

Introduction

Staff continued to advance economic development projects. This report presents updates on the Covelo Cleanup project, Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program, Microenterprise Business Assistance Loan Program, The Whale Gulch Elementary Access Project and the Mendocino County Labor Force and Industry Employment Report.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Covelo Clean Up Project

The CDBG funded Covelo Cleanup Project addresses illegal dumping through site cleanup, removal of abandoned vehicles, community cleanup days and education about the environmental impacts of improper waste disposal.

Illegal dump site cleanup activities were completed in early October 2026.



Figure 1: Before Cleanup, Foothill



Figure 2: After Cleanup, Foothill



Figure 3: Before Cleanup, Bigger Lane



Figure 4: After Cleaup, Bigger Lane

Community Cleanup Days, a collaborative effort with the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) and the Round Valley Tribe, were held on October 2 and 3. Due to lower-than-expected turnout, MCRCD and the Round Valley Tribe coordinated with C&S Waste to offer two additional drop-off dates on October 9 and 10.

Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program

The County has been approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to use $407,000 of CDBG program income to provide Microenterprise Technical Assistance for small businesses.

The County issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a vendor to provide direct technical assistance to small businesses. The RFP is currently being evaluated, with the process expected to be completed by mid-November. The County expects a contract to be issued no later than January 2027.

Microenterprise Business Assistance Loan Program

The County of Mendocino's Business Assistance Loan Program will increase access to affordable financing for small and emerging businesses that struggle to obtain conventional loans. This County-led program will utilize CDBG program income funds to create a revolving loan fund that offers flexible, low-interest, forgivable loans for start-ups, business expansions, and projects focused on job retention and creation. These efforts will primarily benefit low and moderate-income (LMI) residents.

The County received a fully executed contract to utilize these funds. Staff are preparing the subrecipient agreement, coordinating the formation of a Loan Committee, and preparing for the program's launch.

Centro de Negocios West

The County received a Standard Agreement from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the West Business Development Center's "Centro de Negocios" program, which will provide Spanish-language technical assistance and business training in Mendocino County. The agreement is expected to be submitted to HCD for State signatures in early November 2026. Staff will prepare the subrecipient agreement with West Business Development Center upon receipt of the fully executed Standard Agreement. Staff expect the project to start early in 2027.

Whale Gulch Elementary Access Project

The Whale Gulch School Access Project is designed to improve accessibility by reconstructing the pathway connecting Whale Gulch Elementary School to its restrooms and expanding the existing fire alarm system to cover the entire campus. These improvements will help ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Building Code.

The architect procured by Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE) submitted the final drawings of the project to the Division of State Architects (DSA). The plans are currently scheduled to begin the review process on November 18. The County continues to monitor the review process and is prepared to submit the application once MCOE provides the final documents.

Mendocino County Labor Force and Industry Employment Estimates

The Employment Development Department (EDD) has released preliminary civilian labor force and industry employment estimates for September 2026.

- Mendocino County's unemployment rate is 5.2%
- California unemployment rate is 5.1%.

The October 2026 Industry Employment & Labor Force Report is attached.

October 16, 2026
Employment Development Department
Labor Market Information Division
Contact: LMID RESEARCHERS

Mendocino County

Industry Employment & Labor Force
March 2025 Benchmark

Data Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Sep 25	Jul 26	Aug 26 Revised	Sep 26 Prelim	Percent Change Month	Year
Civilian Labor Force (1)	37,330	36,350	36,480	37,130	1.8%	-0.5%
Civilian Employment	35,250	34,360	34,430	35,190	2.2%	-0.2%
Civilian Unemployment	2,080	1,990	2,050	1,950	-4.9%	-6.3%
Civilian Unemployment Rate	5.6%	5.5%	5.6%	5.2%		
(CA Unemployment Rate)	5.6%	5.3%	5.4%	5.1%		
(U.S. Unemployment Rate)	4.3%	4.4%	4.3%	4.0%		
Total Wage and Salary (2)	33,350	33,310	33,520	34,070	1.6%	2.2%
Total Farm	1,890	1,740	1,590	1,950	22.6%	3.2%
Total Nonfarm	31,460	31,570	31,930	32,120	0.6%	2.1%
Total Private	24,290	24,750	24,760	24,590	-0.7%	1.2%
Goods Producing	3,930	3,930	3,920	3,890	-0.8%	-1.0%
Mining, Logging and Construction	2,020	2,090	2,110	2,070	-1.9%	2.5%
Mining and Logging	340	370	370	360	-2.7%	5.9%
Construction	1,680	1,720	1,740	1,710	-1.7%	1.8%
Manufacturing	1,920	1,850	1,820	1,830	0.5%	-4.7%
Durable Goods	940	930	910	910	0.0%	-3.2%
Non-Durable Goods	980	920	910	930	2.2%	-5.1%
Service-Providing	27,530	27,630	28,010	28,220	0.7%	2.5%
Private Service Providing	20,350	20,810	20,830	20,700	-0.6%	1.7%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	5,550	5,460	5,460	5,420	-0.7%	-2.3%
Wholesale Trade	710	690	680	680	0.0%	-4.2%
Retail Trade	3,960	3,900	3,910	3,860	-1.3%	-2.5%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	880	870	870	890	2.3%	1.1%
Information	160	170	170	170	0.0%	6.3%
Financial Activities	950	940	950	950	0.0%	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	1,960	1,900	1,930	1,940	0.5%	-1.0%
Private Education and Health Services	6,940	7,170	7,250	7,260	0.1%	4.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,060	4,390	4,320	4,230	-2.1%	4.2%
Other Services	730	790	760	730	-3.9%	0.0%
Government	7,180	6,820	7,170	7,520	4.9%	4.7%
Federal Government	270	270	270	260	-3.7%	-3.7%
Total State and Local Government	6,910	6,550	6,910	7,260	5.1%	5.1%
State Government	820	840	820	820	0.0%	0.0%
Local Government	6,090	5,710	6,090	6,440	5.7%	5.7%

Notes:

(1) Civilian labor force data are by place of residence; include self-employed individuals, unpaid family workers, household domestic workers, & workers on strike. Data may not add due to rounding. The unemployment rate is calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Industry employment is by place of work; excludes self-employed individuals, unpaid family workers, household domestic workers, & workers on strike. Data may not add due to rounding.

These data are produced by the Labor Market Information Division of the California Employment Development Department (EDD). Questions should be directed to:
Contact: LMID RESEARCHERS

These data, as well as other labor market data, are available via the Internet at http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov.

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