

## California Department of Transportation

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November 12, 2025

Round Valley Area Municipal Advisory Council  
PO Box 372  
Covelo, CA 95428

Dear Secretary Richards,

Thank you for reaching out to Caltrans with your suggestions for HM4 Projects in your area. Safety is at the top of our list of priorities and is reflected in our Department's mission statement and goals.

We have gone through the list of community requests that you provided on behalf of the Round Valley Area Municipal Advisory Council, and determined that some of the requests involve facilities that are outside the State right-of-way. As to the remaining requests that pertain to facilities within the State right-of way, Caltrans doesn't have any planned improvements for that route segment at this time.

However, there are various grant funds that would allow for movement on some of the improvements desired by the community. When pursuing grant funds, partnerships are critical and might be mandatory depending on the project type or who maintains the infrastructure under consideration. We encourage collaboration with the County of Mendocino. With shrinking budgets and limited grant opportunities, thinking outside the box can help. For example, speed tables/humps are hard to find funding for, but a raised pedestrian crosswalk may have more opportunities and provide similar outcomes. Drainage improvements that may be corrected by sidewalk and curb improvements can be more successful when framed as a pedestrian and roadway improvement.

The following are examples of potential funding opportunities for the types of projects inquired about:

- Improved drainage on Howard Street:
  - Drainage specific grants are challenging to find. At times, the local water/wastewater supplier may have access to funds that can be used on these types of projects. Additionally, the [Department of Water Resources](https://water.ca.gov/work-with-us/grants-and-loans) (<https://water.ca.gov/work-with-us/grants-and-loans>) may have funding opportunities for this type of work. One tactic could be to

approach this from a sidewalk/pedestrian need which may provide more funding opportunities. If the proposed work would be related to, or corrected by, construction of sidewalks/paths/trails this might be a good nexus.

- The Caltrans Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/fed-and-state-programs/highway-safety-improvement-program>) can fund pedestrian safety related projects on non-state-owned public roads and roads on tribal land.
- Creation of a complete Streets Plan for Covelo:
  - Applications are currently being accepted for the FY 26-27 Sustainable Transportation Planning (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/division-of-transportation-planning/regional-and-community-planning/sustainable-transportation-planning-grants>) grant program. This is a statewide competitive grant program overseen by Caltrans that funds planning projects that have a transportation nexus. Mendocino County is an eligible applicant for the program and work like the creation of a safe streets or complete streets plan for Covelo is an eligible project type.
  - US DOT Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Program would consider this a supplemental plan and has one of the easier application procedures (<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>).
- Sidewalks and improved drainage along Route 162 between Eberle and East Lane:
  - The Caltrans Local HSIP program (see above).
  - While highly competitive, the Active Transportation Program (<https://catc.ca.gov/programs/active-transportation-program>) could be considered. Drainage alone would not typically be a competitive application, but it may be allowable if it were part of the work to create pedestrian/bike improvements.

Outside the programs listed above, there are some less conventional funding programs that can fund these types of improvements but require more work and creativity. The Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/affordable-housing-and-sustainable-communities>) funds housing specific projects but requires active transportation/transit improvements to be included. Community Development Block Grants (<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/>) can in some cases fund these types of improvements. There are also funding programs specific to tribes such

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as the Tribal High Priority Projects (<https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/tribal/tribal-hpp-program>) or the Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (<https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/tribal/safety/funds>) that could fund or partially fund (leverage/match) elements or other programs.

Sincerely,  
Jess Clifton, D1 Safe Systems