



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Transportation Planning Agency
Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
611 I Street, Suite B
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 444-8208
www.hcaog.net

AGENDA ITEM 7d
HCAOG Board Meeting
December 21, 2017

DATE: December 7, 2017
TO: HCAOG Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Marcella Clem, Executive Director
Prepared by: Oona Smith, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2017 Update**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's Recommended Action
- Staff Summary
- Final *Regional Transportation Plan–2017 Update**
- Resolution 17-24

* available online at <http://www.hcaog.net/calendar/date/hcaog-board-meeting-63>

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 that the HCAOG Board adopt the *Humboldt Regional Transportation Plan 2017 Update–Variety in Rural Options of Mobility (VROOM)*."

Staff Summary:

The final draft of the 2017 RTP update "*VROOM...*" (*Variety in Rural Options of Mobility*) is the culmination of coordination, collaboration and review by HCAOG committees, agency partners, and stakeholders in the general public. The full Public Review Draft was out for an official public review and comment period in September and October. Staff responded to

comments in the Semi-final Draft, and released it in October for an additional review period, which went through November 27, 2017.

The changes do not substantially change the objectives, policies, or proposed actions of the RTP. Instead, besides correcting minor errors, most changes consist of adding information on existing conditions. Below I have listed the changes made from the semi-final draft to the final draft that is being considered for adoption.

Changes from the semi-final draft (November) to the final draft:

1. Introduction

- *In response to Caltrans District 1's comments:*
 - Added California statewide metrics to the demographic information.
 - Described transportation implications of Humboldt's demographics, as underlined:

"In 2015, 14% of Humboldt County's population was 65 years or older. In 2030, it is estimated that approximately 23% of the County's population will be senior citizens. (California Dept. of Finance, February 2017). We can assume that as they age, people will want to be able to rely on transportation modes besides driving a private car. In Humboldt County this may mean a steep increase in demand for public transit and a connected network of safe walking and bicycling routes.

In the public health realm, practitioners recognize transportation as one of the social determinants of health. Reliable, affordable transportation directly and indirectly affects people's access to basic services and goods. For instance, access to transportation directly affects people's ability to travel to medical appointments, health services, and social events. Transportation indirectly affects people's access to goods and services because it determines whether or not people can get to jobs that provide the means to purchase those goods and services. In Humboldt County, "(b)eing poor, nonwhite or living in an area with low population density significantly increases the chance of transportation problems" (DHHS 2013)."
 - Described Senate Bill 1 funding in the Introduction, as follows:

"A milestone for State transportation funding came in April, 2017, when the California legislature passed, and Governor Brown signed, Senate Bill 1 (Beall), reversing years of the State's transportation revenues not keeping up with inflation. Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) invests \$5.4 billion annually over the next decade to address years of unfunded road maintenance on the state highway system and the local road system. The new funding will pay for filling potholes, improving road safety, upgrading streets and roads for active transportation, maintaining seismic safety on bridges and overpasses, and investing in public transit. The revenues for these transportation improvements will come from an increase in the gasoline and diesel fuel excise taxes (effective November 1, 2017); vehicle license fees (effective January 1, 2018); and a new registration fee for zero-emission vehicles (model year 2020 and later, effective July 1, 2020). The revenues will be adjusted for inflation over the ten years. The SB 1 revenues will be split roughly in half between State-

maintained highways and bridges, and local street and road repairs, transit agencies and pedestrian and bicycle networks in communities statewide.”

- Added mention of climate change in the objective, as follows (underlined text):
“*Efficient & Viable Transportation System* – Make the transportation system operate more efficiently, such as by increasing multimodal connectivity, increasing opportunities for short trips made via walking or biking, reducing traffic congestion, and using Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) management (e.g. Greater Eureka Area Travel Demand Model, Street Saver, GPS tracking on transit buses, other management programs). Make the system more financially and operationally viable such as by prioritizing cost-effective investments, including climate-change and sea-level-rise adaptation and resiliency in planning and design, pursuing stable funding, and preserving transportation assets to maximize resources and future use.”
- Added a reference regarding where to find information on specific species and natural or historic sites; added information about the California State Wildlife Plan (underlined text added):

“California State Wildlife Action Plan (2015)

Each State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), mandated by Congress, must examine the health of wildlife and prescribe actions both to conserve wildlife before they become rarer, and to conserve vital habitat before it becomes costlier to protect. The California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) prepares the SWAP, identifying “species of greatest conservation need” and actions to protect them. The SWAP 2015 update includes companion plans for nine sectors that could have significant influences on sensitive natural ecosystems, including the transportation sector. The SWAP’s Transportation Planning Companion Plan suggests “opportunities for the transportation planning sector to collaborate and incorporate natural and wildlife resource conservation in project planning:

- engaging in natural community conservation planning (NCCP);
- implementing low-impact development projects that limit impacts on large habitat areas and species;
- developing and implementing best management practices (BMPs) for water quality and roadways;
- replacing culverts and retrofitting bridges to allow fish passage and wildlife movement;
- describing transportation development stressors on wildlife and habitats (e.g., species composition changes and incidental losses [road kills]);
- prioritizing large habitat preservation and locating future construction along existing transportation corridors;
- avoiding habitat/population fragmentation and invasive species expansion; and
- analyzing completed transportation projects that have reduced wildlife resource impacts for lessons learned (California Department of Fish and Game, 2005)” (CDFW 2016).

The RTP’s “Environmental Stewardship” objective is consistent with the California SWAP, and HCAOG supports transportation planning and projects that follow these resource conservation objectives. The RTP’s Program Environmental Impact

Report (EIR) identifies species of greatest conservation need and their habitat, as well as historic sites and cultural resources, that could potentially be vulnerable to impacts from proposed transportation projects in Humboldt County. The EIR's mitigation measures include actions suggested in the *Transportation Planning Companion Plan*. Local jurisdictions will conduct subsequent project-level environmental assessments, per CEQA and/or NEPA."

- *In response to Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) comment:*
Removed "STAA compliance" and replaced it with the following underlined text:
"Overall objectives...
 - ❖ **Economic Vitality** – Support the local or regional economy by improving goods movement and transportation access, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness; by enhancing economic attractors (e.g. via walkable streets, multiuse trails, transit service, freight access, shared mobility services); and by indirectly cutting health care costs due to more active transportation or less transportation-related pollution, and by reducing consumption of foreign oil."

2. Complete Streets Element

- *In response to Caltrans District 1's comments:*
 - Mentioned how Senate Bill 1 will result in additional funds for the backlog of roadway maintenance.
 - Added number of bridges maintained by the County.
 - Revised Table *Streets-4* Complete Streets Projects to include:
 - (1) City of Arcata project: Old Arcata Road; Buttermilk to Jacoby Creek Road; Short-term project; Rehabilitation, pedestrian-bicycle and calming improvements, gateway at Jacoby Creek Road; funding sources are STIP, Measure G, ATP; implementation years 2018-21; cost in year(s) of expenditure is \$4,124,000.
 - (2) Trinidad Rancheria project: US 101/Trinidad, HUM 101-98.4/100.7 and Char-Ae Lane; Short-term project; New interchange with local connections to Scenic Drive and Westhaven Drive, with pedestrian access; Not funded; Targeted funding sources are FHWA TTP funds; implementation years TBD; cost in year(s) of expenditure is \$30,000,000.
 - (3) Humboldt County project: Airport Road (at Redwood Coast/Arcata-Eureka Airport); Long-term project; Install sidewalk; Not funded;; implementation years TBD; cost in year(s) of expenditure is \$380,000.

7. Goods Movement Element

- *In response to Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities (CRTP) comment:*
 - Revised objective for Balanced Mode Share/Complete Streets, as follows (underlined):
"Specific Goods Movement Objective:

- ◆ *Improve goods mobility, reliability, and system efficiency in and out of Humboldt County. Connect road, sea, air, and rail transport modes and maximize the utility of each mode use of transportation corridors within the region.*
- CRTP requests that Caltrans' Richardson Grove Operational Improvement Project be removed from the RTP entirely. (Staff moved the project from the Complete Streets Element to the Goods Movement Element in the Semi-final Draft.) Based on recommendations from the Technical Advisory Committee, staff has kept the project in the Goods Movement Element (Table *Goods-3*. Regional Goods Movement Projects).

9. Financial Element

- Revised estimated costs/revenues to reflect new projects listed in Complete Streets Element, and a few cost adjustments submitted by TAC members.

As a reminder, prior to making a decision on adopting the Regional Transportation, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the HCAOG Board shall consider the Addendum to the Final EIR, which the Board approved and certified on November 16, 2017. (The Addendum to the EIR and the *Humboldt Regional Transportation Plan 2013/14 Update: Final Environmental Impact Report*, are posted on the HCAOG website:

<http://hcaog.net/announcements/semi-final-draft-vroom-regional-transportation-plan-2017-update> (and <http://www.hcaog.net/calendar/date/hcaog-board-meeting-63>).