger excursion service. (*Freight service is currently halted due to needed tunnel repairs*). Its limits extend east to west, from the City of Willits in northern Mendocino County to the City of Fort Bragg on the northern Mendocino coast, a distance of approximately 40 miles.

The California Western Railroad (CWR) is a privately held company that provides a vital connection to north coastal communities of the Mendocino region. It's a Class III common carrier public utility purchased by Sierra Railroad Company in 2004. It is currently owned and

operated by Mendocino Railway, a subsidiary of Sierra Railroad Company. It is one of the oldest operating railroads in the North Coast area.

This rail line was originally laid in 1885, and was built to ship freight and lumber from coastal mills to the Northwestern Pacific line at Willits where it still maintains an interchange connection. In 1911, passenger service from Fort Bragg and Willits was made available. As the years passed, more and more visitors began using the rail line to view the redwood forests and vacation on the coast. Ownership of the railroad first passed from the Union Lumber Company to the Boise Cascade Corporation in 1970. Georgia Pacific acquired the mill and the railroad in 1973. In 1977, Kyle Railways, Inc. was retained as contract operator of the railroad, and the railroad was sold to Kyle in 1987. The line was used primarily as a tourist passenger line known as the “Skunk Train” between Fort Bragg and Willits. In 1996, California Western Railroad, Inc. purchased the railroad, and in 2004 the line was sold to the Sierra Railroad Company, and it continues to be owned and operated by Sierra Railroad’s subsidiary company, Mendocino Railway.

Today, the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train continues to be an excursion railroad, operating over segments of a 40-mile route, via vintage motorcars from the 1930s, diesel-powered locomotives and steam engines. The Skunk Train currently operates multiple trips per day during the peak season, from Fort Bragg to the Glenn Blair Junction, approximately 7 miles total, and from Willits to Northspur, approximately 40 miles total. There is currently no way to travel between Willits and Fort Bragg on the line because of the closure at tunnel #1, which closed in 2013. Since 2013, California Western Railroad/Skunk Train has said it plans to commence work to restore tunnel #1, but has not yet done so. The Skunk Train hosts numerous special events throughout the year; and private charters, weddings, corporate retreats, and other events may also be planned. For additional information, visit the Skunk Train’s website at [www.skunktrain.com](http://www.skunktrain.com).

Freight service has not been provided along this rail line, however, if there were to be restoration of tunnel #1, California Western Railroad could provide freight service between Fort Bragg and Willits, if there is a market demand for freight between Fort Bragg and Willits. Tunnel repair may be eligible for certain State or Federal grant programs; however, private entities would typically need to partner with a public agency to sponsor a grant application. This railroad is not eligible for transit assistance funds (such as Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program – TIRCP) because it does not operate regularly scheduled transit service. PUC regulations for passenger train service apply to the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train even though it primarily operates excursion rail service.

In a November 30, 2020 letter to the California Transportation Commission, Mendocino Railway expressed opposition to the transfer of the southern portion of the NCRA line and freight rights to SMART (Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit), and expressed interest in assuming ownership of a portion of the NWP line to preserve access to the interstate railroad system. As noted above, Mendocino Railway has filed documents (*Baker & Miller PLLC filings on July 6, 2021 and August 16, 2021*) with the Surface Transportation Board opposing NCRA’s request for certain abandonment exemptions, arguing the request would preclude Mendocino Railway from being able to file an “Offer of Financial Assistance” (OFA) to acquire portions of the line.

In August 1999, the California Historic Resources Commission added the Willits Train Station to the National Register of Historic Places. The station consists of three buildings constructed in 1915. In 2008, through a combination of MCOG's STIP funding and TEA-21 "Demonstration" funding, the City of Willits completed a restoration of the main (east) depot building and parking lot, but additional funding is needed to restore the other two buildings on the site. The parking lot at the Willits depot was also constructed as an intermodal facility using STIP funds and included bicycle parking facilities and an Amtrak stop.

The train station in historic downtown Fort Bragg is located one block off Main Street/Highway 1. The station was built in 1924 after the original station was destroyed by a sawmill fire. The Skunk Train owns 150 +/- parking spaces in town.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The loss of freight rail service around the late 1990's – 2000 resulted in a shift in the goods movement system within and through Mendocino County. The return of freight rail service to the region along the NWP corridor is not anticipated over the long-range period of this plan (20 years). In previous Regional Transportation Plans, the need for freight rail as a way to reduce the significant impacts of truck traffic on aging, mountainous roads and highways through Mendocino County was identified as a need. However, the extent of deterioration of the NCRA tracks, monumental expense of restoration, and the North Coast Railroad Authority's formal move toward abandonment and rail banking proceedings, along with the interest in the State Legislature to develop the Great Redwood Trail along (or on) the NWP railroad right of way, indicate that resumption of freight rail service on this rail corridor will not happen in the foreseeable future.

There is a possibility that limited freight service between the north coast and Willits will become available when the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train completes restoration of tunnel repairs and opens up the CWR/Skunk Train for service between Fort Bragg and Willits. This type of short-line freight rail service would benefit shippers who seek to transload in Willits. California Western Railroad has also expressed interest in pursuing efforts to acquire a portion of the NWP line to preserve interstate access and connect local shippers to the national freight system by providing a rail hub/transloading facility in Willits.

Economic development and employment enhancement are needs that implementation of transportation connections to the Bay Area and the rest of the State directly supports. Although rail connections from within Mendocino County to out of county rail services such as the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit are not anticipated during the timeframe of this plan, transit connections are currently available (see Transit Element).

The California Western Railroad/Skunk Train, as a private company, faces ongoing business challenges of maintaining and operating the rail line and equipment, and covering personnel and administrative costs. This is particularly challenging for a tourist-based excursion service during a prolonged downturn in the economy. The planned improvements to tunnel #1 to allow future resumption of freight service and expanded passenger opportunities will be a benefit to the

community, and, depending on frequency and size of shipments, will also lead to greenhouse gas reduction and reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as heavy trucks on the roadway are replaced by rail car shipment. The provision of tourist and excursion passenger service will encourage expansion of the tourist industry throughout the county.

## **ACTION PLAN: SHORT AND LONG-TERM PROJECTS**

Although MCOG provides oversight and coordination for the state and federal transportation-related grant funds expended in its area of jurisdiction, MCOG does not provide direct financial support or participate in the management and programming of improvements for railroad operations of either the NCRA or the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train.

While rail transportation remains an important long-term goal for the region, the impending dissolution of the North Coast Railroad Authority and its transition to a trail agency, for all practical purposes, indicates that restoration of rail service along the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) will be pushed out beyond the 20-year timeframe of this plan. The action by the California Legislature to disband the NCRA and transition the NWPRR to a trail corridor officially means the end of rail service along this corridor for the foreseeable future. A future return to rail operations along this line would likely require legislation and/or significant financial assistance from the State.

The possibility of limited freight rail service becoming available through the California Western Railroad/Skunk train remains a future possibility, if the owner is able to make the necessary tunnel repairs to open the line for through service between Fort Bragg and Willits. The passenger and excursion services provided by CWR will continue to be an economically valuable and historic part of transportation in Mendocino County. The possibility of Mendocino Railway being successful in its filings before the Surface Transportation Board opposing NCRA's petition for exemption of certain abandonment requirements is unknown at this point. If Mendocino Railway, or any other agency, were to ultimately be successful in acquiring and rehabilitating the NWP line for freight service, that process would extend well beyond the timeframe of this four-year plan, and short- and long-term projects would be identified in future RTPs.

### **Short Term Projects**

#### *North Coast Railroad Authority*

With the impending dissolution of the North Coast Railroad Authority set in motion by the enactment of SB 1029 and the transition to a new trail agency, there are no short-term rail projects listed for the NCRA.

In 2012, MCOG, in coordination with NCRA, developed a Rails with Trails Plan for the rail corridor throughout the County. The plan identified priority segments for implementation of a multi-use path within the railroad right-of-way throughout Mendocino County. These facilities allow for shared use of the right of way while preserving the tracks for future use. Since completion of the plan, the City of Ukiah has implemented three phases of the trail: the first phase between Gobbi and Clara, the second phase from Gobbi to Commerce, and the third phase

from Clara to Brush. A fourth phase (from Commerce to Norgard) has also been funded. Additional phases of this project are identified in the Active Transportation section of this plan.

### California Western Railroad/Skunk Train

The California Western Railroad/Skunk Train continues to explore ways to see freight return and to enhance its current passenger services in the short-term by improving both the Willits and Fort Bragg stations, as well as maintaining and rehabilitating tracks and equipment. The plan for the future includes restoring service through tunnel #1, offering freight service to local customers who seek to transload in Willits, increasing ridership by improving the passenger experience, improving the track structure and increasing the ridership capacity of the passenger excursion service. The expansion will also require a major marketing effort, the addition of equipment, and an expansion of activities such as entertainment and special events.

## **Long-Term Projects**

### North Coast Railroad Authority

Restoration of service within Mendocino County is unlikely to fall within the long-term (20 year) timeframe of this plan, thus no long term NCRA projects are included in this plan. Per legislation (SB 1029), the NCRA is expected to be dissolved over the next few years.

### California Western Railroad/Skunk Train

California Western Railroad/Skunk Train will continue to enhance its services in the long-term by continued maintenance and improvement of both the Willits and Fort Bragg stations, and ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of equipment and track structure. Similar to short-term plans, long term plans include increasing freight traffic, increasing ridership, expanded entertainment opportunities, and marketing efforts. California Western Railroad's parent company (Mendocino Railway) has expressed interest in acquiring a portion of the NWP line to preserve access from Willits to the interstate rail system. If that were to be successful, the process would take several years, and future Regional Transportation Plans may include identified long-term projects.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Performance measures for the Railroad System Element are essentially non-existent at this time.

The California Western Railroad/Skunk Train (a Class III public utility/common carrier) is currently primarily an excursion train service connecting the communities of Willits and Fort Bragg, and as a private company, is not subject to the same type of performance measures as public agencies. However, PUC regulations for passenger train service do apply to the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train.

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## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The following major accomplishments or actions have taken place since the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan:

- Enactment of SB 1029 (McGuire, 2018) – which initiated planning for dissolution of North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) & ordered assessment of NCRA (9/29/18)
- Enactment of SB 69 (McGuire, 2021) – which renamed the NCRA as the Great Redwood Trail Authority and amended its governance structure and mission
- Completion of “Assessment of the North Coast Railroad Authority” (*Report to the Legislature, 2020*)
- Action by North Coast Railroad Authority Board of Directors on 2/18/21 to authorize Counsel to File all Documents Before the Surface Transportation Board as Necessary to Effectuate Railbanking of MP 139.5 near Willits to MP 284.1 near Eureka (2/18/21)
- Action by North Coast Railroad Authority Board of Directors on 6/14/21 to terminate its operating agreement with NWP Co.



## AVIATION SYSTEM ELEMENT

### SYSTEM DEFINITION

The Aviation System for Mendocino County is composed of six airports, privately owned aircraft of various types, privately operated aircraft service facilities, and publicly and privately operated airport service facilities. The majority of aircraft are privately owned small, single or twin engine planes flown primarily for recreation. Some corporate aircraft utilize two of the airports on a regular basis, and all of the airports on an occasional basis. All but one of the airports is publicly owned and operated. Ocean Ridge Airport, located north of Gualala on the coast, is privately owned and operated.

The six public use airports that serve the region are distributed throughout the county in response to the geographical and population characteristics of the region. The airports are listed below:

**Table 22**  
**Mendocino County Aviation System**  
**Public Use Airports**

<b>Airport</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Ukiah Municipal Airport	South end of Ukiah Valley	City of Ukiah
Willits Municipal Airport	Brooktrails, west of US-101	City of Willits
Round Valley Airport	Round Valley	County of Mendocino
Little River Airport	2.2 miles E/O Coast @ Little River	County of Mendocino
Boonville Airport	Anderson Valley @ Boonville	Anderson Valley Community Services District
Ocean Ridge Airport	2.0 miles N/O Gualala on the Coast	Privately Owned

The airfields serve a variety of functions ranging from Regional-Business/Corporate for the Ukiah Municipal Airport to Community/Local/Recreation for the Boonville Airport. Only Ocean Ridge Airport is privately owned and operated, which places the Airport outside of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Division of Aeronautics funding support. Therefore, the airfield at Ocean Ridge will not be included as part of the Interregional California Aviation System at the request of the Division of Aeronautics staff. Only a descriptive information narrative for Ocean Ridge Airport will be included in this report section. The Ukiah Municipal Airport is the only airport in Mendocino County with an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Ukiah's plan was updated in 2020, and adopted in May 2021 by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). The other public use airports are addressed in Mendocino County's 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

### Ukiah Municipal Airport

The Ukiah Municipal Airport is the largest, busiest, and most developed of the North Coast airports between Santa Rosa (to the south) and Eureka/Arcata to the north. The Ukiah Municipal Airport serves as a regional airport, providing all weather access to the area for most of Mendocino and Lake Counties. The Airport is an enterprise activity within the city and, as such,

is expected to pay its own way, as well as make a profit, which it does. The Ukiah Airport provides a link between local general aviation uses and larger heavier uses provided by metropolitan airports, such as commercial passenger and cargo uses. The value of the Ukiah Airport can be seen in the daily activities that occur at the Airport. Fixed Base Operations (FBO) at Ukiah Airport provide recreational flying, pilot training and charter services, fuel and maintenance services, corporate and small business services, air freight and courier services. The Ukiah Municipal Airport also serves as a staging area and refueling depot for California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) air tankers when fighting fires in the region. Ukiah Municipal Airport connects the North Coast to the regional, state, and national airport system. The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALCUP) for the Ukiah Municipal Airport was updated in 2020, and adopted in May 2021 by the Airport Land Use Commission.

### **Willits Municipal Airport**

The Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field) is located five miles west of the City of Willits. The Willits Airport is the third largest airport in the County. In the 1960's, the Willits Airport was moved from the downtown area to its present location. The property was donated by several private individuals who felt the new location would provide better year-round access for incoming and outgoing aircraft. Upon completion, it was immediately deeded to the City of Willits, and it has been owned and operated by the City since that time.

### **Round Valley Airport**

Round Valley Airport serves the community of Covelo and the surrounding portions of Mendocino County. Round Valley, as a geographic area, is exactly as the name indicates—a round valley located in the northeast corner of the County, surrounded by mountains ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 feet in height.

Round Valley Airport provides essential services as a site for emergency medical transport, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and United States Forest Service (USFS), as well as community aviation for local private aircraft. The Round Valley Airport is also an important link to the rest of the county and northern California, because there are very few access roads to the valley. If the main highway were to be blocked or washed out by winter storms, the Airport would be one of the only remaining ways to access the valley. For this reason, it is important to keep the airfield operable and functioning.

Due to limited based aircraft, Round Valley Airport is now an unclassified general aviation airport, which limits Federal Airport Improvement Program grants to one pavement rehabilitation project each ten years. The Airport remains eligible for annual California Aid to Airports assistance, which can be used for smaller maintenance and safety projects, as well as California Acquisition and Development Grants.

### **Little River Airport**

Little River Airport is located approximately 2.2 miles east of Highway 1, between Albion and the Town of Mendocino near the community of Little River and has a functional classification as a Community Airport. The airfield has the longest runway available in the County, with a

runway length of 5,249 feet and a width of 100 feet. The Airport is operated by the County of Mendocino through its Department of Transportation. The County staffs the Airport with an onsite Airport Operations Specialist Thursday through Monday. The County provides fuel and limited hangar rentals. It also provides ground leases for privately owned hangars.

Little River Airport provides primarily recreation flying, but also has some corporate users. In addition, the Airport also provides service for medical emergency transport, and search and rescue flights. The fuel is accessed through a card-lock system from an aboveground fuel tank. Little River Airport has an airport advisory committee and an active Pilot Association which are very helpful in addressing airport needs.

### **Boonville Airport**

The Boonville Airport is a small, public use, general aviation airport owned by the Anderson Valley Community Services District. The Airport is located a quarter of a mile west of State Highway 128 and three-quarters of a mile northwest of the town of Boonville. The Airport is constrained by topography and a lack of developable land. A minimal number of aircraft (12) are considered as based at the airfield, but in reality are stored or hangared at private facilities adjacent to the runway. The Airport has a functional classification of Community and is primarily used for recreation aviation users.

### **Ocean Ridge Airport**

Ocean Ridge is a privately owned, public use airfield with a functional classification as a Community Airport facility. Ocean Ridge is located near the community of Gualala in the southwest corner of Mendocino County and serves a population of approximately 3,500 people. The airfield occupies approximately 30 acres, located one-half mile south of the intersection of Old Stage Road and Pacific Woods Road. The airfield site is on the east side of Old Stage Road. The airfield primarily serves recreation flyers, but has a General Aviation FAA NPIAS Category classification.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

All of the airports in the Mendocino County Region have key basic problems in common. Each airport has suffered from deferred maintenance and postponed capital improvements. All public airports rely heavily on grants from the State and Federal government to provide a substantial portion of their maintenance and improvement funds. All of the airports, in one way or another, have to deal with threats to continued operation and maintaining the potential for airport development. During public outreach on this RTP, concern was expressed about the lack of available hangar space to store private airplanes on the coast. A long-standing issue of the disallowance of new hangar installation at both inland and coastal airports was also noted as an area of concern.

The following information identifies key issues and needs for each airport:

## **Ukiah Municipal Airport**

The overall operational capacity of the facility based upon current traffic peaking characteristics, indicates an ability of the runway and taxiway systems to accommodate approximately 180,000 annual operations. The facility is more than adequate to meet the foreseeable future operational demands of the area.

The Airport has a limited amount of developable land remaining for additional aircraft storage and business use. The Airport is located two miles from the center of town and adjoins the south end of the city. Protection of flight paths and corridors is a concern of the County Airport Land Use Commission, Ukiah Airport Commission and Ukiah City Council. Although there are currently no major noise constraints at the Airport, efforts are being made to institute a quiet flying program to protect airport operations. The City of Ukiah and both Commissions are active in reviewing land use issues that potentially could affect operation of the Airport.

Specific needs include the need to extend ground access from the terminal area to the east side of the runway and taxi-ways, and begin implementation planning for a new expanded terminal facility. These improvements will help consolidate the role and importance of this Airport to the long-range economic development of the region.

The lack of a regular commercial air service creates a hardship for those wishing to make air connections at Santa Rosa, San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, or Sacramento airports. Interest in non-automotive, out of county travel options has been expressed in previous public workshops for the RTP. Air travel is one potential mode of transportation to serve that purpose.

## **Willits Municipal Airport**

The Willits Municipal Airport facility has a certain amount of unused capacity. The overall operational capacity of the facility, based upon current traffic, indicates an ability of the runway and taxiway system to accommodate additional operations. The Airport can accommodate an approximate 125,000 annual aircraft operations based on a VFR capacity of 40 operations per hour. The facility is more than adequate to meet the foreseeable future operational demands of the area and also provides an opportunity to further expand service and operations. The local Airport Land Use Commission is committed to maintaining the appropriate airspace clearances to protect the facility over the long-range outlook. There are no major noise constraints imposed at the Willits Municipal Airport. Conflicts with surrounding properties are minimal, primarily due to the relatively low development densities in areas lying within designated flight paths.

Of particular immediate concern is the stability of soil conditions at the north end of the runway. Geologic formations and the effect of erosion from water drainage have created an ongoing maintenance problem for the existing runway, as well as impacting possible future expansion of airport facilities. Funding was secured to correct the problem, however, a rare plant species has been found in the area which has caused a setback.

The City presently leases a large hangar-type facility to a Fixed Base Operator (FBO). Services provided by the FBO include certified mechanical repair, annual flight certification, pilot training and flight lessons.

REACH Air Medical Services operates an air ambulance base at the Airport. The base provides 24-hour life-saving emergency medical services to the community. REACH has been operating at the Willits base since 2014.

The City of Willits completed a runway rehabilitation project at the Airport in 2021. The project included the rehabilitation of the runway and taxiways as well as relocation of runway thresholds, markings, lights, signs, and Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) as necessary to bring the Airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport runway standards.

### **Round Valley Airport**

The Round Valley Airport experiences relatively light use, and with an estimated 2,000 annual aircraft operations, no significant capacity issues. Because of the Airport's light usage, the hourly VFR aircraft capacity of 30 operations per hour is never approached. The overall capacity of the Airport is, at a minimum, 60,000 annual aircraft operations. This places current operations far below this capacity.

### **Little River Airport**

Little River Airport has an extensive amount of unused capacity. Little River can accommodate approximately 35 VFR aircraft operations per hour and an estimated capacity of 100,000 annual operations. Current demand at Little River Airport averages approximately 2,000 annual aircraft operations. The facilities at Little River Airport can accommodate the current level of demand, however, additional hangar and aircraft parking will be required if more aircraft are to be based at the Airport.

The Airport does have developable land available for future expansion although trees and brush that interfere with aircraft operation currently cover the area. The County is currently working on securing Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant funds for taxiway and ramp reconstruction and runway rehabilitation. The airport terminal was remodeled using County funds in 2018.. Noise associated with aircraft operations is currently not a major problem. However, measures to minimize future noise-related conflicts between the Airport and surrounding properties will be important factors to be considered by the County in future airport development. Measures to be considered will include aviation easements and noise attenuation construction techniques to protect property owners from future problems. Little River Airport adopted a noise abatement policy developed by the Airport Advisory Committee in late 1996. There is an Airport Master Plan for this facility completed in February 1990 and an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) was completed in 2014.

### **Boonville Airport**

Boonville Airport is not planning any major future expansions. The runway cannot be extended due to the proximity of a hill and houses at the north end and the County road at the south end. There is a current demand for hangar facilities on the field. The presence of these facilities would provide additional income for continued airport maintenance and improvement.

## ACTION PLAN

The primary sources used in determining projects for each airport include the 2017 Mendocino County Regional Transportation Plan, the 2019-2028 Aeronautics Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) prepared by the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics, and direct input from airport managers or responsible local agency staff for airport operations and development.

### Short-Term Projects

This section identifies the short-term projects (0-10 years), which have been judged as necessary by each airport owner/operator. These projects may or may not have the funding available for implementation. Where Federal or State funding has not been secured for a given project, the responsible local agency has judged the project to be of sufficient priority to include it in the CIP. The responsible entities will also simultaneously pursue the funding to deliver the projects by the year indicated in the CIP.

Table 23 contains projects listed in the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Capital Improvement Program, which covers 2019-2028. Inclusion in the CIP does not guarantee that the project will be funded. In fact, it is likely that only a few of these projects will be completed within the short-term time frame of this RTP. However, projects must be included in the State's CIP in order to be eligible for funding from the Federal Airport Improvement Program.

**Table 23**  
**California Division of Aeronautics**  
**CIP Projects Year 2019-2028**  
**Mendocino County Airports**

Project	Year	Cost			
		Federal \$	State \$	Local \$	Total \$
<b>Ukiah</b>					
Runway 15-33 Rehab & Taxiway Construction	2019	2,713,901	135,695	165,849	3,015,445
Reimbursable Agreement for PAPI Design	2019	35,505	1,775	2,170	39,450
Replace VASI w/PAPI, Relocate REILS – Cons.	2019	532,461	26,623	32,539	591,623
Runway 15-33 Demo Shoulders, Install LED MIRL & Thrshld Lts - Construction	2020	1,237,883	61,894	75,648	1,375,425
Pavement Rehab of Taxiway, A, A3, A5 - Design	2021	54,000	2,700	3,300	60,000
Demo Taxiway D, Construct Taxiway A4 - Design	2021	51,705	2,585	3,160	57,450
Pavement Rehab of Taxiway A, A3, A5 - Cons.	2022	565,259	28,263	34,544	628,065
Demo Taxiway D, Construct Taxiway A4 – Cons.	2022	506,160	25,308	30,932	562,400
<b>Willits</b>					
North Apron Area Reconstruction – Design	2021	54,000	2,700	3,300	60,000
South Apron Area Seal Coat – Design	2021	54,000	2,700	3,300	60,000
Environ. Assess. for Removal of Tree Obstruct.	2022	180,000	9,000	11,000	200,000
North Apron Area Reconstruction – Construction	2022	387,000	19,350	23,650	430,000
South Apron Area Seal Coat – Construction	2022	72,000	3,600	4,400	80,000
Removal of Tree Obstructions	2023	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Segmented Circle Rehabilitation – Design	2023	40,500	2,025	2,475	45,000
Segmented Circle Rehabilitation – Construction	2024	99,000	4,950	6,050	110,000
Removal of Tree Obstructions	2025	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Removal of Tree Obstructions	2026	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Removal of Tree Obstructions	2027	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Removal of Tree Obstructions	2028	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000

<b>Little River</b>					
Rehabilitation of Taxiway, Connectors and South and Main Apron	2020	5,400,000	270,000	330,000	6,000,000
Update Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan	2020	0	225,000	25,000	250,000
Airport Layout Plan w/Narr. Report, AGIS Survey	2021	135,000	6,750	8,250	150,000
Runway and Runway Shoulder Rehab Design	2021	148,500	7,425	9,075	165,000
Runway and Runway Shoulder Rehab Cons.	2022	967,500	48,375	59,125	1,075,000
Ramp, Hangar, Taxilane Pavement Reconstruction Design	2023	132,300	6,615	8,085	147,000
Ramp, Hangar, Taxilane Pavement Reconstruction Construction	2024	1,561,500	78,075	95,425	1,735,000
<b>Round Valley</b>					
Runway 10-28 Pavement Rehabilitation Design	2019	61,020	3,051	3,729	67,800
Runway 10-28 Pavement Rehabilitation Construction	2021	457,650	22,883	27,968	508,500
<b>Boonville</b>					
Environmental Assessment for Land Acquisition & Obstruction	2020	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Land Acquisition	2021	405,000	20,250	24,750	450,000
Obstruction Removal – Design only	2022	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Slurry Seal Runway 13/31	2023	108,000	5,400	6,600	120,000
Obstruction Removal – Existing Dam & Spillway	2024	315,000	15,750	19,250	350,000
Hangars & Taxiways – Design	2026	67,500	3,375	4,125	75,000
Hangar Area Site Preparation & Taxiways	2027	270,000	13,500	16,500	300,000
Hangar Construction	2028	216,000	10,800	13,200	240,000

### Long-Term Projects

It is likely that many of the projects listed within the short-term time frame will actually fall into the long term due to lack of funding and staff time. Completion of these important projects will take initial priority during the long-term time frame.

In addition, a number of projects have been identified that, if completed, would allow each airport to accomplish the mission of the Aviation Element of the Mendocino County RTP, and the Goals identified for the California Aviation System Plan (CASP) The projects are stated in broad terms because they reflect estimates of long-range needs and are of indefinite timing beyond ten years, but possible within a 20-year time frame.

The long-term projects contained below in Table 24 are based on dialogue with the various airport management teams, reevaluation of the previous RTP, and ongoing planning activities by consultants where appropriate. The projects identified here, as is the case with the short-term project identification, reflect current aviation system planning and programming in Mendocino County.

**Table 24  
Long-Term Proposed  
Aviation System Planning & Programming Projects  
Mendocino County**

Proposed Projects	State	FAA
<b>Ukiah Municipal Airport</b>		
Develop a systematic program for the acquisition of available parcels (purchase or	✓	✓

easement agreement) adjacent to airport to protect current airport operations and future airport development. Parcels would include residential, commercial, or agricultural zoned properties.		
Construct new administration building	✓	✓
Construct commercial helicopter operations area, including housing facilities for medical evacuation personnel.	✓	✓
Relocate corporation yard from airport to available parcels in airport industrial area. This will free airport land for airport development activities.	✓	✓
Remove portable hangars and replace with permanent hangars.	✓	✓
Remodel former FSS building to create usable space for airport activities.	✓	✓
<b>Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field)</b>		
Construct new administration building and pilot's lounge.	✓	✓
Purchase 75-100 acres southwest of airport for extension of runway and runway protection zone.	✓	✓
Construct new parallel taxiway on east side of the runway.	✓	✓
Construct 10 new hangars.	✓	✓
Construct perimeter road around airport.	✓	✓
Attract and promote aviation-type businesses on and around airport property to support airport use and activities.	✓	✓
<b>Little River Airport</b>		
Establish a tree and brush-trimming program to maintain a clear zone around airport runways and approaches.	✓	✓
Replace storage buildings at airport site.	✓	✓
Replace operations building at airport.	✓	✓
Construct more aircraft tie-downs.	✓	✓
Construct more hangars	✓	✓
Reconstruct main aircraft parking apron	✓	✓
Realign County Road at Runway 29 RPZ	✓	✓
Overlay taxiways	✓	✓
Install security fencing and electric gates at ramp access	✓	✓
<b>Round Valley Airport</b>		
Install perimeter fence around north and west perimeter of runway	✓	✓
Update Airport Layout Plan	✓	✓
Acquire property for Runway 28 road realignment and RSA	✓	✓
Construct S. Airport Rd. realignment around Runway 10 RSA	✓	✓
Construct Phase 2 Taxiway to full length of Runway 10-28	✓	✓
Construct S. Airport Rd. realignment around Runway 28 RSA	✓	✓
<b>Boonville Airport</b>		
Construct airport operations building and pilot's lounge.	✓	✓
Place overlay of apron and turn-around area, install apron lighting, and lighted wind cone for emergency use.	✓	✓
Initiate ongoing pavement maintenance program.	✓	✓

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The selection of the Safety/Security measure as the initial measure for the Aviation System Element reflects the importance of security for the five publicly owned airports in the region. The airports include a wide range of locations, use, safety, and security issues. These indicators emphasize security issues for initial implementation of improvement to airports in Mendocino County.



**Table 25**  
**Aviation System Performance Measures**  
**in Mendocino County**

Performance Measure	Indicator(s)	Data Source(s)
<b>Outcome: Safety/Security</b>		
Ensure secure boundaries for airport runways, taxi-ways and apron areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Presence of perimeter fencing around runways, taxi-ways and apron areas.</li> <li>➤ Card access and / or automated gate system to access runways; airport use monitoring system to track aircraft operations in place.</li> <li>➤ Security fencing around fueling facilities and essential airport operations buildings in place.</li> </ul>	Annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) expenditures, grant program funded projects and Local Agency General Fund program expenditures.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A separate environmental document will be prepared for the Regional Transportation Plan. The majority of the projects discussed in the Action Plan of this element are likely to have little impact with regard to environmental issues, however specific airport improvement projects will have environmental assessments as part of the project planning process. In addition, the RTP does not serve as a primary planning document for airport improvements, nor does MCOG have programming authority for airport projects, therefore the RTP will not have an environmental effect in relation to airport projects.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The information contained in this section is an identification of projects known to be completed since adoption of the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan. Recent improvements are not known for all airports.

### Ukiah Airport

- Installed Perimeter Fencing

### Willits Municipal Airport

- Updated Airport Layout Plan
- Completed modification to the runway to bring airport into compliance with FAA standards
- Established air ambulance base for REACH
- Removed number of trees in and around airport to reduce hazards to flight
- Installed new LED runway lights
- Improved aviation fuel sales system
- Installed security fencing at south entrance to the airport.
- Updated signage

## MARITIME SYSTEM ELEMENT

### SYSTEM DEFINITION

#### Noyo Harbor

Noyo Harbor, near Fort Bragg, is the only developed public marine facility on the Mendocino Coast and has historically been one of the safest harbors on the northern California coast. It is considered to be one of four main harbors along the northern California coast between San Francisco and the Oregon border, and consistently ranks in the top 10 commercial ports in California in terms of ex-vessel value of commercial fish landings. The Noyo Harbor District is responsible for policy decisions concerning the harbor as well as maintaining consistency with the goal, policies, and objectives stated in the following sections of this element. The District is governed by a Board of Harbor Commissioners: two of the five commissioners are appointed by the City of Fort Bragg, two by the County Board of Supervisors, and one, the Chair, by mutual consent of the City and the County.

There are currently two public launch ramps at the Noyo Harbor, both of which are on District land. In 2018, the Noyo Harbor District undertook a major renovation of the parking lot and launch ramp in south Noyo Harbor, with a grant from the California Department of Boating and Waterways. The project included resurfacing the parking lot, a new drainage system for runoff into the Noyo River, a new sidewalk, new handicapped-accessible bathrooms, and a reconstructed boat ramp. Both ramps are maintained by the District. One private ramp also exists in the Harbor.

There are approximately 25 businesses operating on the Noyo Harbor waterfront, including numerous support facilities for the commercial fishing fleet, as well as ice, restaurants, and lodging. Fuel is only available from trucks with lines running across private property to the docked boats, as the privately owned fuel dock closed several years ago. There is also a fuel dock at the Dolphin Isle Marina, about a half-mile upriver from the District dock facilities. Parking is generally adequate in the south harbor where the parking lot was redone. Parking is limited at the upper launch ramp on the north side.

In 2018, the Noyo Harbor District undertook a major renovation to the parking lot and boat ramp in south Noyo Harbor, with funding from a State Division of Boating and Waterways grant.

In June 2019, the Noyo Harbor District adopted the “Noyo Harbor Community Sustainability Plan” (CSP). Per the CSP, in 2018 it was estimated that approximately 159 deck and crew hands were employed in commercial fishing vessels in Noyo Harbor. The harbor supports a number of charter, sport fishing, and recreation boating vessels. Data from charter boat organizations indicate an annual average of 5,675 passengers on charter boats out of Noyo Harbor between 2011 and 2017. (2019 CSP)

In 2019, the California Coastal Commission granted an administrative permit for the District to repair its high dock, which had been closed due to deterioration of the structure. The high dock project has been completed and is now open, and a large hoist has been added to offload vessels.

A functioning high dock is essential for loading and unloading vessels, and is also used for docking, loading, and unloading of supplies.

### **Point Arena Harbor**

Point Arena Harbor provides a number of marine facilities; however, the highest use of the Arena Cove Pier is the commercial fishing industry (for ship berthing and haul out purposes). The pier features a 12,000 pound hoist, and one product hoist for unloading boats, which have a minimum per pound fee. The Harbor's revenues are largely generated by fish poundage, by hoist launching and retrieval fees and boat parking rentals.

Both maritime transportation and recreational facilities were completed in Point Arena at the Arena Cove Pier in 1987. The Pier is owned and operated by the City of Point Arena, and provides several marine services to the South Coast area of Mendocino County. The facility contains a parking lot, restrooms, showers, as well as fishing facilities. The City of Point Arena owns and operates the Arena Cove Pier through city ordinance. Day to day operations are overseen by the Pier Operations Supervisor as well as the Pier Attendant(s).

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

### **Noyo Harbor**

A master plan was prepared by the Noyo Harbor District in 1992, which included a detailed listing of projects. More recent planning documents include the 2014 Noyo Harbor District Municipal Service Review (MSR); the 2018 Strategic Planning & Harbor Redevelopment Plan; the 2019 Community Sustainability Plan; and the 2018 Strategic Planning & Harbor Marina Planning study. These documents include a number of potential future projects, but the reality is that implementation of projects will take a very long time, and will require grant funding and possible capital improvement loans. An excerpt of the 2019 Noyo Harbor Community Sustainability Study (Priorities, Recommendations, and Implementation) is included in Appendix I. Other planning documents are available on the Noyo Harbor District's website at: <http://www.noyoharbordistrict.org/>.

A breakwater for Noyo Harbor continues to be an ongoing, high priority, need at the entrance to Noyo River. Noyo Harbor is the only port of refuge for mariners between Eureka and Bodega Bay in Northern California. The previously estimated cost to complete the breakwater project was a minimum of \$30 million, and the cost increases each year that the project is not completed. Funding for the breakwater has been, and will continue to be, dependent on the availability of Federal and State grants or other sources of funding since the annual budget for the Noyo Harbor District allows for only basic operations.

Routine dredging of the harbor entrance and channel is critically important to maintain navigational access to the harbor. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers performs dredging to keep the harbor entrance and main channel open. The channel is typically dredged on a biannual basis. Channel maintenance dredging is a shared harbor district and Army Corps of Engineers responsibility; however, responsibility for dredging the mooring basin is exclusively the harbor's district's responsibility. The mooring basin was last dredged in 2015. Inadequate funding for

dredging operations combined with limited capacity to store dredged spoils is an ongoing issue. A key challenge is to find a suitable permanent disposal location rather than storing dredged materials on the district’s temporary storage site north of the harbor entry.

In addition to the projects identified in other plans, access improvements identified in the City of Trails Supplemental Trail Feasibility Studies (2017) remain a need. This City of Fort Bragg document examines the feasibility of both a trail using the Old Mill Road to connect the existing Coastal Trail South Segment with Noyo Harbor and either a Class I or II bicycle trail parallel to North Harbor Drive. This document builds on the City of Trails Feasibility Study, in which the Old Mill Road and a multi-use trail to North Noyo Harbor are described as priorities. Bicycle and pedestrian access to North Noyo Harbor are identified as actions in the Active Transportation element of this document, but are critical elements to the long-term sustainability of maritime activities at the Noyo Harbor and efforts to ensure a vibrant, active harbor facility.

Traffic circulation, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and parking are serious problems in the North Harbor Area (North Harbor Drive). Correcting these deficiencies working with the City of Fort Bragg, County of Mendocino, Mendocino Council of Governments and area property owners is necessary for economic growth and future development in Noyo Harbor.

The 2019 Noyo Harbor Community Sustainability Plan includes key recommendations (from fishing industry, community, and stakeholder input) intended to facilitate sustainability of the harbor, including economic, social, and environmental considerations. Although some of these recommendations are peripheral to harbor operations, they are included here for information.

**Table 26**  
**2019 Noyo Harbor Community Sustainability Plan Summary**

<b>SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY ISSUES</b>
<b>Facilities, Access, Regulatory Concerns, Marketing</b>
<b>Facilities</b>
Ice House – Rehabilitation or new construction
Fuel Dock – Establish operational fuel dock in conjunction with mooring basin reconstruction
Gear Switching, Repair, and Dry Storage Space – Identify suitable location
Mooring Basin Reconfiguration/Reconstruction – Assemble funding, undertake process
Fish Cleaning Station – Establish a fish cleaning station in south harbor
Noyo Harbor District Facilities Master Plan – Prepare plan for capital improvements
<b>Access</b>
Dredging Management – Identify opportunities to finance dredging, and maintaining disposal site
North Harbor Circulation Improvements – Establish secondary emergency access; improve parking and access for pedestrians and bicyclists
<b>Environmental and Regulatory Concerns</b>
Fisheries Access – Examine diminished fishing opportunities
Sea Level Rise – Collaborate with partners to prepare Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment
Local Coastal Program Amendment – Encourage County to amend Zoning Regulations
<b>Promotion and Marketing</b>
Increased Tourism Facilities – Marketing of facilities and events
Coordinate with Visit Mendocino and Visit Fort Bragg – promote harbor as visitor destination

## Point Arena Harbor

It is critical for the Point Arena Harbor to seek additional funds for the capital maintenance and improvement of the municipal pier. The pier has a small operating budget and has difficulty

handling major renovation projects, especially as income from fisheries fluctuates. In time, pilings, deck surfaces, machinery and structures must be replaced. The Arena Cove Pier will continue to supplement revenues through fund raising but this remains a small addition to the pier's coffers. Funds generated by harbor activities (fish poundage, launch fees and the sale of shower tokens) will inevitably be expended on maintenance and operations. The revenue from a good year will be used for substantial projects like the new hoist recently installed. Other large projects will likely be dependent on grant funding.

Point Arena is undertaking a project to raise the elevation of the parking lot, create a slight wall as a breakwater and build in a system for effectively controlling surface water runoff to help prevent flooding of the cove parking lot and undermining of the pavement. These efforts will also help with planning for rising sea levels.

In recent years, the City has purchased additional land parcels near the harbor, adding to what had already been acquired, for consideration of expanding services to the public and enhancing public access to and enjoyment of a highly scenic location. This project includes the possibility of a small park, additional parking for fishing boats and trailers, potentially the development of a campground and it will help protect the sensitive habitat in the area. The property has been put into interim use as parks and trails while City Administration plans future uses and potential development. This project will likely depend on outside funding.

## **ACTION PLAN: SHORT AND LONG-TERM PROJECTS**

Projects included here have, for the most part, been identified by the agencies responsible for harbor management. Because the Regional Transportation Plan is a multi-modal document they are included, however, the Mendocino Council of Governments has very limited involvement in funding or implementation of improvements to maritime transportation facilities.

### **Short-Term/Constrained Projects**

#### *Noyo Harbor*

Due to fiscal restraints, there are no definite short-term improvements planned by the Noyo Harbor District. Expenditures on the Harbor are expected to be limited to the maintenance of existing facilities. The budget does not allow for emergencies, or any possible large capital expenditures; these expenses must come from reserve funds and special grants/funding or loans. The District has recently awarded a contract to SHN to work with the District on securing funding and implementing the projects in the Sustainability Plan.

Silting of the channel is a recurring problem for the Noyo Harbor. Historically, the Corps of Engineers has financed and administered necessary dredging of the Noyo River Channel. The Corps of Engineers will continue to dredge the necessary sections of the channel in order to keep access open to the Mooring Basin for the commercial fishing industry, U.S. Coast Guard, and private vessels.

### Point Arena Harbor

The most critical action for the Point Arena Harbor is to pursue adequate funding sources for capital maintenance and improvements. The pier has a small operating budget which often allows for the routine maintenance of the pier facility and paved parking lot. In time, pilings, deck surfaces, and machinery must be replaced and structures repaired and upgraded. The main boat hoist has been operating with a hoist rated at lifting up to 6 tons. The Arena Cove Pier will continue fund raising efforts and seek grant funding in order to finance other large improvements. Remaining funds will be expended on maintenance and operations. In addition, Point Arena is undertaking a project to raise the elevation of the parking lot, create a slight wall as a breakwater and build in a system for effectively controlling surface water runoff to help prevent flooding of the cove parking lot and undermining of the pavement. It would be beneficial to study the impact of unchecked vegetation growth in the creek area to assess what can be done to aid in small stream runoff as well as understanding the challenges to the salmon population's breeding cycle.

The City of Point Arena is also undertaking a project to replace wooden fenders pilings on the Arena Cove Pier to protect fishing boats during loading and off-loading operations.

### **Long-Term/Unconstrained Projects**

#### Noyo Harbor

A Breakwater Project at Noyo Harbor to improve seaward access has been a high priority project for a number of years. The high cost of construction, coupled with the downturn in the fishing industry has delayed construction of this project. The Corps of Engineers has approved this project for Federal funding. However, locating funding for local match remains a constraint.

The need for storage areas for crab pots, nets, and other fishing related uses has been identified as a need for the Noyo Harbor. This has, to some extent, been addressed. However there is a need for additional storage areas. There is a high likelihood that costs of this project will be prohibitive, due to environmental constraints and a limited amount of available space. The estimated cost to complete the project is nearly \$1 million.

The Harbor District boat basin currently has 265 berths and there is a waiting list of approximately 90 vessels. A long waiting period does exist, depending on the length of the boat, and the time of year the request for berthing is made. The need for an increased number of berths within the Harbor is noted as being a way to relieve problems with navigation due to high boat traffic and congestion. A long-range goal will be to attempt to locate additional properties to increase the number of berths in the Harbor.

Additional long-term projects, as listed in Appendix I, are listed below. Depending on funding availability, some of these much-needed projects may be achievable in the short term.

- Ice House – Rehabilitation or new construction
- Fuel Dock – Establish operational fuel dock in conjunction with mooring basin reconstruction. (Note: updated information from Noyo Harbor District indicates that the fuel

dock is needed now, and could occur on a privately owned parcel. It is not planned to be incorporated with the mooring basin replacement.)

- Gear Switching, Repair, and Dry Storage Space – Identify suitable location
- Mooring Basin Reconfiguration/Reconstruction – Assemble funding, undertake process
- Fish Cleaning Station – Establish a fish cleaning station in south harbor
- Dredging Management – Identify opportunities to finance dredging, and maintaining disposal site
- North Harbor Circulation Improvements – Establish secondary emergency access; improve parking and access for pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition to emergency access, North Harbor Drive also needs a western connection back to Highway 1. Making North Harbor Drive a one-way road would provide space for pedestrian access and public parking.

### Point Arena Harbor

Although there is no formal long-range plan for the Arena Cove Pier, the City of Point Arena has internal long-range goals to:

- Support the commercial fishing industry by pursuing and developing new forms of fishing revenues as well as servicing the existing urchin diving and commercial as well as sport fishing industry to ensure the viability of the Pier.
- Continue to pursue growth opportunities at the Arena Cove Pier, making use of the natural open space, and possibly also including a future camping facility.
- The city acquired land parcels near the harbor and is working towards developing a small city park on the ocean and to preserve sensitive habitat in oceanfront areas. The project will enhance public access with lands that are highly scenic yet largely undevelopable for commercial or residential use due to extreme proximity to the ocean and to Arena Creek and surrounding wetlands.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The performance measures for the Maritime System element are constrained by available, relevant data sources. The measures selected reflect safety and use measures for the two harbors that form the Maritime System for Mendocino County. The usage measure is broadly defined to capture both the commercial and recreational boating activity. The safety/security measure is designed to capture both harbor and open sea response operations. In the Point Arena area, due to the size of the port and the need for effectively trained responding personnel (as well as available funding), quick and timely responses to mariners in distress were found to be best provided by a combination of the U.S. Coast Guard and local response assets from South Coast Fire Departments Swift Water Rescue team.

**Table 27**  
**Maritime System Element Performance Measures**

Performance Measure	Indicator(s)	Data Source(s)
<b>Outcome: Safety/Security</b>		
Safe and secure harbor facilities that protect moored and/or berthed vessels; and provision of rescue boats	➤ Construction and repair of breakwaters, sea walls, docks, piers and general maritime facilities by appropriate jurisdictions responsible for harbor/port operation.	Vessel launch and incident response reports kept by responsible agencies, repair and maintenance records and expenditure records for vessel

<p>and other facilities for quick and timely response to boating emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide adequate search and rescue vessels for maritime safety and response to emergencies in a timely manner. It is recognized that the United States Coast Guard has primary responsibility for boating safety, however local harbor authorities provide emergency response services as well.</li> </ul>	<p>upgrade and operation and Coast Guard records for rescue response and boat safety incident reporting.</p>
<p><b>Outcome: Facilities Use/Service Demand</b></p>		
<p>Annual boating activity into/from harbors and ports located on the Mendocino County coast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recorded and estimated boat launchings from ramps and piers with in harbor and port facilities along the Mendocino County coast.</li> </ul>	<p>Estimated and recorded boat launchings, berthed boat departures and arrivals for commercial and recreational purposes from Noyo Harbor and Point Arena Pier, and data collected by the appropriate harbor authority at each facility.</p>

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A separate environmental document will be prepared for the Regional Transportation Plan. The majority of projects discussed in the Action Plan of the Maritime Element are likely to have little impact with regard to environmental issues however projects listed in the Noyo and Point Arena harbors will have individual reviews at the time of implementation.



## **TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ELEMENT**

### **SYSTEM DEFINITION**

The United States Constitution recognizes Native American tribes as separate and independent political communities within the territorial boundaries of the United States. Tribes promulgate and administer their own laws and operate under their own constitutions. In California, Native American lands are usually referred to as reservations or rancherias.

There are 109 federally recognized Native American tribes in California, of which 10 lie within the boundaries of Mendocino County, as shown on the exhibit in Appendix H.

The primary forms of transportation serving the tribes in Mendocino County are highways/streets/roads, non-motorized transportation (bicycle/pedestrian), and transit. Roadways that serve the tribes can be State highways, county roads, city streets, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) roads, or Tribal roads. These roads are considered by the BIA to be part of the Tribal Transportation Program (previously the Indian Reservation Roads System) and tracked in the National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI). The BIA defines TTP facilities as that group of public roads on or near Indian reservations, or other lands held in trust, that provide service to Native American people or access to these lands.

### **MCOG'S ROLE IN TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION**

MCOG's relationship with the various tribal governments throughout the county varies greatly from that with the County and four cities. These tribes have been found by the U.S. Supreme Court to be sovereign, domestic dependent nations, and therefore, cannot be treated in the same manner as a local agency. Greater efforts have been made over the past few years by MCOG, Caltrans, and the tribal governments to improve relations, communication, and involvement between the agencies. However, after many years of separate and discrete functioning, there is still much room for improvement.

#### **Government to Government Relations**

MCOG recognizes the special status of the tribal governments and endeavors to carry out appropriate government-to-government level relations and consultation with the tribes.

MCOG has made efforts to include tribal governments in ongoing planning efforts. Each meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee includes a standing agenda item to invite input from tribal governments. In addition, a representative from Consolidated Tribal Health is an appointed member of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council. In recent years, Caltrans has implemented quarterly tribal meetings with all Mendocino County tribes, which provide a venue for ongoing communication between MCOG, the tribes, and other transportation partners. These quarterly meetings have proven useful in gathering information on tribal transportation needs, sharing information on funding programs, and presenting information on MCOG's transportation planning efforts that impact or involve tribal communities.

In addition to these ongoing consultation and coordination opportunities with all area Tribal Governments, MCOG formalized their relationship with the Round Valley Indian Tribes through a Memorandum of Understanding, executed in 2003, establishing a government to government relationship between the Tribes and MCOG. MCOG will work with other Tribal Governments expressing an interest in developing a similar agreement in the future. However, MCOG will continue ongoing consultation with all tribes, regardless of MOU status.

During development of this plan, Tribal representatives suggested methods for increasing communication and enhancing government to government relations with Tribal governments. The Action Plan of this element includes a proposal for Tribal Transportation Workshops in response to this recommendation.

## **Consultation**

In addition to including Native American members of the community in general public outreach efforts, MCOG participates in formal consultation with the tribal governments. Formal consultation is defined by CFR 23, Subpart A, which states, “Consultation means that one party confers with another identified party and, prior to taking action(s), considers that party’s views.” MCOG makes every effort to consult with the tribes within Mendocino County, through proper protocol, when taking actions that may impact their communities or resources. In addition, local agencies which implement projects funded through MCOG are also required to inform and consider the tribes when implementing projects. MCOG staff contacted each of the ten tribes to request tribal input in the development of this Tribal Transportation element.

## **TRIBAL LANDS & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS & ISSUES**

### **Cahto Tribe of Laytonville**

The Cahto Tribe’s Laytonville Rancheria is located southeast of the town of Laytonville. About half of the land on the 200-acre rancheria is devoted to residential use. There are about 50 homes on the rancheria, in addition to tribal offices, Head Start, health facilities, and a baseball field.

The rancheria is served by 2.3 miles of county roads and 1 mile of BIA roads. Primary access to the rancheria is provided by Branscomb Road (CR 429). Reservation Road forms a loop south off Branscomb Road and is the principal road within the rancheria. Both roads are in fair condition. “Cemetery Road” (CR 319G) provides access to the cemetery and is also in fair condition. Cahto Drive (BIA Route 167) serves homes on the rancheria. A number of other BIA roads serve a HUD housing development on the rancheria. In the past, transit has been identified as the biggest transportation need of the Cahto Tribe, particularly for ill or elderly individuals needing to travel to Ukiah for medical services and other needs. In recognition of the long-standing need for transit service to Laytonville and other rural communities, MCOG applied for, and was awarded, grant funding from Caltrans to conduct a feasibility study to look at mobility solutions beyond traditional bus service to serve these remote rural areas of the County. The study will be conducted in 2022 and is expected to result in realistic mobility solutions and recommendations that can be implemented to address this identified need.

## **Coyote Valley Rancheria**

The Coyote Valley Reservation is situated on approximately 64 acres between the forks of Forsythe Creek and the Russian River north of Ukiah. There are many homes on the reservation, along with tribal offices, a baseball field, gymnasium, and casino.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Road Inventory, the road system serving Coyote Valley is composed of 4 miles of BIA and county roads, 2.2 miles of which are county roads and the rest are BIA roads. The majority of these roads are paved, and all are in need of improvement. Access to the reservation is provided via North State Street.

Safety issues have previously been identified on the road leading to the casino. Speeding was a problem on the road which is used by pedestrians, including children, accessing other facilities along the road. In addition, safety issues were noted with southbound vehicles entering the reservation from North State Street (turning left into the reservation).

## **Guidiville Rancheria**

The Guidiville land holdings are in two areas. The Guidiville Off-Reservation Trust Land is located near Ukiah, in the Talmage Area. It is accessed by Guidiville Reservation Road (CR 203B). There are several homes on the original Rancheria. The Guidiville Rancheria sits just outside of Ukiah off of Vichy Springs Road. The housing is located on two roads, Luff Court (.09 miles) and Medicine Way (.39 miles). The housing includes 20 homes, with two homes designed specifically for disabled, and five for seniors. There are also two separate offices located on Medicine Way with 10+ people employed.

Transit continues to be the tribe's priority. Tribal representatives have indicated that homes and tribal businesses on the tribal lands off of Vichy Springs would benefit from some type of dial-a-ride or fixed-route service for their senior and disabled residents. The limited ingress/egress on Vichy Springs Road, as well as dangerous conditions for walking and biking, add to the need for transit service in this area.

## **Hopland Band of Pomo Indians**

The Hopland Reservation lies east of the town of Hopland. At one time, the reservation contained over 2,000 acres. However, there are currently only about 40 acres in trust status. In addition to the homes, the Reservation also has a tribal center, health facility, education building and administration office. There is also an Indian gaming facility which adds to the demands of the Reservation's road system, as well as the adjacent county road system.

The Hopland Reservation is served by approximately 7.96 miles of roads. Of this total, 2.6 miles are on the State Highway System (SR 175), 4.4 miles are county roads, and only .96 mile is on the BIA road system.

The Reservation is primarily served by SR 175, which crosses the southwest corner of the reservation. Road improvements to SR 175 was mentioned as a need during a Caltrans quarterly Tribal meeting. As most of the land on the reservation is privately owned, the main roads on the

reservation are County roads, including Pratt Ranch Road, Branch Road, East Side Rancheria Road, and Roads 117 and 118. The Tribe has organized in recent years to do some of their own work on reservation roads. Access to the reservation is provided off SR 175 by Pratt Ranch Road and CR 117. CR 117, East Side Rancheria Road, Branch Road, and CR 118 form a large loop through the center of the reservation. The tribal facilities are served by BIA Route 301, 401, and 402.

### **Manchester-Point Arena Rancheria**

The Manchester-Point Arena Rancheria is served by approximately 6 miles of roads, made up of county and BIA roads. The Manchester parcel is served by Rancheria Road, a county road which connects to Mountain View Road and then to SR 1. The southern parcel is served by Windy Hollow Road, which connects Riverside Drive then connects to SR 1. The northern portion of Windy Hollow is a County Road with .6 miles of the southern section belonging to the City of Point Arena. Decades ago, the bridge across the Garcia River was removed, eliminating any access to this parcel from the north and disconnecting the two portions of the rancherias.

The Manchester-Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians Rancheria was established June 24, 1909 with the purchase of 65.5 Acres of land. Additional parcels were added in 1912, 1934 and 1942 to make a total of 364 acres. The Tribe formed their current government under the Indian Reorganization act of 1935 and their constitution was ratified March 11, 1936. The Tribe's governing body is the Tribal Business Committee which is composed of four officers who are elected by the general membership or the Community Council.

Currently, the Manchester community is approximately 110 acres and is located between Mountain View Road and the Garcia River, approximately three miles northwest of the City of Point Arena. The Point Arena portion is located south of the Garcia River approximately one-mile northwest of the City of Point Arena, and is approximately 254 acres.

The Rancheria is situated on 364 acres and is divided into two locations by the Garcia River. The Point Arena site houses the Tribal Administration, Tribal Head Start Program, Senior Nutrition Program, Tribal Casino and approximately 60 homes located two miles inland from the ocean just north of the coastal town of Point Arena, Ca. The Tribe also owns and operates a Sonoma County Indian Health Project Satellite Clinic located on their reservation lands. The Manchester location is primarily a residential area with approximately 30 homes.

The Pacific Coast Scenic Highway State Route 1 (SR-1) is the primary transportation facility that provides ingress and egress to the tribal lands of Manchester-Point Arena. There are many obstacles that impede the full-time function of this state highway that include coastal erosion, flooding and landslides. During the rainy season SR-1 often floods, closing the road to the coastal communities north and south of the Garcia River. Manchester-Point Arena Rancheria has identified a need to complete a bridge project spanning the Garcia River to provide an alternative route to State Route 1 on Windy Hollow Road.

A bridge over the river would eliminate the necessity of this circuitous route, connect the two sections of the tribe, and provide access to services south of the river on the rancheria and in Point Arena. A new bridge over the Garcia River would also provide for emergency access

during periods that flooding closes SR 1. During public outreach for this RTP, this need was identified as the Manchester Band of Pomo's number one priority for road needs.

The Manchester-Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians received an Environmental Justice grant from Caltrans to conduct a feasibility study for a new bridge over the Garcia River several years ago. The study determined that a new bridge could be built using conventional bridge types and construction methods. Additionally, it was found that approximately one mile of the roadway would need to be rebuilt to current standards.

Addressing frequent closures of SR 1 due to flooding of the Garcia was also the biggest concern expressed by the public at a previous workshop held in Point Arena, which included tribal representatives. Caltrans is continuing to explore options to address the issue. Several options are being considered, including making improvements to the SR 1 alignment as well as utilizing Windy Hollow Road. While improvements to SR 1 itself would address the road closures, this option would still leave the two halves of the tribal land disconnected. The City of Point Arena is prepared to work with the tribe on issue of Windy Hollow Road.

During public outreach for this RTP, the need for speed reduction or signs to make drivers aware of the intersection of Mountain View Road and Rancheria Road was identified as the tribe's main safety concern for roads providing service to the tribal community. The blind spot when turning onto Mountain View Road from Rancheria Road was noted as a major concern.

### **Pinoleville Rancheria**

The Pinoleville Indian Reservation is located just north of Ukiah, on approximately 100 acres in the Russian River Valley. The rancheria is also comprised of a second parcel north of Lakeport in Lake County, however, that portion of the rancheria lies outside the jurisdiction of this plan.

The Pinoleville Indian Reservation has been zoned by Mendocino County as the Pinoleville Industrial District. Uses include an automobile dismantling business, rural residential, and agriculture.

The Reservation is served by three County roads—Orr Springs Road, Pinoleville Drive and Pomo Lane. Orr Springs Road parallels the southern boundary of the Reservation and is the primary access to roads that travel through the reservation. Pinoleville Drive, a narrow roadway with no shoulders or pedestrian/bicycle facilities, forms the southern boundary and provides principal access within the reservation. US 101 bisects the property and North State Street is on its eastern border. The Reservation is also served by Wellmar Drive, a private road which allows public use.

The Pinoleville Pomo Nation "2020 Tribal Transportation Program Roadway Inventory Update and Long-Range Transportation Plan" identified a total of 13 priority transportation future projects that are eligible to be completed using the Tribe's Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) Tribal Share funding. The projects listed below are listed in Tribal priority at the time of the Long-Range Transportation Plan; however, Tribal representatives have noted that the priority list is constantly evolving as the specific needs of the community change. Projects, identified by the

Tribes to be funded (in full or partially) by the Tribe's TTP Tribal Share are included in the following prioritized order:

1. Transportation Program Administration (\$8,000)
2. Long-Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Transportation Program Facilities Inventory (\$11,000)
3. Master Plan with Significant Transportation Analysis (\$14,500)
4. Transportation Safety Plan (\$12,500)
5. Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (\$9,400)
6. Tribal Transportation Facilities Maintenance Plan (\$5,500)
7. Tribal Transportation Program Maintenance Project (\$22,000)
8. Tribal Transit Program – Supplemental Funding (\$10,000)
9. Tribal Administration Parking Lot Improvement Project (\$88,983)
10. Vineyard Future Development – Including Construction of Public Road Facilities (\$595,057)
11. New Rancheria Land Acquisition and Future Development (\$2,054,368)
12. Pinoleville Drive Improvements and Maintenance (\$886,399)
13. Intersection of Pinoleville Drive and Orr Springs Road. Safety Analysis and Improvements (\$458,767)

The cost estimates listed above are planning level estimates only, and each project may have unforeseen special circumstances.

### **Potter Valley Band of Pomo Indians**

The original land base for the Potter Valley Band of Pomo Indians (Potter Valley Tribe) is a 9.7 acre property in Potter Valley, purchased in 1895, and held in fee status ever since. There is one property (Redwood Valley), which recently received trust status, and two properties (Potter Valley and Eel River) with trust applications underway.

Since re-organization in 2004, the Potter Valley Tribe has been purchasing property to fulfill its goals of land for tribal housing and economic development. The Tribe is considered a non-gaming tribe in California. Current land holdings consist of six separate land bases, a warehouse/commercial building, a commercial food/coffee house site and one community building, all located in Mendocino and Lake Counties. All the governmental programs are run from offices in the Tribal Community Center in Ukiah, at 2251 S. State Street. The five areas in Mendocino County available for housing are in Fort Bragg, Redwood Valley, Potter Valley, and at the Eel River (14 acres), 4 miles north of Potter Valley. In 2009, the Potter Valley Tribe purchased a 69-acre property north of the City of Fort Bragg for recreation, cultural and economic development. The most recent acquisitions (2019) are the 879 acre, forested Eel River property, and a coffee shop/commercial site in Ukiah. The Tribe currently has six housing sites, in Redwood Valley, Potter Valley, Ft Bragg, Eel River; and Santa Rosa (Sonoma County).

Tribal members have similar transportation needs to those of the general population, including maintenance and improvement to the existing roads in the area, and transit to better serve the rural Ft Bragg, Potter Valley and Redwood Valley areas.

Short term transportation needs include:

- Completion of the Eastside-Potter Valley Road project – *Phase 1 construction to begin in Summer/Fall 2021*
- Maintenance & dust control of County roads in the Eel River area
- Dust control on County sections; excess dust impacts forest health and water quality

Long-term transportation needs include:

- An MTA bus stop, just north of the current one at the northern city limits of Ft Bragg
- A crosswalk near Hwy 1 and Airport Road, near the northern city limits of Ft Bragg
- Paving of Eel River Road to Lake Pillsbury for enhanced recreational development
- Parking and pull out areas along Eel River for current and future recreational access
- Resolution of ownership and access along former US Forest Service road (20N01). Possible acquisition by Mendocino and Lake Counties to allow improved recreational access and emergency escape routes. Maintenance will need appropriation of funds, long and short term.
- Construction and maintenance of trails along river; incorporation into trails on tribal properties for improved recreational access.
- Establishment of Salmon Parkway along the US Forest Service road 20N01

### **Redwood Valley Rancheria**

The Redwood Valley Rancheria is located approximately 2 miles north of the community of Redwood Valley. It is divided into two portions. The “Main Rancheria” is 159 acres and is located at the termination of Road I. An additional portion called “Old Rancheria” is 12 acres and is located off of West Road. There are 42 homes on the Redwood Valley Rancheria in addition to a tribal office and community center.

Redwood Valley Rancheria is served by 1.6 miles of County and Tribal roads. The “Main Rancheria” is accessed by Road I, a County road off of East Road. In 2003 the Bureau of Indian Affairs improved a 0.6 mile portion of Road I closest to the Rancheria, with widening, resurfacing, and improving drainage. The current structural condition of this portion is excellent. However, traffic markings before and in front of the Rancheria’s main entrance need annual maintenance. Signage before and in front of the Rancheria’s main entrance is confusing and congestive, with “Curve Warning”, “Speed Hump,” “Trucks and Bus Turnaround/No Outlet,” and “Road Narrows” signs all within a short distance of each other. Traffic markings and signage should be upgraded to acceptable standards.

Within the “Main Rancheria”, Redwood Drive, a Tribal HUD road, serves the tribal office and residences within the Rancheria. Redwood Drive is 0.4 miles in length and the current structural condition is good. However, its width is 20 feet, which is narrow and restricts parking. It lacks any sidewalks and is therefore unsafe for pedestrians. An additional paved road unofficially called Pomo Way provides access to the Tribe’s community center. Pomo Way, a Tribal HUD road is an extension of Road I and is 0.1 miles in length. Its current structural condition is good.

Road I is the only emergency access road for Redwood Valley Rancheria. It may be possible to create an additional access point via Colony Drive and Road J, or by connecting Redwood Drive

to Road J. The Redwood Drive/Road J option would require construction of a fire road contingent upon a MOU between the Tribe and the landowners next to the Rancheria at Road J. This road connection would be controlled by a gate utilizing a keyless entry.

The main access to the “Old Rancheria” is a County road called West Road. The current structural condition of West Road is fair. However, West Road lacks any sidewalks, and its gravel shoulders are narrow to nonexistent which is unsafe for pedestrians. “Old Rancheria” residences can be accessed by an offshoot of West Road, called Rancheria Road. This road is 0.3 miles in length and its structural condition is good. Old Rancheria lands can also be accessed by Road L, a County road, off of West Road. This road is 0.1 miles length and connects with Rancheria Road. The structural condition of Road L is fair; however, Road L lacks stop controls on the Road L approach to West Road. The primary safety issue is that West Road and Road L drivers may not have adequate time or distance to avoid oncoming traffic.

Many tribal individuals as well as surrounding community members have voiced concerns regarding pedestrian safety on East and West Roads. Tribal members, adult members of the community and many children walk along these roads to access bus stops and for personal business in Redwood Valley. However, the gravel shoulders are narrow to nonexistent. This is a significant concern especially because many children must walk to and from bus stops for extended distances (up to 1 mile) on these narrow and nonexistent gravel shoulders. The Tribal community would like this safety concern addressed in order to mitigate risks to pedestrians with effective solutions.

The Tribe has identified both East and West Roads as popular bike routes during much of the year. Groups of cyclists are often trying to share these roads with vehicle traffic creating conflicts between modes and potential major hazards for both vehicles and cyclists.

Lack of public transit stops have also been identified as an issue by the Tribal community. The closest public transit stop is at the Redwood Market. Enhanced signage and route identification would improve visibility and awareness of the stops.

## **Round Valley Reservation**

The Round Valley Reservation is the largest Native American reservation within Mendocino County. It is comprised of approximately 19,000 acres surrounding the community of Covelo in the northeastern part of the County. The 2010 US Census placed population of the Reservation at approximately 475.

The Reservation is accessed from Highway 101 via State Highway 162 from Longvale. Land uses include agriculture, rural residential development, public facilities, and vacant lands. Tribal facilities include tribal headquarters, a Housing Authority, Indian Health Services, schools, fire stations, and refuse disposal transfer station, and cemeteries. A recreation center, owned by the County, is also within the reservation boundaries. The Round Valley Airport is also located within the boundaries of Reservation, however, is owned and maintained by the County. Based on the rural agricultural nature of the area, little future growth is anticipated.



State Highway 162 provides the primary access to the Round Valley area and runs north and east through the reservation, connecting to a system of County roads. The BIA Road System and the tribal roads tie into this network of County roads. The Reservation is served by a total of approximately 62.5 miles of roads. Of this, only about 37 miles are paved. The mileage is comprised of 33.45 miles of County road, 3.75 miles of BIA Roads, 9.25 miles of Tribal roads, and 14.8 miles of State Highway.

In 1997, consultants were retained by the BIA to develop a Transportation Plan for the Round Valley Reservation. The plan identified several specific needed projects, including cost estimates for the projects. Table 23 of that plan lists the projects identified in the Plan. It should be noted that the costs estimates were developed in 1997, and therefore, it is likely that today's costs to complete the projects would be dramatically higher.

One particular need of the Round Valley Reservation residents is the ability to safely walk and bike through the community. Little to no shoulders, high speeds and reckless driving on SR 162 make it extremely dangerous and have led to an accident and fatality rate much higher than the state average. MCOG is implementing a multi-use trail that will run parallel to SR 162, serving the Tribe and the entire community of Covelo. Completion of this trail is of high priority to the community.

### **Sherwood Valley Rancheria**

The Sherwood Valley Rancheria is comprised of one 300 acre parcel (the original Rancheria) located northwest of the city of Willits and one 48 acre parcel located near downtown Willits. The principal land uses on the larger parcel are rural residential and pasture land. There are nine homes on the parcel. The smaller parcel within Willits contains 35 homes, a community center, and a casino.

The Rancheria is served by 13.7 miles of roadway, 11.45 of which are County roads, 2.15 BIA Roads and 0.1 of Tribal road. The main access to the original Rancheria is via Sherwood Rancheria Road, a County maintained earth road. The main road within the Rancheria is BIA Route 215, also an earth road, which serves the homes on the Rancheria.

The newer rancheria parcel in Willits is served by County and Tribal roads. Access is from Crest Drive and Meadowbrook, both County roads. These connect to Sherwood Valley Drive, Acorn Place, and Pomo Court, the BIA roads within the parcel. Two other BIA roads, Sherwood Hill Drive and Kwai Drive provide access to the community center and casino. With the exception of Sherwood Hill Drive, all roads serving the Rancheria need some level of improvement.

### **Yokayo Tribe**

The Yokayo Ranch is located on the Russian River, approximately five miles southeast from the City of Ukiah and is owned by the Tribe since 1881. There are 25 homes currently occupied on the 120-acre reservation. Yokayo Ranch Road (0.77 miles) provides access to the housing eastward from Old River Road. Another road provides access on the west side from Old River Road to the community water pumphouse and river. Approximately 70 members reside on the land.

Because the Yokayo Tribe is not a federally-recognized tribe, the mechanisms aren't in place for the same type of project development or funding that exist for the other tribes in the region. However, the needs of this tribal community are still a relevant aspect of tribal transportation in Mendocino County.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **Construction and Implementation Projects**

MCOG is currently in the project development phases of the SR 162 Corridor Trail. This project will create a new route parallel to but separate from SR 162 through the community of Covelo. SR 162 currently lacks any shoulders and has open ditches along both sides, forcing pedestrians and bicyclists in this disadvantaged community to walk in the lanes of traffic, which often travels at high speeds even through town. Phase I of the project will extend from Howard Street, which provides access to the community schools, to Biggar Lane and include an east-west extension through tribal lands to Henderson Lane. Phase II of the project will extent from Biggar Lane to Hurt Road. Both phases of the project have been awarded ATP funding and are being implemented by MCOG.

The Redwood Valley Tribe has identified the need to develop an emergency exit route near their Rancheria. Various options (including connecting Road I to neighboring Road J; creating an additional access point via Colony drive; or connecting Redwood Drive to Road J) are possible routes that may be studied. This project is expected to be implemented and constructed by the Redwood Valley Tribe. Although funds haven't been secured to date, the tribe is pursuing grant sources. Availability of funding will determine when the improvements are constructed.

Other projects, including roadway and active transportation construction projects or addition of transit service, will be implemented by agencies such as the County of Mendocino, city governments, Caltrans, or the Mendocino Transit Authority. Those projects can be found in the Action Elements of the Local Streets and Roads, Active Transportation, State Highway and Public Transit sections of this plan.

### **MCOG Actions**

MCOG's actions over the next several years will focus on enhancing partnerships and expanding government to government relationships with all tribes in Mendocino County and strengthening existing relationships. Specific actions will include continuing formal consultation and exploring the possibility of developing MOU's with all tribes in the county. MCOG will make every attempt to involve and inform tribes of planning and programming activities, including development of the Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Improvement Program, State Transportation Improvement Program, and Active Transportation Plan. MCOG will continue to include participation from tribal governments in Technical Advisory Committee meetings, and will continue to participate in the quarterly tribal meetings hosted by Caltrans.

MCOG will consider initiating a regular Tribal Transportation Workshop. Similar to the Caltrans quarterly meetings, this workshop would include all Tribes within Mendocino County and provide a better opportunity for MCOG and the Tribal governments to share information about transportation related needs and efforts, as well as possible funding opportunities. It is proposed that this workshop be held annually initially, with the option to increase frequency if desired.

In addition to expanding relations with tribal governments, MCOG will seek out funding sources that may be utilized by the tribe as well as explore the eligibility of the Tribes to be direct recipients of existing funding sources. These efforts may include pursuit of transportation planning funds, funds specifically for use on tribal land or for projects on city, county or State facilities that serve the tribal members and their lands.

## FINANCIAL ELEMENT

### FUNDING FOR HIGHWAYS, STREETS, ROADS, BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

#### Funding Issues

Short-range project funding is generally tied to the two-year STIP funding cycle, the yearly allocations of sales tax and gasoline taxes, annual distribution of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds (previously known as Regional Surface Transportation Program Funds), and local agency general fund allocations based on political and project priorities. In addition, the cities of Point Arena, Fort Bragg, and Willits have approved half-cent sales tax measures for transportation which will significantly increase funding available for improvements to their transportation systems. The City of Ukiah has a general half-cent sales tax with an advisory measure directing it towards street maintenance and rehabilitation. Adding to these funding sources, Senate Bill 1 (2017) created a significant new funding source targeted toward street and road maintenance, that goes directly to the local agencies. It is anticipated that the local agencies, particularly the cities, will continue to make improvements to the condition of their pavement networks over the next few years. Even with the voter-imposed taxes and additional funding provided by SB 1, funding for roadway maintenance and rehabilitation continues to remain inadequate to meet local agencies' needs.

In general, funding projections can be made with some sense of reliability three to five years into the future. It would be highly speculative to project future funding of long-range projects at this time. Funding for roadway maintenance and rehabilitation remains inadequate, although it has improved somewhat in recent years. A variety of factors impact the stream of available funding for roadway, street, and highway projects. None of these factors can be predicted with any certainty, or in some cases even approximated. The status of the economic activity, gasoline sales, federal and state program allocations and requirements, and vehicle characteristics can all change from year to year with unexpected rapidity. An example of this includes unexpected events such as the COVID-19 pandemic of early 2020, which impacted statewide fuel sales, significantly reducing transportation revenues generated through excise taxes.

The financing requirements of the short-range program are as reasonably balanced between expenditures and projected funding as can be expected, given the uncertainty of funding levels beyond the four-to-five-year period. The definition of the long-range improvement program is vague, reflecting the uncertain nature of funding over the twenty-year life of the plan. This region has experience in seeing short-range projects slip through the mid-range, and into the long-range.

#### Funding Maintenance and Rehabilitation

For many years, identifying a permanent, sufficient, funding source for road maintenance and rehabilitation has been a challenge for local agencies in Mendocino County. Three of the four incorporated cities successfully passed a half-cent transportation sales tax to address the deterioration of their streets. The City of Ukiah has also passed a half-cent sales tax which,

although a general tax, is intended to be used to improve the City's streets. The passage of Senate Bill 1 in 2017 has added significantly to the funding available for maintaining streets by providing funding directly to local agencies for this purpose. This, combined with local sales tax, will put the cities in a position to make significant improvements. Although SB1 funding flows to Mendocino County as well, their ability to make a dent in their backlog of deferred maintenance is likely to take longer due to the extent of the County's network and lack of a local tax.

### **Traffic Impact Fees**

Traffic Impact Fees could be adopted by ordinance by a City or County and collected in correspondence with new development. Fees would be used to fund transportation improvements that would be necessitated through new development, as documented through a nexus study. A Traffic Impact Fee Nexus Study was prepared for the Ukiah Valley area in 2008 which provided a schedule of maximum allowable fees that could be charged given the requirements of AB 1600. At this time, a fee program has not yet been adopted by the County or City of Ukiah.

A travel demand forecasting model was prepared in 2010 as a first step toward a potential traffic impact fee for the rest of the county. Further studies would be required before any type of fee could be implemented. The report, *MCOG Travel Demand Forecasting Model, Final Model Development Report*, October 2010, prepared by Fehr & Peers, can be found on the MCOG website. Caltrans has offered to include an update of MCOG's dated travel demand model as part of their traffic model updates in District 1, which is currently underway.

## **Potential Funding Sources**

### **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

Historically, the STIP has been the source of the majority of transportation funding for large scale projects within the Mendocino County region. Revenues that flow into the STIP have declined in recent decades, reducing the ability to fund very large projects. At the State level, these funds are divided into two programs—the Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funded from 75% of new funding, and the Interregional Improvement Program (IIP), funded from 25% of new STIP funding. Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) are given the authority to decide how to program the county share of RIP funds, subject to STIP eligibility guidelines. To be eligible, projects must be nominated by the regional agency in their Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Caltrans has the authority to program the Interregional Transportation Improvement Funds. Similar to the RTIP, Caltrans must nominate projects within the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP). STIP funds are primarily intended for use on capital projects. Eligible projects include improving state highways, local roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, grade separations, intermodal facilities, and safety. Transit projects are also sometimes eligible for STIP funding depending on the revenue types funding the STIP.

New STIP funds are generally programmed on a biennial basis. In August of odd years (typically), the California Transportation Commission adopts the Fund Estimate for the STIP cycle. Regional agencies then adopt their Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) based on the adopted Fund Estimate. MCOG requires that all projects funded with Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) funds are identified in or consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.

Caltrans has adopted high emphasis “focus routes” to guide where its share of IIP funds are programmed and partnerships have been created between regional agencies and Caltrans to fund mutual high priority State highway projects.

While RIP funds can be used for projects on local roads, as well as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects, in order to implement desired improvements to the State highway system, RIP funds must also be used for State highway improvement.

Of course, there are many variables which can affect revenues from any of these funding sources. When the economy is poor people are less likely to travel, and therefore buy less gas, reducing the amount of money going into the State Highway Account and the amount of sales tax collected. The amount of commercial trucking decreases as well with a weak economy. Gas taxes can also be affected by changes in fuel efficiency of vehicles (fuel efficiency decreases revenues generated). Because the sources of funding for the STIP are so dependent on our economy, and so prone to change, it is difficult to accurately predict what future STIP and SHOPP funding amounts will be. Over the last two decades, the funding available in the STIP has fluctuated greatly. Passage of Senate Bill 1 in 2017 helped stabilize the revenue streams that flow into the STIP. In the 2022 STIP, the Mendocino County region’s share of new STIP funding was \$5,290,000. The average amount of STIP funding available to the region from 2014-2022 was \$3,355,800 per two-year cycle. It is expected that future STIP cycles will continue to provide some capital funding to the region, although very large projects will likely still require multiple STIP cycles or multiple sources to fund.

At times, unanticipated funding sources become available to MCOG and/or local jurisdictions. The following four programs are examples of these types of unexpected funding opportunities:

### CARES Act & CRRSAA – COVID 19 Relief Funding

During the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020 -2021, relief funding was made available from the Federal government through two programs to assist local agencies with anticipated revenues losses and other challenges in dealing with the pandemic. In Mendocino County, the public transit agency (Mendocino Transit Authority) received approximately \$2.06 million in funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), and nearly \$1.5 million through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA). Local jurisdictions also received relief funding through CRRSAA, totaling approximately \$1.6 million. Existing state and federal programs were used to distribute the funding to local agencies.

### Clean CA Grant Program

The Clean California Local Grant Program is a competitive, one-time (over two funding cycles), statewide grant program created in 2021 (AB 149) to beautify and clean up local streets and roads, tribal land, parks, pathways, transit centers, and other public spaces. Eligible project-types include infrastructure enhancement and rehabilitation. The program is intended for “quick-build” projects (completed by June, 2024), and includes separate funding components for Caltrans and local agency sponsored projects.

### Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

This federal infrastructure bill was signed into law by the President in November, 2021. It provides approximately \$25.3 billion for highways, \$4.2 billion for bridges, and \$9.45 billion for transit projects in California. Additional activities were funded in the bill, however, it is not yet known how those funds will impact transportation networks.

### Highway Bridge Program (HBP)

The Highway Bridge Program (HBP) is authorized by the federal transportation bill. The purpose of the Program is to replace or rehabilitate public highway bridges over waterways, other topographical barriers, other highways, or railroads when the State and the Federal Highway Administration determine that a bridge is significantly important and is unsafe because of structural deficiencies, physical deterioration, or functional obsolescence. Eligible work for this program includes replacement, rehabilitation, painting, scour countermeasure, bridge approach barrier and railing replacement, and seismic retrofit.

About \$300 million of federal funds are made available to local agencies annually. The federal/local reimbursement ratios for all new HBP projects will be revised to 80%/20% for on-federal aid system projects and 88.53%/11.47% for off-federal aid system projects, for eligible participating project costs including preliminary engineering, right of way, and construction. This applies to projects that do not yet have an authorization to proceed in the PE phase by March 30, 2021. Candidate projects are submitted to Caltrans for review on an annual basis. Successful projects are included in the HBP multiyear plan.

### Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is a federal safety program that provides funds for safety improvements on all public roads and highways. Federal funds may be exchanged for state funds. These funds serve to eliminate or reduce the number and/or severity of traffic accidents at locations selected for improvement.

Local agencies compete statewide for HSIP funds by submitting candidate safety projects to Caltrans for review and analysis. Caltrans prioritizes these projects and releases an annual HSIP Program Plan that identifies the projects that are approved for funding. As this is a statewide competition, it must be recognized that this is in no way a guaranteed source of funding. In 2021 (HSIP Cycle 10), 266 projects totaling \$227.6 million in HSIP funds were selected for funding.

In 2020, Caltrans provided grant funding from the HSIP program to assist local jurisdictions with development of individual Local Road Safety Plans (LRSP). Beginning with HSIP Cycle 11 in 2022, an LRSP (or equivalent) will be required for an agency to apply for HSIP grant funds. These LRSPs provide local jurisdictions an opportunity to address roadway safety needs by systematically identifying and analyzing safety problems, and prioritizing improvements. The HSIP program also incorporates the High Risk Rural Roads (HR3) Program, which addresses problems on roads that are functionally classified as rural major collector, rural minor collector, or rural local road.

### Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP), is a federal program that provides funds for projects providing access to federal lands and transportation facilities located on, or adjacent to, federal owned lands. The program's goal is to improve transportation facilities associated with federal lands, favoring locations with high recreation use and projects that result in a sizable economic benefit. The intent of this program is to supplement state and local funding resources, and the required non-federal match is 11.47%.

### Senate Bill 1- Road Repair and Accountability Act

In 2017, the State legislature passed Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act. The bill provides the first significant, stable, and on-going increase in state transportation funding in more than two decades. SB1 increased revenues through increased per gallon fuel excise taxes; increased diesel fuel sales taxes and vehicle registration fees, including a new annual fee for electric vehicles; and provides for inflationary adjustments to tax rates in future years. Revenues from the bill provided increased funding to some existing funding programs and created other new programs. Funding has been added to the Active Transportation Program, State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), Transportation Asset Management, and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). New programs are the Local Streets and Roads Program, Solutions for Congested Corridors, Trade Corridor Enhancement and Local Partnership Program. The new programs that are relevant to the Mendocino County region are discussed below.



Local Streets & Roads Program (RMRA) - Beginning November 1, 2017, the State Controller (Controller) started depositing portions of the new funding created by SB1 into the newly created Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (RMRA). A percentage of this new RMRA funding is apportioned by formula to eligible cities and counties pursuant to Streets and Highways Code (SHC) Section 2032(h) for basic road maintenance, rehabilitation, and critical safety projects on the local streets and roads system. In order to be eligible for RMRA funding, statute requires cities and counties to provide basic annual RMRA project reporting to the California Transportation Commission. Prior to receiving an apportionment of RMRA funds from the Controller in a fiscal year, a city or county must submit to the CTC a list of projects proposed to be funded. All proposed projects must be included in an adopted city or county budget.

Local Partnership Program - SB 1 created the Local Partnership Program and continuously appropriates \$200 million annually to be allocated by the California Transportation Commission to local or regional transportation agencies that have sought and received voter approval of taxes or that have imposed fees, which taxes or fees are dedicated solely for transportation improvements.

The 2020 Program (formulaic and competitive) covered FY 2020-21 through 2022-23. New cycles will be programmed approximately every two years. Formulaic incentive funding of up to \$20 million will be set-aside each year for newly passed measures, leaving the balance to be distributed 60% via formulaic and 40% via competitive program (subject to change). In Mendocino County, the Cities of Point Arena, Willits and Fort Bragg are eligible for this source. Although the City of Ukiah also has a local sales tax, because it is a general tax it does not qualify for this source.

The formulaic portion of LPP includes a funding minimum for very small agencies. The minimum is subject to change with each revision of the guidelines, but currently is \$200,000 per year. All three eligible agencies in Mendocino County receive the minimum.

Trade Corridor Enhancement - The Trade Corridor Enhancement Program funds corridor-based freight projects nominated by local agencies and the state. The program will fund infrastructure improvements along corridors that have a high volume of freight movement, and will include measures to evaluate potential economic and noneconomic benefits to the state's economy, environment, public health and Disadvantaged Communities. It is expected that projects along the US 101 and SR 20 corridors could potentially be eligible for funding through this program. The 2020 Program provided three years of programming in FY 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23, for an estimated total of \$1.001 billion. Subsequent program cycles will include two new years of programming.

#### Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program

These funds, previously referred to as Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds, are apportioned by the State pursuant to Sections 182.6 d(1) and d(2) of the Streets and Highways Code. The State distributes Section 182.6 d(2) directly to counties. Section 182.6 d(1) funds are received by MCOG then distributed to local agencies by formula. A total of \$100,000 is taken off the top annually by MCOG to be used for "partnership" projects, such as

the funding of the Simpson Lane/SR 1 Roundabout project. These funds can be used for a number of different types of projects including construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational improvements on roads classified above a local or rural minor collector in the Federal Aid Highway System. Another \$90,000 annually is designated for regional project management by MCOG staff. The estimated amounts of these funds to be distributed to local agencies for FY 2020/21 may be found in [Table 28](#).

**Table 28**  
**STBG Funds Distribution**  
**FY 2020/21**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>RSTP Amount</b>
Mendocino County	\$128,687
Ukiah	\$173,184
Fort Bragg	\$115,631
Willits	\$108,530
Point Arena	\$71,732

*Note: STBG funds not actually received until following FY.*

### General Fund

General funds may be used for transportation, but must compete with other governmental functions each year for funding. When used for transportation, general funds are most often used for road improvements and regular maintenance. General fund revenues are subject to shifting local priorities and have proven to be unreliable as a source of transportation funding.

### Local Sales Tax

Mendocino Council of Governments commissioned voter opinion surveys in Mendocino County in 2002 and again in 2016. The results of this survey showed that one of the biggest overall concerns of citizens throughout the County is the condition of local streets and roads.

Following the initial survey, the cities of Fort Bragg, Willits, and Point Arena passed half-cent sales tax measures for transportation. Following the second poll, Ukiah voters approved a half-cent general tax with an advisory measure directing that revenues be used for improvement to City streets. Revenue from all of the measures will primarily be used to improve and maintain the existing street system. These revenues will provide a measurable impact to the backlog of street maintenance experienced by local agencies. The following table shows projected revenues to be generated from these sales tax measures:

**Table 29**  
**Voter Approved Local Sales Tax**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Approximate Annual Revenue</b>	<b>Use of Funds</b>
Willits	\$850,000	Repair, replacement, construction, and reconstruction of the City's road system
Fort Bragg	\$1,017,000	Repair, maintenance, and reconstruction of City streets
Point Arena	\$50,000	Repair, replacement, construction and reconstruction of the City's road system

Ukiah	\$3,400,000	Repair and maintenance of City streets (general tax with advisory measure)
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### Environmental Enhancements and Mitigation

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program provides funding for environmental enhancement and mitigation projects which are directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of modifying existing transportation facilities, or for the design, construction or expansion of new transportation facilities. Projects must be over and above the required mitigation for the related transportation project and must fall into one of the following three categories: Highway Landscaping and Urban Forestry, Resource Lands, and Roadside Recreation.

The Legislature is authorized to allocate ten million dollars annually for the program. A total of \$13.4 million was authorized for the 2021 EEM program, from two years' of appropriations. Applications are accepted annually by the California State Resources Agency in Sacramento. No matching funds are required, however, projects that include the greatest proportion of other monetary sources of funding will be rated highest. Grants are generally limited to \$500,000 for individual projects; however, up to \$1 million may be awarded for acquisition projects.

### Transportation Planning Grants

The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant program is an annual Caltrans grant program that provides funding for transportation planning projects, under four categories: (1) Sustainable Communities Competitive grants – to fund local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning projects that further the region's RTP Sustainable Communities Strategy (where applicable), and contribute to the State's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets; (2) Strategic Partnership grants – to fund transportation planning studies in partnership with Caltrans that address regional, interregional, and statewide needs of the State highway system; (3) Strategic Partnership Transit – to fund multi-modal planning studies with a focus on transit. These are competitive grants, awarded on an annual basis. A fourth category, Sustainable Communities Formula grants – are only available to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). In addition to the \$9.5 million in traditional state and federal grant funding, approximately \$25 million in SB 1 funds is available for the FY 2022-23 grant cycle.

## **Active Transportation Funding**

The following are potential sources of funding which could be used for non-motorized infrastructure projects.

### Complete Streets

The Complete Streets program does not have its own funding program, but rather a set-aside reservation of funds within the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). The 2020 SHOPP has a reservation of funds (\$42 million statewide) to augment projects to include complete streets elements as opportunities develop. The SHOPP is the state highway system's "fix-it-first" program that funds the repair and preservation, emergency repairs, safety

improvements, and some highway operational improvements to the state highway system. Caltrans seeks opportunities to add complete streets improvements to the projects identified in the SHOPP using that reservation of funds.

### Active Transportation Program (ATP)

This is a competitive grant program that combined several previous state and federal grant programs, including the Bicycle Transportation Account, state Safe Routes to Schools, and the Transportation Alternatives Program (federal program containing elements of former Transportation Enhancements program, Recreational Trail Program, and federal Safe Routes to School from MAP-21). The passage of SB 1 in 2017 provided an additional \$100 million annually from the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account to the ATP, significantly augmenting the available funding for this program.

The purpose of the ATP is to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation. The program funds both capital projects and planning/education programs. The program does not require a local match; however, leveraging of funds is considered in scoring of large projects. In 2021, the program provided \$445.56 million statewide. Of the statewide total, \$4 million is directed to projects developed by the California Conservation Corps and Certified Local Community Conservation Corps, 50% goes to a statewide competitive program, 40% goes to a competitive program for urban areas, and 10% to a competitive program for small urban and rural areas. Although highly competitive, due to its significant funding pot, the ATP offers a good opportunity for funding high cost, non-motorized, capital projects. MCOG's "2019 Pedestrian Facility Needs Inventory/Engineered Feasibility Study" ranked non-motorized projects with criteria similar to ATP scoring criteria to identify potential high-scoring ATP projects.

### Urban Greening

Urban Greening is a competitive program, which is anticipated to be annual, funded through the Cap and Trade Program (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund). Funds are available for projects that reduce commute VMT by constructing bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, or pedestrian facilities that provide safe routes for travel between residences, workplaces, commercial centers, and schools. It also funds projects that reduce GHG emissions by reducing energy usage or tree planting. In 2021, the California Natural Resources Agency awarded \$28.5 million in funding for 25 Urban Greening projects. The majority of the funds must be awarded for projects in areas that meet the CalEnviroScreen definition of a disadvantaged community, which excludes Mendocino County, but some of the funds can be used elsewhere. In 2021, the City of Ukiah was awarded a \$3,563,212 Urban Greening grant for the City's Rail with Trail project, Ph. 4.

### State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

As explained above, STIP funds may be used for pedestrian, bicycle, and intermodal facilities. Unfortunately, in recent years, the State and Federal revenues that flow to this funding source have been drastically reduced. As a result, this may not be an ongoing reliable source of funding for active transportation projects.

### Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)

As explained above, STBG funds are distributed annually by MCOG to each local entity on a formula bases and may be used for bikeway, pedestrian or other local streets and roads projects.

### Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)

The OTS offers grant funding to assist local agencies with bicycle and pedestrian safety and education programs. Grants are awarded on a statewide, competitive basis and are not available for construction of bikeway facilities. In 2020, the OTS awarded \$93.7 million for more than 400 grants to agencies throughout the state. Grants are awarded based on identifiable traffic safety problems, proposed strategies to improve the safety of roads, and proven measures to reduce traffic deaths and injuries.

### Community Development Block Grants

The program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG program is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program administered by the State of California. Within the parameters of the program, one of a number of eligible project categories includes the construction or reconstruction of streets, including bike lanes and sidewalks.

### Transportation Development Act (TDA)

The Transportation Development Act of 1971 established the Local Transportation Fund (LTF). One-quarter cent of the State sales tax generated in each county is returned to the regional transportation planning agency for deposit in the LTF. These funds are to be used for agency administration, optional bicycle and pedestrian projects, transit, transportation planning, and local streets and roads projects, in accordance with priorities established by TDA and policies of the regional transportation planning agency.

MCOG allocates 2% of LTF funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. This is the only funding source specifically for active transportation projects that's available to the region by formula rather than competitively. Because the total funding available is fairly small, these funds are often used by local agencies as a match for competitive grants.

## **TRANSIT FUNDING**

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5309

The Federal Transit Administration offers a Capital Investment Grant and Loan Program to provide transit capital assistance for bus and bus-related facilities. Funding under this program is often earmarked by Congress. MTA has been successful in acquiring Section 5309 funding in the past.

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310

The Federal Transit Administration provides assistance to public or private, non-profit agencies that provide transit services to the elderly and/or persons with disabilities when transportation services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. The traditional 5310 program is a capital assistance program historically used for vehicle replacement and expansion projects, but other capital items, such as computerized dispatching systems, are also eligible. The expanded 5310 Program provides funding for operations and mobility management projects that serve the elderly and disabled. In California, Caltrans administers this biennial competitive program. In Mendocino County, the senior center transportation programs and Mendocino Transit Authority have benefited from these grants for both vehicle replacement and operating grants.

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311

The 5311 program provides supplemental funding for public transit service in non-urbanized areas which have populations of fewer than 50,000 residents, as quantified by the United States Census Bureau.

The FTA apportions formula funds to each state on an annual basis. The California Department of Transportation, Division of Rail and Mass Transportation (DRMT) is the designated grantee for California. 5311 funding is apportioned as follows:

**75% Regional Apportionment** -- This funding share is apportioned to non-urban areas based on the size of the rural population. This apportionment is distributed to Transportation Planning Agencies whose county or region contains a non-urbanized area as identified by the United States Census Bureau. The TPA submits a Program of Projects that identifies subrecipients and projects to receive Section 5311 funds in their planning area. This must be completed by December 31st of each year. Additionally, subrecipients must complete and submit a Section 5311 Program Application and all other required submittals by the appropriate deadline. Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) receives at least \$500,000 per year under this program,

**15% Intercity Bus Program** -- This funding share is apportioned to the Rural Intercity Bus Program (known as FTA 5311(f)). The Section 5311(f) Program is designed to address the intercity travel needs of residents in non-urbanized areas of the state by funding services that provide them access to the intercity bus and transportation networks in California. Both public and private transportation providers are eligible to compete for funding. Capital and operating assistance projects are eligible. MTA has received approximately \$300,000 in a typical grant cycle.

**10% State Administrative Expenses** -- This funding share is apportioned to State Transportation Agencies in order to fund the administration of the 5311 and 5311(f) grant programs.

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5304

The Federal Transit Administration annually provides discretionary funding for transit planning assistance which funds the Caltrans administered Sustainable Communities grant program. These programs require an 11.47% local match. Typical projects that have been funded include transit development plans, capital plans, and transit employee training programs.

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5339

Congress created the FTA Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities program under Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21). This action required the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to be the designated recipient of this Program's funds for small urban and rural areas of the State. The program was continued, with some modifications in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The program provides capital funding to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. FTA annually apportions a discretionary component and a small urban (population 50,000 to 200,000) formula component to each State.

## **State Sources**

### State Transit Assistance (STA)

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) established the State Transit Assistance account. Funds for the program are derived from the statewide sales tax on diesel fuel. The State Controller allocates these revenues to regional transportation planning agencies for transit uses. The allocation formula distributes funds 50% by population and 50% according to operator revenues from the prior fiscal year (the revenue amount of each STA-eligible operator compared to statewide totals determine its share). These funds can be used for operations, subject to specific eligibility criteria, or capital projects. Revenues have varied widely from approximately \$300,000 to \$800,000 or more per year. SB 1 stabilized this funding source, although it is subject to fluctuations in the economy.

### State of Good Repair (SGR)

Senate Bill 1, The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, added a vehicle registration fee to the State Transit Assistance program, funding this new State of Good Repair (SGR) program. It is distributed to eligible transit operators in California by the same formula as for STA. SGR funds are received by regional transportation planning agencies and suballocated to transit agencies. The program's goal is to keep transit systems in a state of good repair by providing transit operators a consistent revenue source to invest in the upgrade, repair, and improvement of their agency's transportation infrastructure. This includes the purchase of new transit vehicles and the maintenance and rehabilitation of both existing vehicles and transit facilities. These investments will lead to cleaner transit vehicle fleets, increased reliability and safety, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. SGR revenues have averaged approximately \$130,000 per year in the first four years.

### Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP)

One of several programs of the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program established by SB 862 (2014), the LCTOP was created to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emission and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. Approved projects in LCTOP will support new or expanded bus or rail services, expand intermodal transit facilities, and may include equipment acquisition, fueling, maintenance and other costs to operate those services or facilities, with each project reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For agencies whose service area includes disadvantaged communities, at least 50 percent of the total moneys received shall be expended on projects that will benefit disadvantaged communities. Senate Bill 862 continuously appropriates 5% of the annual auction proceeds in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (Fund) for LCTOP, beginning in 2015-16. MTA has received funding from this program since 2015, with the most recent award of \$176,103 in 2020.

### State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Regional transportation planning agencies may program capital projects through the regional share of the STIP (see previous discussion). Since there are Article XIX limitations on the State Highway Account component of the STIP, a transit project must be funded with Public Transportation Account (PTA) dollars in the STIP. The availability of PTA funds in the STIP varies from one STIP cycle to the next. In the most recent STIP Fund Estimate (2022), no PTA funding has been identified. STIP is an unreliable, and often unavailable, source of funding for transit.

## **Local Funding Sources**

### Transportation Development Act (TDA)

The Transportation Development Act of 1971 established the Local Transportation Fund (LTF). One-quarter cent of the State sales tax generated in each county is returned to the regional transportation planning agency for deposit in the Local Transportation Fund. These funds are to be used for agency administration, optional bicycle and pedestrian projects, transit, transportation planning, and local streets and roads projects in accordance with priorities established by TDA and policies of the regional transportation planning agency. Local Transportation Funds generated through TDA have been the single largest funding source available for transit services provided through Mendocino Transit Authority. Over the past five years, MCOG LTF allocations to MTA have averaged \$3.5 million per year.

### Farebox Revenues

Transit systems funded with Transit Development Act funds are required to establish and maintain certain minimum level of local farebox returns. Urban systems are required to maintain a 20% farebox return; rural areas are required to maintain at least a 10% farebox return. Farebox revenues are the second highest source of operating funds for MTA. Originally MTA's minimum farebox was required to be 14.7% of operating cost; however, Senate Bill 508 amended TDA statutes in 2015, setting the minimum farebox at 10% for all rural transit operators.



## TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Many of the funding sources described for use on streets, roads, highways and for bike and pedestrian projects would be available for use on tribal roads. Typically, a tribe would need to partner with a local agency such as a city or county to sponsor a project.

### Tribal Specific Funds

#### Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)

The Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 established the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) Program funded within the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund. Since the establishment of the IRR Program and its successor as part of MAP-21, which is now called the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP), the total Federal construction authorization for Tribal Transportation has exceeded \$10 billion. The TTP is jointly administered by the BIA and the FHWA. These investments have contributed greatly to the improvement of unsafe roads and the replacement or rehabilitation of deficient bridges on or near reservations.

Under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the TTP was authorized at a funded level of \$465 million in FY 2016; \$475 million in 2017, \$485 million in 2018, \$495 million in 2019, and \$505 million in 2020. Except for a 5% set aside for FHWA and BIA for program oversight, all other TTP funding is provided to Tribes either as Tribal shares or as special set-aside funding to address transportation planning, as well as safety and bridge projects and activities. As under MAP-21, the FAST Act allocates TTP funding among the Tribes through a statutory formula based on tribal population, road mileage and average tribal shares under the SAFETEA-LU Indian Reservation Road program. The FAST Act continues this formula without modification. [23 U.S.C. 202(b)]

Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds are Federal funds that Tribes and others can spend only on certain allowable activities. Also, the allowable activities are subject to spending limits. The FAST Act made no changes to TTP eligibilities. Allowable activities that Tribes can use TTP funds for are broken into two broad categories: (1) planning and design activities, and (2) construction and maintenance activities.

#### Planning and Design Activities:

- Indirect general and administrative costs include, but are not limited to, computers, software, office furniture, and other equipment needed to administer the TTP.
- Transportation-related planning and programming activities (including but not limited to roadway, trails, transit, and safety planning and programming, and planning for tourism and recreational travel).
- Identification and evaluation of accident prone locations.
- Planning and design of Tribal Transportation Facilities.
- Engineering support studies (i.e. geotechnical, hydraulic, etc.)
- Environmental studies, evaluations, and compliance activities.
- Planning and design of mitigation for impacts to environmental resources

- Architectural and landscape engineering services including lighting.
- Inspection of bridges and structures.
- Public meetings and public involvement activities.
- Tribal employment rights ordinance (TERO) fees.

Construction and Maintenance activities:

- Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational improvements of TTP facilities (i.e. roads, trails, bridges, structures, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit facilities, ferry facilities, rest areas, parking areas, etc.).
- Road sealing and chip sealing.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements.
- Seasonal transportation routes including, but not limited to, snowmobile trails, ice roads, and overland winter roads.
- Mitigation activities required by Tribal, state, or Federal regulatory agencies.
- Tribal employment rights ordinance (TERO) fees.
- Maintenance of TTP facilities identified in the National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI). Not more than 25% or \$500,000, whichever is greater, of the TTP funds allocated to a Tribe may be expended for the purpose of maintenance. This funding limit does not apply to road sealing.
- Development and negotiation of Tribal-State road maintenance agreements.
- Purchasing, leasing or rental of construction and/or maintenance equipment.

TTP Bridge Program

Under FAST Act, up to 3% of TTP funds are available each year for improving deficient bridges. Federally recognized Indian tribes may submit an application at any time for eligible tribal transportation bridges for planning, design, engineering, preconstruction, construction, and inspection, or to replace, rehabilitate, seismically retrofit, or paint. Funds may also be used for anti-icing, de-icing, or to implement countermeasures (including multiple-pipe culverts). To be eligible, a bridge must have an opening of at least 20 feet, be classified as a tribal transportation facility, and be structurally deficient or functionally obsolete

Tribal Technical Assistance Program

The Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) is a discretionary training and technology transfer program for Native American tribes in the United States. It is funded by the FHWA and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. TTAP aims to:

- distribute technical assistance and training activities at the tribal level;
- help implement administrative procedures and new transportation technology at the tribal level;
- provide training and assistance in transportation planning and economic development; and
- develop educational programs to encourage and motivate interest in transportation careers among Native American students.

The goals of TTAP are accomplished through technology transfer and training, research, and cultural consideration.

## Other Potential Funds

Some additional funding sources that are available to cities and counties, but may be considered by tribes in partnership with a local agency include Environmental Enhancements and Mitigation grants, Urban Greening grants, and Sustainable Transportation Planning grants. In addition, tribal governments may apply on their own for Active Transportation Program (ATP) grants and Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grants, described above.

## AVIATION FINANCING

Local counties, particularly rural counties, have no excess resources to use for airport enhancement or improvement beyond bare maintenance expenditures. The State has had minimal amounts to distribute to the rural counties for use in airport upgrades and capital improvement projects. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has historically been focused on urban aviation needs and requirements, with only minimal funding available for the occasional grant to rural county aviation needs.

The source and stability of revenues for each of the airports varies greatly from airport to airport. Round Valley Airport, located in Covelo and owned/operated by the County of Mendocino produces almost no income from airfield operations, requiring the bulk of funding from the County General Fund. The Ukiah Municipal Airport on the other hand typically produces a net surplus of funds for the City of Ukiah which is used to provide the match for anticipated grant funding.

Each airport struggles to maintain a viable operational base, expand the service capabilities of the airport, and meet the fiscal restraints of the local agencies operating the airports from general funds. For all of the airports only necessary high priority maintenance is included in each year's budget. Preventative maintenance projects are typically deferred in hopes of extra funding becoming available from State and Federal aviation funding sources. Any capital improvements are dependent on grants from the State and Federal government from sources outside of MCOG's control.

## Funding Sources

### Airport Improvement Program

The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) provides grant funding directly from the Federal Aviation Administration. To be eligible an airport must be included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) and be included in the State Capital Improvement Program and the Federal Airport Capital Improvement Program. Eligible projects include those improvements related to enhancing airport safety, capacity, security, and environmental concerns. Funds can be used on most airfield capital improvements or repairs except for terminals, hangars, and non-aviation development. Project development for eligible projects—such as planning and design—are eligible, as is runway, taxiway, and apron pavement maintenance. Aviation demand at the airport must justify the projects. Operational costs and revenue-generating improvements are not eligible. The FAA participation rate in project costs

for General Aviation Airports is 90%. Matching funds can come from the Caltrans AIP Matching Grant program or other sources.

Because the demand for AIP funds exceeds the availability, the FAA bases distribution of these funds on present national priorities and objectives. AIP funds are typically first apportioned into major entitlement categories such as primary, cargo, and general aviation. Remaining funds are distributed to a discretionary fund. Set-aside projects (airport noise and the Military Airport Program) receive first attention from this discretionary distribution. The remaining funds are true discretionary funds that are distributed based on a national prioritization formula

### Annual Grants

These are annual grants available from the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics in the amount of \$10,000. These grants are available to all airports in Mendocino County and can be used for a variety of uses. These annual grants are the State's first aeronautics funding priority and have historically been safe from budgetary cutbacks.

### AIP Matching Grants

These are State grants to eligible airports for a portion of the required match for the Federal Airport Improvement Program grants (see discussion above). This program provides a funding amount equal to 5% of the FAA funding amount (4.5% of total project cost). The remaining match must be provided by the local agency, however, the Annual Grant funding can be applied toward this match. In order for projects to be eligible for the AIP and the AIP Matching Grants, they must be included in the State Capital Improvement Program and the Federal Airport Capital Improvement Program.

### Acquisition and Development Grants

Acquisition and Development (A&D) Grants are also available from the State to fund construction projects, land acquisition and planning projects such as Master Plans and airport layout plans. The minimum grant amount is \$20,000 and the maximum is \$500,000. The amount available statewide for these grants is the remaining funding available in the Aeronautics Account after funding State operations, Annual Grants and AIP Matching Grants. These are 90% state grants, requiring a 10% local match.

### Airport Loan Program

These are discretionary State loans to eligible airports for construction and land acquisition projects that benefit an airport and/or improve its self-sufficiency. Projects that enhance an airport's ability to provide general aviation are eligible. A loan may provide the local share for an AIP grant, but cannot provide the local match for A&D grants. These loans cannot fund projects that accommodate scheduled air carriers. This is a revolving loan fund in which funding varies. Loans may be requested at any time, and there is no local match requirement.

## HARBOR FUNDING

### Noyo Harbor

Harbor Development is financed through local taxes, Federal and State Funds and revenues from berth rentals. Except when funds from special State and Federal Programs, such as, State Disaster Funds and Army Corps of Engineers are available, revenues from operations provide approximately 90% of the funds needed to cover operating expenses. The remaining 10% is obtained from local property taxes. It is important to keep in mind that the budget does not allow for dredging, emergencies, or any possible large capital expenditures; these items come from reserve funds and special grants/funding.

Historically, the Corps of Engineers has financed and administered necessary dredging of the Noyo River Channel. The dredging of the Harbor is a significant expense, but is financed through the US Army Corps of Engineers.

### Point Arena Harbor

The Arena Cove Pier budget is financed through a variety of sources. Fees are charged for commercial operations on site such as hoist rental fees, commercial/private launching, and boat storage fees. Additionally, the City charges commercial operations for use of the fishing facilities. The City's FY 2021/22 budget identified projected operating expenses of \$96,493, plus \$23,400 for pier repair and replacement costs. Revenues for the year of \$50,000 are expected, plus a transfer in from the General fund to cover remaining expenses.

## CONSTRAINED & UNCONSTRAINED PROJECTS

Appendix J contains a list that identifies projects from this plan as constrained or unconstrained based on funding availability. Many projects identified as priorities will depend on competitive grant funding, which will limit what can be completed during the timeframe of this plan. MCOG believes all of the listed projects are important; however, what ultimately gets implemented will be affected by project readiness and availability of appropriate funding sources.