



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 5b
SSTAC Meeting
February 21, 2017

DATE: February 8, 2017
TO: Service Coordination Committee (SCC)
FROM: Debra Dees, Associate Planner
SUBJECT: **Draft FY 2017-18 Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) Report of Findings**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Draft FY 2017-18 UTN Report of Findings

Staff's Recommended Action:

1. Introduce the item as an action item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. After receiving public comment and discussing, make the following motion:
"I move to support the SSTAC's recommendation to the HCAOG Board that "there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet."

Staff Summary:

As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Humboldt County, HCAOG is responsible for the administration of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds. TDA funds, which are funded through ¼ percent of the statewide sales tax, are the primary funding source for most transit systems. The administration of TDA funds includes the annual unmet transit needs process, which has three key components: soliciting testimony on unmet transit needs; analyzing needs in accordance to adopted definitions of unmet transit needs and reasonable to meet; adoption of a finding regarding unmet transit needs that may exist for the upcoming fiscal year.

HCAOG and the SSTAC work with the transit providers and the public to identify any transit needs that are not currently being met. The HCAOG Board makes a determination as to what needs are reasonable to meet, according to adopted criteria, and is responsible for ensuring that

funds are expended to meet any needs that are found reasonable to meet *before any TDA funds can be spent for non-transit purposes*.

Definition and Criteria

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

Definintion 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.

Definintion 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 may be determined to be unreasonable to meet because it is not feasible to initiate service within the coming fiscal year, due to the time required for vehicle acquisition, planning, or similar timing factors, or because additional information is needed to determine whether or not the unmet transit need is reasonable to meet. An unmet transit need shall not be determined unreasonable to meet more than once on these grounds.

The SSTAC reviewed and evaluated the draft FY 2017-18 Unmet Transit Needs Report at their January 17 and February 1, 2017 meetings. The draft report provides information on all public comments received, including comments made at public hearings and meetings, comments submitted in writing or by phone, and results from a survey conducted by the College of the Redwoods (CR). The most common requests are discussed in the report on pages 15-19 and are summarized below.

- new service to the town of Samoa;
- weekend service between Southern Humboldt and Eureka;
- additional Blue Lake Rancheria Transit System service for an early a.m. run; service between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.; a later (6:00 p.m.) run, and weekend service in Blue Lake;
- increased Saturday service to College of the Redwoods (CR); new service to CR on Sunday (survey conducted by CR);
- late night service to CR to accommodate students taking late classes.

The draft UTN Report of Findings is presented to the SCC for continued review and evaluation of the requests received using HCAOG's criteria to determine if an unmet transit need is reasonable to meet based on the adopted criteria. The SSTAC's recommendation to the HCAOG Board must be one of the following:

- (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.

Concluding review and evaluation of all requests, the SSTAC provided a recommendation to the HCAOG Board that "there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet."