

**Transportation Development Act
(TDA)**

**Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings
FY 2015-16**



**Adopted
January 15, 2015**



**Humboldt County Association of Governments
(HCAOG)**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapters

<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
1. Transportation Development Act	3
2. Transit Dependent Demographics	7
Table 1. Populations in Humboldt County	7
Table 2. Transit Dependent Indicators: Income and Age	8
Table 3. Other Factors That Affect Mobility: Disability Status and Carless Households	8
3. Existing Transit Service	9
4. Unmet Transit Needs Findings	11
Table 4a - Evaluation Criteria for Potential Service-Old Arcata Road	12
Table 4b - Estimated Cost and Ridership –Old Arcata Road	12
Table 5a - Evaluation Criteria for Potential Service-Tish Non Community Village.....	13
Table 5b - Estimated Cost and Ridership-Tish Non Community Village	13
Table 6: Summary of comments submitted	14
Table 7: Summary of comments heard at public meetings.....	15
5. TDA Funds and Allocations	20
Table 8. LTF Funds Allocated by Jurisdiction, FY 2013-14.....	20
Table 9. FY 2014-2015 LTF Fund Apportionments.....	21
List of Acronyms	22
Appendix A Existing Transit Operators & Services	A-1
Appendix B Record of Public Hearings and Testimony	B-1
Appendix C Public Comments Received via Phone and Written	C-1
Appendix D Unmet Transit Needs Flyers (English & Spanish).....	D-1

Executive Summary

The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG), is Humboldt's designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA). As an RTPA, HCAOG is responsible for the administration of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds received for the Humboldt region. HCAOG's membership includes the cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Trinidad, in addition to the County of Humboldt.

The purpose of the Unmet Transit Needs process is to ensure that all unmet transit needs, that are reasonable to meet, are met before funds are expended for non-transit uses, such as streets and roads. If the HCAOG Board determines that there are unmet needs that are reasonable to meet, the affected jurisdiction must satisfy those needs before any TDA funds may be expended for non-transit purposes.

Each year, pursuant to the California State TDA, HCAOG must identify any unmet public transit need that may exist in Humboldt County. Public meetings are held to discuss transportation needs and hear concerns. HCAOG has established, by law, a Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), comprised of the transit-dependent, including disabled, elderly and low-income representatives. SSTAC members have worked with local agencies in developing unmet transit needs criteria, which are used in making project approval decisions. As mandated in Section 99238(c) of the Transportation Development Act (TDA), the SSTAC is responsible for:

- (1) Annual participation in the identification of transit needs in the jurisdiction, including unmet transit needs that may exist within the jurisdiction of the council and that may be reasonable to meet by establishing or contracting for new public transportation or specialized transportation services or by expanding existing services.
- (2) Annual review and recommended action by the transportation-planning agency for the area within the jurisdiction of the council, which finds, by resolution, that (A) there are no unmet transit needs, (B) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet, or (C) there are unmet transit needs including needs that are reasonable to meet.
- (3) Advising the transportation-planning agency on any other major transit issues, including the coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services.

The SSTAC recommendation:

The SSTAC recommended that the HCAOG Board approve the FY 2015-16 Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings identifying new bus service for the Tish Non Community Village and Old Arcata Road as reasonable to meet. Staff was directed to gather ridership and operating cost data for service requests discussed on pages 17 through 19 of this report for consideration next year.

The HCAOG Board's finding:

The HCAOG Board adopted findings of unmet transit needs, including needs reasonable to meet. The needs were identified as new services on Old Arcata Road and to the Tish Non Community Village.

The finding has been made based on deliberation and consideration of comments generated during the unmet needs public participation process, and measured against the evaluative criteria established in the RTPA's adopted definitions for the terms "unmet transit need" and "reasonable to meet" (described on pages 5-6 of this report).

1. Transportation Development Act

The California State Transportation Development Act (TDA) was enacted in 1971 and became effective July 1, 1972. The TDA established state funding for local jurisdictions to work regionally to improve existing public transportation and coordinate regional public transportation. The TDA provides two funding sources:

1. *Local Transportation Fund* (LTF), which is derived from ¼ cent of the general sales tax collected statewide; and
2. *State Transit Assistance* (STA) fund, which is derived from the statewide sales tax on gasoline and diesel fuel. The STA fund was established in 1980. Statute requires that 50% of STA funds be allocated based on population, and 50% be allocated according to operator revenues from the prior year.

Together, these funds provide the revenue for developing and supporting public transportation systems in California.

The following TDA Articles, under Public Utilities Code Division 10, Part II, Chapter 4, direct how funds are distributed:

Article 3 allows for up to two percent of funds made available to counties and cities for facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles unless HCAOG finds that the money could be used to better advantage for the purposes stated in Article 4 (commencing with Section 99260) and Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 99275), or for local street and road purposes in those areas where the money may be expended for such purposes, in the development of a balanced transportation system.

Article 4 generally supports public transportation systems, research, and demonstration projects. Operators that provide both fixed-route and paratransit service are required to maintain a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs (farebox ratio) of 10% in non-urbanized areas.

Article 4.5 supports “community transit services” that “link intracommunity origins and destinations,” including services to the elderly or persons with disabilities. A Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) is eligible for TDA funds under this Article. Although Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center (HCAR) is the designated CTSA in Humboldt County, they do not receive funds under this Article. HCAOG’s current policy is to allocate up to 20% of STA funds.

Article 8 is utilized by jurisdictions that do not have their own transit operations. Article 8 provides transit funds to pay a contractor to provide public transportation or special needs public transportation. Article 8 also provides funding for local streets and roads, and project, which are provided for use by pedestrians and bicycles (§99400(a)); and passenger rail service operations and capital improvements (§99400(b)). Article 8 only includes population-based STA funds.

“Unmet Transit Needs Process”

The TDA requires each transportation planning agency to annually “identify the unmet transit needs of the jurisdiction and those needs that are reasonable to meet,” before allocating any funds for any purpose *not* directly related to public transportation services or for facilities used exclusively by pedestrians and bicyclists (§99401.5).

The transportation planning agency is required to:

- (a) Consult with the social services transportation advisory council (SSTAC) established pursuant to Section 99238.
- (b) Identify the transit needs of the jurisdiction, including:
 - 1. Assessing the size and location of identifiable groups likely to be transit dependent or transit disadvantaged.
 - 2. Analyzing extent to which existing private and public transportation services are meeting transit demand.
 - 3. Analyzing potential alternative public transportation services and service improvements that would meet all or part of the transit demand.
- (c) Identify the unmet transit needs of the jurisdiction and those needs that are reasonable to meet, holding at least one public hearing (per Section 99238.5) to solicit public comments.

Following policy in its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), HCAOG requests each member entity to conduct its own public hearing on unmet transit needs. These city and county hearings are in addition to HCAOG’s required public hearing, and expands the level of public input. They provide local elected officials an opportunity to hear and respond directly to the expressed needs of their constituents. HCAOG notifies all persons or groups known to have an interest in transit related matters, including the federally recognized Native American Governments. HCAOG publishes a public notice(s) of the public hearings in the local newspaper(s).

The SSTAC, as mandated by the TDA, leads the process in soliciting input from transportation-dependent and transportation-disadvantaged persons, and in recommending a finding to the HCAOG Board. The committees and the Board review public comments, and evaluate the most common requests against HCAOG’s criteria for determining if an unmet transit need is reasonable to meet.

Definition and Criteria

In 2011, HCAOG adopted the following definitions for unmet transit needs.

Definition of “*unmet transit needs*”

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): Transportation Development Plans, the Regional Transportation Plan, the Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan.

Additionally, the HCAOG’s 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.

Definition of “*reasonable to meet*”

Unmet transit needs may be found to be **reasonable to meet** by means of the following criteria:

1. Pursuant to the requirements of Transportation Development Act (TDA) Statutes (Public Utilities Code Section 99401.5 (c)), a determination of needs that are reasonable to meet shall not be made by comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads, for the allocation of TDA funds. The fact that an identified transit need cannot be fully met based on available resources shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not reasonable to meet.
2. If a new, expanded or revised transit service fails to meet ridership or cost effectiveness standards after one full year of operation, reasonable efforts will be made and documented to rectify the situation during the following year of operation. If service has not met performance standards during the period required by the Transportation Development Act Statutes, and efforts to improve service productivity have been documented by the operator to be unsuccessful, the service will be subject to termination as not being reasonable to meet. Efforts to rectify the underperforming ridership may include but are not limited to increased outreach/marketing of service (newspaper placement), collaboration between organizations or agencies that work with potential ridership of the service and surveys documenting ways in which the service could be improved or made more attractive.

3. Evaluation of potential unmet needs shall be conducted by the TDA claimant that is expected to provide the new, expanded, or revised transit service. The TDA claimant shall review, evaluate, and indicate that the service is operationally feasible, including:
 - a. Forecast of anticipated ridership if service is provided.
 - b. Estimate of capital and operating cost for the provision of such services.
 - c. Determination if there are adequate roadways and selected turnouts to safely accommodate transit vehicles.
 - d. Determination that vehicles are currently available in the marketplace.
 - e. Determination if potential transit service duplicates existing services.

4. An unmet transit need, meeting the tests in criteria #3, may be determined *not reasonable to meet* only once based on an inability to initiate service within the coming fiscal year. The claimant(s) should use this time to plan, acquire vehicles, or submit additional information needed to begin service. If the service is not initiated in the next fiscal year and still meets the tests in criteria #3, it will be determined reasonable to meet.

After considering all available information compiled pursuant to the Unmet Transit Needs public participation process (§99401.5 (a), (b), and (c), above, HCAOG must adopt, by resolution, one of the following findings:

- (1) there are no unmet transit needs;
- (2) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; or
- (3) there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet. (§99401.5(d))

Pursuant to subdivision 99401.5 (e), if HCAOG adopts a finding that there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet, then the unmet transit need shall be funded before any allocation is made for other (non-transit) uses within the jurisdiction.

Local jurisdictions may decide to voluntarily fund needs that are determined not to be “reasonable to meet” from the jurisdiction’s TDA funds or other revenue sources.

2. Transit Dependent Demographics

The majority of the county's population is centered adjacent to the State Highway 101 corridor serving many highly populated communities in the unincorporated area of the county and the cities of Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad.

While all sectors of the community may utilize public and private transportation services, groups likely to be transit dependent or transit disadvantaged are those that are either unable to operate a vehicle or do not have access to a vehicle. Older citizens, persons with disabilities, and persons of limited means are more likely to be transit dependent and may require specialized transportation. For the purposes of this document, older citizens are considered to be individuals 65 years and older, and persons of limited means are those with incomes below the poverty threshold as defined by the federal government. The following tables (Tables 1, 2, and 3) list demographics for the region.

Table 1. Populations in Humboldt County

Jurisdiction	January 1, 2013	January 1, 2014	Change from 2013 to 2014	Percent Of Countywide Population (2014)
Arcata	17,774	17,734	-0.2%	13.17%
Blue Lake	1,255	1,251	-0.3%	0.93%
Eureka	26,921	26,914	0.0%	19.99%
Ferndale	1,361	1,357	-0.3%	1.01%
Fortuna	11,838	11,902	0.5%	8.84%
Rio Dell	3,349	3,347	-0.1%	2.49%
Trinidad	363	361	-0.6%	0.27%
Unincorporated Area	71,826	71,782	-0.1%	53.31%
Countywide	134,687	134,648	0.0%	100%

Source: State of California. Department of Finance. *E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State — January 1, 2013 and 2014.*

Tables 2 and 3, on the next page contain the same data as last year's report. The release date for the 2009-2013 ACS 5-year estimates is December 4, 2014. The updated data will be included in next year's report.

Table 2 provides the most current regional data summarizing income and age statistics. The percentage of persons below poverty level represents the percent of individuals who fall below the United States Department of Health and Human Services poverty thresholds. Humboldt's three largest cities, Arcata, Eureka and Fortuna have the highest percentages of residents meeting the poverty threshold. All three are above the region wide average of 19.7%. Residents in these cities, in addition to adjacent unincorporated areas, are served by a Dial-A-Ride service.

Aging populations lose their ability to drive privately owned vehicles and have to rely on family, neighbors and volunteer driver programs for mobility. It is increasingly important to address

multiple modes of transportation to prevent isolation, economic hardship and reduced quality of life of the expanding senior population. Ferndale, Fortuna and Trinidad have the highest percentages of residents age 65 and over.

Table 2. Transit Dependent Indicators: Income and Age

Jurisdiction	Population for whom poverty status is determined	Persons Below Poverty Level	Percentage below poverty level	Population for whom age was determined	Persons 65 years and over	Percentage of persons 65 and over
Arcata	15,455	5,209	33.7%	17,421	1,421	8.2%
Blue Lake	1,386	191	13.8%	1,445	115	8.0%
Eureka	26,282	5,804	22.1%	27,037	3,491	12.9%
Ferndale	1,372	100	7.3%	1,372	316	23.0%
Fortuna	11,579	2,337	20.2%	11,830	2,222	18.8%
Rio Dell	3,352	514	15.3%	3,357	339	10.1%
Trinidad	281	27	9.6%	281	67	23.8%
Countywide	130,315	25,729	19.7%	134,317	17,870	13.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2008 - 2012 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (S1701) and Demographic and Housing Estimates (DP05)

Other factors that affect mobility are provided in Table 3. Mobility refers to the movement of people via multiple modes, including individual cars, transit, walking and cycling, among others. Mobility can be an important indicator of quality of life, as mobility is correlated with accessibility, which is the means at which individuals can reach their destinations. All cities, with the exception of Arcata have a percentage of people with a disability higher than the countywide percentage of 15.5%.

The four highest populated cities in the region have the highest percentages of carless households. These cities are served by public transit, but there is limited Dial-A-Ride service to the City of Rio Dell.

Table 3. Other Factors That Affect Mobility: Disability Status and Carless Households

Jurisdiction	Civilian No institutional Population	Population with a disability	Percentage with a disability	Percentage of carless households
Arcata	17,384	1,958	11.3%	11.3%
Blue Lake	1,445	244	16.9%	1.9%
Eureka	26,513	4,509	17.0%	10.2%
Ferndale	1,372	253	18.4%	6.1%
Fortuna	11,709	2,175	18.6%	8.3%
Rio Dell	3,357	706	21.0%	7.9%
Trinidad	281	63	22.4%	0.0%
Countywide	133,014	20,570	15.5%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2008 - 2012 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates: Selected Social Characteristics in the US (DP02) and Selected Housing Characteristics (DP04)

3. Existing Transit Service

Humboldt benefits from several public entities and private enterprises that provide transit services. Organizations that provide and/or fund transit services include municipalities, the County of Humboldt, tribal governments, social services, private businesses, and community-based/non-profit organizations. Mostly, transit services concentrate around the greater Humboldt Bay area, where population densities are higher and destinations are more compact.

The bulk of transit service is provided by fixed-route transit; that is, buses that stick to one route with fixed bus stops and schedules. Paratransit service, on the other hand, runs flexible routes usually with door-to-door service for their customers. Paratransit is more commonly known as Dial-A-Ride (or Dial-A-Lift) service. It is provided for persons with disabilities or health-related conditions that restrict them from using general public transportation. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all public transportation systems to provide paratransit service. Other transportation services range from taxis to volunteer-driver programs for taking patients to medical appointments.

The existing transit services within Humboldt County are listed below. Details of each transit service/program are described in Appendix A of this report.

Public Transit Fixed Routes:

Arcata & Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS) - Service within Arcata City Limits

Blue Lake Rancheria Transit System (BLRTS) – Deviated fixed-route service in the City of Blue Lake, and to Arcata Transit Center.

Eureka Transit Service (ETS) - Service within Eureka City Limits.

Klamath-Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation (K/T Net) - Two deviated fixed routes between Willow Creek and areas north along Highways 96 and 169, including Hoopa Valley, Weitchpec, and Pecwan/Wautec and Orleans.

Redwood Transit System (RTS) – Operated by HTA. The primary intercity public transit system in the county. Fixed-route commuter service along the US 101 corridor, between the cities of Scotia and Trinidad.

Southern Humboldt Transit System (SHTS) – Operated by HTA. Intercity and local transit service in the southern portions of the county. The Southern Humboldt Intercity service runs between Garberville and Eureka with stops including Briceland/Redway Drive, Phillippsville, Miranda, Myers Flat, Weott, Fortuna, and College of the Redwoods. The Southern Humboldt Local Transit System provides deviated fixed-route service in areas between Garberville and Miranda.

Willow Creek Transit Service (WCTS) – Operated by HTA. Fixed-route service along Highway 299 between Willow Creek and the Arcata Transit Center.

Paratransit and Medical Transportation Services:

City Ambulance of Eureka (CAE)
Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center (HCAR)
Fortuna Senior Services, Inc: Fortuna Senior Bus
Humboldt Medi-Trans

Social Service Transportation Providers:

Redwood Coast Regional Center
Humboldt Senior Resource Center: Adult Day Health Dial-a-Ride
County of Humboldt Health and Human Services Department (Social Services Branch)
K'ima:w Transportation Department
Adult Day Health Care of Mad River
Ferndale Senior Resource Center "Bridging the Gap"
Bridgeville Community Center Van
Southern Trinity Health Services
Area 1 on Aging (AIAA) Volunteer Driver Program

Private Transit Providers:

Cher-Ae Heights Casino Shuttle – For casino patrons
Taxi and Shuttle Services

See Appendix A: "Existing Transit Operators & Services" for full descriptions of these programs.

4. Unmet Transit Needs Findings

The unmet transit needs process is necessary to evaluate how current transit services are meeting community needs. The HCAOG Board makes a finding based on testimony received, the recommendation of the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), and HCAOG's adopted definitions of "unmet transit needs" and "reasonable to meet."

The HCAOG Board must make one of the following findings:

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

The HCAOG's TDA Rules stipulate that unmet transit needs *do not include minor or operational improvements or changes such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes.*

Previous Year Recap: FY 2014-15

In last year's UTN process, a "focus" survey was conducted based on prior year comments to determine ridership for potential transit service on Old Arcata Road (between Hall Avenue and Sunny Brae). Additionally, the Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria conducted a survey and submitted a request for transit service to the Tish Non Community Village.

These two services met the evaluation criteria but were not determined to be reasonable to meet based on Criteria #4, which states:

An unmet transit need, meeting the tests in criteria #3, may be determined *not reasonable to meet* only once based on an inability to initiate service within the coming fiscal year. The claimant(s) should use this time to plan, acquire vehicles, or submit additional information needed to begin service. If the service is not initiated in the next fiscal year and still meets the tests in criteria #3, it will be determined reasonable to meet.

The HCAOG Board made a finding that there were no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet with consideration of Criteria #4 for evaluations on the following two potential services: 1) service on Old Arcata Road (between Hall Avenue and Sunny Brae) and 2) service to the Tish Non Community Village (Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria).

Updated cost and anticipated ridership information is provided in Table 4a and 4b for new service on Old Arcata Road and in Table 5a and 5b for new service to the Tish Non Community Village. Service to these areas meet the adopted criteria and are not eligible for the application of Criteria #4 for the 2015-16 Report of Findings.

Table 4a - Evaluation Criteria for Potential Service-Old Arcata Road

Potential service:	Fixed route bus service on Monday-Friday Servicing Hall Avenue to Buttermilk Lane 2 northbound trips and 2 southbound trips in the AM 2 northbound trips and 2 southbound trips in the PM	
Transit Operator:	HTA	
a. Forecast of anticipated ridership if service is provided.	See Table 4b	
b. Estimate of capital and operating cost for providing such service	See Table 4b	
c. Do adequate roadways and turnouts exist to accommodate transit vehicles?	Yes. The County is researching bus stop locations and cost	
d. Are necessary vehicles available in the marketplace?	Yes	
e. Does potential transit service duplicate existing service	No	

Table 4b - Estimated Cost and Ridership –Old Arcata Road

Anticipated Cost	Anticipated Ridership (passengers)	Estimated Cost Per Ride	Estimated Revenue	Anticipated Farebox Ratio
\$451 per day \$2,255 per week \$117,260 per year	36 per day 756 per month	\$2.00	\$72 per day \$1,512 per month \$18,144 per year	15.47%
36 passengers x 21 days per month = 756 passengers per month \$2.00 day x 36 passengers x 21 days/month = \$1,512 monthly revenue Farebox Ratio: Yearly revenue \$18,144 divided by yearly costs \$117,260 = 15.47%				
Monthly Projected Cost*		Annual Projected Cost*		
\$9,772 - \$1,512 = \$8,260		\$117,260 - \$18,144 = \$99,116		
*Expenditures include: Fuel tires, vehicle maintenance, vehicle insurance, vehicle registration, driver (incl taxes), administrative.				
Additional cost - Purchase of two 17 passenger vans for total cost of \$240,000 to be funded by the 5311 program & LTF funding.				
Additional cost – bus stop signs and/or shelter(s) – \$				

Table 5a - Evaluation Criteria for Potential Service-Tish Non Community Village

Potential service:	Fixed route bus service on Monday-Friday Servicing College of the Redwoods, Loleta, Tish Non Community Village, Palmer Blvd, 11 th & N Street in Fortuna 2 northbound trips and 2 southbound trips in the AM 2 northbound trips and 2 southbound trips in the PM Transit Operator: RTS
a. Forecast of anticipated ridership if service is provided.	See Table 5b
b. Estimate of capital and operating cost for providing such service	See Table 5b
c. Do adequate roadways and turnouts exist to accommodate transit vehicles?	Yes. The Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria has purchased and installed a bus shelter at the Tish Non Community Village site.
d. Are necessary vehicles available in the marketplace?	Yes.
e. Does potential transit service duplicate existing service	No

Table 5b - Estimated Cost and Ridership-Tish Non Community Village

Anticipated Cost	Anticipated Ridership (passengers)	Estimated Cost Per Ride	Estimated Revenue	Anticipated Farebox Ratio
\$738 per day \$3,690 per week \$191,880 per year	30 per day 630 per month	\$3.00	\$90 per day \$1,890 per month \$22,680 per year	11.82%
30 passengers x 21 days per month = 630 passengers per month \$3.00 day x 30 passengers x 21 days/month = \$1,890 monthly revenue Farebox Ratio: Yearly revenue \$22,680 divided by yearly costs \$191,880 = 11.82%				
Monthly Projected Cost*		Annual Projected Cost*		
\$15,990 - \$1,890 = \$14,100		\$191,880 - \$22,680 = \$169,200		
*Expenditures include: Fuel tires, vehicle maintenance, vehicle insurance, vehicle registration, driver (incl taxes), administrative.				
Additional cost - Purchase of two 17 passenger vans for total cost of \$240,000 to be funded by the 5311 program & LTF funding.				
Additional cost – bus stop signs and/or shelter(s) –\$				

Current Year - Fiscal Year 2015-16 Findings

HCAOG initiated the citizen participation process on August 15, 2014, encouraging the public to participate in a number of ways. In addition to an Unmet Transit Needs flyer widely distributed in English and Spanish (provided in Appendix D), a public notice was published in the local newspaper, a total of ten public hearings were held and a public service announcement was distributed to the local media and transportation partners in the region. The full record of public comments received are provided in *Appendix B: Record of Public Hearings and Testimony* and *Appendix C: Record of Public Comments Received via Telephone or Written*.

A summary of all comments heard at meetings or submitted to HCAOG are provided in Table 6 and Table 7. The comments categorized as “operational” or “other” were determined as such based on guidance from HCAOG’s TDA Rules and Regulations last updated November 2014. The guidance states that 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.

Table 6: Summary of comments submitted (full comments provided in Appendix C)

	Public Comments submitted via Phone or Written	Comment Type		
		UTN	Operational	Other
x1 - Affordable transportation, all kinds. Buses, ride/share, subsidized low income rates for individuals of limited income.			X	
x1 - Early (7:00 am) weekend bus service from Eureka to Arcata (works HSU Sat and Sun 8:00 am).		X		
x1 - Request for additional buses due to overcrowding (Manila).		X		
x1 - Provide more bicycle capacity on buses.			X	
x1 - Request more service runs through Manila (several hours in am and pm have no service runs.)		X		
x1 - Bus drivers should not leave a stop before its scheduled departure time.			X	
x1 - More bus service opportunities for Loleta residents. Difficult for seniors as have to wait long periods between service runs.		X		
x1 - Later service run to McKinleyville from Eureka and Arcata.		X		
x1 - Transit service on Old Arcata Road.		X		
x1 - The transit needs of the non-school community should be met and considered a priority as well as the students in the school community.		X		
x1 - Add more afternoon service in Manila.		X		
x1 - Add more northbound and southbound service in Manila on Saturday.		X		
x1 - Add more service in Manila on Sunday.		X		
x1 - Provide more buses due to overcrowding.		X		
x1 - Allow riders to use carts for their transit trip.			X	
x1 - Provide better HTA Office public service.			X	
x1 - Request service to Carlotta for seniors, DAR.		X		
x1 - Request service from Arcata to Fortuna (Smith Lane) before 10:00 am.			X	
x1 - More service runs on Sunday (RTS to Arcata) 8:00 pm or 8:30 pm.		X		
x1 - Encouraged Portland transit as an example of transit serving all classes of people and runs every 15 minutes.				X
x3 - Transit service to Bridgeville (So Hum).		X		
x1 - Bus svc Bayside. (along Old Arcata Road) Around the loop of the whole bay thru Bayside, stop at Indianola, Bayside Corners, and Buttermilk Lane.		X		
x6 - Bus svc Bayside. (along Old Arcata Road) Bayside, stop at Indianola, Bayside Corners, and Buttermilk Lane.		X		
x1 - Earlier am and later pm buses from Arcata to Eureka. More buses on weekends...Add more buses on weekends when special events are planned to occur in community.		X		

**Table 7: Summary of comments heard at public meetings
(full comments provided in Appendix B)**

Public Hearing Testimony and Submitted Public Comments - Unmet Transit Needs for 2015-16		Comment Type		
		UTN	Operational	Other
	Public Hearing and Public Meeting Comments/Requests			
Arcata	x1 - Request bus service on Old Arcata Road beyond Sunny Brae to Bayside Post Office.	X		
	x1 - Utilize public transit funds to help subsidize A1AA Volunteer Driver Program.		X	
	x1 - Improve transportation services for Veterans. Primarily providing rides to medical appointments.			X
	x1 - Include the Senior Center as one of the stops on the Gold Route.		X	
	x1 - Provide public transit from Arcata to the Wharfinger Building.	X		
Blue Lake	x1 - Request weekend service.	X		
	x1 - Extend another hour in evening.	X		
	x1 - Add a mid day service run.	X		
	x1 - 6:00 am bus to meet transfer in Arcata for CR.	X		
	x1 - Extend hours 6:00 am and 9:00 am.	X		
	x1 - Request weekend early and late day route for quality shopping in Arcata.	X		
	x96 - Petition (96 signatures) presented to City of Blue Lake. Support of transportation services in the following areas by the Blue Lake Rancheria transportation system: City of Blue Lake, Blue Lake Rancheria, Community of Glendale, Community of Fieldbrook, Community of Korbek.	X		
	x1 - 1 signature not in support of transportation services.			X
	x15 - Petition (15 signatures) presented to City of Blue Lake, in support of increasing the Blue Lake bus from the casino to include a 6 PM and a 7 PM run.	X		
	x17 - Petition (17 signatures) presented to City of Blue Lake, in support of increasing the Blue Lake bus from the casino to include a 10 AM and 11 AM run.	X		
	x15 - Petition (15 signatures) presented to City of Blue Lake, in support of increasing the Blue Lake bus from the casino to run additional runs 11 AM – 1 PM Monday – Friday.	X		
	x10 - Petition (10 signatures) presented to City of Blue Lake, in support of increasing the Blue Lake bus from the casino to run on Saturday and Sunday.	X		
Eureka	x1 - Later evening transit service on all systems.	X		
Ferndale	x1 - Inquiry if this TDA funding could be used to provide temporary bus service for Ferndale residents during soon to occur upcoming temporary road improvements by Caltrans	X		
Fortuna	x4 - Support for the A1AA Volunteer Driving Program, funding needed to continue program.		X	
	x1 - Request for additional transit stops to CR on Saturday, and provide Sunday service to CR. (submitted by an individual on behalf of 110+ students that reside in the dorms)	X		
Rio Dell	x2 - Inquiry about Dial-A-Ride service in Rio Dell.	X		
	x1 - Comment in support of rail service in Humboldt County.			X
Trinidad	x1 - Better service north from Trinidad to Patrick's Point.	X		
County of Humboldt	x2 - Support for transit service in Bayside.	X		
	x3 - Support for transit service to Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria.	X		
HCAOG	x2 - Transit concerns for seniors and need for funding for the administration of the Volunteer Driving Program offered by the Area 1 Agency on Aging.		X	
	x1 - Extended late night hours between Eureka and Arcata and new weekend bus service to Southern Humboldt.	X		
	x22 - Petition in support of Saturday Service to Southern Humboldt.	X		
	x22 - Petition in support of Sunday Service to Southern Humboldt.	X		
	x22 - Petition in support of late night service in between Eureka and Arcata.	X		
McMAC	x1 - Safety concern on Central Avenue, McKinleyville. Busses block driving lane and bike lane causing safety concern.		X	
	x1 - Request to look into a group bus to take individuals to out of area airports.			X
	x1 - Noted difficulty Adult Day Health Care of Mad River having with transportation of their clients.		X	
	x1 - Comment on high (unaffordable) cost for Dial-A-Ride services.		X	
	x1 - More bike capacity needed on buses.		X	
	x1 - Difficult to put bikes on bus racks.		X	
	x1 - Safety concern pedestrians for disabled community with walking devices. Would like to see a continuous sidewalk from Bartow Road to Anna Sparks Way.			X
	x1 - Safety concern - witnessed person in wheelchair trying to cross Bella Vista on Central Avenue.			X
	x1 - Safety concern on Dows Prairie Road, Norton to Dows Prairie School. Drivers drive on Dows Prairie Road instead of Grange Road.			X
	x1 - More bike racks needed in McKinleyville.			X

Transit needs resonating the most in Tables 6 and 7 are requests for:

- New service on Old Arcata Road (especially serving Bayside);
- New service for the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria;
- Extended morning and evening service between Eureka and Arcata;
- Improved service to Manila;
- New Service to Bridgeville;
- Extended trips throughout the day and weekends for the Blue Lake Rancheria service and new service to Glendale, Fieldbrook and Korbel;
- Extended service to the College of the Redwoods on Saturday and new service on Sunday; and
- Weekend bus service to Southern Humboldt.

The first major finding required for a transit need to qualify as “reasonable to meet” is a defensible estimate of anticipated ridership compared to the estimated cost of the service. This is referred to the farebox recovery ratio and indicates the percentage of operating costs covered by passenger fares. Since A&MRTS, ETS and RTS existed in the 1970’s their fareboxes are based on historical performance and are unique to each system. The required farebox ratio for the A&MRTS is 18.8%, for ETS is 22.4% and for RTS is 26.4%. For new transit routes, a 10% farebox ratio is required to maintain the system. Adding early or late night trips will in most cases cause the existing farebox ratio to decrease.

The outstanding operating costs, not funded by passenger fares, are subsidized by TDA funds allocated by HCAOG directly to the cities and county based on population. A finding of a transit need being reasonable to meet does not mean that HCAOG will fund the service, it means that HCAOG will require the county or affected city to appropriately prioritize the use of TDA funds in their jurisdiction. The finding that a transit need is reasonable to meet does not automatically mean that it will be implemented. If all TDA funds are already being used on transit services in the affected jurisdiction, it simply “waits” for TDA funds to increase enough for implementation.

Determining anticipated ridership or passenger fares is difficult to estimate. With expanding transit needs region wide and limited TDA funds coming in, this part of the process is key to the best use of TDA funds. In the past, estimating ridership has been achieved by using responses to directed surveys, using an industry standard for predicting Saturday or Sunday service based on weekday statistics or the professional opinion of the operator. Anticipated operating costs are determined by the operator.

Old Arcata Road and the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria

New services on Old Arcata Road and the Tish Non Community Village were discussed and evaluated in the previous cycle. Due to the allowance available through criteria #4, these services were revisited this year and still meet the required criteria as shown in Tables 4a, 4b, 5a and 5b. These two services have been determined to be reasonable to meet based on the adopted criteria.

Extended morning and evening service between Eureka and Arcata

The request for extended services between Eureka and Arcata is a reoccurring transit need request. In addition to a few comments received, as summarized in Tables 6 and 7, a petition was presented at the HCAOG Board hearing comprised of 22 signatures supporting late night service between Eureka and Arcata. Although the petition is not clear, the speaker clarified that the boxes for Saturday and Sunday on that petition pertained to Southern Humboldt. The SSTAC does not have enough information to estimate anticipated ridership but agree that a focused survey or analysis of ridership on the earliest and latest existing trips would be beneficial to determine if this need is reasonable to meet. Staff has been directed to work with HTA to provide the SSTAC with trip ridership and operating cost data for the regional system between Eureka and Arcata to be analyzed in next year's process.

Improved service to Manila

Comments for improved service to the town of Manila have increased since last year. The SSTAC recommends that a focused survey be included in next year's analysis to get a better understanding of the issues and needs of the community. The SSTAC does not have enough information to estimate anticipated ridership but agree that a focused survey or analysis of ridership would be beneficial to determine if this need is reasonable to meet. Staff has been directed to work with HTA to provide the SSTAC with trip ridership and operating cost data for existing service to Manila to be analyzed in next year's process.

New Service to Bridgeville

Currently the Southern Trinity Health Services (STHS) provides the only regularly scheduled public transportation service to Bridgeville. STSH is a medical facility in the community of Mad River, Trinity County. They provide transportation services for the southern portion of Trinity County and the southeastern portion of Humboldt County. Anyone (not just health center patients) is eligible to take the bus for any type of trip, including shopping, banking, medical appointments, and social outings. The transportation service runs Monday through Friday, serving the communities of Bridgeville, Dinsmore, Hayfork, Hettenshaw Valley, Mad River, Ruth, Swains Flat and Zenia. Additionally, on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesday of each *month* they run the "Day-in-Town" route, which travels to the Eureka/Fortuna area with stops dependent on rider needs. Seating is limited and passengers must call ahead for reservation. Reservations made ahead of time determine the route.

The Bridgeville Community Center (Center) has provided public transportation service for Bridgeville residents in the past, but due to lack of funding has not been able to provide that service since May 2013. The Center is a non-profit organization that offers a senior lunch program on Tuesdays, rural health services on Thursdays and sponsors other community events throughout the year. They have one seven-passenger (non-wheelchair accessible) van that is currently used only for Center services. Prior to May 2013 the Community Center provided transportation for Bridgeville area residents to Eureka and Fortuna on the first Thursday of each month for medical and social service appointments, and also transportation for seniors in the area to attend a weekly lunch program.

A1AA provides a Volunteer Driver Program which offers rides to medical and health-related appointments serving seniors from the Eel River Valley area to Trinidad. A1AA provides transportation on Highway 36 but only as far east as Carlotta. Passengers must be over the age of 50, with limited resources and comply with the Program Passenger Guidelines. Preference is given to those who are disabled and/or frail. A donation is requested for the service.

The SSTAC does not have enough information to estimate anticipated ridership for the Bridgeville area, but agree that a focused survey or analysis of ridership would be beneficial to determine if this need is reasonable to meet. Staff has been directed to work with STHS and the Center to provide the SSTAC with trip ridership and operating cost data for existing and previous service to Bridgeville to be analyzed in next year's process.

Extended trips throughout the day and weekends for the Blue Lake Rancheria service and new service to Glendale, Fieldbrook and Korbelt

Petitions, as well as public comments, were received at the unmet transit needs hearing in Blue Lake. New trips in the morning, afternoon, evening, and new service on the weekends were requested from Blue Lake to Arcata. In addition, new service was requested for Fieldbrook, Korbelt and Glendale. The petitions for the new trips between Arcata and Blue Lake were very clear as to the time or day but the petition for the other areas was not so straight forward. The SSTAC is very interested at the upsurge of comments. HCAOG does not have current ridership or operating costs for the Blue Lake Rancheria service. An analysis of this data would assist the SSTAC in making a determination of reasonable to meet. HCAOG staff will work with the Blue Lake Rancheria and the City of Blue Lake to provide the SSTAC with available information. As for new services to the other communities a focused survey would be necessary to determine anticipated ridership. One comment addressed the need for the Blue Lake Rancheria system to coordinate with the RTS bus going South. HCAOG staff will assist with this coordination effort.

SSTAC directed staff to work with Blue Lake Rancheria and the City of Blue Lake to provide trip ridership and operating cost data for the existing Blue Lake Transit System to be analyzed in next year's process. The SSTAC will develop a focus survey for requested new services to Fieldbrook, Glendale, and Korbelt.

Extended service to the College of the Redwoods (CR) on Saturday and new service on Sunday

A letter was presented at the City of Fortuna hearing requesting increased service on Saturday and new Service on Sunday on behalf of "100+" students residing in the dorms at the CR. An understanding of ridership on existing trips and a direct survey of students would provide better data in determining anticipated ridership.

The SSTAC does not have enough information to estimate anticipated ridership but agree that a focused survey or analysis of ridership on existing service would be beneficial to determine if this need is reasonable to meet. Staff has been directed to work with HTA to provide the SSTAC with trip ridership and operating cost data for the regional system serving CR to be analyzed in next year's process.

Weekend bus service to Southern Humboldt

The petition submitted at the HCAOG public hearing included twenty-two signatures requesting weekend service to Southern Humboldt. The General Manager of HTA has submitted the existing farebox ratio, 16.38%, for the weekday service of the Intercity System that connects Southern Humboldt with Eureka. In order to be considered a viable service, transit systems need to retain at least a 10% minimum farebox return. Industry standard suggests that anticipated Saturday ridership is 50% of weekday service (8.19%) and anticipated Sunday ridership is 25% of weekday service (4.1%). Using those statistics, anticipated ridership does not seem viable to meet the 10% requirement. The SSTAC would be more comfortable with making a finding of reasonable to meet once the weekday statistics reach a 20% farebox ratio.

5. TDA Funds and Allocations

The Transportation Development Act provides State funding sources meant primarily for public transportation. The TDA funding comes through two sources, the Local Transportation Funds (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA) funds. For this 2015-16 Report of Findings, LTF allocations are provided for the last two years (FY 13-14 and 14-15). The LTF estimate for the 2015-16 year will not be released until February 2015.

For the 2014-15 fiscal year the Humboldt County region’s estimated share of LTF funds was higher than the 2013-14 years share. For the fiscal year 2014-15, the jurisdictions were estimated to receive \$4,366,611 in LTF, which is an increase of \$211,557 more than what was allocated in FY 2013-2014.

Fiscal Years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015

Table 6 shows how LTF funds were allocated in the FY 2013-14 fiscal year; it also shows how the Cities and County projected they would apportion funds to transit and non-transit uses. The City of Ferndale expended all their LTF funds to non-transit purposes (streets and roads). The City of Trinidad did not submit a claim in FY 13-14. Other jurisdictions used funds for both transit and non-transit uses, as shown below.

Table 8. LTF Funds Allocated by Jurisdiction, FY 2013-14

	Ending Balance 2012-13 Unrestricted (actual) \$	Apportioned LTF Funds (estimate) \$	Transit Use Article 4 \$	Third Party Transit Use Article 8 \$	Bike & Ped Use Article 8 \$	Streets & Roads Use Article 8 \$	Unclaimed Funds* \$
Arcata	148,281	548,051	696,392	0	0	0	0
Blue Lake	14,506	38,745	0	32,125	0	21,126	0
Eureka	122,120	832,326	954,446	0	0	0	0
Ferndale	2,514	42,049	0	0	0	44,563	0
Fortuna	49,957	365,532	230,912	0	8,310	176,267	0
Rio Dell	14,239	103,238	39,849	6,500	0	71,128	0
Trinidad	3,212	11,238	0	0	0	0	14,450
County	305,222	2,213,875	1,848,504	172,560	65,000	433,033	0
Region Totals:	660,051	4,155,054	2,119,265	211,185	73,310	746,117	1,665,228

*Funds remain in jurisdiction’s account with County Auditor.

Table 7 reflects FY 2014-2015 LTF apportionments. These estimates are based on an estimate provided by the Humboldt County Auditor pursuant to Government Code Section 6620. The estimate includes those moneys anticipated to be deposited in the fund during the ensuing fiscal year. After close of the current fiscal year, the auditor reports any unrestricted balance which is the balance that is neither allocated, reserved, nor retained in the fund as an unallocated apportionment pursuant to Section 6655.1. The county auditor makes the estimate from such data as is available including those, which may be furnished by the State Board of Equalization.

Table 9. FY 2014-2015 LTF Fund Apportionments

	Population*	% of Regional Population	2014/15 LTF Estimate (\$)	2013/14 Unrestricted Balance (actual \$)	2014/15 Total Funds Available
City of Arcata	17,836	13.19%	576,018	34,002	\$610,020
City of Blue Lake	1,260	0.93%	40,692	2,370	\$43,062
City of Eureka	27,021	19.98%	872,650	52,208	\$924,858
City of Ferndale	1,366	1.01%	44,115	2,533	\$46,648
City of Fortuna	11,885	8.79%	383,829	22,081	\$405,910
City of Rio Dell	3,363	2.49%	108,609	6,279	114,888
City of Trinidad	365	0.27%	11,788	15,154	\$26,942
County of Humboldt	72,113	53.33%	2,328,908	131,523	2,460,431
Region Totals:	135,209	100%	4,366,609	266,150	4,632,759

*Source: California Department of Finance, Report E-1, released May 1, 2013.

List of Acronyms

A1AA	Area 1 Agency on Aging
A&MRTS	Arcata & Mad River Transit System
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADHC	Adult Day Health Care
APTA	American Public Transit Association
BLRTS	Blue Lake Rancheria Transit System
BRBRR	Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria
CAE	City Ambulance of Eureka
CAV	Care-A-Van
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CTSA	Consolidated Transportation Service Agency
DAR/DAL	Dial-A-Ride / Dial-A-Lift
ETS	Eureka Transit Service
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HCAOG	Humboldt County Association of Governments
HCAR	Humboldt County Asset and Resource Center
HSRC	Humboldt Senior Resource Center
HSU	Humboldt State University
HTA	Humboldt Transit Authority
JPA	Joint Powers Agreement or Agency
K/T Net	Klamath-Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation
LTF	Local Transportation Fund
NET	Non-Emergency Transportation
PAC*	Policy Advisory Committee
PTA	Public Transit Account
PUC	(State) Public Utilities Code
RCRC	Redwood Coast Regional Center
RCT	Redwood Coast Transit
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agency
RTS	Redwood Transit System
SB	Senate Bill
SCC*	Service Coordination Committee
SHTS	Southern Humboldt Transit System
SRC	Senior Resource Center
SSTAC*	Social Service Transportation Advisory Council
STA Fund (STAF)	State Transit Assistance Fund
TAC*	Technical Advisory Committee
TDA	Transportation Development Act
TDP	Transit Development Plan
TTP	Tribal Transportation Program
UTN	Unmet Transit Need
WCTC	Willow Creek Transit System

*HCAOG Committee