



**HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**Regional Transportation Planning Agency**  
**Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority**  
**Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies**  
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**AGENDA ITEM 9c**  
**HCAOG Board Meeting**  
**February 16, 2017**

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**DATE:** February 9, 2017  
**TO:** HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)  
**FROM:** Marcella Clem, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** **Formation of a 101 Safety Corridor Task Force**

### **STAFF REPORT**

#### **Contents:**

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Diana Lynn letter dated February 3, 2017 & Photograph of Vehicle

#### **Staff's Recommended Action:**

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. Discuss item and consider making the motion:  
"I move that the PAC recommend the HCAOG Board provide direction to staff regarding the formation of a 101 Safety Corridor Task Force."

#### **Staff Summary:**

The 101 Safety Corridor, implemented in 2003, was created after a series of public meetings and coordination of government agencies. It was initially designed to be an interim solution to the high number of collisions on U.S. Highway 101 between the Eureka Slough Bridge and the Gannon Slough Bridge. While there has been sharp reduction in fatalities on the roadway, once known as Blood Alley, collision rates at some uncontrolled intersections remain high. As traffic volumes increase on Route 101 between Eureka and Arcata, the effectiveness of the current Safety Corridor has declined. Its effectiveness is expected to continue to decrease over time. The average annual daily traffic is expected to increase from 35,500 vehicles per day (2008) to an estimated 48,800 by 2033.

With the current Safety Corridor in place, collision rates are still above statewide averages at the Mid-City and Indianola Cutoff intersections. Also, during peak travel periods, long lines of traffic can form on Route 101 and its crossroads waiting to make a left turn across oncoming traffic. When traffic is light, most drivers can wait for suitable gaps in oncoming traffic to make left turns. But when traffic is heavy and other drivers are waiting behind to also make a left turn, drivers sometimes attempt to complete left turns within shorter traffic gaps across lanes with oncoming traffic.

HCAOG staff was contacted last year by two individuals, Diana Lynn and Mayor Frank Wilson, whose lives have been forever impacted by collisions on the corridor. Mayor Wilson will be in the audience to personally tell of his experience. Until last month, Ms. Lynn's concern was fueled by observations of unsafe driving and overwhelming disregard for the principles of the safety corridor. While she is not able to attend the Board meeting in person, she has provided a letter and photograph detailing her firsthand experience on the corridor. The letter ends with a request for the formation of a task force to address temporary safety measures on the Corridor.

With Board direction, staff can begin recruitment of a task force made up of a broad base of both public and private sector entities, all of which have an interest in improving traffic safety along an identified corridor. Possible stakeholders could include, but not limited to:

- community members
- community groups
- business representatives
- Caltrans
- California Highway Patrol
- local law enforcement
- the media
- emergency services organizations
- elected officials
- HCAOG committee members

A hallmark of a Safety Corridor Task Force is to provide leadership in identifying and developing solutions to improve safety. The Task Force should convene to identify conditions and behaviors contributing to collisions on the corridor and to recommend and implement solutions. Strategies could include enhanced enforcement, engineering (capital improvements), signing and striping, motorist assistance, public education and awareness.