Questions to the Candidates from **Walk & Bike Mendocino**  
Mo Mulheren

1. Quality bicycling/walking opportunities and safe bike/pedestrian infrastructure enhance quality of life and address issues such as affordability, equity, health, and the safety of our streets. At the same time, studies from Portland and other US cities show people on bicycles spend more per month in local business districts than those arriving by other modes. Considering these benefits, **what can the County do to actively support improvements in biking and walking infrastructure?**

The next key step is to work to find funding to extend the Great Redwood Trail. The County of Mendocino has been tasked with increasing the housing stock (they need over 1,300 to meet their RHNA housing goals) it is important that these plans are carefully thought out and include appropriate infrastructure including sidewalks and bike lanes and a lot of safe places to play. The existing subdivisions need attention with a comprehensive plan, the Great Redwood Trail can offer a great connector. As a City Council member I have been actively involved at helping to steer the Traffic Engineering Committee in a direction that promotes and advocates for active transportation. The Ukiah Streetscape is a plan that has been around for over a decade. I am proud of the work that I’ve done to help communicate and share information with the community so that we can create a project that works for everyone. The MCOG Capital Improvement plan from 2011 points out several studies that need to be taken off of the shelf, dusted off, check off what’s been completed and create new priorities for the next ten years so we create a comprehensive plan.

2. Childhood obesity and chronic weight related health issues are a major problem. As an elected official, **how would you use your position to foster an active living agenda that will make measurable improvements in these chronic, but often preventable, diseases?**

Connecting local groups working on these issues is a priority. There is a lot of good work being done in these areas and it’s important to connect the agencies that are working on it as well as being able to connect those groups with funding sources. I have given my time as a volunteer to create a monthly walk on the Great Redwood Trail and am working with other concerned individuals to bring a girls
running program to our community to build self-esteem and an active lifestyle. I believe in leading by example.

3. Forty percent of vehicle trips are less than two miles and many of us trip-hop with our cars rather than walking when we have a number of closely located errands to do. **Will you commit to using your leadership position in the community to “walk the walk” by personally walking and biking whenever possible during your tenure in office?**

   Of course and I already do. What I would love to do is continue to encourage parking on the outskirts of town and walking safely around the community by bringing awareness to the safety and health benefits of walking. I'm happy that the MTA has created a circular route which will allow commuters to use public transportation which will lead to more walking in between stops and that's exactly what we want. The other day I was talking to colleagues and one said “Wait when did you get that car?” I said “Two years ago.” He said “Oh I hadn’t even noticed because everywhere I see you, you are walking”

4. The proposed Great Redwood Trail can potentially connect Hopland through Redwood Valley and on to Willits crossing four of the five County's supervisorial districts. The County’s Director of Transportation has stated this would be a “park” and will not budget or help build any of it as part of our transportation infrastructure. **In a time of climate crisis, do you agree with this position? What will be your approach to building this critical infrastructure and do you consider it a priority?**

   No, I do not agree and have not. It is a priority to see the build out of the Great Redwood Trail in our community. The easier it is for folks to get around without cars the more they will do it. The GRT provides a safe flat route. While the County may not be able to put the extension in to the general fund budget there are grants and other funding opportunities available to allow for the extension of Ukiah's section of the GRT. Increasing Active Transportation and Public Transportation are priorities I have been working on as a city Council person as well including the MTA has an app and a new circular route on the agenda for the City Council.
5. Mendocino County has a strong rural agrarian cultural and economic history. Yet in a time of climate change, it is clear that concentrating growth in urban centers (Ukiah, Willits, and Fort Bragg) and rural nodal “downtowns” has many advantages. Homes built in the wildland/urban interface and sprawling developments increase fire risk and do not provide enough tax revenue to provide the services their owners demand. **What steps will you take to ensure development, with or without population growth, is sustainable and climate friendly?**

Being engaged and involved is a really important. There are some policies that allow development by right and don’t incentivize developers to make sustainable choices around energy, parking and quality of life needs. If we provide the information to make the healthy choice the easy choice we can expect the community and developers to work together to prioritize these needs.

6. The Joe Rodota Trail in Santa Rosa has been allowed to be used as a homeless encampment rendering it all but unusable for pedestrians and bicyclists. Although homelessness is neither created nor cured by paths and parks, the problems associated with homelessness are frequently raised as a reason not to develop or improve paths and parks. **What will you do as a Supervisor to ensure that we can “have nice things” like trails and parks despite the problems created by our homeless population?**

We all have to exist in our community together housed or not. We need to respect each other and our public property. I worked with a group of local service providers and volunteers to do outreach to those without housing or trash pick ups to create a regular route where they can “stage” trash and it will be picked up by others. A priority will be to get folks in to housing and more importantly helping them before they come homeless in the first place. A large reason that individuals end up homeless is due to inability to handle mental health conditions which can lead to drug addiction as a way of self medicating. If we can stop that from happening in the first place by teaching kids about how to relieve stress and anxiety for instance through a running program we
want to do on the great redwood trail called mermaid club that teaches girls about self-esteem and the power that running can give you through building your strength and endurance. We do have people that are unhoused in our community and how we help them regain dignity and find the housing that works for them the better off the whole community is.