

2010 MENDOCINO COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**FINAL
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Mendocino Council
of Governments

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This overview of the transportation system elements presents the highlights of the key actions presented in this document. Goals, objectives and policies are presented in the full text accompanied by detailed information regarding needs assessment, action plan and financial/funding constraints.

STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM ELEMENT

The Significant Highway Corridors are facilities that connect the region to the rest of the state and country. The facilities include US-101, State Route 20, State Route 1 (north of SR 128), and State Route 128 for travel through, and to, Mendocino County. Highlights of activities planned for these corridors include:

Short-Range Improvements

- Construction of the Willits Bypass on US-101.
- Environmental studies and project development for North Hopland safety improvements project on US-101.
- Operational and/or safety improvements at US 101 interchanges in the Ukiah area
- Construction of roundabout at Simpson Lane/SR 1 in the Fort Bragg area.
- Construction of SR 1/Fort Bragg Main Street Merge Lane & Safety Improvements

Long-Range Improvements

- Construction of North Hopland safety improvements project on US-101.
- Construction of the Willits Bypass, Phase II.
- Construction of interchange improvements on US-101 in the Ukiah area.
- Operational and safety improvements in SR 1 in Gualala identified in the Gualala Downtown Design Plan.

COUNTY ROADS & CITY STREETS ELEMENT

This system is comprised of the county roads and city streets. The following are highlights of improvement projects for this modal system:

Short-Range Improvements

- Right of Way and Construction of the East Side Potter Valley Road reconstruction.
- Project development for Brooktrails Second Access in the Willits area.
- Project development for Redemeyer Road Extension in the Ukiah area.
- Project development for Orchard Avenue Extension in the Ukiah area.
- Gobbi Street Reconstruction, from State Street to Main Street in Ukiah.
- Railroad Avenue Bridge Replacement Project in Willits
- Highway 1 Safety & Circulation Improvements in Fort Bragg
- Safety/Operational Improvements on Main Street in Point Arena

Long-Range Improvements

Some of the more significant identified long-range improvement projects, although many are unfunded or only partially funded, are as follows:

- Construction of Brooktrails Second Access.
- Construction of Redemeyer Road Extension
- East Side Potter Valley Road Widening, Phase II (MP 4.70 to 6.40)
- Circulation improvements in Willits to deal with post-bypass needs.
- Development of an arterial or collector parallel to Main Street in Fort Bragg, through the Georgia-Pacific property to meet future development needs.

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

The Non-Motorized Transportation System is made up of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the county. Facilities may be alongside county roads, city streets, or State highways or independent of those facilities.

Short-Range Improvements

- Highway 1 Safety Improvements in Fort Bragg
- Blosser Lane Elementary Transportation Enhancements in Willits
- Branscomb Road Multi-Use Bridge in the Laytonville area
- Highway 1 Safety & Circulation Improvements in Fort Bragg
- Development of countywide Rails With Trails plan
- Pedestrian safety improvements in the vicinity of Grace Hudson Elementary School in the Ukiah area
- Safe Routes to Schools Improvements in Point Arena, on Lake Street/School Street and intersections with SR 1
- Pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements on SR 1 bridges

Long-Range Improvements

Long range bicycle and pedestrian improvements will focus on implementation of projects identified in various plans. Potential projects would include rails with trails projects in the Ukiah and Willits areas, post-bypass improvements in Willits, and further safety improvements in school areas.

PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE SYSTEM

Public transit services in Mendocino County are provided by the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA). Service includes a mix of fixed routes, flex routes and dial-a-ride throughout much of the county. Additional paratransit for the elderly and disabled are provided by local senior centers through funding from MTA.

The action plan for the public transit system will focus largely on replacement of their fleet as necessary due. A variety of new services may be considered as a result of a recent Commute Transportation Study, including potential vanpools, carpools and volunteer driver programs.

MTA also has plans for a Facility Solarization and Modernization project at their Ukiah office and maintenance yard facility. The project would modernize the office buildings, maintenance buildings, provide a solar power system, and provide an alternative fuel infrastructure.

AVIATION SYSTEM

There are five publicly owned and one privately owned airports in Mendocino County that provide aviation service in the region: Ukiah Municipal Airport, Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field), Round Valley Airport, Little River Airport, and the Boonville Airport. All of these airports provide general aviation service for recreation and charter small aircraft users. The Ukiah Municipal Airport is also used by Federal Express and United Postal Service jet aircraft and serves as a staging area and refueling depot for California Division of Forestry air tankers when fighting fires in the region. The Round Valley Airport plays a unique role in the Round Valley community due to the geographic isolation of the area. The airport frequently provides a site for emergency medical helicopter transportation.

The action plans of the airports will focus on projects from the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Capital Improvement Plan, and be subject to grant funding availability from the State and Federal government. Planned improvements in the CIP for each airport include:

Ukiah Airport

- Construct Taxiway Connector & Stopway - \$442,105
- Purchase property/easements south end - \$1,575,000
- Construct & Seal Runway/Apron Access - \$526,315
- Construct Taxiway Connector to NE corner - \$798,000
- Design and Construct helicopter Operations Area - \$105,000
- Incursion/Pedestrian Security Wall - \$262,500
- Construct Apron - \$263,158
- Extend Service Road - \$262,500

Willits Airport

- Runway 16 RSA Slope Stabilization - \$495,000
- Runway 16-34 Rehab Construction - \$302,750
- Construct holding apron for Rwy 34 - \$364,900
- Construct southerly segment of parallel taxiway - \$416,500

Little River Airport

- Acquire land for RPZ 11/29 ends - \$200,000
- Construct taxiway, apron, fences, lighting - \$1,750,000

Round Valley Airport

- RWY 28 land acquisition - \$400,000
- Construct road alignment for RWY 28 RPZ and fence - \$450,000

Boonville Airport

- Land Acquisition (Terminal Area Expansion) - \$400,000
- Hangar Area Site Prep & Taxiways - \$200,000
- Runway 13/31 Overlay, Widen 10', RSA Grading/Drainage - \$500,000
- Medium Intensity Runway Lighting & Signs & Vault - \$300,000

MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

Noyo Harbor, located in the city of Fort Bragg, and the Point Arena Pier, in the City of Point Arena, represent the two sources of commercial maritime activity in Mendocino County. The limited funding available for capital improvements to these facilities will limit what can be done within the timeframe of this plan to all but basic maintenance and operations. Perhaps the most critical action for the harbors in the near future will be to find a funding source to enable needed improvements.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mendocino County has two railroad systems: The Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP), which is overseen by the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), and the Skunk Train, a private company owned by Mendocino Railway.

The "Skunk Train" line extends east to west, from the City of Willits to the City of Fort Bragg, a distance of approximately 40 miles. The NWP is a 316-mile long, extending from Lombard in Napa County in the south, to Samoa in Humboldt County in the north, traversing the entire length of inland Mendocino County. As neither of these railroads currently provides service, the first priority will be restoration of service. The NCRA anticipates resuming service as far north as Windsor (in Sonoma County) in late 2010. Service as far north as Willits may resume as early as 2011.

Another short term project (to be undertaken by MCOG) will be the preparation of a "Rails with Trails Corridor Plan" for the NWP rail corridor throughout the County.

TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION

A Tribal Transportation System Element has been included in the RTP in an effort to better identify the transportation needs of the tribes and pave the way for expanded government to government relations between MCOG and the ten Mendocino County Native American tribes. The actions in this section focus on establishing government to government relationships with *all* tribes in Mendocino County and strengthening existing relationships.

In addition to expanding relations with tribal governments, MCOG will seek out funding sources that may be utilized by the tribes as well consider a planning project to improve eligibility for transportation funding on roads serving tribal land and residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

An Environmental Impact Report for the Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in 2003. An addendum to that document will be prepared prior to adoption to address any changes to guidelines and the plan in this update.

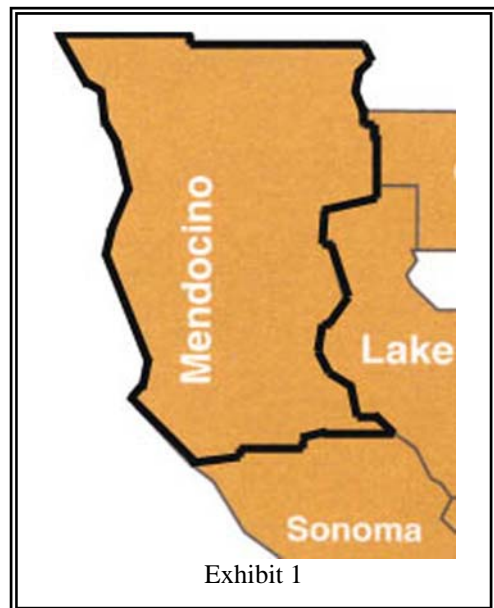
INTRODUCTION

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY

Mendocino Council of Governments

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) was first established as a joint powers agency in 1972, as mandated by the Transportation Development Act. The Council primarily serves as the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for the region, and consists of seven members—two county supervisors, a county elected official, and one council member from each of the four incorporated cities (Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg and Point Arena). [Exhibit 1](#) shown below outlines the boundaries for the MCOG region.

Three standing committees aid the Mendocino Council of Governments in performing its transportation planning functions. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) consists of each member of the Board of Directors plus a representative from Caltrans, District 01. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is composed of planning and public works representatives from each of the Joint Powers entities, the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) General Manager, representatives from rail transportation and air quality, and a Caltrans transportation planner. The TAC is heavily involved with Regional Transportation Improvement Program development, the Regional Transportation Plan, the annual work program, public transit, as well as other technical functions. Senate Bill 498, approved in 1987, established the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), which represents interests of the elderly, handicapped, and persons of limited means. The SSTAC has statutory responsibility to advise the RTPA on transportation-related issues such as Federal Transit Administration (FTA) transit grant applications for programs, and unmet transit needs. The SSTAC membership consists of a potential transit user 60 years of age or older, a potential transit user who is handicapped, two representatives from social services providers for seniors, two representatives from local social service providers for the handicapped, one representative from a local social service provider for persons of limited means, and two representatives from the local Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (MTA).



COORDINATION & OUTREACH EFFORTS

Interagency Coordination

In preparing this Regional Transportation Plan, Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) staff coordinated with the public and staff from Caltrans, the Mendocino County Department of

Transportation, the Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services, the City of Ukiah, City of Willits, City of Fort Bragg and City of Point Arena.

Other agencies such as the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA), North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), Sierra Railroad, the Noyo Harbor District, Air Quality Management District (AQMD), and several airports that serve the region were also contacted in preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan.

In addition to direct input from these agencies, several supporting documents developed jointly among the above-mentioned agencies and Caltrans were also used in preparing this document (see References section of this document for a complete list of sources).

Inter-Regional Coordination

Inter-regional coordination involves development of working relationships beyond the border of the region. To some extent, inter-regional coordination has been occurring for many years due to active participation in the following groups and organizations:

- **Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) Group:** This group meets prior to California Transportation Commission meetings (approximately 10 times per year) to discuss the CTC agenda, formulate responses to CTC policies, and network on issues of common concern. Attendance provides MCOG staff opportunities for inter-regional coordination with staff of other regional transportation agencies, Caltrans, and the Federal Highway Administration. MCOG staff regularly attends RTPA meetings.
- **Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF):** This group has been sponsored by the California Transportation Commission since 1987 to provide a forum for the State's 26 rural counties. It meets bi-monthly in Sacramento to discuss common issues and to some extent provide a vehicle of input to the California Transportation Commission. Due to inherent small staffing, budget constraints, and travel distances, few rural counties have the resources to regularly attend the RTPA Group meetings. MCOG staff attends regularly and has had a history of involvement since RCTF inception. Sub-committees of the RCTF are often assigned to work on inter-regional issues of common concern.
- **Caltrans-Regional Coordination Meetings:** These meetings are generally bi-monthly and are coordinated with California Councils of Government (CalCOG) meetings. At these meetings the Caltrans Director and staff meet with regional agency directors or their designees to discuss transportation issues and policies. MCOG staff regularly attends these meetings.
- **California Transportation Commission (CTC) Meetings:** The CTC usually meets 10 times per year at various locations around the state. Although the primary purpose of the CTC is not inter-agency coordination, the venues regularly provide opportunities for such coordination. MCOG staff regularly attends CTC meetings.
- **California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT):** CalACT is an association of private companies, individuals, organizations, regional transportation planning agencies and transit agencies committed to improve transit in California. In recent years the RCTF has teamed with CalACT to provide workshops, training and

programs of mutual benefit to both organizations. MCOG staff regularly attends one of the two CalACT conferences per year and has been active in program development.

- **California Association of Councils of Government (CalCOG):** CalCOG is an association that generally meets bi-monthly in conjunction with the Caltrans-Regional Coordination Meetings. Although transportation issues are often a focus, the meetings also include discussion and action on other issues that are commonly addressed at the regional level. MCOG is a member of CalCOG and the Executive Director regularly attends.
- **North State Super Region:** The “Super Region” is a new collaboration of 16 single-county regional transportation planning agencies in far northern California. Its purpose is to communicate needs and direct change for this area that represents over 27% of the state’s land area and encompasses over 35% of California’s State and federal highways. Meetings are expected to occur biennially, with the first meeting in October, 2010.

Since 1986 there has been a level of transportation planning coordination between the Lake County/City Area Planning Council (APC) and the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) that is perhaps unparalleled in this state. Both agencies contract for administration and transportation planning services. The APC contracts for an Executive Director and for Transportation Planning Services. MCOG combined both functions in 1999 and contracts with one consultant for both functions. Consequently, the same consultant provides transportation planning services for both agencies. Not only has this allowed for a high level of inter-regional coordination, it has also provided a cost effective means for both agencies to be represented at the RTPA, RCTF, Caltrans-Regional Coordination meetings, CTC, CalACT, and other statewide meetings.

Mendocino Council of Governments was awarded a grant through the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) to establish an inter-regional partnership to address consequences of jobs, housing, and transportation imbalances. In November of 2001, MCOG began implementing what became known as the **Wine Country InterRegional Partnership (IRP)** to address jobs-housing imbalances between Lake, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties.

Several ongoing inter-regional relationships have resulted due to the MCOG’s involvement in the Wine Country IRP:

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG):** In February 2004 the Mendocino Council of Governments entered into an MOU with ABAG and the Lake County/City Area Planning Council to explore areas of mutual concern and to move forward with the identification of joint planning efforts and implementation actions of mutual benefit to the Bay Area and rural Mendocino County.
- **Wine Country IRP Phase 2 (Origin & Destination Studies):** Mendocino Council of Governments has taken the lead to conduct origin & destination studies at specific cordon sites in order to monitor trip purposes between Lake, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties. This State Public Transportation Account funded study was approved in March, 2005 and is expected to be completed by June, 2006. MCOG, the APC, the

Napa County Transportation Authority, Sonoma County Transportation Authority, ABAG, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and Caltrans districts 1 & 4 are participating in this effort.

For decades now, the North Coast Counties Supervisors' Association (NCCSA) has met to review and revise its list of improvement priorities for Route 101. Members are elected county supervisors from Marin, Sonoma, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties. Each of the delegates has interest in improvement to U.S. 101, known as the "lifeline of the North Coast". Although the improvement priority list is extensive, the proposed Willits Bypass has consistently emerged as the No. 1 priority of this inter-regional group.

Public Involvement

Public involvement is a major component of the Regional Transportation Planning process. Mendocino Council of Governments has an adopted Public Participation Plan from which a public and interagency participation strategy was designed for the RTP that included a number of components.

MCOG staff kicked off its public involvement process by attending and staffing a table at the Mendocino Trails Symposium in January 2010. People from all across the county attended this symposium, which focused primarily on non-motorized transportation options and recreational trails. The symposium also provided an opportunity for MCOG staff to promote the RTP development process on Mendocino TV.

Following the symposium, staff developed an online survey to help identify needs and determine areas of public concern and support in regards to transportation projects. Over 150 responses to the survey were received, which were used in development of this plan.

In May 2010, MCOG staff held a series of 6 workshops in Ukiah, Covelo, Point Arena, Willits, Boonville, and Fort Bragg to give the public an opportunity for early input into development of the plan. At these workshops, members of the public completed surveys, informed MCOG of their most pressing transportation related concerns, and had the opportunity to ask questions and get information from MCOG staff. The input gained from those meetings has been used in development of this plan. These meetings were also advertised in a number of ways including press releases, paid notices, and on the MCOG website.

The opportunity for public input regarding the regional transportation planning process is also regularly provided at the regularly scheduled MCOG board meetings.

Table 1 shows a complete listing of MCOG's outreach activities for the 2010 RTP update, including public, interagency, and Native American involvement:

Table 1
Participation Process for the 2010 RTP Update

Participant	Activity	Date
Public/MCOG Staff	Mendocino Trails Symposium	1/9/10
Public/MCOG Staff	Interview on Mendocino TV	1/9/10

Tribal Governments & Caltrans	Caltrans Tribal Meeting	4/20/10
Public/MCOG Staff	Online survey	4/22/10-5/30/10
Countywide newspapers	Sent Press Release advising of RTP update and public workshops	4/23/10
Countywide radio stations	Sent Public Service Announcement advising of RTP update and public workshops	4/23/10
Public/MCOG Staff	Email notifications of public workshops	4/23/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop - Ukiah	5/5/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop - Covelo	5/8/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop - Willits	5/8/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop – Point Arena	5/10/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop – Fort Bragg	5/13/10
Public/MCOG Staff	RTP Workshop – Boonville	5/17/10
TAC/Local Agencies	Draft RTP discussion at TAC meeting	10/13/10
MCOG Board/Staff/Public	Draft RTP discussion at MCOG meeting	11/8/10
Tribal Governments	Notice to each tribal government regarding anticipated RTP adoption	Scheduled for January
Countywide newspapers/public	Publication of notices of upcoming RTP adoption	Scheduled for January
MCOG Board/Public	Adoption of 2010 RTP at public hearing	Scheduled for February

Examples of materials and documentation of MCOG’s public outreach efforts can be found in Appendix A. Any public and agency notification requirements of CEQA will also be followed.

NATIVE AMERICAN COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

MCOG participated in a Tribal transportation meeting sponsored by Caltrans in April 2010. Native American tribes were then notified of the development of the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan update via letters to all tribal chairs sent in April, 2010, inviting tribal representatives to the workshops, offering consultation on the RTP process and asking for input into the plan as well. Each tribe was also sent a draft plan for comment prior to scheduled adoption by MCOG.

It is the goal of MCOG staff that coordination and consultation with the Native American tribes in the regional transportation planning process can become more regular in the future, and that a strong, symbiotic government-to-government relationship be developed.

PURPOSE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The regional transportation planning process is a long-range (1-20 year) planning effort that involves federal, state, regional, local and tribal governments, public and private organizations, and individuals working together to plan how future regional transportation needs can be met. Regional Transportation Plans are planning documents required by State legislation, and are developed by RTPAs in cooperation with Caltrans and other stakeholders. RTPs are developed to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, policies, objectives and strategies. In addition, the RTP should also:

- Provide an assessment of the current modes of transportation as well as identify potential new travel options for the region;

- Predict future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identify specific actions and improvements in order to address the needs of mobility and accessibility;
- Promote consistency between other transportation plans developed by local, state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs and;

UPDATE TO THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

Senate Bill 45 (Kopp), which took effect in 1997, had significant impacts on the regional transportation planning process. Some impacts of the bill include:

- Empowered regional transportation planning agencies to take a more active role in the programming of projects, and encouraged more decision-making through partnerships among stakeholders;
- Modified state law to fund the State Highway Operation and Protection Plan (SHOPP) off the top, then make 75% of remaining State Highway Account funds available to regional agencies for Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) programming, and the remaining 25% available to Caltrans;
- Introduced greater regional agency fiscal accountability into the STIP process, yet simplified funding programs.

MENDOCINO COUNTY REGION

Mendocino County lies within the northern extension of California's coast mountain ranges. These mountains are characterized by a series of southeast to northwest ridges that are separated occasionally by narrow valleys. The coastline is also rugged and rocky, offering spectacular views of the ocean. Much of the land area is taken by State and National Forest lands, with the remainder used for agriculture, residential and other uses. Transportation routes tend to be located within valleys, and east-west travel is especially difficult, since parallel ridges must be traversed. The mountainous nature of the County tends to minimize ground transportation options throughout the region.

Population

The majority of the population in Mendocino County is concentrated in a few areas of the County. Ukiah, Talmage, and Redwood Valley make up the largest single population concentration in Mendocino County. Fort Bragg and the coastal area southward to the Navarro River is another population cluster. Willits, the Little Lake Valley, and the Brooktrails subdivision are also large settlement areas in the County. Smaller community clusters include Hopland, Gualala, Covelo, Boonville and Laytonville. The rest of Mendocino County is rural and undeveloped.

The California Department of Finance estimated the Mendocino County population at 90,206 as of 2009. This includes a population of 62,055 within the unincorporated area of the County, 15,711 within the city of Ukiah, 6,868 within Fort Bragg, 5,080 in Willits, and 492 within the city of Point Arena. The average persons per square mile in Mendocino County is only 25.7,

which is an indicator of the rural nature of the Region compared to the statewide average of 246 average persons per square mile.

The overall growth within the Region has declined over the last two decades. Between 1980 and 1990, Mendocino County grew by 20%. The 2000 Census revealed that the population in the region only increased by 7.4% between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census. Estimates of growth since the 2000 Census are even lower. According to the department of Finance, between 1999 and 2009, population in Mendocino County has only increased 0.5% per year, for a total of 5%.

Economy

According to the Mendocino County Economic & Demographic Profile, the Service Industry, Government, and Retail are the largest employment sectors and represent the highest earnings for the county. According to the Employment Development Department (EDD), the region has experienced a decline in employment over the last few years ranging from 0.3% to 0.7% per year. 2008 Unemployment rates for the region were 6.9%. The region's unemployment rate is consistently higher than the State rate.

According to the Department of Finance, the median household income, based on a 2007 estimate, in Mendocino County was \$42,329, which was significantly lower than the state average of \$59,928 for that same year. An estimated 15.4% of households in Mendocino County were noted as below poverty level, compared to the statewide average of 16%.

Traffic Forecasts

Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants developed the travel demand model for the *AB 1600 Traffic Mitigation Fee Study* under contract with MCOG. The focus area for the model was essentially the Ukiah area from south of Talmage Road to north of Lake Mendocino Drive. There were 4 land use scenarios evaluated in the study for the Year 2030. The "No Build" scenario indicated that moderate (LOS C-D) concerns would materialize only on North State Street, immediately north of the U.S. 101 freeway over-crossing (Masonite area) and on Lake Mendocino Drive between U.S. 101 and North State Street. The "Preferred Project" alternative (250 acres of additional residential and 250 acres of additional mixed-use, including Masonite, Lovers Lane and other minor developments) indicates that congestion would increase to become serious (LOS E-F) at the same two locations identified for the "No Build" alternative. Furthermore, LOS C-D conditions would expand on North State Street further north of the U.S. 101 over-crossing and also to the segment between the two Lake Mendocino Drive intersections. New LOS C-D conditions would also emerge on Brush Street, the easterly segment of Empire Drive, Bush Street, and on U.S. 101 in the vicinity of the Talmage Road interchange. The *AB 1600 Traffic Mitigation Fee Study* is posted on the MCOG website.

Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultant completed in October 2010 a countywide travel demand model in the same format as developed for the Ukiah Valley. The base year for the countywide model is 2009, with the out-year to 2030 in coordination with the RTP horizon. Significant traffic flow constraints (LOS 0.75 to 1.00) identified by the model occur only in the region's 3 major communities as summarized below:

2009

- In Fort Bragg on SR 1 on the Noyo Bridge segment and immediately to the north and south
- In Willits on US 101 between Walnut Street and SR 20, between San Francisco Avenue and East Valley Street, and between State Street and Sherwood Road.
- In Ukiah on North State Street between the northbound US 101 ramps and Orr Springs Road, on Orchard Avenue north of Perkins Street, and Talmage Road from Betty Street to the US 101 southbound ramps.

2030

- In Fort Bragg on SR 1 on the Noyo Bridge, extending further north to South Street and further south to Ocean View Drive.
- In the Ukiah area on North State Street between KUKI Lane and US 101 northbound ramps, on Airport Boulevard between Commerce Drive and Talmage Road, on Commerce Drive, on Orchard Avenue north of Perkins Street, and on Talmage Road between Betty Street and US 101 northbound.

The Final Model Development Report for the MCOG Travel Demand Forecasting Model can be found on the MCOG website.

The *State Route 1 Corridor Study Update* used 2007 summer traffic volumes in an analysis of critical traffic issues in 3 primary sub-areas of the State Route 1 corridor: (1) south County Line to SR 128, (2) north of SR 128 to south of SR 20, and (3) SR 20 to north study area limits. Existing conditions revealed that 4 of the 37 intersections studied met warrants for traffic control and 23 locations met warrants for right or left turn lane operational improvements. For future year 2030, the study indicated that 16 study locations would warrant additional traffic control and 28 study locations would warrant turn lane improvements. The *State Route 1 Corridor Study Update* is posted on the MCOG website.

Work also continues in conjunction with the Napa County Transportation & Planning Agency (NCTPA), Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), and Lake County/City Area Planning Council (APC) to develop a four-county inter-regional travel demand model. This is the third phase of the Inter-Regional Partnership (IRP) that will assess the impacts of interregional travel to include the impacts of jobs/housing imbalance as well as recreational travel between the northern San Francisco Bay Area and the North Coast. Inputs for the new Mendocino County have been coordinated with the developer of the four-county model. This model is expected to be complete and operational in 2011. This model will operate at a higher level and be most useful to assess impacts on major roadways in the four-county areas.

Land Use

Large-scale land use changes are not anticipated in Mendocino County. Development is expected to produce rather localized impact. Land use policies tend to protect open-spaced lands such as agriculture and forestlands. Although as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, MCOG's primary role is in guiding the future of transportation in the county, there has been a

recognized need for a higher level of interregional cooperation to address a range of land use, planning, environmental and economic issues.

The Wine Country Interregional Partnership (IRP) with Lake, Sonoma and Napa Counties, was MCOG's first project that meshed land use and transportation. The IRP was initiated with the intent of looking at the imbalance of jobs and housing throughout the four counties and the role that transportation plays in that system. The IRP has been through three phases now, which included an initial jobs and housing study, and origin and destination study, and a four county traffic model.

More recently, MCOG has taken on a new planning project, Vision Mendocino 2030, a regional blueprint plan which will examine the interworkings of land use, transportation, the environment, local economy, and many other factors. The project will include a community driven visioning process and scenario planning to determine the future impacts of today's planning decisions. This is the first project of its kind in the county and ultimately will result in a "preferred growth scenario" being selected that will guide future decision making throughout the county. Additional information on the project can be found at the project website, www.visionmendocino2030.org.

COUNTYWIDE ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)

Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set statewide GHG emission reduction targets and to develop regulations and market mechanisms to reduce California's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 25 percent by 2020. In 2007, CARB established a statewide Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions cap for 2020 of 427 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, based on 1990 emissions, as required by the bill. Transportation is responsible for generating a considerable portion of the carbon dioxide produced in California. Carbon dioxide is the most prevalent GHG. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Guidelines require that the issue of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions be addressed during the RTP process. While predominately rural areas such as Mendocino County are not subject to the same requirements as urban regions, discussion of the issue in the RTP provides the opportunity to identify existing and future efforts that will contribute to the emission reduction targets. Obvious strategies to reduce GHG generation entail expanded transit use, improving streets/roads efficiency, and expanding non-motorized travel opportunities. These strategies have been and will continue to be employed in Mendocino County throughout the time frame of the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan. But in fact, there are a wide range of activities in which the Mendocino Council of Governments has been engaged that have and will continue to have a positive effect on greenhouse gas generation in Mendocino County. These activities are briefly discussed below under various headings:

Planning

- MCOG has been awarded funding for 3 phases of Regional Blueprint Planning to better link land use with transportation planning (with expected results to include vehicle trip reduction, greater non-motorized use, and greater transit efficiency)

- MCOG has for decades produced the Regional Bikeway Plan so that each of its member entities can qualify for funding improvements under the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) to expand the bikeway system
- MCOG has administered and participated in the development of grant-funded Community Action Plans in Gualala, Laytonville, & Point Arena, each of which emphasizes an expanded network of non-motorized transportation
- MCOG funded a city-wide Safe Routes to School Plan for the City of Willits which will facilitate future Safe Routes to School Grant applications
- MCOG has supported various Mendocino Transit Authority planning studies, such as the recent Commute Transportation Study, in order to increase transit use and efficiency
- MCOG has consistently supported the preservation of the rail corridors in Mendocino County for future transportation uses should rail activity permanently cease.
- MCOG recently obtained a grant to develop a Rails with Trails Corridor Plan to develop non-motorized facilities within the rail right-of-way from the Sonoma County Line to Willits

Funding

- Unless funding availability is extremely constrained, MCOG consistently allocates the maximum amount authorized under the Transportation Development Act toward the development of pedestrian and bikeway projects
- Since first available with ISTEA legislation in 1991, MCOG has fully utilized funding made available for Transportation Enhancement projects and has not converted these funds in favor of more traditional (streets & roads) uses
- MCOG may be the only regional transportation planning agency in California to routinely set aside a share of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding exclusively for the programming of bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects
- MCOG has given full consideration to the claim for transit funding from the Mendocino Transit Authority, ensuring that the county-wide transit authority receives the maximum amount available from MCOG
- MCOG created a Transit Reserve Account to minimize the effect of revenue shortfalls of the provision of stable transit service
- MCOG has funded a number of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) projects in several communities to improve access to the pedestrian network
- MCOG has provided funding to member agencies to provide local matching funds for bicycle and pedestrian grant-funded projects
- MCOG recently funded a bicycle rack program to purchase and deploy bike racks in Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, Point Arena, and unincorporated communities

Transportation Monitoring

- MCOG initiated and has been participating in an interregional effort (Wine Country Inter-Regional Partnership) to monitor, evaluate, and mitigate the transportation effects of jobs/housing imbalance between Lake, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties
- MCOG developed a transportation model of the Ukiah Valley, linking the unincorporated area surrounding Ukiah with the City of Ukiah
- MCOG is in the process of developing a county-wide transportation model that will have the capability of projecting GHG production for alternative transportation networks

Facilitation

- MCOG routinely disseminates information it acquires regarding various outside funding opportunities (Bicycle Transportation Account, Safe Routes to School, Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation, etc) to Native American tribes and member entities
- MCOG provides grant development and assistance for member agencies to enhance opportunity to acquire funding for local priority projects
- MCOG routinely offers to review grant applications prepared by member entities to enhance their competitiveness for outside funding
- MCOG has expanded opportunities for teleconferencing for Board meetings, committee meetings and other public meetings
- MCOG has provided training to member agency personnel and public officials on topics that feature expansion of transportation alternatives (especially bicycle/pedestrian projects)
- MCOG funds the entire Pavement Management Program for all entities to ensure limited funds for streets/roads paving is utilized in the most effective manner and that roadway wearing surfaces contribute positively toward maximizing miles per gallon

Circulation and Access Improvements

- Air quality improvements expected from the MCOG-supported U.S. 101 bypass of Willits were a significant factor in project selection
- MCOG has taken the lead in identifying and partnering with local agencies to implement congestion-related improvements at U.S. 101 interchanges in the Ukiah Valley
- MCOG funded the State Route 1 Corridor Study Update that identifies current and future (20-year) locations where safety and congestion-related improvements will be needed on State Route 1 in Mendocino County
- MCOG has promoted and supported the consideration of modern roundabouts within Mendocino County and is partially funding a roundabout project at S.R.1/Simpson Lane
- MCOG has funded a feasibility study and environmental document to provide an alternate access to the Brooktrails community with options including access to the new bypass to reduce congestion in Willits
- MCOG funded a feasibility study to provide alternative access that reduces trip lengths between subdivisions on Redemeyer Road and North State Street/U.S. 101
- MCOG funded an AB 1600 nexus study to develop a funding mechanism to construct transportation improvements that will be needed due to future development

Alternative Fuels

- In 1998 MCOG became the first rural transportation planning agency in the nation to research and test electric vehicle practicality in a rural environment
- MCOG was responsible for construction of electric vehicle charging stations in Mendocino County
- MCOG has supported the efforts of Mendocino Transit Authority to diversify fuels for its transit fleet, including support for a TIGGER application for electric busses and solar power canopies

In summary, prior and ongoing efforts that result in reduced GHG emissions involve the following:

- Providing an effective public transit system
- Expanding non-motorized modal alternatives
- Promoting the expansion of alternative fuels (particularly for public transportation)
- Investing in projects that reduce congestion
- Participating in long term planning efforts (Blueprint Program) that are likely to reduce sprawl and promote infill
- Identification of funding to implement all of the above

MCOG had established a high base line of investment in planning and project implementation that produced positive impacts on GHG production long before Assembly Bill 32 was signed into law in 2006. It is very likely that efforts similar to those identified above will be employed in Mendocino County through the 20-year time frame of the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan.

Intelligent Transportation System

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) refers to a group of information based technologies which assist in monitoring traffic flow, providing warning and advisory messages to motor vehicle drivers, regulating traffic flow via metering and routing control, and providing rapid emergency incident response capabilities for law enforcement personnel.

MCOG participated in the California-Oregon Advanced Transportation System (COATS) ITS Strategic Deployment Plan.

ITS projects that have been implemented in the region are as follows:

- Deployment of motorist call boxes under the Mendocino Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies. The call box locations have been coordinated with Caltrans and the necessary encroachment agreements have been processed and approved.
- Installation of changeable message signs by Caltrans, District 1, in Mendocino County. Two signs have been installed on US-101 and one sign on State Route 20. These signs will provide warnings and information for users of these routes.
- Installation of traffic signals. Traffic signals have been installed at the intersection of Main (SR 1) and Laurel in the City of Fort Bragg and at the intersection of US 101 and Holly Street in the City of Willits.

At such time that the Mendocino Council of Governments considers proposing an ITS project, the project will be in conformance with the common structure of the regional architecture as identified in the California Oregon Advanced Transportation System (COATS) Regional Architecture.

Although there is currently no “511” traveler information system in place in Mendocino County, if such a program is considered for implementation in the future, it will be coordinated with adjacent counties, MPOs, and RTPAs as appropriate.

Transportation Security and Emergency Response

Mendocino County is a sparsely populated rural area with three key issues that impact transportation security and emergency preparedness/response planning: (1) limited access routes due to topography and existing infrastructure which provides limited access/egress points out of/into the County; (2) a population that has limited resources and ability to evacuate on their own, or to shelter in place for the duration of an emergency/security event; and (3) limited security and emergency response resources within the County. For Mendocino County, the potential for fires, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and landslides pose a more likely threat to the safety and security of the population and the transportation system than a terrorist attack.

Transportation clearly plays a key role in avoiding disaster and responding to emergencies. Key transportation routes will provide evacuation routes as well as routes for emergency responders. In addition to surface transportation, air transportation plays a key role in disaster response in Mendocino County. Airports are often used as staging grounds for fire fighting in rural areas. Many isolated areas in Mendocino County without nearby hospitals also rely on helicopter service rather than ambulances for medical emergencies. Coordination between transportation agencies throughout the county and State and local airports and transportation agencies will be critical in preparing for emergency situations. Goals, objectives and policies have been included in this document that specifically address concerns regarding security and emergency response.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

PREAMBLE

Transportation helps shape an area’s economic health and quality of life. Not only does the transportation system provide for the mobility of people and goods, it also influences: air quality, environmental resource consumption, social equity, “smart growth,” economic development, safety, and security. Transportation planning recognizes the critical links between transportation and other societal goals.

This Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is more than a mere listing of capital investments, it is a strategy for operating, managing, maintaining, and financing the area’s transportation system in such a way as to advance the long-term societal goals of the communities of Mendocino County and the long-term societal goals of the State of California.

This RTP emphasizes a strategy of investing transportation funds to bring greater mobility and access to services for all residents – including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles. Among other things, this strategy will reduce green house gas emissions (GHG) and household expenses by reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This strategy will also bring economic and cultural renewal to every community in Mendocino County – because as public investments improve each community’s public spaces, private investments follow.

In summary, this RTP provides a comprehensive strategy – one that leverages regional transportation funds to advance the long-term societal goals of the communities of Mendocino County and the State of California.

POLICIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Build a combination of transportation facilities that, when evaluated as a group, will result in improved air quality, and reduce transportation-related air toxics and green house gas emissions in Mendocino County.

Objectives	Policies
Coordinate transportation planning with air quality planning.	Continue to include Air Quality representation on the Technical Advisory Committee and in the decision making process.
	As feasible, evaluate air quality impacts of proposed transportation improvements in the transportation modeling process.
Invest in transportation projects that will help Mendocino County residents to proportionately contribute to the California greenhouse gas reduction targets established by Assembly Bill 32 and	Evaluate transportation projects based on their ability to reduce Mendocino County’s transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.
	Prioritize transportation projects which lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
	Participate with other agencies in Blueprint Planning activities

SB 375.	that may lead to reduced vehicle trips/vehicle miles travelled.
	Monitor new technologies and opportunities to implement energy efficient and nonpolluting transportation infrastructure.
	Continue to consider bicycle transportation, pedestrian, and transit projects for funding in the State Transportation Improvement program (STIP).
	Continue administrative, planning, and funding support for the Region’s transit agency, Mendocino Transit Authority.
Ensure transportation improvements are subject to adequate environmental review and standards.	Monitor transportation projects funded through MCOG to ensure that CEQA and NEPA requirements are being met.
	Coordinate and consult with resource agencies when implementing transportation projects.

LAND USE, ACCESSIBILITY AND THE ECONOMY

Goal: Encourage coordination of land use and public investments in a way that improves accessibility to services, employment and housing – thereby strengthening the local and state economies.

Objectives

Policies

Encourage local entities to direct private development to priority urbanized areas where services can best be provided at lowest public cost and least environmental consequences.	Work with the County of Mendocino and the county’s cities to create a regional blueprint that identifies priority development areas where new land division and land use intensification should be directed.
	Consider transportation grant programs to encourage Mendocino County governments to support infill construction in identified priority development areas.
Encourage equity in providing transportation services and facilities.	Prioritize transportation projects that ensure residents – regardless of income – have equitable access to vital services, employment and educational opportunities.

COMPLETE STREETS

Goal: To improve our public spaces so the street, road and transportation system meets the needs of all surface transportation modes, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and transit.

Objectives

Policies

Incorporate bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements when planning roadway improvements, unless the	Coordinate funding programs to provide multiple components of an infrastructure project when appropriate.
	Seek funding sources for multiple modes of transportation.

roadway is exempt by law, or the project receives a specific waiver authorized through a public, high-level process.	Facilitate coordination between local transportation agencies and Mendocino Transit Authority.
	Consider waivers in cases where environmental issues constrain improvement options, transit service is not planned or currently provided, or where the benefit/cost ratio of providing bike/pedestrian improvements is low (as would be expected in isolated rural areas).
Provide new bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities on existing streets and roads where none exist.	Seek funding to fill gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities adjacent to roadways and provide bus stop improvements along fixed transit routes.

GOODS MOVEMENT

Goal: A transportation system allowing the efficient free flow of goods and freight, including agricultural goods, within and through the region.

Objectives

Policies

Develop State Highway routes capable of efficiently moving goods and agricultural products to, from, and through the Region.	Prioritize State Highway and local road projects that improve connectivity and overall mobility, and increase efficiency with which freight can travel throughout the region.
	Support State efforts to develop a Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) route along the existing alignment through Richardson Grove State Park to eliminate the only STAA gap between the Bay Area and Eureka.
Re-establish freight rail service in Mendocino County.	Support the efforts of the North Coast Railroad Authority to re-establish freight rail service in Mendocino County if viable and financially feasible.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Goal: Provide a safe transportation system and enable rapid and safe evacuation and emergency response.

Objectives

Policies

Coordinate with local and state agencies on security and emergency response planning efforts.	Encourage local agencies and airports to work with Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services to prepare for emergency response and security.
	Identify key transportation routes for evacuation as well as emergency responder access.
Encourage the provision of safety	Consider safety features when planning new transportation

measures for all modes of the regional transportation system.	projects, such as lighting fencing, that would improve safety and security of travelers.
	Consider new technologies to improve security, such as on-board security equipment for transit and changeable message signs for roads and highways.

STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Goal: Provide safe, efficient transportation for regional and interregional traffic while maintaining quality of life for residents of the county.

Objectives

Policies

Provide timely improvements to the Principal Arterial (major highway) system consistent with statewide needs and regional priorities.	Identify improvements to the major corridors consistent with route concepts.
	Seek funding for priority improvements identified on major corridors and interregional routes, including the consideration of RIP programming and pursuit of other State and Federal funding sources.
	Prioritize completion of all phased of the U.S. 101 bypass of Willits consistent with the adopted EIR/EIS for that facility.
	Identify, prioritize, and seek funding for access improvements (interchanges & intersections) to the Principal Arterial System.
	Consider funding participation in staged widening of two-lane segments of U. S. 101 south of Ukiah.
Provide a system of Minor Arterial Highways consistent with statewide needs and local priorities.	Encourage State funding for maintenance of Minor Arterial Highway segments within the County.
	Coordinate with Caltrans to identify and program needed operational and safety improvements.
	Consider local funding partnership to correct safety concerns as appropriate.
Provide safe traveling conditions on all State Highways within Mendocino County.	Prioritize projects that correct safety issues (particularly in locations with high accident rates) for support and funding consideration.
	Implement a system of motorist aid call boxes consistent with the Call Box Implementation Plan per MCOG’s role as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Mendocino County.
Provide for efficient, free-flowing travel on all Sate Highways in Mendocino County.	Maintain a minimum Level of Service C on rural segments of the Principal Arterial System and a minimum Level of Service of D in “urbanized” areas as measured by the current Highway Capacity Manual.
	Maintain a minimum Level of Service D on the “main line” at all

	interchanges and at-grade crossings on the state Highway System.
	Consider programming RIP funding for projects that maintain or improve Level of Service to standards identified herein.
Balance the needs for transportation improvements with quality of life for residents of and visitors to the region.	Consider context sensitive solutions when planning and designing highway improvements, particularly in communities where a State highway serves as “Main Street.”
	Consider “complete streets” strategies when planning major corridor improvements that include the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.
	Pursue multiple funding sources (STIP, TE, SR2S, BTA, etc.) on corridor projects to fund multiple modal aspects of the project.

LOCAL STREETS & ROADS

Goal: Provide a safe and efficient transportation network, connecting local community roads and major transportation corridors and meeting the transportation needs of the communities served by these facilities.

Objectives

Policies

Identify and prioritize capital improvements to the regional road system	Conduct planning activities, such as development of CIPs, to identify critical, high priority improvements.
	Seek funding for needed improvements, including consideration of RIP funding and other state and federal grant sources.
	Prioritize improvements to principal local roadways, particularly those providing primary access to communities, those that connect to the State Highway system, or those that relieve the impact on the State Highway system.
Balance the need for safety and operational improvements with the need for maintenance of the existing system.	Maintain a Pavement Management Program to analyze and determine the best use for funds available for pavement maintenance and rehabilitation.
	Assist local agencies in identifying, prioritizing, and funding safety improvements on local streets and roads systems.
	Seek reliable funding sources for ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation efforts in order to protect investment in existing system.
Provide for alternative forms of transportation on local street and road networks.	Consider “complete streets” strategies when planning and implementing local street and road improvements, including the addition/improvement of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and transit stops.

NON MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Provide a safe and useable network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the region as a means to lessen dependence on vehicular travel and improve the health of Mendocino County’s residents.

Objectives	Policies
Maximize funding opportunities for local agencies to develop and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Update Regional Bikeway Plan on a timely basis to ensure local agency eligibility for Bicycle Transportation Account funds and other grant programs.
	Provide support to local agencies in pursuing grant funding such as Safe Routes to Schools and the Bicycle Transportation Account.
	Continue to reserve and allocate 2% of Local Transportation Funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects.
	Seek funding for needed improvements, and consider RIP funding and other state and federal grant sources.
Provide a non motorized transportation network that offers a feasible alternative to vehicular travel.	Prioritize improvements providing access to schools, employment and other critical services.
	Prioritize projects that link to an existing facility or provide connectivity.
	Fund planning activities in MCOG’s Work Program to identify priority improvements for commute purposes, such as safe routes to schools plans.
	Consider the addition/improvement of bicycle and pedestrian facilities when planning and implementing local street and road improvements.
Encourage healthier lifestyles through increased walking and biking.	Coordinate with health organizations to promote alternative forms of transportation.
	Support educational programs to promote increased walking and biking.
	Encourage development adjacent to existing pedestrian and bicycle systems.
Improve property value and strengthen local economies through more accessible commercial and residential areas.	Encourage the addition of pedestrian and bicycle improvements in local business areas and existing residential areas.

TRANSIT

The Mendocino Transit Authority is the Consolidated Transit Service Agency for Mendocino County and provides the majority of transit services throughout the county, including support for

paratransit services provided by non-profit organizations. Although MTA has their own board of directors which sets policies for the transit agency, MCOG does have an active role in transit. The following are MCOG’s goals, objectives and policies related to transit. MTA’s goals and policies can be found in their Short Range Transit Development Plan (April 2005).

Goal: A coordinated and effective public transit system, which serves the needs of the citizens of Mendocino County, to the extent feasible.

Objectives	Policies
Fund public transit services to the extent that there are demonstrated transit needs, existing service demonstrates good performance, and resources are available.	Conduct annual unmet transit needs process.
	Continue to maximize Transit Development Act funding for Mendocino Transit Authority and maintain a capital reserve fund.
	Pursue all available funding for transit operations and capital needs, including consideration of RIP funds for transit capital needs when appropriate as well as acting as official grant applicant when appropriate.
	Continue funding the LTF Reserve Fund to ensure transit continuity when LTF revenues fail to meet projections.
Ensure that transit operates in an efficient and effective manner.	Prepare coordinated transportation plans as required, identifying opportunities for coordination or consolidation in services.
	Fund and coordinate triennial performance audits and annual fiscal audits of MTA.
	Conduct annual meetings of the Transit Productivity Committee to review transit system performance and review/adjust performance standards.
	Consider the needs of the transit system (bus stops and bike/pedestrian access) when planning roadway improvements
Support transit needs of seniors, the disabled, and low income individuals.	Coordinate annual grant programs, such as FTA Section 5310, JARC and New Freedom programs and provide assistance to agencies in preparing applications as appropriate.
	Conduct meetings of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee, a minimum of once each year. Involve the SSTAC in transportation planning activities as appropriate.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Goal: A fully operational rail transportation system connecting Mendocino County to interregional, state and national rail system service, providing safe and efficient access for freight and passenger movement.

Objectives	Policies
Provide support to rail operators as appropriate.	Coordinate with NCRA in planning efforts providing support as needed and appropriate.

	Monitor activities of NCRA, assuring the protection of MCOG and its member jurisdictions investments.
	Consider RIP funding for high priority rail/grade crossing improvements on local streets and roads.
Encourage full use of rail right of way.	Coordinate and encourage efforts to create multi use trails within rail right of way, while retaining use of rails and insuring public safety.
	Support retention of rail right of way for transportation and other public purposes in the event of railroad closure or abandonment.
Seek reliable funding sources for rail operations.	Maintain policy support and encourage funding by State and Federal agencies for rail planning and implementation.
Improve economic vitality of the region through rail related tourism.	Support coordination between the tourist industry and rail providers.

AVIATION

Goal: A safe, efficient, and well maintained system of airports that meet the aviation needs of Mendocino County residents, visitors, commerce, and emergency services.

Objectives

Policies

Ensure the long term stability of the Region’s airports through resolution of land use issues.	Support adoption and periodic update of Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) for each airport.
Improve air facilities and maintain each airport at an acceptable level of service and in good repair.	Support and assist airport facility owners in grant application processes and with communication/coordination with the Division of Aeronautics, the California Transportation Commission, and the F.A.A.
	Assist local agencies with development of Airport Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs).

MARITIME

Goal: An adequate, well maintained, safe and efficient system of maritime facilities that meet the regional and interregional needs of commercial, recreational, and emergency services maritime vessels.

Objectives

Policies

Maintain and improve existing publicly owned maritime facilities	Support the identification and allocation of resources for maritime facilities at Noyo Harbor and Arena Cove.
Develop future maritime facilities based upon adopted master plans.	Support the development of future maritime facilities that are based upon established needs, are financially viable, and are

	consistent with general plans.
Provide adequate public access to maritime facilities.	Support the maintenance and improvement of public access (streets/roads, bikeways, pedestrian facilities and transit) to established maritime facilities.

TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION

Goal: For Tribal residents within Mendocino County to have safe, effective, functional transportation systems, including streets, roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit.

Objectives

Policies

Implement activities in a knowledgeable, sensitive manner respectful of tribal sovereignty.	Consult with and involve the tribes in the development of planning documents. Routinely, this applies to development of the Regional Transportation Plan and the biennial State Transportation Improvement Program.
	Provide the tribes with information regarding various Federal, State, and local transportation grant programs for which they may qualify.
	Routinely transmit MCOG’s policy and program recommendations, actions, and information having potential effects on the tribes’ land or resources to the tribes.
Establish and maintain government-to-government relationships with the tribes in order to establish clear and open, ongoing communication between MCOG and the tribes	Meet with the tribes to review the status of the government-to-government relationships and exchange information.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Goal: To provide proper stewardship of transportation resources and maximize the effectiveness of these resources to fulfill RTP goals and objectives.

Objectives

Policies

Maximize the effectiveness of transportation funding resources.	Prioritize transportation projects which fulfill multiple RTP goals and objectives, when selecting or nominating projects for funding.
	Prioritize projects that lie within those agencies that have adopted and implemented transportation impact fee programs.
	Reserve a portion of federal funds made available through the Surface Transportation Program (or subsequent program adopted by Congress) for the purpose of partnering with local agencies and Caltrans to construct regional priority transportation projects.

	<p>Direct Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to capital projects: (1) on state Highways (2) on major local highways that connect to State Highways (3) on major local highways that facilitate through traffic or otherwise relieve State Highways, or (4) on major local highways that serve communities not served by the State Highway system.</p>
<p>Ensure planning and construction funds are awarded to projects with a plausible financing plan that will lead to timely construction of projects.</p>	<p>Require funding plans to be submitted as a component of all applications for MCOG planning, project development, right-of-way, and construction funding. Funding plans are to commensurate with project complexity and are to ensure that regionally funded projects are feasible, fundable, and timely.</p>
<p>Diversify funding sources for transportation projects.</p>	<p>Encourage agencies to federalize transportation projects that are eligible for federal funds, if feasible.</p> <p>Prioritize projects where agencies have adopted capital improvement fees to ensure new development pays its proportional share of the cost of transportation improvement projects.</p> <p>Prioritize projects within those agencies have provided matching funds that are not limited to transportation projects, such as Redevelopment or General funds.</p> <p>Assist local agencies in identifying and obtaining local funding sources such as transportation development fees and local transportation sales taxes.</p> <p>Consider MCOG sponsorship and/or matching fund commitments for transportation planning grants that will further the goals and objectives of the RTP.</p>