



HOPLAND

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hopland Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting – Hybrid

January 15, 2025 at 5:30 pm

Hopland Fire Protection District Community Room

21 Feliz Creek Road, Hopland, California

The Hopland Municipal Advisory Council (HMAC) meetings are held in-person and virtually via Zoom Video Communications. Meeting access information is available on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members: Julie Golden, Dale Andrew, Amy Frost (pending BOS approval), *Vacant, Vacant*

Alternate: *Vacant*

Administrative Support: Melissa Frausto - LACO Associates

1. Call to order & roll call

The meeting was called to order at 5:39pm. All members were present. No member attended virtually.

2. Public comment & announcements on non-agenda items

No comment/ discussion

3. Consent Calendar

- a. Approval of the December 18, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

Dale moved to approve the consent calendar with a second from Amy. All voted in favor.

4. Discussion and possible action on community updates and issues

- a. Mendocino County Sheriff's Office: *General updates from Sheriff Kendall*

Sheriff Kendall shared a few updates from the Sheriff's Office. 1) He has observed an increased interest in joining the police academy in recent years. 2) Construction of the new jail is progressing well. 3) Earlier this week there was an incident involving a man walking into traffic and it is assumed this behavior likely correlates with the drugs found on him. 4) With the passage of Proposition 36, the Sheriff's Office will be able to install electronic surveillance cameras throughout Mendocino County. He hopes that the public will not steal the cameras and emphasized that he will not hesitate to arrest those who do.

Julie inquired if the Sheriff's Office investigates skimmers at gas stations. Sheriff Kendall acknowledged that skimmers have been identified in Mendocino County but explained that these devices are sent to a computer lab in Sacramento for analysis. This lab is extremely busy, receiving 1,000 cases every three months, and prioritizes more serious crimes. Consequently, skimmer investigations have a lower priority. The Sheriff's Office is actively seeking grants to establish a dedicated computer lab within Mendocino County.

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Amy asked if the Sheriff's Office investigated the scam call received by the Shanél Valley Academy (SVA) that was mentioned in the December HMAC meeting. Sheriff Kendall stated that he attempted to call the scammer's number multiple times but was unable to reach them.

Madeline asked Sheriff Kendall to talk about Community Outreach and Engagement (CORE). He explained that incidents will be addressed through a dual-response system, involving both a Sheriff's Deputy and a social services staff person.

b. Hopland Fire Protection District: *General updates from Chief Franklin*

Chief Franklin shared that the Hopland Fire Protection District (HFPD) recently held its annual appreciation dinner and it was a great success. He also mentioned that firetrucks from Mendocino and Humboldt Counties were dispatched to Southern California to assist with the wildfires there. While the HFPD has not yet deployed any firetrucks or personnel, it is fully prepared to assist if needed.

c. Board of Supervisors: *General updates from Supervisor Madeline Cline*

District 1 Supervisor Madeline Cline shared that the new Board of Supervisors (BOS) was sworn in on January 7th and subsequently participated in a two-day workshop to discuss priorities for the County of Mendocino (County). The BOS identified public safety as its top priority, followed by road improvements. Furthermore, Madeline noted that the County carried over \$11 million from last year's budget into this year and subsequently, the County is currently in good financial standing. All required financial reports were also submitted on time. Additionally, Madeline shared that a new Low-Intensity Camping Ordinance will be presented to the BOS sometime in February. This ordinance would potentially allow property owners to establish between 1 and 10 campsites on their property. Lastly, Madeline plans to host a constituent lunch at McNab Ridge Winery on February 7th at noon. This event will provide an opportunity for her to meet with constituents and gather their feedback on issues in Mendocino County.

Madeline shared that she recently had a meeting with Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and Senator McGuire's office to discuss the Hopland ADA 101 Project. Julie requested that a HMAC representative be in attendance at future meetings. Madeline will try to include the HMAC as much as possible moving forward.

d. Hopland Public Utility District: *General updates*

No update/ discussion

e. Hopland Cemetery District: *General updates*

No update/ discussion

f. Shanél Valley Academy: *General updates from Amy Frost*



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Amy shared that the SVA will begin offering a full-day preschool program starting February 3rd. This program was recently expanded to include 2-year-olds. Julie inquired about the program's capacity, and Amy responded that it could accommodate 24 children and currently has 8 enrolled.

Julie mentioned that the SVA is participating in Destination Hopland, a fundraiser scheduled for January 25th. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is actively involved in assisting with the event. Destination Hopland will feature 22 vendors pouring sparkling wine and has a capacity of 120 attendees.

Madeline raised a question about the recently installed 'slow' traffic signs on Mountain House Road. Amy clarified that the signs have been installed, but unfortunately, they are in the wrong locations. The signs were put up on January 8th.

g. Hopland Research and Extension Center: *General updates from Hannah Bird*
No update/ discussion

h. Hopland Farmers Market: *General updates*

Julie shared that the Hopland Farmers Market is trying to merge with the Mendocino County Farmers Market.

5. Discussion and possible action on Caltrans Hopland Highway 101 ADA Project

Jen Buck (*Caltrans, Office Chief of Project Management*) provided an update on the Hopland ADA project. Jen explained that the June community meeting aimed to inform residents about the project elements that would potentially impact the Hopland Public Utility District (HPUD). She emphasized that the current plans are not yet finalized and therefore not ready for public review. The Hopland ADA project is divided into two phases: Project A and Project B. Construction of Project A is slated for Spring of 2026.

Project A: Infrastructure Improvements

- Upgrade pedestrian facilities to meet current ADA standards.
- Enhance signage throughout the project area.
- Install 7 high-visibility crosswalks, including 2 new crosswalks.
- Incorporate dedicated bicycle lanes.
- Rehabilitate or reconstruct pavement sections.
- Improve sight lines at intersections by lowering road grades.
- Upgrade guardrails and end treatments for better safety.
- Install visually appealing architectural hardscape elements.
- Standardize lane widths, sidewalk dimensions, and driveway standards as follows:
 - Sidewalks: 5 to 8 feet wide
 - Parking lanes: 8 feet wide
 - Travel lanes: 11 feet wide
 - Two-way left turn lane: 11 feet wide
- Install ADA curb ramps at all crosswalks.



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- Install mountable curbs.
- Maintain standard driveways.

Project B: Improvements that require further coordination

- Replace or rehabilitate drainage systems throughout the project area.
- Upgrade existing lighting infrastructure.
- Install a census station.
- Install rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at Center Street and Mountain House Road intersections.

The timeline for installation of the RRFBs is currently unknown due to challenges with underground utilities. The installation of RRFBs requires 7-foot-deep trenches, which would conflict with existing gas, sewer, water, and electrical lines. Caltrans must also adhere to minimum clearance requirements for these utilities. Additionally, the HPUD has indicated a lack of funding to contribute to Project B improvements at this time.

For questions or comments, the public can email HoplandADA@dot.ca.gov, and for more information visit the project webpage at: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-1/d1-projects/d1-hopland-ada>.

Julie inquired about the specific sidewalks that would be updated, to which Jen clarified that only sidewalks that do not already meet ADA standards would be addressed. Supervisor Madeline Cline (*BOS, District 1*), asked to clarify which sidewalks specifically do not meet the standard. Leo Morales (*Caltrans, Engineer*) responded that only sidewalks within the State right-of-way (ROW) would be addressed. Julie then asked whether the sidewalk in front of the Thatcher Hotel would be replaced. Leo confirmed that it would, specifically mentioning the section at the intersection of Center Street. He emphasized that the work would be carried out with minimal disturbance within the ROW. Julie then inquired about the ramp and steps at the Bluebird Cafe, expressing concerns that the owners had not received a Temporary Construction Easement (TCE), a legal agreement that allows Caltrans to temporarily access private property during construction projects that encroach upon the state's ROW. Jen clarified that a TCE may not have been necessary if Caltrans already had access. Leo further added that the existing sidewalk at that location already complies with ADA standards and no work to the ramp and steps would be completed. Leo concluded by offering his assistance in answering any specific questions about the project. He suggested compiling a list of questions about the scope and location of the planned work.

Julie inquired about the timeline for Project B, expressing concern that it may be indefinitely delayed due to the HPUD's potential inability to secure funding. She is concerned that Caltrans might not revisit the project if the HPUD fails to obtain necessary funds. Jen responded by emphasizing that Caltrans has already provided significant support to the HPUD, including preliminary design work and assistance in identifying potential grant opportunities. She also mentioned that Jared Walker (*Willow County Water District, General Manager*) had pointed out

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the challenge of securing funding for infrastructure improvements when existing utilities are not currently failing.

Amy expressed concern with the plans regarding the large grape trucks that frequently pass through the area, causing significant traffic congestion and obstructing pedestrian crossings at Highway 101. Leo inquired about the typical schedule of these truck movements. Amy explained that the trucks are present throughout the day and night. Marie Brady (*Caltrans, Project Manager*) then asked if the truck traffic was primarily concentrated during the harvest season. Amy acknowledged that traffic peaks during harvest, but she pointed out that because there are processing facilities within Mendocino County, there is a consistent flow of trucks throughout the year. Amy also mentioned that the HFPD has expressed safety concerns regarding the trucks turning onto Mountain House Road. Jen mentioned that trucks would be able to drive over the curbs, as designed. Leo clarified that the planned improvements are designed to accommodate large trucks. Marie also added that Caltrans did an analysis on truck turning radiuses when developing the design. Madeline and Julie requested to Marie that Caltrans reach out to the HFPD and the local businesses.

Amy inquired about the feasibility and potential cost of RRFBs exclusively at the crosswalk in front of the Thatcher Hotel. Jen suggested that this question be directed to the HPUD. Julie then asked whether it might be possible to move the utilities sideways instead of vertically, which could potentially simplify the installation process. Jen acknowledged that this approach might be feasible and added that this could potentially be a "minor" project but would still be contingent on the HPUD's approval and cooperation. Leo added that even a localized project, such as installing RRFBs at a single intersection, would still have a significant impact on existing underground utilities due to the age of the infrastructure.

Julie inquired about the potential consequences of a delay in Project A. Jen explained that a delay would jeopardize the current funding allocation for the project. Julie then asked for the project's budget, which Jen confirmed to be \$15.4 million. Marie emphasized the urgency of the project, stating that the deteriorating pavement condition necessitates immediate action. She also highlighted Caltrans' obligation to ensure that the roadways meet safety and accessibility standards. Amy then posed a hypothetical scenario, asking what would happen if the HPUD were to secure the necessary funding for Project B within the next 3 months. Jen explained that this would necessitate a complete re-evaluation and redesign of the project plans, inevitably leading to further delays.

Jen stated that she would collaborate with Marie to upload the PowerPoint presentations from both the June meeting and today's meeting to the project website within a week. She anticipated that the finalized project plans would be available by the following Monday, January 27th. Dale suggested that the project plans should be shared with the businesses and include information on how to submit comments on the project plans.

Jen suggested creating a one-page informational sheet to distribute to local businesses prior to the commencement of construction.

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Jen concluded by offering to provide monthly updates on the project's progress moving forward.

6. Discussion and possible action on Downtown Hopland Pedestrian Lighting

Julie asked when Caltrans would install lighting conduits. Marie stated that since installing conduits involves the HPUD, it would be completed with Project B.

Supervisor Cline pointed out that the installation of conduits was not explicitly included in the project description outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study. The Initial Study uses ambiguous language, suggesting a preliminary investigation into the "possibility" of including conduits, rather than definitively stating their inclusion.

Marie reported that during her exploration of lighting options, she consulted with Howard Dashiell (*County of Mendocino Department of Transportation, Director*). Mr. Dashiell had informed her that the Hopland Lighting District does not currently have a comprehensive lighting plan in place, which he indicated is a necessary prerequisite for the installation of lighting conduits. Julie expressed concern about the appropriateness of Mr. Dashiell as the primary contact for the lighting district. Supervisor Cline offered to investigate the current membership of the lighting district.

7. Discussion and possible action on Mendocino County Emergency Operations Plan

No update/ discussion

8. Council Members' and staff reports regarding assigned tasks, committee meetings, and other items of general interest

a. HMAC Vacancies

No update/ discussion

9. Discussion on agenda items for February 19, 2025 HMAC meeting

No update/ discussion

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.