

MCOG Awards \$2 Million to Regional Projects

At their December 6 meeting, the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) awarded over \$2 million to projects of regional significance. Local agencies applying for Transportation Enhancements projects under the federal “TE” program received funds intended for enhancements to the surface transportation system, such as bicycle and pedestrian trails, scenic and historic preservation, landscaping and beautification.

The top-ranked project receiving funds was the City of Point Arena’s Coastal Access Scenic Bikeway. MCOG awarded \$383,850 to complete this project connecting the downtown area with the municipal pier at the cove for bicycle and pedestrian access. The project includes a bus shelter, public restrooms and “streetscaping.” Previously MCOG has awarded \$426,000 to this project.

The County of Mendocino received \$371,000 for one of their applications, which ranked second. The project will provide pedestrian facilities around Grace Hudson School in Ukiah and near River Union School in Talmage. This project was also awarded \$339,000 by MCOG under an earlier funding program.

Ranking third, the City of Fort Bragg received the largest award at \$1,245,000 for Phase 3 of their Downtown Streetscape Project. The project will provide improved pedestrian facilities and beautify the streetscape along five blocks of Fort Bragg’s downtown. The first two phases of this project have been funded under a variety of other sources.

The TE program originated with the Congressional bill formerly known as ISTEA and reauthorized as TEA21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. Both bills have expired and a six-month extension is in place until Congress enacts a new federal transportation bill in the coming spring 2005 session.

MCOG also awarded local bicycle and pedestrian funds to the County Department of Transportation for pedestrian improvements in Laytonville (\$48,000) and in Caspar (\$24,180); and to the City of Ukiah (\$72,000) for their sixth phase of sidewalk curb ramps to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

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 the North Coast Rail Authority, California Western Railroad, Mendocino Transit 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.

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