

**Project Proposal:**

The Willits Bypass project will construct a 4-lane freeway on a new alignment that will bypass the City of Willits. The purpose of this project is to improve interregional connectivity, significantly increase safety, enhance livability within the city of Willits, and decrease travel delays by providing at least Level of Service C for interregional traffic within this segment of the corridor. This project is the number one priority in the Regional Transportation Plan for Mendocino County and the Final Environmental Document (EIS/EIR) has recently been completed.

2005 Peak Hour Average Daily Traffic within the project limits ranges between 1100-2150 vehicles. Truck traffic comprises 5-10% of total traffic volume.

The Willits Bypass project meets several of the goals listed in the Strategic Growth Plan, including: expanding capacity, enhancing operations, improvement of travel times in highly congested corridors, reducing congestion, improving traffic flow, and increasing traffic safety.

U.S. Route 101 spans the entire western coast of the United States between the Canadian and Mexican Borders. It is a major interstate route and holds considerable interregional importance to the North Coast region of California. Often referred to as the “Lifeline to the North Coast”, the Route 101 corridor between the Golden Gate Bridge and Oregon Border, is the only North/South principal arterial route west of Interstate 5. As a single route dependent region, the North Coast is heavily reliant on Route 101 for movement of goods, services and people. Route 101 is identified as a high emphasis focus route in the 1998 Interregional Transportation System Management Plan. In this document, “focus routes” represent the corridors that should be the highest priority for completion to minimum facility standards (for most routes freeway or expressway) in the 20-year period to assure a statewide trunk system is in place and complete for higher volume interregional trip movements. In addition, Route 101 is part of the California Freeway & Expressway System, and is included in the National Highway System.

U.S. 101 is the primary route providing direct access to California’s North Coast for commercial trucking year round. From Marin County northward, this is the only goods delivery corridor tying the North Coast in with the greater San Francisco urban core and the Port of Oakland. On-time delivery of goods and services is significantly hampered by congestion. 2005 truck volumes taken from approximately 7 miles north of the project limits account for approximately 17-20% of total vehicle volume, or approximately 550 5+ Axle Vehicles Per Day (source: 2005 Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic on the California State Highway System). It can reasonably be assumed that a large percentage of these trucks are interregional and would utilize the Willits Bypass.

The corridor is also a major route for access to travel related business, which accounts for a significant portion of local business revenues and employment in both Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

**Schedule/Cost:**

Total Project Cost: \$356,360,000

Funding Split:

Jointly funded with Grandfathered Interregional Improvement Program (GF-IIP) funds, Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) funds and Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds.

Project Milestones:

- ❑ PAED – December 31, 2006 – \$10,465,000
- ❑ PS & E – May 13, 2009 – \$11,100,000
- ❑ R/W Support – \$2,155,000
- ❑ R/W Capital (Cert. & RTL) – July 15, 2009 – \$36,000,000
- ❑ Construction Support – \$18,000,000
- ❑ Construction Capital (Award Contract) – November 13, 2009 – \$278,640,000

**Proposed Performance Improvement Measures:**

- ❑ Connectivity

Closing Freeway/Expressway gaps is the highest priority within the Route 101 Corridor. Approximately 80 percent of the Corridor is constructed to concept as identified in the 1998 ITSP. With the construction of the Willits Bypass, approximately 6 miles of Freeway miles will be added to the corridor and, with the exception of a short segment of conventional highway in Hopland, there will be approximately 132 miles of continuous Freeway/Expressway from Willits south to the Golden Gate Bridge.

- ❑ Safety

The number of total collisions, based on statewide average collision rates for similar facilities, is projected to decrease nearly 80 percent.

- ❑ Community Livability (on existing Route 101 after construction of bypass)

Construction of the bypass will remove a significant amount of interregional traffic from the local road network in the City of Willits. This will benefit community livability by removing a major source of congestion and local travel delay, and will present opportunities for improving local circulation, including improved non-motorized and transit facilities.

- ❑ Congestion Relief

Peak hour delay time through the Willits area was projected with and without construction of the bypass.

**Comparison of Overall Peak Hour Delay Time**

Alternative	Overall Total Delay (hours)	Total Delay (min/veh)	Stop Delay (min/veh)
1998 Existing	105	1.7	1.1
No-Build 2008	225	4.0	3.1
No-Build 2028	485	7.4	5.9
Preferred Alternative 2008	66	0.9	0.6
Preferred Alternative 2028	102	1.2	0.7

Source: Modified Valley Alternatives – Addendum to Willits Bypass Traffic Study Report. November 2000.

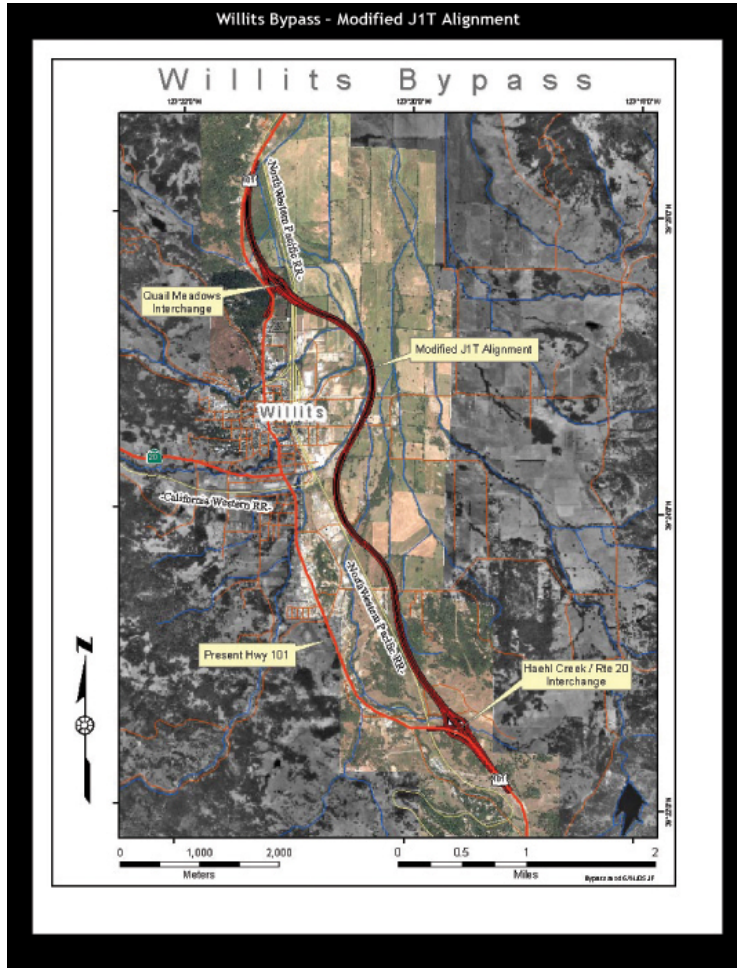
**Co-Nominator:**

Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG)  
Del Norte Local Transportation Commission (DNLTCO)  
Humboldt County Area of Governments (HCAOG)

**District Contact Information:**

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Route 101: Willits Bypass  
1-MEN-101-R43.1/52.3  
MAP 1



Route  Corridor  
Gaps in the U.S. 101 Route Concept  
in District 1

