



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 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. Based on public testimony, the SSTAC’s recommendations, and according to HCAOG’s definitions (see box on the right), the HCAOG 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)

If the HCAOG Board determines that a finding of (c) above applies to an HCAOG entity, then that entity will be required to spend all of their apportioned TDA funds for transit purposes. (Under other findings, entities are allowed to spend TDA funds for non-transit purposes, such as streets and roads maintenance.)

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.

(over)

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 HCAOG Board will consider and adopt the Report of Findings by March 2018.

Opportunities for Public Comment on Unmet Transit Needs

Public hearings are held each year by HCAOG and member entities to receive comments on unmet transit needs. Comments may be provided at any of the unmet transit needs public hearings or submitted to HCAOG throughout the year via email, Facebook, in person, or telephone through the contact information below.

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| Email: | debra.dees@hcaog.net |
| Facebook: | www.facebook.com/hcaog |
| Mail or in person: | HCAOG Office 611 I Street, Suite B Eureka, CA 95501 |
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