

# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

## Approved MINUTES

Monday, October 7, 2019

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers

### ADDITIONAL AUDIOCONFERENCE LOCATION:

Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

### ADDITIONAL MEDIA:

*Find YouTube link at <http://www.mendocinocog.org> under Meetings  
or search Mendocino County Video at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)*

**The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) meets as the Board of Directors of:**  
Mendocino Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and  
Mendocino County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. Present were Directors Brad Mettam (Caltrans/PAC), Jim Brown, Richey Wasserman, Larry Stranske, John Haschak, Tess Albin-Smith, Michael Carter, and Chair Dan Gjerde presiding.

Staff present: Nephela Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director/CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant; Danielle Casey, Project Coordinator; James Sookne, Program Manager, and Alexis Pedrotti, Project Manager.

**2. Convene as RTPA**

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

**4. Public Expression.** Diana Clarke, Executive Director of the Ukiah Senior Center shared comments from Richard Baker of the Willits Senior Center; both expressed gratitude towards Ms. Barrett and Ms. Orth's efforts to help the Senior Centers resolve issues with their transportation contracts under Mendocino Transit Authority.

Ms. Clarke thanked MCOG staff for helping them submit their FTA 5310 application for a vehicle replacement grant. – *refer to Agenda # 5*

**5 - 6. Regular Calendar.**

**5. Public Hearing: Adoption of Resolution Approving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Grant Program Regional Priority List.** Mr. Sookne explained that the FTA Section 5310 Program is intended to provide funding to private non-profit agencies for the purpose of providing transportation services to the elderly and disabled. Of the four applicants for the grant, the Ukiah Senior Center was the only applicant to submit a traditional application (for vehicles and equipment). Mendocino Transit Authority, Coastal Seniors, and Consolidated Tribal Health submitted applications under the expanded program (for operating and mobility management), and thus were not scored by MCOG. The Ukiah Senior Center received a score of 85, which was turned in to Caltrans prior to the meeting.

Ms. Barrett added that the non-traditional applications are scored by Caltrans due to the FTA Section 5310 Program expansion.

**Upon motion** by Director Brown, second by Director Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes –*Mettam/PAC, Brown, Wasserman, Stranske, Haschak, Albin-Smith, Carter, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

**Resolution No. M2019-09**

Approving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310  
Grant Program Regional Priority List  
(Reso. #M2019-09 is incorporated herein by reference)

**6. Presentation: Gualala Downtown Streetscape Project Update and Working Group Report – Frank Demling, Caltrans.** Ms. Barrett provided a brief background of the project, explaining the history of MCOG’s involvement in the project. Presentation handouts were distributed. The draft environmental document had been released in August. The most recent of two working group meeting was well attended, with unanimous consensus on a new compromise for the project. About 175 people attended the public meeting on October 1. Ms Barrett introduced the project manager, Frank Demling.

Mr. Demling gave an overview of the Caltrans draft environmental document for the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Project. The document proposed reconfiguring State Route 1 into two 11-foot-wide travel lanes; a 12-foot-wide, two-way left turn lane; two 5-foot-wide Class II bicycle lanes; and 6-foot-wide sidewalks winding within an 8-foot-wide strip of right of way on both sides of the street, resulting in a 60-foot wide streetscape. About 80 letters were received, with the majority opposed to the removal of on-street parking, so MCOG and Caltrans worked with the community to find a compromise. The plan with the most community support would call for a 64-foot wide streetscape section that would have two 12-foot travel lanes, two 5-foot bike lanes, two one-foot buffers between the bike lanes, two 8-foot parking lanes and two 6-foot sidewalks. Future restriping for a two-way left turn lane (TWLTL) or turn pockets is a possibility. The estimated cost for the 64’ compromise plan is \$3.3M, with MCOG’s portion for construction costs at \$1.8M (current) and \$2.2M escalated. Ms. Barrett added that the item is purely informational and that funding requests for the project will come in the future.

Board discussion and questions included:

- The chosen images were a great resource for people to visualize the project. It presents the concept of making Gualala more walking and biking-friendly. Would a roundabout be a solution to problems with making left turns? Encouraged more off-street parking areas. (Albin-Smith)
- A roundabout would provide more opportunity to create a better flow of movement. Does the revised plan include meandering sidewalks? The landscape would make the town more welcoming. (Wasserman) The community suggested locating a roundabout at the south end of town; the meandering sidewalk landscape was eliminated in the revision. (Demling)

The Chair invited public comment.

George Provencher, a resident of Gualala, participated in both the working group and the community meeting held in Gualala. Both were well represented and brought forth enthusiastic responses from the community, leading to an overall consensus on a compromise plan. He thanked Mr. Demling for a good process and asked that impacts to local businesses be considered.

John Bower, a property owner of Gualala, expressed concern over the lack of parking in Gualala. There are environmental constraints to developing more offsite parking and roundabouts would not accommodate big rig trucks. He would like to continue coming up with different solutions with Mr. Demling.

Ms. Barrett added that the current plan would allow for restriping and a center turn lane as future option. On-street parking will remain part of the plan at this time. Caltrans is considering paving a dirt area near the south end of town for additional parking. This space could include the installation of electric vehicle charging. Mr. Bower then stated that he'd like to see more private charging stations on the coast, since public chargers would take up even more parking space.

Chair Gjerde referred to Ms. Orth as the key person to contact if there are any ideas or questions about electric vehicle charging. Ms. Orth reported that the updated Mendocino County Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Regional Readiness Plan was completed last June. Sonoma Clean Power received a grant under the California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (CALeVIP) for Sonoma and Mendocino counties. The program can pay for up to 80% of the cost of installing charging stations. This program starts October 2020. Director Albin-Smith added that there is a need for multiple kinds of charging outlets that accommodate all makes of electric vehicles.

Tom Murphy of the Gualala Municipal Advisory Committee (GMAC) thanked Ms. Barrett and Mr. Demling for their efforts. The proposed plan will achieve safety goals. GMAC voted 5-0 for this plan and supported an option for individual property owners to opt out of on-street parking for safety or aesthetic reasons in the future. There are currently 20 parking lots available in the project area, with relatively few vehicles parked on the highway. While the new plan will not call for sidewalk landscaping, sidewalks and bike lanes could bring more business to the area. He urged the Board to support the plan when it considers future funding.

Steve May, owner of Surf Market, asked Mr. Demling whether property owners may opt in or out of certain elements of the plan. Mr. Demling explained that there are some components that cannot be opted out of, such as a bike lane, but if there is sufficient off-street parking, the community could consider that option in the future. Mr. May credited Robert Juengling for carrying the project forward and also praised Mr. Demling for finding a compromise the majority of the community could agree on. Surf Market would lose parking under the plan. He also added that a center turn lane was widely unpopular in the community. He does not support the opt-in/out concept as it would prolong disputes and it is important to come together and complete the project.

Robert Juengling, Chair of GMAC, expressed gratitude that the community had come to a consensus and that the public hearing in Gualala had gone so well. He credited Mr. Demling with producing alternatives and appreciated MCOG's support over the years.

Carolyn Decator, marketing director of Surf Market, stated that the option to "opt out" was never shared as a possibility to the community. This creates uncertainty about the agreement to keep on-street parking.

Ms. Barrett praised Mr. Demling for his success in bringing the Gualala community together and supporting a compromise.

With no further public comments, the Chair returned discussion to the Board.

- What are the operational changes? (Wasserman) Mainly turn lanes. Individual businesses need to take some responsibility for their own parking needs and not rely on the State to provide. There is no near-term need to add a two-way turn lane. There will be a more accurate estimate of what is necessary for the new plan after studies using traffic counters are completed. (Demling)
- Does "escalated cost" refer to inflation? (Haschak) Yes.

Chair Gjerde asked staff for next steps. Ms. Barrett reported that today is the due date for funding requests for the 2020 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). In November the Technical Advisory Committee will consider all requests and make a recommendation to the Board for adoption of the final RTIP by the December 15 due date. She confirmed that Caltrans

implements the Gualala project and the cost is shared with MCOG. The total RTIP fund estimate is \$3.2 million for the 2020 cycle.

**7 - 11. Consent Calendar.** Upon motion by Director Wasserman, second by Director Albin-Smith, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – *Mettam/PAC, Brown, Wasserman, Stranske, Haschak, Albin-Smith, Carter, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent) IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved:

**7. Approval of August 19, 2019 Minutes – as written**

**8. Approval of FY 2019/20 Budget Amendment: California State of Good Repair Program – Mendocino Transit Authority’s Ukiah Transit Center Project – to reflect MCOG’s August 19, 2019 allocation of \$388,597 from the first three years of State of Good Repair funds**

**9. Approval of Second Amendment to Fiscal Year 2019/20 Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP) - To reprogram unexpended prior-year planning funds, increasing total OWP funding from \$1,064,430 to \$1,133,141, an increase of \$68,711 (\$28,314 Rural Planning Assistance and \$40,397 Local Transportation Funds) in carryover funds.**

**10. Award of Fiscal Auditor Engagement for MCOG and Mendocino Transit Authority Audits, Fiscal Years 2018/19 Through 2022/23 – to R.J. Ricciardi, Inc., Certified Public Accountants**

**11. Appointments to Transit Productivity Committee – Senior Center Representatives – Diana Clarke of Ukiah Senior Center and Richard Baker of Willits Harrah Senior Center as Alternate**

**12. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee - Reconvene as RTPA - Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee.** Upon motion by Michael Carter, second by John Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes –*Brown, Wasserman, Stranske, Haschak, Albin-Smith, Carter, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent) IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

### **13. Reports - Information**

- a. Mendocino Transit Authority. Chair Gjerde and Ms. Barrett discussed MTA’s progress. Ms. Barrett reported on MCOG Administration staff’s recent technical assistance with the senior centers, dealing with MTA contracted transportation services.
- b. North Coast Railroad Authority. Ms. Ellard noted that the last NCRA meeting was cancelled so there was no report.
- c. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to her written staff report.
- d. MCOG Administration Staff - Ms. Barrett introduced Danielle Casey, the new project coordinator.
- e. MCOG Planning Staff. Ms. Ellard reported that MCOG is almost through with procurement of a consultant for the Fire Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan. A committee made up of members from the County CEO’s office, Sheriff’s office, Office of Emergency Services, Department of Transportation, Caltrans and MCOG reviewed five proposals and found a unanimous top proposal.
- f. MCOG Directors. Director Albin-Smith gave a report from a meeting Senator McGuire attended and planned to speak with him again this afternoon. She commented on the

competition rural counties face when competing against larger counties for funding, noting that MTA's federal grant application to purchase an electric bus was denied. Ms. Barrett added that no rural applicants were successful under that program.

Director Haschak asked for any news on the Covelo trail project. Ms. Barrett reported that MCOG is making progress with the consultants on right-of-way and environmental mitigations. MCOG hopes to start construction next year, and staff will be coming to the board in the next months to appoint an ad hoc committee to assist with the project.

- g. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. There was no report.

**15. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant