



Collaborative Highway 101 Billboard Project

Recommendation:

The Visitor Services Committee is recommending the redirection of funds ear-marked for a Mendocino County Welcome Sign on Highway 128 to a collaborative billboard project on Highway 101. The total amount in that line item is \$8,000.

Background:

Since the opening of the bypass in Willits in November 2016, the business community has seen a noticeable decline in people traffic and revenue. The Willits Chamber of Commerce and City were looking into signage, but were informed from Caltrans that signage would have to be tabled until the bypass opened. With the passing of the Chamber Director Lynn Kennelly and with the recent increase in TOT for Fort Bragg, Visit Mendocino County feels that this could be a great partnership opportunity to help our partners, plus link inland with the coast.

The intention is for Visit Mendocino County to work with both the City of Willits and City of Fort Bragg to meet and discuss the options of billboard signage off of Highway 101, who would own the billboard (not VMC) and how it could impact influencing travelers to visit the heart of downtown Willits and encourage travel on Highway 20 to Fort Bragg and the coast.

Please note: these funds will likely carry over to the next fiscal year, due to the potential timeline of the project.