



SYNOPSIS:
Citizen Participation Process for
Assessing Unmet Transit Needs

Transportation Development Act

California's Transportation Development Act (TDA) legislates funding for transit purposes primarily, and for non-transit purposes under certain conditions. TDA funds are distributed through the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) throughout the state. An RTPA must assess its jurisdiction's unmet transit needs prior to allocating any TDA funds for purposes *not* directly related to public transit or facilities used exclusively by pedestrians and bicyclists.

Public Process to Make a Finding

Each year, HCAOG conducts a citizen participation process to receive public comment concerning transit needs within the RTPA jurisdiction. The HCAOG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) leads the process to solicit broad input from transportation-dependent and transportation-disadvantaged persons. With recommendations from the SSTAC, at the end of the process the Board shall find that:

- (a) there are no unmet transit needs; or
- (b) there are no unmet transit needs which are reasonable to meet; or
- (c) there are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet. (Section 99401.5)

The HCAOG Board shall make this finding as a result of testimony received, and based on HCAOG's adopted definitions (see box on the right).

If the HCAOG Board finds that there are no unmet transit needs, or that there are no unmet transit needs which are reasonable to meet, entities may expend excess (unexpended) TDA

(over)

DEFINITIONS

Unmet transit needs are, at a minimum:

- (1) Trips requested from residents who do not have access to public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services or resources for the purpose of traveling to medical care, shopping, social/recreational activities, education/training, and employment; or
- (2) Proposed public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services that are identified in the following (but is not limited to): a Transportation Development Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Additionally, the HCAOG TDA Rules stipulate that, for this process, unmet transit needs do not include :

- ❖ Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the next fiscal year.
- ❖ Minor operational improvements or changes such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes.
- ❖ Trips for purposes outside of Humboldt County.
- ❖ Trips for primary or secondary school transportation.
- ❖ Sidewalk improvements or street and road needs.

Reasonable to meet criteria:

- (1) Whether a need is reasonable to meet shall **not** be determined by comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads, or for the sole reason that there is a lack of available resources to fully meet the identified need.
- (2) New, expanded, or revised transit service that has not met performance standards in the first two full years of operation can be subject to termination as being unreasonable to meet.
- (3) The transit operator (TDA claimant) that is expected to provide a new, expanded, or revised transit service indicates that it is operationally feasible.
- (4) One and one time only, an unmet transit need may be found to be unreasonable to meet if time constraints make it infeasible to begin service within the coming fiscal year, or if more information is needed to determine whether the unmet transit need is reasonable to meet.

funds for non-transit purposes. A finding that there are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet, delivers a mandate to the respective entity to set aside funds, given that they are available, to implement a program to meet those needs deemed reasonable to meet.

The TDA directs HCAOG, as the RTPA, to make the finding that there are no unmet transit needs, which are reasonable to meet prior to approving fund claims for street and road purposes.

Public Hearings on Unmet Transit Needs

HCAOG holds the single statutorily required public hearing. Per TDA law, the HCAOG Board as the regional transportation planning agency is the authority to determine Unmet Transit Need findings pursuant to Section 99401.5(d). In addition, HCAOG encourages all member entities to conduct hearings to receive constituent comments. HCAOG encourages entities to notify stakeholders of the public hearings with as much advance notice as is possible. We also encourage entities, to the fullest extent possible, to hold meetings during times that available transit is in service.

After conducting an Unmet Transit Needs hearing, the member entity forwards to HCAOG the public hearing record of comments or transcript.

Additional Opportunities for Public Comment on Unmet Transit Needs

Comments may also be submitted to HCAOG anytime during the year via email, Facebook, in person, or by telephone at the addresses below. All comments, whether they are made at public hearings or received via the options below will receive the same consideration.

Email:	debra.dees@hcaog.net
Facebook:	www.facebook.com/hcaog
Mail or in person:	HCAOG Office 611 I Street, Suite B Eureka, CA 95501
Telephone:	(707) 444-8208

Report of Findings

HCAOG compiles public testimony and other comments from all entities, and includes it in the *Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings* for the upcoming fiscal year. The report also covers demographic information of the transportation-dependent public, existing programs, and includes recommendations for meeting transit demands.

Timely conduct of the hearing process and submittal of the requested documentation allows HCAOG staff to prepare the *Report of Findings* for the Board to consider and adopt by March 2017, and thereby avoid delays in processing TDA claims for the upcoming fiscal year.

For questions or assistance regarding this public participation process, please contact HCAOG at (707) 444-8208 or debra.dees@hcaog.net.