



**MENDOCINO  
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### **MCOG Reacts to State Commission's Rejection of Willits Bypass**

At its regular meeting today, Mendocino Council of Governments considered how best to react to the California Transportation Commission's rejection, in a blatantly political move, of MCOG's top project and the Commission's own staff's recommendation.

MCOG Executive Director Phil Dow had added an emergency agenda item to consider "deprogramming" nearly \$32 million of regional shares already committed to the Willits Bypass project, as a way to regain some leverage.

MCOG's Board of Directors heard from members of the public, including City of Willits officials who expressed anger and frustration at the State Commission's action.

Also added to the agenda was a resolution declaring the collapse of the long-established state and regional transportation funding partnership.

After extended debate, MCOG first adopted a resolution protesting the State Transportation Commission's action and calling for a standby list of those projects ranked and recommended by Commission staff but denied by the Commissioners.

Second, the MCOG Board decided not to deprogram Willits Bypass funds until their member City Councils and the County Supervisors have a chance to discuss long-term implications and to recommend a course of action.

Third, MCOG adopted the Regional Transportation Improvement Program recommended by their Technical Advisory Committee, programming much of the \$6.7 million made available from Proposition 1B. The funds will go to a combination of public transit vehicles and existing streets and roads projects.

Acting as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, MCOG programs or allocates various types of state and federal transportation funds to Caltrans, the County of Mendocino and the four incorporated Cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Willits, and Point Arena. In addition to projects on state highways and within its five member jurisdictions, MCOG helps support transportation activities of Mendocino Transit Authority, North Coast Rail Authority, local airports, and others. Projects involve planning, capital improvements, rehabilitation and maintenance, fleet replacement, and intermodal transit centers. For more information, call the MCOG office at 463-1859 or consult the agency's web site at [www.mendocinocog.org](http://www.mendocinocog.org).

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