

MINUTES

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom Meeting/Teleconference

October 21, 2020

Members Present

Jacob King, MTA
Tasha Ahlstrand, Caltrans
Alicia Meier, County DOT
Chantell O’Neal, City of Fort Bragg
Jason Benson *for Tim Eriksen*, City of Ukiah
Jeremy Ronco *for Dusty Duley*, City of Willits

Members Absent

Mitch Stogner, NCRA (*Non-Voting*)
Barbara Moed, AQMD
Jesse Davis, County DPBS
Richard Shoemaker, City of Point Arena

Staff & Others Present

Nephele Barrett, MCOG Administration
Lisa Davey-Bates, MCOG Planning
Loretta Ellard, MCOG Planning
James Sookne, MCOG Planning
Alexis (Lexi) Pedrotti, MCOG Planning
Danielle Casey, MCOG Administration
Charlene Parker, MCOG Planning
Kyle Finger, Caltrans Local Assistance

1. **Call to Order/Introductions** – Nephele called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Individuals present on the Zoom meeting/teleconference were identified.
2. **Public Expression** – None.
3. **Input from Native American Tribal Governments’ Representatives** – No tribal representatives were present. Nephele reported she recently attended the Caltrans quarterly tribal coordination meeting and said MCOG has been asked to make a presentation at the next quarterly meeting. She noted this would be a good opportunity to let the tribes know what MCOG is doing, and an opportunity for outreach on the Regional Transportation Plan update. She said the Redwood Valley Rancheria is working on a tribal transportation plan, which will also inform the RTP. She invited members to let her know if they have information to share with the tribes.
4. **Approval of 8/19/20 Minutes** – Motion by Chantell O’Neal, seconded by Alicia Meier, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 ayes – King, Ahlstrand, Meier, O’Neal, Benson, Ronco), to approve the minutes of 8/19/20.
5. **Regional Transportation Plan/Active Transportation Plan – 2022 Update** – Loretta advised that MCOG staff is getting started on the update of the Regional Transportation Plan. The 2017 Plan was adopted by MCOG on 2/5/18, and the next update is due 2/5/22. She reviewed that MCOG shifted from a five-year update cycle to a four-year cycle in 2014, which allowed local governments in the region to change from a five-year to an eight-year Housing Element cycle.

She advised that MCOG staff is reviewing guidelines to see what has changed since the last update and

working on updating the Public Participation Plan (PPP). A required 45-day public review period for the PPP is being advertised, and adoption of the PPP is scheduled for the December 7 MCOG meeting.

Loretta summarized that staff will be reaching out to local agencies to begin reviewing information, and initial tasks will include a review of goals and policies by the TAC and MCOG Board.

6. Development of Local Road Safety Plans – Loretta advised that the RFP to hire a consultant to develop the LRSPs is currently being advertised, with proposals due November 13. She said she asked District 1 Local Assistance staff about local agencies’ funding allocations and was told they were expected to be completed by early next month “...*assuming the program does not run out of funds.*” She advised MCOG cannot award a consultant contract until all funds have been officially allocated.

Nephele noted that most local agencies had submitted funding requests by the end of the last round and expressed concern they might not be allocated this round. Kyle Finger, Caltrans Local Assistance, said the County’s increased request would have to re-compete, but that is the only one that would possibly not be allocated. A question was asked if the County’s original request would be allocated if the increase is not approved, and Kyle agreed to check on this and follow up with Nephele, Loretta, and Alicia. He confirmed that reimbursable work cannot begin until funds have been allocated.

Loretta said a committee will be formed to review consultant proposals. After the project gets started, a stakeholder group (including local agency staff) will be established to inform plan development. Plans are scheduled to be completed by March 2022, in advance of the 2022 HSIP cycle.

Tasha advised that in response to MCOG’s request to post the RFP on Caltrans’ website, she reached out to their Public Information Office and was told that it did not meet required ADA accessibility rules. She expects more guidance on Caltrans ADA requirements to become available soon.

7. Staff Reports

7a. **Regional Early Action Planning Grants (REAP)** – Nephele said approximately \$318,000 is available in REAP funds from the 2019 State budget for housing related planning. This regional funding is coming to MCOG, but MCOG has the option of suballocating the funds to local agencies, which is what will be proposed. There has been some delay in getting started, but now that MCOG has approved the JPA Amendment and it’s been ratified by member agencies, the effort is moving forward.

Nephele advised that the Local Early Action Planning program’s timeline has been changed to match up with REAP, thus allowing agencies to combine LEAP with REAP funds. MCOG staff will follow up with local agency planning staff to submit the application to the State by the January deadline.

7b. **Active Transportation Program Cycle 5** – Nephele reported two applications were submitted in Mendocino County. MCOG staff worked with Caltrans staff to prepare and submit an application for the Gualala Downtown Streetscape project for approximately \$7.2 million for construction and additional project development funds. An application was also submitted by the Round Valley Tribe for a Safe Routes to School project in Covelo, on Foothill Blvd. She said staff recommendations are due to be out in February, and she is hopeful both projects will be funded.

Regarding the Gualala application, Nephele advised that MCOG is working with Caltrans to plan a

virtual public workshop to gather feedback on the project, which will take place sometime in early December. More information will be provided once dates are finalized.

7c. Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update – Loretta reported MCOG staff is working with the consultant to schedule the public outreach for the Coordinated Plan update. A virtual workshop is being planned which will combine outreach to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) with outreach to the general public. The tentative workshop date is November 16, and the TAC will also be invited once the date is confirmed. The draft plan will be posted to MCOG’s website when available.

Nephele advised the Coordinated Plan was last updated in 2015 (amended in 2017) and is on a five-year update schedule. She explained the primary purpose of the plan is to assess needs and look at opportunities for coordination and strategies to improve transit and human services transportation. The plan also identifies operating and capital projects to be funded in the FTA 5310 grant program. This project is part of a State contract in which the consultant is updating multiple plans for rural counties.

7d. FY 2021/22 Overall Work Program – Application Cycle (1/15/20 – 12/1/20) – Lexi reported that she recently distributed the call for projects for the FY 2021/22 Overall Work Program, with applications due to MCOG by 12/1/20. She briefly reviewed expected revenues and annual planning contract expenses and estimated there will be approximately \$130,000 for new planning projects. Chantell O’Neal asked that the call for projects announcement be forwarded to her.

7e. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 10 – Due Date Extended to 11/2/20 – Nephele noted the extended application deadline and encouraged agencies to apply for funding under the set-aside categories (Guardrail Upgrades; Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements; Installing Edgelines; Tribes). Jeremy said the City of Willits is talking with Caltrans about the possibility of applying for a street crossing project at Walnut. Alicia said the County is planning to apply under the Guardrail category. Nephele invited agencies to contact MCOG staff for assistance, if needed.

7f. Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) Plan – Nephele noted that an email from Caltrans with links to information on the CAT Plan had been forwarded to TAC members yesterday.

Tasha shared information from Alexis Kelso, the project lead, who was unable to attend today’s meeting. She said the CAT Plan is a statewide effort to identify transportation improvements on, across, or parallel to the state highway system, and Caltrans District 1 is looking at the local network. The links provided include information on the existing conditions report, a partner survey, public survey, and opportunities for coordination.

Tasha reviewed upcoming tasks, and said Caltrans is working on adding the planning process schedule to the events calendar on the CAT website. She said the public survey is live and will be open until the end of the year for the gap analysis phase, and will function for another year or two until the end of the contract. Caltrans will send emails to community organizations across District 1 to get feedback and will be developing an official media tool kit to facilitate information sharing. She said the partner survey is specific to technical advisory groups and local agencies, and she asked members to take the partner survey and share with local agency staff.

Tasha summarized that Caltrans is offering to meet with community groups and will share information collected with MCOG. Caltrans is open to ideas for combining outreach (including tribal) and asked what MCOG is doing for outreach. Nephele said she has viewed the existing conditions report and has been participating on the Technical Advisory Group, along with other participants including representatives from Walk and Bike Mendocino, community members, and some elected officials. She encouraged members to take a look at the CAT plan and partner survey and share the public survey as appropriate, especially noting the importance of areas where the state highway is Main Street.

Nephele advised that MCOG will follow up with Caltrans staff on potential dates for combining outreach efforts, noting that this is a Caltrans Plan, not something for MCOG adoption.

8. Miscellaneous

8a. Next Meeting – November 18, 2020 (*if needed*).

Caltrans FY 2021/22 Sustainable Communities Planning Grants – Tasha reported the final draft grant guidelines for the FY 2021/22 Sustainable Communities grant program have been released for a 30-day comment period. The grant submittal deadline will be determined after comments are received, but will likely be in January 2021, with approvals in April/May and awards in June 2021.

California Transportation Plan 2050 – Tasha advised the CTP 2050 public comment period ends tomorrow, 10/22/20, and she has the link to the document and an email where comments can be submitted. The document can be found by typing/searching CTP 2050. She explained the Plan is a high-level document, similar to a giant RTP for the state. Nephele noted that while the RTP must be fiscally constrained, the CTP is does not have that requirement.

Mendocino Transit Authority – Jacob said MTA has an electric cutaway zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) from Diamond Motors, that MTA is trying out. He invited members to visit the vehicle, noting that it may be gone by tomorrow.

Local Road Safety Plans – Quarterly Reports – Alicia asked if local agencies need to include a report on the LRSPs in their quarterly OWP reports, and Loretta responded that MCOG staff is managing that OWP project and will prepare the quarterly report.

9. Adjournment – approx. 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Loretta Ellard
Deputy Planner

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