

# Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County

Covelo, Laytonville, Brooktrails, Potter Valley and Hopland

Presentation to the MCOG Board of Directors, April 3, 2023



# Agenda

- Why MCOG undertook this study and the AMMA team's approach.
- What we learned from the 5 communities about their mobility needs.
- A presentation and discussion of the developing Action Plan.



## Five Rural Communities Without Public Transit Service

- Covelo
- Laytonville
- Potter Valley
- Brooktrails
- Hopland\*

# Study Goals

- Recognize long-standing unmet transportation needs – where rural geography and small populations make traditional transit unsustainable
- Bottom-up, community-based identification of needs
- Innovative solutions to address hard-to-serve trips

**DO YOU NEED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FROM YOUR COMMUNITY TO UKIAH, WILLITS OR BEYOND?**  
**¿NECESITA SERVICIO DE TRANSPORTE DE TU COMUNIDAD A UKIAH, WILLITS O MÁS ALLÁ?**

**Do you need a way to get around your local community?**  
**¿Necesita una forma de moverse por su comunidad local?**

**Take our 5-minute survey and be entered in a drawing for one of five \$100 Gift Cards!**  
**¡Tome nuestra encuesta de 5 minutos y participe en un sorteo de una de las cinco tarjetas de regalo de \$100!**

**Mendocino Council of Governments is studying transportation needs and possible solutions in your community.** Please take five minutes to complete our on-line survey and tell us about your transportation needs and priorities.

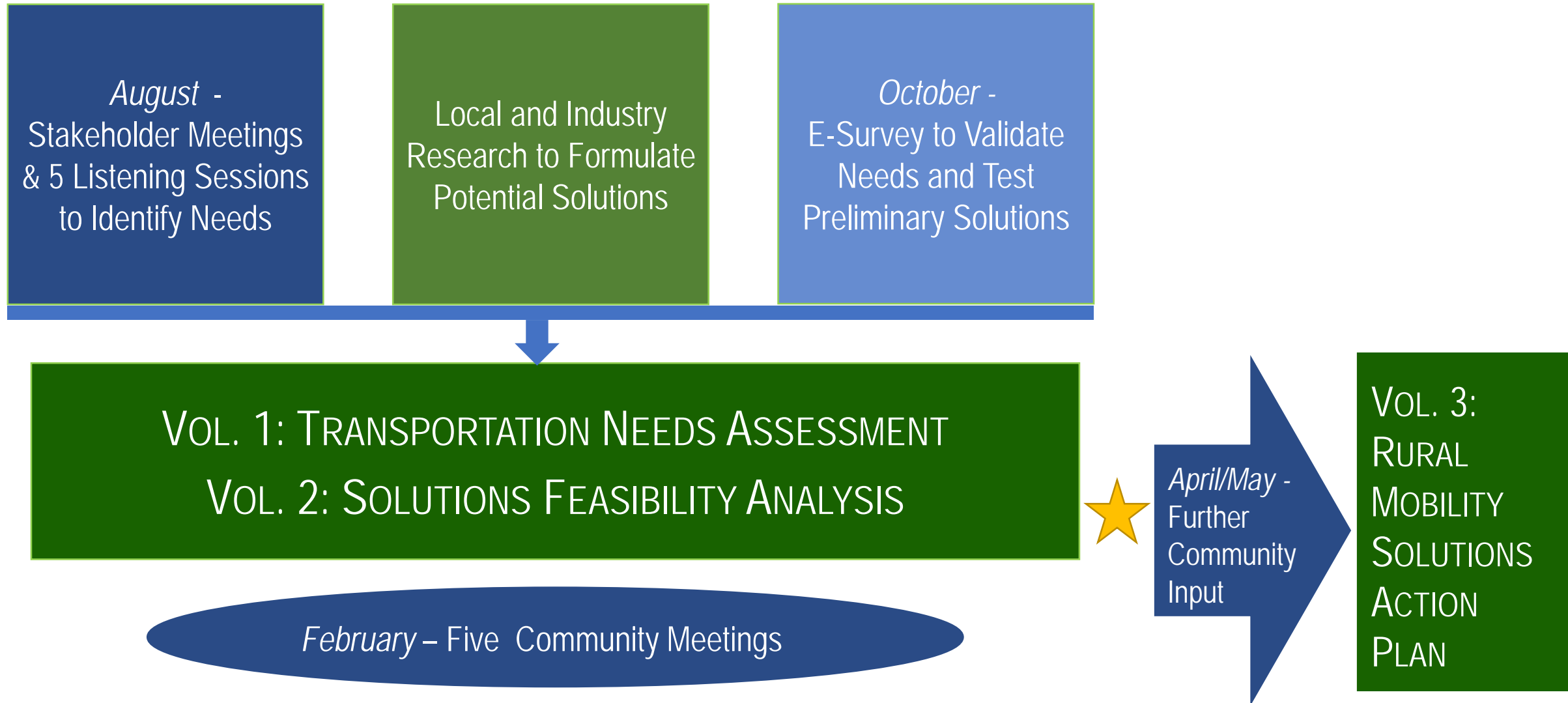
**Consejo de Gobiernos de Mendocino estudia necesidades de transporte y posibles soluciones en tu comunidad.** Tómese cinco minutos para completar nuestra encuesta en línea y cuéntenos sobre sus necesidades y prioridades de transporte.

Just scan the QR Code or enter this URL to go to the survey: [www.bit.ly/MCOGMobility](http://www.bit.ly/MCOGMobility)  
Simplemente escanee el código QR o ingrese esta URL para ir a la encuesta: [www.bit.ly/MCOGMobility](http://www.bit.ly/MCOGMobility)

# Principles to Guide Mobility Solutions and Assess Feasibility

1. Address market needs, prioritizing lifeline service connections over trips for improved convenience
  - Potential for sustainable transferability to other isolated Mendocino County communities
2. Build upon existing partnerships to encourage community-buy-in
3. Embrace innovation
  - Supporting the customer experience and/or improving operating efficiency
4. Encourage reduced vehicle miles traveled, shared-ride trip-making and/or achievable zero emissions
5. Be financially sustainable, with reasonable start-up costs:
  - Small-scale, levels of service sufficient to test demand
  - Opportunities for efficiencies identified; e.g. minimizing deadhead
  - Reasonable service unit costs – e.g. *cost per passenger trip* or *cost per vehicle mile* - while reflecting rural transportation
6. Measure utilization and costs to assess success

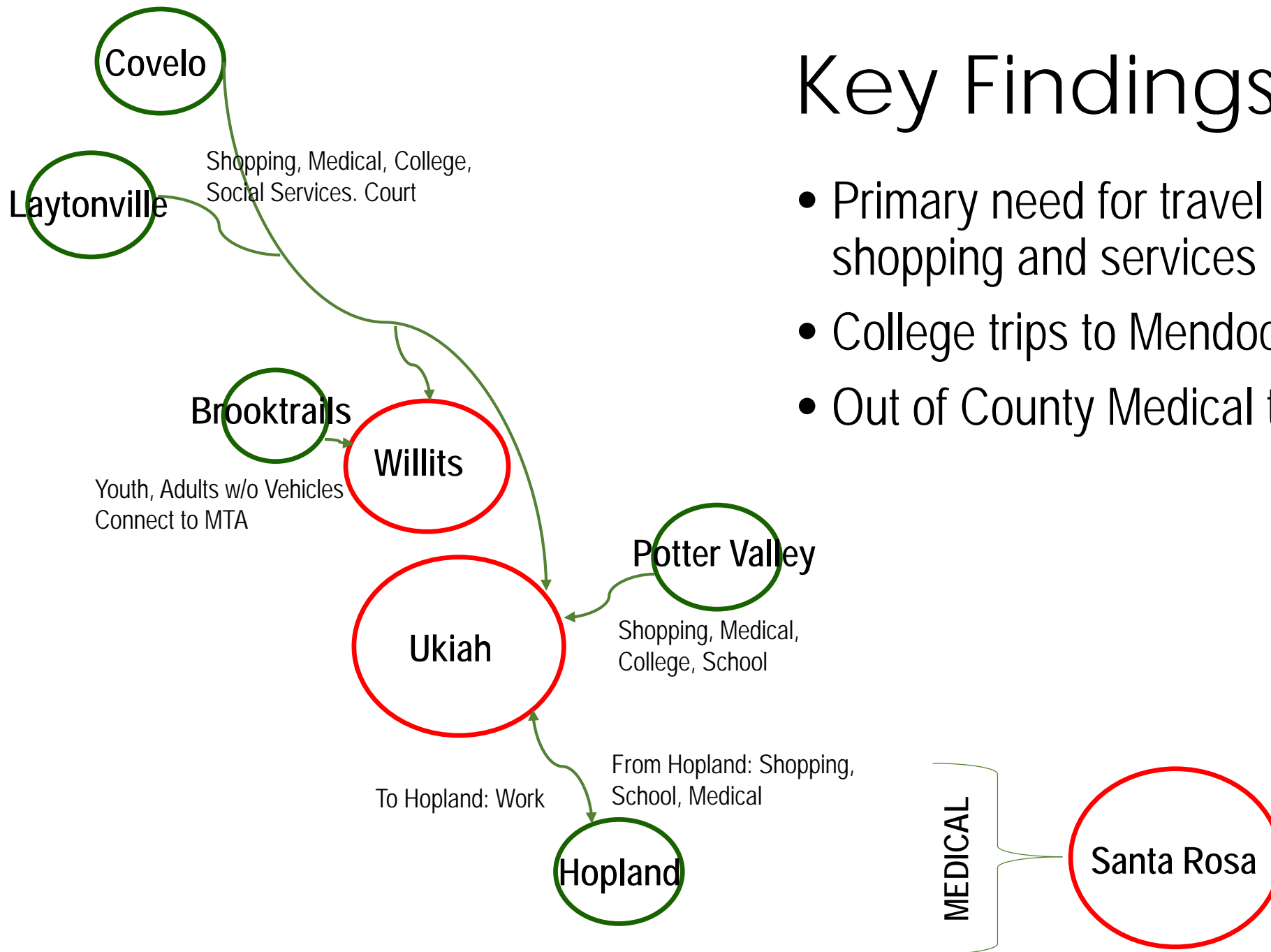
# Mobility Solutions Study Approach



# Market Needs

# Key Findings

- Primary need for travel to Ukiah/Willits for shopping and services
- College trips to Mendocino College
- Out of County Medical to Santa Rosa


























# Potential Mobility Solutions




# Potential Mobility Solutions

To Address Identified Needs in Each Community

## Lifeline Mobility Needs

Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/ Shuttle to Ukiah					
Community Van					
Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement					
Community Ride Board					
App-Based Car Share					

## Daily Transportation

Scheduled Transportation Brooktrails-Willits					
Expanded Dial-A-Ride					
Work Transportation Ukiah-Hopland					

**Covelo**

**Laytonville**

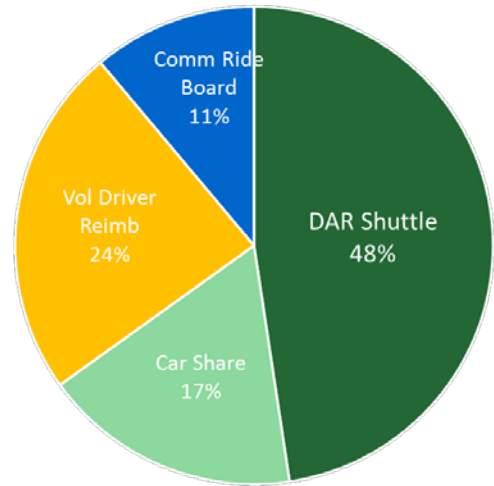
**Potter Valley**

**Brooktrails**

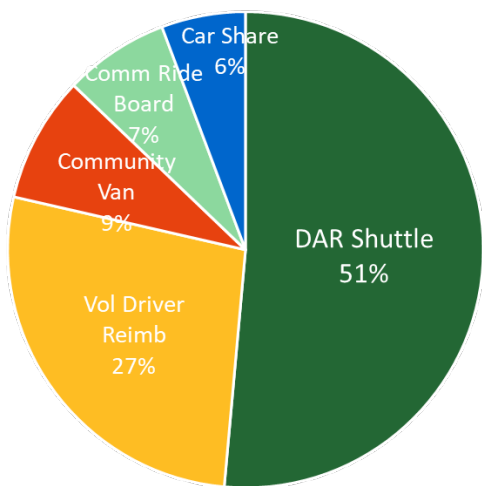
**Hopland**

Rural Mendocino County Communities Without Public Transportation

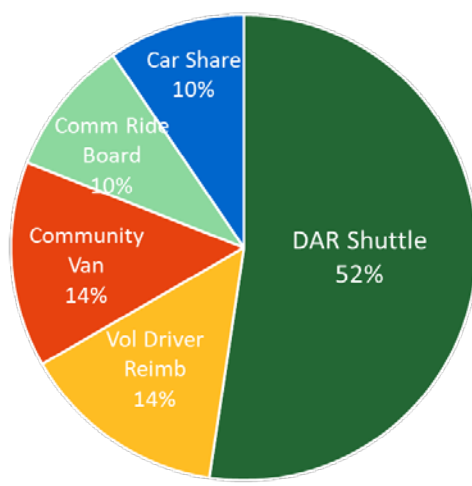
Covelo: Preferred Solution



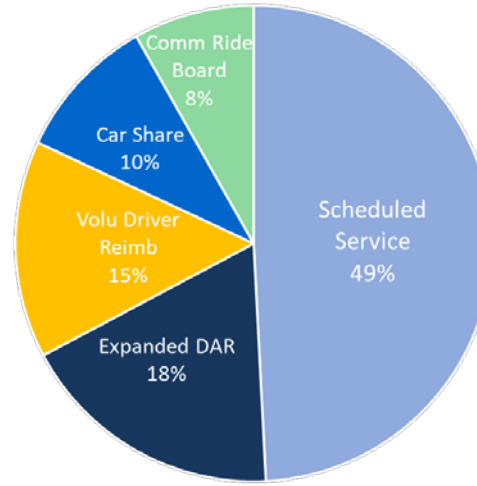
Laytonville: Preferred Solution



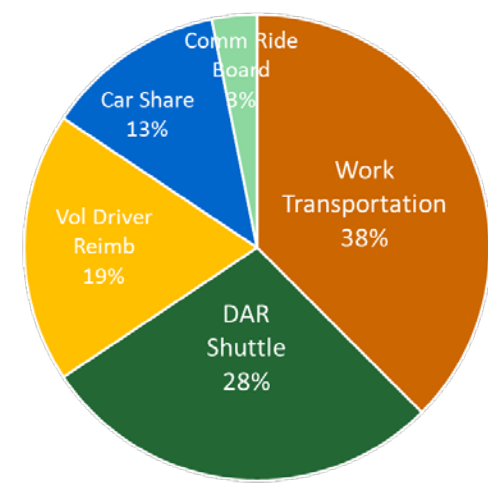
Potter Valley: Preferred Solution



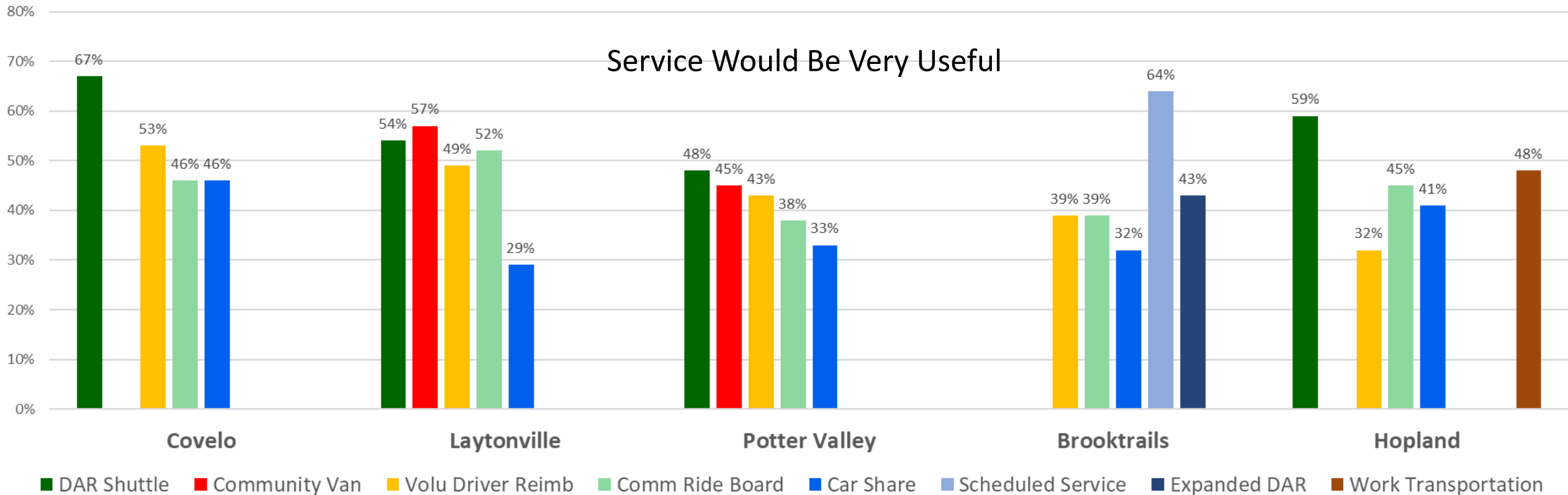
Brooktrails: Preferred Solution



Hopland: Preferred Solution



### Service Would Be Very Useful



# Tested Mobility Options

## Developed Responsive to Each Community

- Vehicle-based
  - Dial-a-Ride Hybrid Shuttle
  - Community Van
  - Brooktrails Dial-a-Ride Expansion
  - Brooktrails MTA Expansion
  - Hopland Work Trips - Shuttle or User Side Subsidy (taxi trips)
- Support Services
  - Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement
  - Electronic Ride Share Board
  - App-based Car Share

# Tested Mobility Options

## Modified by February Community Input

- Vehicle-based
  - Dial-a-Ride Hybrid Shuttle/Community Van
  - Brooktrails Dial-a-Ride Expansion
  - Brooktrails MTA Expansion – S RTP
  - ~~Hopland Work Trip Shuttle or User Side Subsidy (taxi trips)~~
  - Additional MTA service to Hopland - S RTP
- Support Services
  - Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement
  - Electronic Ride Share Board
  - ~~App-based Car Share~~
  - College student trip solution

# College Trip Needs

Home Community	Need to Travel to College (Ukiah or Willits)	Preferred Solution								
		Comm Ride Board	Vol Driver Reimb	DAR/Shuttle	Sched Transp	Work Transp	Exp DAR	Car Share	Comm Van	
Brooktrails	36%	5%	9%	0%	<b>77%</b>	0%	5%	5%	0%	
Covelo	48%	7%	<b>38%</b>	<b>41%</b>	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%	
Laytonville	47%	6%	<b>34%</b>	<b>41%</b>	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%	
Potter Valley	33%	7%	14%	<b>50%</b>	0%	0%	0%	7%	21%	
Hopland	59%	0%	<b>29%</b>	18%	0%	<b>47%</b>	0%	6%	0%	

# How to Move Forward

# Challenges of Implementing Rural Mobility Solutions

- No single strategy sufficient - mix of low-cost services to address multiple mobility needs
- Finding sustainable funding difficult
- Leadership critical for successful implementation, promotion and management -
  - Role of MTA
  - Role of MCOG
  - Who leads rural mobility efforts?





# Mendocino County Rural CTSA

## Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Authorization

*Social Services Transportation Improvement Act, 1979 (AB 120)*

- Designated by the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA )
  - “to improve transportation service required by social service recipients by promoting the consolidation of social service transportation services”.
- Many different CTSA structures – public agency, non-profit, JPA, etc.
  - RTPA may not be a CTSA.
- Up to 5% of the County’s TDA, Local Transportation Fund (LTF) may be allocated to CTSA operations by the RTPA.
- More than one CTSA can be designated within a County.

# Characteristics of a Rural CTSA

- Sustainable Funding
  - Earmark a small portion of LTF for rural community mobility services
  - Provide focal point for securing additional funding from other sources
- Leadership
  - Build local, community support and utilization of mobility services
  - Engage regional partners to provide support, funding and other contributions
- Service Implementation
  - Bundle innovative mobility solutions
  - Address small scale demand with affordable responses
  - Measure performance/ evaluate service effectiveness
  - Adjust service mix to meet rural community needs

# Mendocino County Rural CTSA (up to 5% of LTF $\approx$ \$250K)

## Rural Mobility Manager

Pursuit of relevant funding/ partnership opportunities

Countywide Mileage  
Reimbursement  
5310 Funded

Gas and Insurance \$  
for Potter Valley FRC  
to operate existing  
vehicle

Driver and Vehicle for  
Laytonville/Covelo  
DAR Shuttle and  
Community Van

Additional Vehicle  
and Budget for  
Willits Senior Center  
to Expand DAR in  
Brooktrails

Rideshare Incentive  
for Rural College  
Commuters –  
Collaborate with  
Mendocino College

Oversight of Community Ride  
Boards

Consolidator/sharer of  
information regarding other  
Rural Mobility Solutions

# Mendocino County Rural CTSA

## Rural Mobility Manager

Pursuit of relevant funding/ partnership opportunities

Countywide Mileage Reimbursement  
5310 Funded

Gas and Insurance \$ for Potter Valley FRC to operate existing vehicle

Driver and Vehicle for Laytonville/Covelo DAR Shuttle and Community Van

Additional Vehicle and Budget for Willits Senior Center to Expand DAR in Brooktrails

Rideshare Incentive for Rural College Commuters – Collaborate with Mendocino College

Oversight of Community Ride Boards

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# Covelo & Laytonville

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Potter Valley

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Collaborate with  
Mendocino College

## Brooktrails

MTA SRTP – Dev. Fixed Route

Oversight of Community Ride  
Boards

Consolidator/sharer of  
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Rideshare Incentive  
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Mendocino College

## Hopland

MTA SRTP – Additional Trips

Oversight of Community Ride  
Boards

Consolidator/sharer of  
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Rural Mobility Solutions

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# Where to House a Rural CTSA?



# Where to House a Rural CTSA?

## *Benefits*



- Existing infrastructure
- Countywide Transit Authority
- Institutional expertise in public transportation
- Currently designated as a CTSA
- Innovative partnership with Senior Centers
- Upcoming SRTP process



Family Resource  
Center Network

- Countywide network
- Existing administrative structure
- Successful grant experience
- Focal point for local relationships/partners
- Work directly with potential rural transit users
- Flexibility to identify and respond rapidly to community needs
- Lower cost structure of non-profit
- Rural Mobility Manger – a rural job

# Where to House a Rural CTSA?

## *Challenges*



- Higher cost structure
- More rules and requirements governing service delivery
- Mission focused on more populated areas of Mendocino County
- SRTP focused on building back ridership within existing service footprint
- Decision to implement rural solutions will be more than a year out



Family Resource  
Center Network

- Very limited transportation expertise
- Start-up challenges
- Need to identify and pursue supplementary funding

# Funding Possibilities

- Earmark a portion of LTF (up to 5%) for rural communities
  - 5% = Approximately \$250,000
- What additional funding is possible?
  - FTA Section 5310 – for seniors and persons with disabilities
  - FTA Section 5312 – Public Transportation Innovation Projects
  - Rural Transportation Assistance Program – Community Rides Grants
  - CARB Clean Mobility Options - \$s for electric vehicle capital & operations
  - Local Partnerships and donations

# How CTSA Funding Can Be Expanded

- 5310 Funding for Senior/Disabled Services
  - Mobility Manager Position – 50% CTSA funding + 50% 5310 funding
  - Volunteer Driver Reimbursement Program, Countywide – 100% 5310 funding
  - Hybrid DAR Shuttle/Community Van – LTF funding for general public trips + 5310 funding for senior and disabled trips
- Partnership with other Community Organizations
  - Example: Partnership with Mendocino College and/or Tribes to provide rideshare mileage incentive for college students from disadvantaged communities

# Advantages of a Rural CTSA

- Leadership on Rural Mobility
- Sustainable funding base
- Ability to pursue additional discretionary \$s
- Opportunity for innovative solutions tailored to each community
- Potential for lower cost operations, under a non-profit

Potential to address other rural areas of Mendocino County

# Alternatives to a Rural CTSA

- Rely on MTA SRTP process to address needs
- Rely on individual communities to shape and fund these solutions
- Continue determination that these needs are “not reasonable to meet”

# Discussion



# Next Steps

# Study Next Steps

## March/ April

- Forming recommendations: define program elements and determine costs
- Identify implementation activities and steps
- Prepare Rural Mobility Action Plan Recommendations

## May

- Plan for, Promote & Conduct Recommendations' Zoom TAG Meeting #4 (*1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May?*)
- Plan for, Promote & Conduct Recommendations' Community Zoom Workshop (*1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May?*)

## June/July

- Develop **Vol. 3 – Rural Mobility Action Plan**

## August

- Final Public Hearing, August 14<sup>th</sup>
- Present Rural Mobility Study Findings and Action Plan to MCOG and MTA Board Members, August 14<sup>th</sup>
- Finalized **Vol. 3 – Rural Mobility Action Plan**