



August 25, 2011

Funds Available for Transportation Enhancement Projects

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, announces the availability of \$815,000 in federal funding for Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects within Mendocino County. The TE program is a federally funded capital improvement program. Projects must have a direct relationship to the surface transportation system and be over and above normal projects. MCOG will be accepting applications from now through October 3, 2011. Although policy has established a project minimum of \$100,000, due to the cumbersome federal process, MCOG would encourage applicants to consider larger projects. Approved projects will become part of the 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

MCOG has established a local TE application process to determine how to distribute these funds. Included in this process are the following key points:

- **Applicant Eligibility** - All applicants or sponsoring agencies must be capable of entering into a Master Agreement with Caltrans. Potential applicants may include the County, Cities, Mendocino Transit Authority, and State agencies. Agencies that do not meet this requirement but wish to pursue grant funding need to work with an eligible agency to act as a project sponsor.
- **Project Eligibility** - Projects must comply with federal environmental requirements and other federal regulations and fall into one of the following categories:
 1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
 2. Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles;
 3. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
 4. Scenic or historic highway programs, including tourist and welcome center facilities;
 5. Landscaping and other scenic beautification;
 6. Historic preservation;
 7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities;
 8. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including conversion and use for pedestrian or bicycle trails)
 9. Control and removal of outdoor advertising;
 10. Archaeological planning and research;
 11. Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity; and
 12. Establishment of transportation museums.
- **Project Selection** - Applications are expected to be reviewed and ranked by MCOG's Technical Advisory Committee during November 2011, with MCOG selection expected to occur at the December meeting. Successful projects will be adopted as part of MCOG's 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and programmed over the five year RTIP period (FY 2012/2013 – 2016/2017).

For additional information, please contact Nephele Barrett, Senior Planner, 463-1859 or barrettn@dow-associates.com. Application materials are available by request or on the agency's web site at www.mendocinocog.org.