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COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
501 Low Gap Road • Room 1010
Ukiah, California 95482

July 13, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5094
Sacramento, CA 95814
[SBUD.Committee@senate.ca.gov]

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814
[AsmBudget@asm.ca.gov]

Re: Additional Local Bridge, Safety and Active Transportation Funding – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Skinner and Assembly Member Ting:

Mendocino County joins the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in our support for CSAC's request for an additional \$1 billion investment into local bridge, safety and active transportation infrastructure from one-time funds. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant drop in local transportation funding at a time when local agencies have hundreds of projects that could quickly go to construction. These projects will stimulate further economic recovery while also making permanent improvements that support California's sustainability and transportation safety goals.

We support CSAC's request for an additional investment of at least \$500 million in local agency bridges. California has over 12,000 locally-owned bridges, of which 1,035 are in poor condition. The Local Highway Bridge Program is significantly oversubscribed, with over 800 bridge projects seeking approximately \$5 billion and dedicated funding of only \$289 million annually. Additional funding could quickly be used to advance dozens of needed projects to rehabilitate and replace local bridges that are ready to proceed but lack funding. In Mendocino County, eleven local bridges are in line for replacement with partial funding from the Federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP). For example, the Ackerman Creek Bridge on North State Street in Ukiah is ready to advertise for bids in the HBP at a total construction cost of \$9.939 million, which includes a \$1.37 million local match — \$403,500 left in College RDA funds and a need for \$960,000 additional Local Bridge Funds.

We also support CSAC's request for an additional investment of at least \$250 million in the Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). This program funds evidence-based projects that improve safety for all users of California's local roadways, including pedestrians and cyclists. Despite reductions in driving, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, preliminary data show increased traffic deaths in 2020. During the most recent grant cycle, local agencies sought \$489.8 million in local road safety projects, but funding was only available to make awards of \$227.6 million. In Mendocino

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County, we have funding for safety evaluation in conjunction with the cities in our county which we hope will identify many needed projects future HSIP grant applications.

Finally, we support CSAC's request for an additional \$250 million for local active transportation grants to improve access and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians in local communities. While cities and counties are integrating active transportation improvements into ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation programs, there is still significant demand for larger-scale projects to enhance local streets for bicyclists and pedestrians. During the current grant cycle agencies requested over \$2 billion with only \$220 million available. In Mendocino County, we are pursuing funding for the 2019 Mendocino Council of Governments *Pedestrian Needs Inventory and Feasibility Study* that is planned for future applications.

Mendocino County urges your support for at least \$1 billion in sustainable fix-it-first local bridge projects, as well as, investments in road safety and active transportation infrastructure. If you have questions about our position, please contact Howard N. Dashiell, Director of Transportation, at (707) 463-4363. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

DANIEL GJERDE, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

cc: Graham Knaus, Executive Director, California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Howard N. Dashiell, Mendocino County Department of Transportation
Paul Yoder, Partner, Shaw Yoder Antwih, Schmelzer & Lange (SYASL)