

MOBILITY NEWSLETTER

Research and reporting from California, the U.S.,
and around the world.

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Exploring the Golden State

Northern California

Photo by Andrew Sterling via Unsplash



Northern California (NorCal)

What constitutes NorCal is often disputed. We define this region to include the northernmost counties in the state (highlighted in blue). According to US Census Bureau estimates, about 4.7% of the state's population lived in NorCal in 2023.

The area is primarily comprised of rural areas, including vast swaths of pristine forests and mountains.

In this edition, we will highlight emerging mobility news in our northernmost region including topics like...

Funding Awards

Transit

Multi-mobility

ZEV Infrastructure



Fresh funds are making their way into the region. Here are three new NorCal projects:



Grant:
**Reconnecting Communities –
Highways to Boulevards**

Humboldt County

Three state highways run through Arcata and pose a connectivity challenge for residents, effectively barring mobility across the community. The grant will support community-driven planning efforts to create enhancements for transit, active transportation, and more to restore community connectivity ([S](#)).



Grant:
Green Means Go

Yuba County

Several communities in Yuba County will receive funding from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments for projects designed to boost infill development and address transportation needs simultaneously. The funds will support planning and infrastructure projects largely designed to improve multimodal accessibility, active transportation, electric vehicle charger availability, and reduce traffic congestion ([S](#)).



Grant:
**Transit and Intercity Rail Capital
Program**

Humboldt County

In 2023, Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) and partners received over \$8.6 million for various transit projects ([S](#)). The teams have quickly gotten to work putting those funds to good use. In January 2024, HTA began servicing residents from Ukiah to Eureka with a new bus route. Funding for operating the new route also draws from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funds ([S](#)).

Contactless payments are growing in the region

With technical support from the California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP), **10 transit operators in the region have already implemented or are in the process of introducing contactless open loop payments** onboard.

In August 2023, open-loop payments launched in the region ([S](#)). Known as the Far North Group – Humboldt Transit Authority, Lake Transit Authority, Mendocino Transit Authority, and Redwood Coast Transit Authority – became the first group of agencies to collectively purchase open loop technologies with Cal-ITP's help.



Coming Soon: Northern Valley Passenger Rail (NVPR)

Plans are underway to construct a new rail line to connect the northern Sacramento region through Butte County. Service is estimated to start in 2031 with stops in Chico, Gridley, Marysville Plumas Lake, and Natomas.

The \$500-million-dollar project will boost high-capacity transit service for commuters in the area. The NVPR will provide this region of Northern California with connections to the Valley, the Bay Area, and even Southern California ([S](#)).



Coming Soon: The Great Redwood Trail

Public comment is open through June for the planned multi-use Great Redwood Trail (GRT). The trail will trace 300 miles of old railroad track that meanders through the valley and forests through Sonoma, Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt Counties.

While the GRT will ultimately include backcountry trails in addition to other types, about 68% of the trail is expected to be designed for multi-use including walking, biking, horseback riding, and more. Plans are proposed for wayfinding and crossings, especially in portions that run through populated areas. Work is also underway to design how visitors can access the GRT trailheads using local transit.

When complete, the GRT is expected to generate about 5-8 million new walking and hiking trips annually ([S](#)).



Hydrogen fueling options are coming to the region

In late 2023, the California Department of Conservation awarded Redding Rancheria \$500,000 to build a hydrogen production facility.

The facility will use downed and dead trees from nearby forests to produce the hydrogen.

Once built, the station will provide clean hydrogen fuel, primarily to hydrogen semi-trucks, along the busy Interstate 5 near Red Bluff. Construction is expected to begin in late 2024 ([S](#)).





Question, feedback, or topic you would like to know more about? Please reach out to angelly.tovar@rebelgroup.com