

# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES  
Monday, August 22, 2011  
Ukiah City Council Chambers

ADDITIONAL AUDIOCONFERENCE LOCATION:  
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

**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 1:38 p.m. with Directors Rex Jackman (Caltrans/PAC) on the conference phone, Larry Stranske, John Pinches, Kendall Smith, Susan Ranochak, and Dan Gjerde present; Chair Gjerde presiding. Lauren Sinnott arrived soon after; Mari Rodin was absent.

Staff present: Phil Dow, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration; Loretta Ellard, Assistant Executive Director; and Nephele Barrett, Senior Planner.

**2. Convene as RTPA**

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

**Public Expression.** None.

**4 - 6. Regular Calendar.**

**4. Presentation and Acceptance of Report: Mendocino Countywide Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – Fehr & Peers, Consultant.** Mr. Dow gave background of the project, noting the first phase was completed for the Ukiah Valley, and this second phase addressed the countywide region. Using the Countywide Traffic Model that was also completed as part of the project, a ten-year CIP was prepared for all modes, with a listing of potential projects in one comprehensive document. The printed report was handed out, which lists a total of 285 projects.

He then introduced Ms. Julie Morgan, Principal, of Fehr & Peers. She described the purpose of this project and how it was developed, then gave a slide presentation. Topics included project characteristics, prioritization criteria, weighting factors, participants in developing the list, ranking into three tiers, and cost estimates. She and Mr. Dow answered questions during the presentation. Ms. Morgan discussed next steps.

Director Sinnott arrived at 1:55 p.m.

Discussion included:

- Projects reflect regional needs. The list is one variation of what could be expected if each city and the county had developed its own list. When funding opportunities arise, priorities are already established and preliminary cost estimates available. MCOG can work with the member entities to develop applications. The list is multimodal and will be useful as we enter the next STIP cycle this fall. For the first time, we will have a comprehensive document, with a model behind it. (Dow)

- Importance of having “shovel ready” projects for funding; reference to Proposition 1B funds. (Pinches) With this CIP, we are now better positioned; it’s good first step. (Dow, Gjerde)
- Accuracy of cost estimates for East Side Potter Valley Road and possible reasons for variations in figures; list reflects additional needs beyond those already programmed/funded. (Pinches; Howard Dashiell, Mendocino County DOT Director; Dow)
- Questions about other projects on list. (Gjerde) Relationship to Caltrans highway projects? (Smith) Discussion of bridges on Route 1.
- Process of developing this list? All existing plans, the model and capacity constraints were reviewed, then county and cities added to the list. MCOG’s Technical Advisory Committee participated in developing the CIP, except for cost estimates. (Stranske, Ellard, Dow)
- MCOG should have member entities review figures before adoption. (Gjerde) This is a living document that may be amended in future to reflect new information. (Dow) Option to adopt today and amend later. (Sinnott)
- Discussion of best use of consultant time and process for changes to CIP document. The type size of project list (Appendix A, 14 pages) is too small and a more legible format requested.
- Discussion of staff recommendation to “accept” versus “approve.” Council has not seen document until today. The information is technical.

**A motion was made** by Director Sinnott to accept report, citing reasons. Director Stranske seconded. **Discussion on the motion:** Chair Gjerde will vote no because of the illegible section. Director Smith asked about a process for amendments and recommended acceptance next meeting. Staff anticipated a process would be determined for future funding opportunities, after the 2012 STIP cycle. Mr. Dashiell requested, if changes are to be made, that the list separate elements of the East Side Potter Valley project. **The motion was defeated** on roll call vote (*1 Aye – Sinnott; 6 Noes – Jackman/PAC, Stranske; Pinches; Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Rodin*). The Chair directed staff to continue this item to the next meeting agenda.

**5. Consideration / Adoption of Resolution Establishing General Policies for the Commitment of Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Shares for the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).** Executive Director Dow introduced the matter and gave background of steps that led to this point, including strategic planning and other factors. A formal update of MCOG’s policies is now in order. The staff report attempts to state the Council’s intent; he noted that a majority of board members were appointed after MCOG’s most recent STIP workshop in 2004. He then invited questions.

Discussion included status of Caltrans’ Hopland projects. Chair Gjerde noted pedestrian safety improvements for Hopland and proposed amending the resolution to mention this. Mr. Dow suggested that Hopland could be a candidate for another community planning effort in future. Director Sinnott expressed appreciation for his report.

**Upon motion** by Pinches, second by Sinnott, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*7 Ayes – Jackman/PAC, Stranske, Sinnott, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Rodin*): **IT IS ORDERED** that the following resolution is adopted as amended so that Whereas #7 reads: “The California Department of Transportation intends to pursue a series of smaller projects within the North Hopland segment **and downtown Hopland** to address safety and operational concerns in the two-lane segments.”

**Resolution No. M2011-10**

Establishing General Policies for the Commitment of  
Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Shares  
for the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)  
(Reso. #M2011-10 is incorporated herein by reference)

**6. Public Hearing: Adoption of Resolution Approving Third Amendment to 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program to Add Federal Grant for Simpson Lane & Highway 1 Roundabout Project.** Mr. Dow explained that Mendocino County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) identified the Simpson Lane Roundabout project as meeting the criteria for federal Transportation, Community & System Preservation program funds and applied for a grant. It ranked first place in statewide competition. Grant awards are not yet known. This grant cycle became available on short notice, and selected projects must be amended into the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). In the interest of time, staff recommended adopting the amendment now to program this project in case a grant is awarded. Ms. Barrett concurred. Mr. Howard Dashiell, MCDOT Director, was on hand to answer questions and agreed with the strategy.

The Chair opened the hearing at 3:08 p.m. With no one wishing to speak, the hearing was closed at 3:09 p.m. Discussion included:

- What would be County's share of project cost? (Pinches) A minimum share of \$80,000 is budgeted by MCDOT. Cost is variable. With a grant, the County might be able to refund some of MCOG's money. (Dashiell)
- It is exciting that this will be the first roundabout on Route 1 in California. (Sinnott)
- Multiple benefits made the project score well. (Dashiell)

**Upon motion** by Smith, second by Pinches, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes –Jackman/PAC, Stranske, Sinnott, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Rodin): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

**Resolution No. M2011-11**

Adopting the Third Amendment to the  
2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)  
(Reso. #M2011-11 is incorporated herein by reference)

**7 - 9. Consent Calendar.** Upon motion by Stranske, second by Ranochak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes –Jackman/PAC, Stranske, Sinnott, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Rodin): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved:

**7. Approval of June 6, 2011 Minutes – as written**

**8. Approval of Fiscal Auditor Engagement for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2011**  
– R. J. Ricciardi, Inc.

**9. Approval of Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation of August 8, 2011:  
Proposal to Contribute Minor Amount (\$637) of Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Funds to Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment**

**10. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee - Reconvene as RTPA - Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee.** Upon motion by Pinches, second by Ranochak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 Ayes – Stranske, Sinnott, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Rodin): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

**11. Reports - Information**

- a. Mendocino Transit Authority. Mr. Bruce Richard, General Manager, reported that five bids were received for MTA's Facility Solarization & Modernization project. The low bid was submitted by a Novato company at \$4,610,000, well within budget and below the engineer's

estimate of \$5,207,000. MTA's board was scheduled to meet the following Thursday in Point Arena and award the contract. Staff is very pleased with the bid response and will recommend the low bid. Mr. Richard noted various project alternatives, such as a bus cleaning shop and a solar photovoltaic system. Next he reported status of projects in MCOG's 2010 STIP amendment, for a total of 11 vehicles: seven have been purchased and are now in service. Of the remaining four, MTA is "waiting for technology to improve" for two vehicles, and two have problems with the procurement process. Mr. Dow said it was fortunate MTA was ready with projects when only a few transit agencies received allocations at that stage. The State's Public Transportation Account is almost exhausted now.

- b. North Coast Railroad Authority. Ms. Ellard reported that the City of Ukiah is requesting an extension of their option to purchase the Ukiah depot property, which expires soon. Two environmental organizations have filed a lawsuit over the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Russian River segment. She confirmed that freight trains are now running south of Windsor.
- c. MCOG Administration & Planning Staff
  1. *Summary of Meetings*. Mr. Dow referred to his written staff report and invited questions. He reported status of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Supplement for the Regional Transportation Plan and three routine responses from public agencies. There have been no responses from the public. A public hearing and adoption of the Plan is scheduled for MCOG's next meeting. He noted standard responses from notified agencies. Director Sinnott thanked Dow for his recent efforts in Point Arena.
  2. *U.S. 101 Bypass of Willits*. Mr. Dow commented that a recent local news article was not current and focused on Caltrans falling behind schedule in its permit process with the Corps of Engineers. A more informative report would have noted this delay was positive and due to significant progress made on the impasse over the mitigation and grazing issue. New federal guidelines released in April have allowed the Corps to reverse its position on grazing. Indications are positive at this point for permit approval. The draft mitigation plan now reverts to the original due date of September 1. The project still must be "delivered" by February 2012, meaning the environmental phase is complete, permits are approved, and project is ready for construction. A brief discussion followed.
  3. *U.S. 101 Perkins Street Interchange, Ukiah*. Mr. Dow referred to his written staff report; there were no questions.
  4. *Gualala Community Action Plan*. The Chair and Vice Chair noted good work by the Executive Director toward implementing projects in the plan.
  5. *Rails With Trails Grant Project*. Ms. Ellard reported that outreach is now in progress for the initial two community workshops and handed out a flyer. There was a brief discussion of the workshop date for Willits. Mr. Dow added that in July he joined in on a field review of the project study areas along the rail corridor in Ukiah and Willits.
  6. *Caltrans Grant Award – Round Valley Non-Motorized Needs Technical Study*. Mr. Dow announced the grant award of \$135,000 to MCOG for this study, and noted the Board's tour in April when the project sites were viewed. He also reported that Caltrans has another grant that coincides with MCOG's for further transportation planning work in Covelo. Director Pinches asked about lighting availability for any new sidewalk projects there; Mr. Dashiell responded with potential options.

7. *MCOG Fiscal Year 2010/11 Annual Report*. The final version was provided in the agenda packet by Ms. Orth and handouts made available. Further distribution was discussed.
  8. *Miscellaneous*. Staff noted plans for next meeting, including a tour of South Coast transportation projects. Logistics were briefly discussed.
- d. MCOG Directors. Director Smith reported feedback and useful information on MCOG's website, making suggestions to post additional information about the Board of Directors. She liked Ms. Orth's plans for making the Board manual available online and requested a report of progress with draft materials next meeting.
  - e. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Ms. Orth noted that CALCOG has been providing an informative email newsletter from the new Executive Director.

**12. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted: PHILLIP J. DOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration