

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES

Transit Productivity Committee - TPC

April 26, 2021

Audio-video Teleconference

PRESENT:

MCOG Board Members: Dan Gerde, Jim O. Brown
MTA Board Members: Jim Tarbell, Tess Albin-Smith
Senior Centers Rep.: Jill Rexrode, Redwood Coast Seniors (Alt.)
Staff & Others: Nephele Barrett, Janet Orth, James Sookne and Monica Galliani, MCOG
Jacob King, Mark Harvey, Dawn White, MTA
Rachael McDavid, Ukiah Senior Center

ABSENT:

None

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Gjerde called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. Participants on the call were identified.

2. **Public Expression.** None.

3. **Review and Recommendation on MTA's Analysis and Prioritization of 2021/22 Unmet Transit Needs.**

Janet introduced the annual process and current status. MTA's analysis of the list of all testimony compiled by MCOG from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) and the December public hearing was included in the agenda packet. The report was ranked by five categories: *Already Exists* (5), *High Priority–Consider for FY 21/22* (4), *Medium Priority* (3), *Low Priority* (1), and *Non-Qualifying Unmet Needs* (1), for a total of 14 needs. Jacob and the group reviewed each need on the list.

- “Already Exists” – Jacob assured that #S-5, Restoration of COVID-related service cuts and #M-4, Resumption of Route 65 service, are both in progress with a phased approach as quickly as MTA can deliver full service; Route 65 (to/from Sonoma County) is at 50 percent service now. #S-4, Willits weekday door-through-door service after 4pm and weekend service, is provided by Willits Seniors through a Dial-A-Ride contract with MTA. Rachael will research background on how #S-2, Wednesday service for Ukiah Senior Center was cut back. Jacob noted #S-6, Fixed Route service to Hopland, is provided by Route 65 currently with one trip each direction until restored to two trips.
- “High Priority–Consider for FY 2021/22” – Nephele explained that all four needs are inter-related: #S-9, Mobility solutions for remote communities; #S-7, Fixed-route service to Potter Valley; #S-8, Service to Covelo and Laytonville; and #M-2, Additional Ukiah-Hopland round trip. MCOG has applied for a Caltrans planning grant for a feasibility study on innovative approaches to serve remote inland communities in Mendocino County, such as micro-transit and ride/car sharing. Caltrans expects to announce awards in June.
- “Medium Priority” – Under #M-5, Round-trip service from Ukiah to South Coast and from Ukiah to Fort Bragg/Mendocino, Jacob reported that MTA is adding service to a segment on Route 60 for between Navarro and The Woods in Little River, increasing the availability of rides to a whole community. #S-3, Brooktrails fixed-route service, is part of the grant proposal for study. #S-1, Non-emergency medical transportation for patients discharged from hospitals during transit off-hours, was discussed at length. – *see below*
- “Low Priority” – #M-3, Research on clean mobility grants for bikes and scooters, also had extensive discussion and interest. Another term than “low priority” might be more apropos. This type of service is not found in the Transportation Development Act (TDA) and could not meet the four conditions for “reasonable to meet” by MCOG’s adopted definition.
- “Non-Qualifying Unmet Needs” – #M-1, Full service the day after Thanksgiving holiday, could not be met due to MTA’s contract with the labor union. Partial service is in place.

Questions and discussion included:

- The transformative COVID pandemic economy caused MTA to make layoffs and cuts to service; restoring service involves difficulties of recruiting and hiring. (Jacob)
- #S-1, Non-emergency medical trips for patients discharged from hospitals, was first introduced by Adventist Health in Willits. In MCOG's updated Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan, options are identified for funding; MediCal is a primary source. Unsure of FTA Section 5310 potential. What would be a reasonable range/distance for such trips? According to Adventist Health, currently Redwood Taxi is providing trips; however the fares are too high for some. (Group)
- #M-3, Research into bicycles and scooters, has merit. These could help to meet first/last mile needs. Who would administer such a program? MTA has looked at rentals; issues included numerous variables such as fare structure, maintenance, vandalism. Private companies are more appropriate managers than transit operators for a bike sharing enterprise. This works better in an urban setting. One model is that a large company establishes and a local nonprofit takes over service. Walk & Bike Mendocino is a possible candidate. This could be part of the scope of MCOG's proposed planning grant to study feasibility of mobility solutions in remote communities. (Group)
- Suggestion to add climate adaptation to definitions of unmet transit needs. MCOG's definitions were adopted in 1998 and are due for review. Climate and sustainability are part of current grants and plans. (Tess, Janet)

Jim Brown moved to recommend on three approaches identified during discussion for further research, study and partnerships; seconded by Jim Tarbell. **Discussion on the motion:** It was noted that MTA also has applied for a Caltrans planning grant, to update its Short Range Transit Development Plan, which will provide analysis and help to identify strategies. The motion makers accepted a friendly amendment to add MTA's proposal to the recommended actions. Ukiah Senior Center will explore meeting needs for its transportation services, including potential FTA Section 5310 grant funding. Janet asked for a separate motion on the formal unmet needs finding to be reported to Caltrans, also agreed to. The committee found it premature to attempt additional service under the continuing pandemic conditions. Both motions carried as detailed below.

Recommendations:

Upon motion by Tarbell, seconded by Brown, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Gjerde, Brown, Tarbell, Albin-Smith, Rexrode; 0 Noes; 0 Absent*), the TPC recommended a finding that “there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet” for Fiscal Year 2021/22.

Upon motion by Brown, seconded by Tarbell, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Gjerde, Brown, Tarbell, Albin-Smith, Rexrode; 0 Noes; 0 Absent*), the TPC further recommended that:

- 1) The MCOG Board of Directors support further study through Caltrans planning grant proposals submitted in the current cycle by MCOG and MTA staffs, to be better positioned to meet several of the listed needs, such as #S-9 “*Mobility solutions for remote communities*” and related service to Brooktrails, Potter Valley, Covelo, and Laytonville.
- 2) MTA staff research opportunities with outside partners such as Adventist Health to meet #S-1 “*Non-emergency medical transportation for patients discharged from hospitals during transit service off-hours.*”
- 3) MCOG staff work with Walk & Bike Mendocino meet #M-3 “*Research on clean mobility grants for bikes and scooters.*”

4. Review and Recommendation on Fiscal Year 2021/22 Transit Claim. Janet gave an overview of her written report, noting an increase in available Local Transportation Funds for transit of 14.7% or \$522,554 above the past two years's amount, reaching \$4 million for the first time. The senior centers are expected to receive the same percentage increase for their transportation program under contracts with MTA. A copy of MTA's claim was included in the agenda packet. Staff found the claim reasonable with no issues identified.

Discussion and questions included:

- When can the senior centers know the amounts available for their budgets? MTA is preparing those numbers and will have that information available soon. (Jill, Dawn)
- What was the outcome of the recent insurance/vehicle maintenance issue? That is on a need-to-know basis and can be provided outside this meeting. (Nephele, Jacob)
- Why did MTA claim STA for operations when capital purposes are more readily eligible for the program? MTA found its available funding sources were already capital heavy. (Janet, Jacob)
- The CARES Act and new CRRSAA federal coronavirus relief funds were discussed. (Group)

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Brown, seconded by Albin-Smith, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (5 Ayes – Gjerde, Brown, Tarbell, Albin-Smith, Rexrode; 0 Noes; 0 Absent), the TPC recommended that MCOG allocate full funding of MTA’s claim as presented.

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	3,434,291	
Unmet Transit Needs	0	
Senior Center Operations	637,376	
Transit Capital Reserve	0	
Total LTF		4,071,667
State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)		
MTA Operations	455,221	
MTA & Seniors Capital	200,000	
Transit Capital Reserve	0	
Total STA		655,221
Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)		
MTA Capital, Current Year	0	
Senior Capital, Current Year	0	
Long-Term Capital Reserve	696,296	
Total CRF		696,296
Total Recommended FY 2021/22 Transit Allocation		5,423,184

5. Review and Recommendation on MCOG Standards. Janet provided a written staff report recapping where this issue left off last year. In May 2019 staff was directed to research options for Passengers per Hour, brought back to the TPC in May 2020. This is the remaining standard due for adjustment; no action has been taken. Staff recommended continuing this item to a future meeting. Discussion included:

- When is the next TPC meeting anticipated? To address unfinished business, another workshop with the senior centers should be scheduled, followed by another TPC meeting. It would be advisable to meet during May and June. (Dan, Nephele)
- Can climate metrics be added to MCOG’s standards? The adopted standards are connected to codes in Transportation Development Act (TDA) law. Would anything prohibit MCOG assessing, for instance, carbon emissions per passenger mile? While not under TDA or CEQA, it could be done additionally. (Jim T., Janet, Dan, Nephele)
- Could transit standards for climate be connected to Regional Transportation Plan goals? Yes, metrics from the updated 2022 RTP could be reviewed for potential recommendation during TPC review. (Janet, Nephele)

The item was continued to the next meeting.

6. Annual Review of MTA Performance Reports Against MCOG Standards. Janet briefly noted findings of her analysis, as documented in the written staff report. In summary, the three-year average compared with last year’s review changed only slightly, despite the pandemic conditions of the past year. After a tough year, all service types met the goal of at least two of three standards over the past three years. Staff recommended acknowledgement of good performance under the circumstances. In discussion, no productivity improvements were considered at this time.

Service Type	2020	3-Yr Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) dropped by 1 (Cost/Hr) in 2020, maintained same 3-yr average	1 of 4	2 of 4
Short Distance Bus Routes maintained same (Farebox) in 2020, added Cost/Hour met over 3 years	1 of 4	2 of 4
Long Distance Routes dropped by 1 (Cost/Passenger) in 2020, maintained 3-year average	2 of 4	4 of 4
Senior Centers met Cost/Hr (replacing Passengers/Hour) in 2020, dropped by 1 in 3-year average (Cost/Passenger) – see note in staff report about Farebox reporting; Pass/Hr is met within margin of error for 3-yr average, at 2.9 (standard is 3.0)	2 of 4	3 of 4

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Albin-Smith, seconded by Tarbell, and carried unanimously by roll call vote (5 Ayes – Gjerde, Brown, Tarbell, Albin-Smith, Rexrode; 0 Noes; 0 Absent), the TPC recommended acknowledgement of good performance by MTA and the Senior Centers under the difficulties and challenges of this past year with the pandemic.

– *Annual Transit Performance Reviews (one year and three years) are attached*

7. Miscellaneous / Members’ Concerns / Announcements. None.

8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Submitted by Janet Orth, Deputy Director / CFO

Mendocino Council of Governments

Annual Transit Performance Review

January 1 - December 31, 2020

Note: Starting with April 2020 review, seasonal quarters are discontinued, replaced with fiscal quarters.

MCOG Standards	Passengers per Hour	Farebox Ratio	Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	Cost per Passenger
<i>When comparing to performance:</i>				
	Higher # is better	Higher # is better	Lower # is better	Lower # is better
Dial-A-Ride				
Jan, Feb, Mar 2020	2.9	13%	\$88.18	\$30.41
Apr, May, June 2020	2.1	11%	\$119.02	\$57.22
July, Aug, Sept 2020	3.3	20%	\$71.30	\$21.61
Oct, Nov, Dec 2020	2.8	16%	\$71.44	\$25.51
Annual Average	2.8	15.0%	\$87.49	\$33.69
Standard	4.5	10.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$81.69	\$18.15
Result	not met	✓	not met	not met
Short Distance Bus Routes *				
Jan, Feb, Mar 2020	6.8	19%	\$112.32	\$16.52
Apr, May, June 2020	3.8	18%	\$140.49	\$37.27
July, Aug, Sept 2020	7.8	25%	\$93.45	\$12.01
Oct, Nov, Dec 2020	7.3	29%	\$88.45	\$12.12
Annual Average	6.4	22.8%	\$108.68	\$19.48
Standard	14.0	10.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$102.39	\$7.31
Result	not met	✓	not met	not met
Long Distance Routes **				
Jan, Feb, Mar 2020	4.4	12%	\$132.32	\$30.07
Apr, May, June 2020	2.2	14%	\$275.96	\$126.59
July, Aug, Sept 2020	5.3	17%	\$119.58	\$22.56
Oct, Nov, Dec 2020	5.1	19%	\$115.45	\$22.64
Annual Average	4.2	15.5%	\$160.83	\$50.46
Standard	3.2	10.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$122.72	\$38.35
Result	✓	✓	not met	not met
Senior Centers				
Jan, Feb, Mar 2020	2.7	24.3%	\$65.25	\$23.81
Apr, May, June 2020	2.4	26.0%	\$63.76	\$26.50
July, Aug, Sept 2020	1.5	3.9%	\$53.08	\$34.72
Oct, Nov, Dec 2020	1.6	15.3%	\$70.10	\$44.25
Annual Average	2.1	17.4%	\$63.05	\$32.32
Standard	3.0	10.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$66.43	\$22.14
Result	not met	✓	✓	not met

* Includes 1 Willits Local, 5 Bragg About, 7 Jitney, 9 Ukiah Local

** Includes 20 Willits/Ukiah, 60 Coaster, 65/66 CC Rider, 75 Gualala/Ukiah, 95 Point Arena/Santa Rosa

NOTES:

"CPI Adjusted Rolling Average" uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Annual Average, All Urban Consumers, California, percent change from corresponding calendar year to year, added to each of the past three years and averaged.

Check-mark symbol indicates the standard was met.

Cost per Passenger is the result of Cost per Hour divided by Passengers per Hour (may differ slightly from MTA report).

Round-off errors may occur between MTA's report and this summary, or differences from number of decimal places entered.

Inland and Coast routes were changed by TPC recommendation to "Short Distance" and "Long Distance" respectively.

MCOG Board adopted 10% Farebox Ration standard on June 3, 2019 as recommended by TPC.

Reporting of Farebox by certain Senior Centers is inconsistent with TDA, thereby affecting average performance for all.

Mendocino Council of Governments Annual Transit Performance Review

3 Years: January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2020

Note: Starting with April 2020 review, seasonal quarters are discontinued, replaced with fiscal quarters.

MCOG Standards	Passengers per Hour	Farebox Ratio	Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	Cost per Passenger	Cost/Hr Annual CPI adj.
<i>When comparing to performance:</i>					
	Higher # is better	Higher # is better	Lower # is better	Lower # is better	
Dial-A-Ride					
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2018	3.0	11.5%	\$74.11	\$25.12	\$76.84 3.69%
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2019	3.3	23.8%	\$76.96	\$23.03	\$79.27 3.00%
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020	2.8	15.0%	\$87.49	\$33.69	\$88.95 1.67%
3-Year Average	3.0	16.8%	\$79.52	\$27.28	\$81.69 2.79%
Standard	4.5	10.0%	NA	NA	
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$81.69	\$18.15	Cost/Hr divided by Pass/Hr standard
Result	not met	✓	✓	not met	
Short Distance Bus Routes					
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2018	7.1	25.5%	\$88.96	\$12.91	\$92.24
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2019	7.7	35.5%	\$101.38	\$13.19	\$104.42
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020	6.4	22.8%	\$108.68	\$19.48	\$110.49
3-Year Average	7.1	27.9%	\$99.67	\$15.19	\$102.39
Standard	14.0	10.0%	NA	NA	
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$102.39	\$7.31	
Result	not met	✓	✓	not met	
Long Distance Routes					
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2018	3.8	14.3%	\$84.66	\$25.05	\$87.79
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2019	4.7	21.8%	\$113.47	\$25.08	\$116.87
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020	4.2	15.5%	\$160.83	\$50.46	\$163.51
3-Year Average	4.2	17.2%	\$119.65	\$33.53	\$122.72
Standard	3.2	10.0%	NA	NA	
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$122.72	\$38.35	
Result	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Senior Centers					
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2018	3.6	29.4%	\$62.89	\$17.85	\$65.21
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2019	3.0	30.3%	\$67.94	\$22.56	\$69.98
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2020	2.1	17.4%	\$63.05	\$32.32	\$64.10
3-Year Average	2.9	25.7%	\$64.63	\$24.24	\$66.43
Standard	3.0	10.0%	NA	NA	
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$66.43	\$22.14	
Result	✓	✓	✓	not met	

NOTES:

"CPI Adjusted Rolling Average" uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Annual Average, All Urban Consumers, California, percent change from corresponding calendar year to year, added to each of the past three years and averaged. Check-mark symbol indicates the standard was met. Cost per Passenger is the result of Cost per Hour divided by Passengers per Hour (may differ slightly from MTA report). Round-off errors may occur between MTA's report and this summary, or differences based on number of decimal places entered. Inland and Coast routes were changed by TPC recommendation to "Short Distance" and "Long Distance" respectively. MCOG Board adopted 10% Farebox Ration standard on June 3, 2019 as recommended by TPC. Reporting of Farebox by certain Senior Centers is inconsistent with TDA, thereby affecting average performance for all.