

Transportation Development Act

Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings



JUNE 2021



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RESOLUTION 21-16
RESOLUTION OF THE HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
ADOPTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT
UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS REPORT OF FINDINGS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-22

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Association of Governments, in its official capacity as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, hereinafter referred to as the RTPA, is responsible for annually adopting a Transportation Development Act (TDA) Report of Findings; and

WHEREAS, the RTPA has administered the annual unmet transit needs processes in accordance and consistent with Sections 99238.5, and 99401.5, Articles 4 and 8, Chapter 4, Division 10, Part 11, of the Public Utilities Code (PUC), to include consulting with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), conducting public hearings, identifying needs, assessing transit dependent groups, assessing existing programs, and analyzing potential programs to meet those identified needs; and

WHEREAS, the RTPA does find that, consistent with the TDA Report of Findings for the 2021-22 year, determining that are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; and

WHEREAS, such a finding has been made based on deliberation and consideration of comments generated during the conduct of the unmet needs process and measured against the evaluative criteria established in the RTPA's adopted definitions for the terms "unmet transit need" and "reasonable to meet."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Humboldt County Association of Governments, in its capacity as the RTPA for Humboldt County, hereby adopts the aforesated finding and the TDA Unmet Transit Needs Report of Findings for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Humboldt County Association of Governments, in the City of Eureka, County of Humboldt, State of California, this 17th day of June 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: MEMBERS: M. Johnson, Bass, Jones, Seaman,
Smith, G. Johnson, West

NOES: MEMBERS: None

ABSENT: MEMBERS: Atkins-Salazar

ABSTAIN: MEMBERS: None

Attest:


Christie Smith, HCAOG Executive Assistant



Mike Johnson, HCAOG Chair

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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 meet HCAOG's adopted criteria of being reasonable to meet are given funding priority over non-transit uses. Local Transportation Funds (LTF) may be used for non-transit purposes, such as road improvements and bicycle and pedestrian uses, if it can be demonstrated that there are no unmet transit needs in the region that are reasonable to meet. If the HCAOG Board determines that there are unmet needs that are reasonable to meet, the affected jurisdiction must satisfy those needs before any LTF 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. The process is led by HCAOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC). As mandated in Section 99238(c) of the 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 HCAOG Board, makes the unmet transit need finding in consideration of the SSTAC recommendation based on deliberation and consideration of comments generated during the unmet needs public participation process and measured against the evaluative criteria established by HCAOG's adopted definitions for the terms "unmet transit need" and "reasonable to meet."

Fiscal Year 21-22 HCAOG Board finding:

The HCAOG Board adopted Resolution 21-XX on June 17, 2021 finding that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.

Although public transit continues to provide essential services, overall ridership has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Expanding service hours or frequency at this time is not considered financially sustainable given current funding sources. There are therefore no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. Late-night weekday service on the Redwood Transit System and express bus service between McKinleyville and Eureka during peak morning and evening hours are unmet needs that will be analyzed in future cycles.

Transportation Development Act

The California State 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 a 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. Effective January 1, 2018 an additional vehicle registration fee called the “Transportation Improvement Fee” is collected with rates based on the value of the motor vehicle. Statute requires that 50% of STA funds be allocated based on population, and 50% be allocated according to operator revenues from the prior year.

Other transit funding sources include the California’s State of Good Repair program and Low Carbon Transit Operations Program and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310, 5311 and 5311(f) Programs.

The following TDA Articles, under Public Utilities Code Division 10, Part II, Chapter 4, direct how LTF 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 (Section 99260) and Article 4.5 (Section 99275), or for local street and road 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%.

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 the Humboldt Transit Authority is the designated CTSA in Humboldt County, they do not receive funds under this Article. HCAOG’s current policy is to allocate STA funds for CTSA duties. A CTSA may file claims for STA funds for clearly defined and budgeted CTSA duties, approved by the HCAOG Board.

Article 8 is utilized by jurisdictions that do not operate 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 projects, 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). Should any unmet transit need be identified, a further determination or assessment must be made to establish whether or not those needs are “reasonable to meet.” In accordance with state law, TDA funds must be allocated first to unmet transit needs, which are found to be reasonable to meet, before any remaining funds can be allocated to local jurisdictions for non-transit purposes.

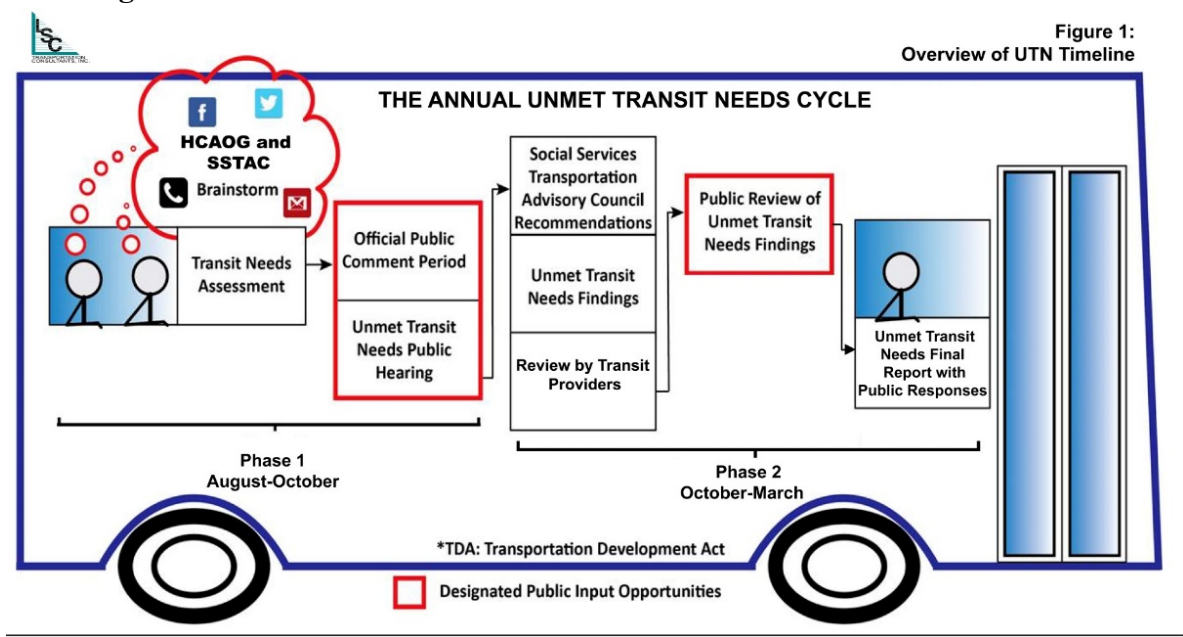
The transportation planning agency is required to:

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

HCAOG encourages each member entity to conduct its own public hearing on unmet transit needs. This provides 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 and publishes a public notice(s) of the public hearings in the local newspaper. Flyers in both English and Spanish are posted in buses as well. Figure 1 depicts the Unmet Transit Needs process that was a part of the outreach this year.

The SSTAC leads the process in soliciting input from transportation- dependent and transportation-disadvantaged persons, and in recommending a finding to the HCAOG Board.

Figure 1: Overview of the Unmet Transit Needs Timeline



Definitions and Criteria

In November 2017, the 2017-2022 Humboldt County Transit Development Plan (TDP) and the SSTAC Strategic Plan were adopted by the HCAOG Board. The TDP is a five-year planning document that assesses transit and related transportation issues in the county and provides a “road map” for improvements to the public transit program over the upcoming five years. The Strategic Plan reviewed the process of defining, identifying and analyzing unmet transit needs and developed a strategy to make the UTN process as clear and efficient as possible. Both documents are available for review on HCAOG’s website:

http://hcaog.net/sites/default/files/humboldt_tdp_2017_plan_final_nov_2017.pdf

http://hcaog.net/sites/default/files/sstac_strategic_plan_final_nov_2017.pdf

Based on recommendations from the Strategic Plan, the HCAOG Board amended the TDA Rules and Regulations to include updated unmet transit needs definitions and criteria used for determining if an unmet need is reasonable to meet.

Definition of Unmet Transit Need:

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 the following:

- 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. Minor operational improvements are changes to service which do not affect the operating cost of the transit service either by requiring additional staff and/or additional vehicle hours of service or miles of service.
- Trips for primary or secondary school transportation.
- Sidewalk improvements or street and road needs.

Criteria to be found of Reasonable to Meet:

1. To be considered reasonable to meet, a service must be operationally feasible and financially sustainable, as defined below:
 - a. To be considered operationally feasible, the service must have adequate running time, adequate roadways, and must be safe to operate.
 - b. To be considered financially sustainable, enough money should be available from identified sources of funding to pay for the marginal operating cost of the service continuously for three years.
2. Additionally, to be considered “reasonable to meet” the service must be projected to meet a minimum “marginal farebox return ratio” of 10 percent within two years. If multiple competing services are requested, other factors such as estimated subsidy per passenger trip

and passengers per vehicle hour of service may also be considered. Ridership and farebox return ratio thresholds will also be considered for continuing newly-introduced services.

3. 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.
4. Once a service is determined to be “reasonable to meet” and is implemented, it can be expected that the ridership in the first 1-2 years of the new service will be less than the projected optimal ridership. Ridership should be evaluated at 6-month intervals to determine if service is meeting performance standards adopted by the transit provider, and specifically whether the service meets a minimum 10 percent marginal farebox ratio. If the service is being adequately promoted and fails to be within 60 percent of the identified standards after six months, 90 percent within the first year, or 100 percent within two years, the service may be cancelled and deemed “no longer reasonable to meet.” An exception to this rule is when a community or group is willing to participate in sharing the ongoing cost of the new service.

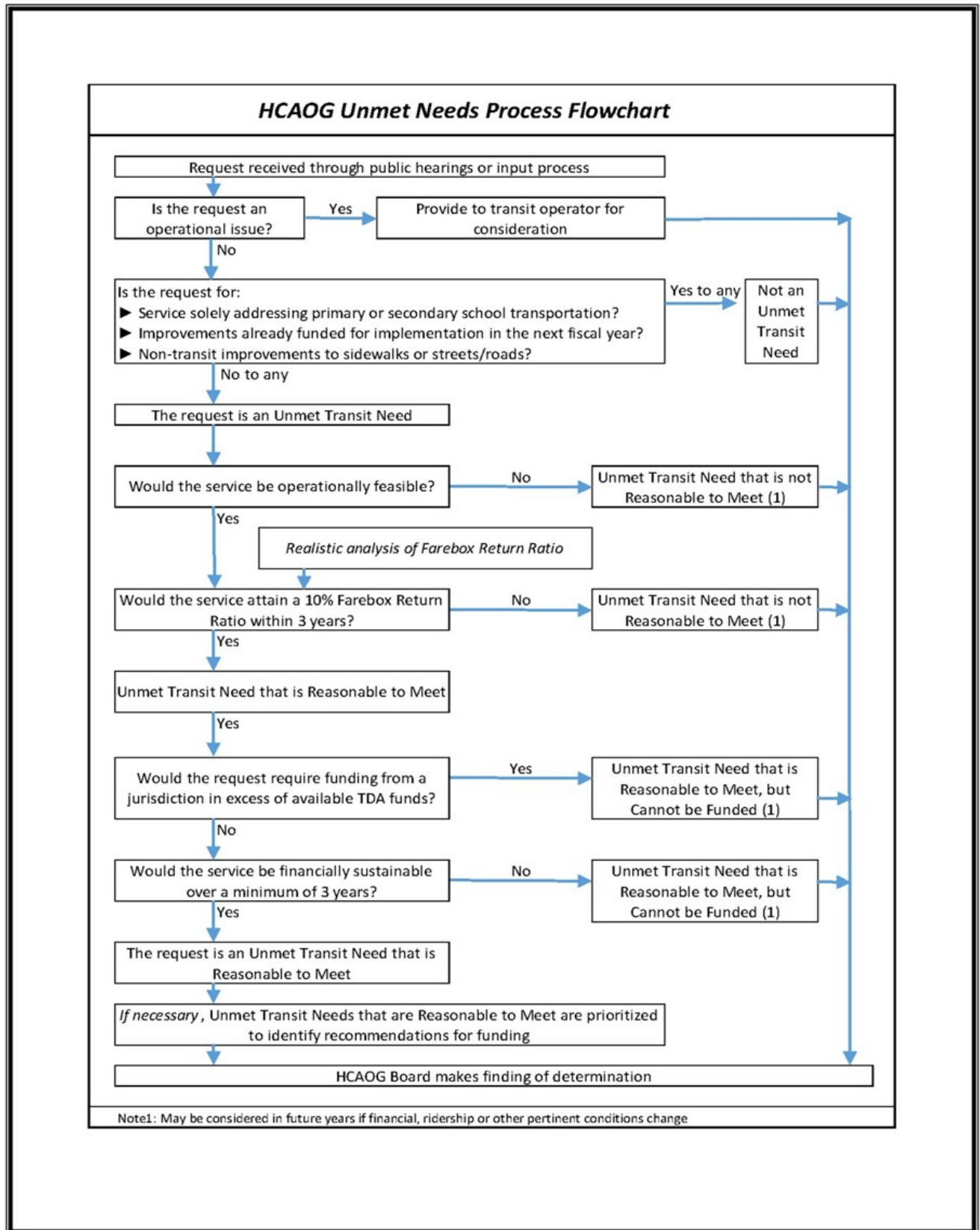
After considering all available information compiled pursuant to the Unmet Transit Needs public participation process, HCAOG must adopt, by resolution, one of the following findings:

- (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.

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.

The flowchart provided in Figure 2 depicts the process used when determining unmet transit needs:

Figure 2: Unmet Needs Process Flowchart



Transit Dependent Demographics

The majority of the county’s population is located within the greater Humboldt Bay Area, centered around the highly populated communities of McKinleyville (unincorporated) and the cities of Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna, and Rio Dell. The cities of Trinidad and Blue Lake as well as unincorporated county areas of Garberville and Willow Creek are also served by the public transit system. Table 1 lists the population increase between 2020 and 2021 by jurisdiction. Overall, Humboldt County population declined by 1.5% in this period.

Table 1: Population Estimates for 2020 and 2021

Jurisdiction	2020 Population Estimate	2021 Population Estimate	Annual Percent Change	Percent of Countywide Population
Arcata	17,891	16,909	-5.5%	13%
Blue Lake	1,271	1,262	-0.7%	1%
Eureka	26,582	26,113	-1.8%	20%
Ferndale	1,376	1,368	-0.6%	1%
Fortuna	12,006	11,926	-0.7%	9%
Rio Dell	3,270	3,299	0.9%	3%
Trinidad	345	342	-0.9%	0%
Unincorporated County	70,083	69,632	-0.6%	53%
Total Population	132,824	130,851	-1.5%%	100%

Source: Department of Finance Table E-1 published May 1, 2021

The Department of Finance does not provide population estimates for unincorporated areas. In terms of population, McKinleyville is the largest community in the unincorporated area. The Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate (Table DB05) indicates a population of 16,612 for McKinleyville. A transit study is currently underway to analyze transit needs and service recommendations for the people living in McKinleyville.

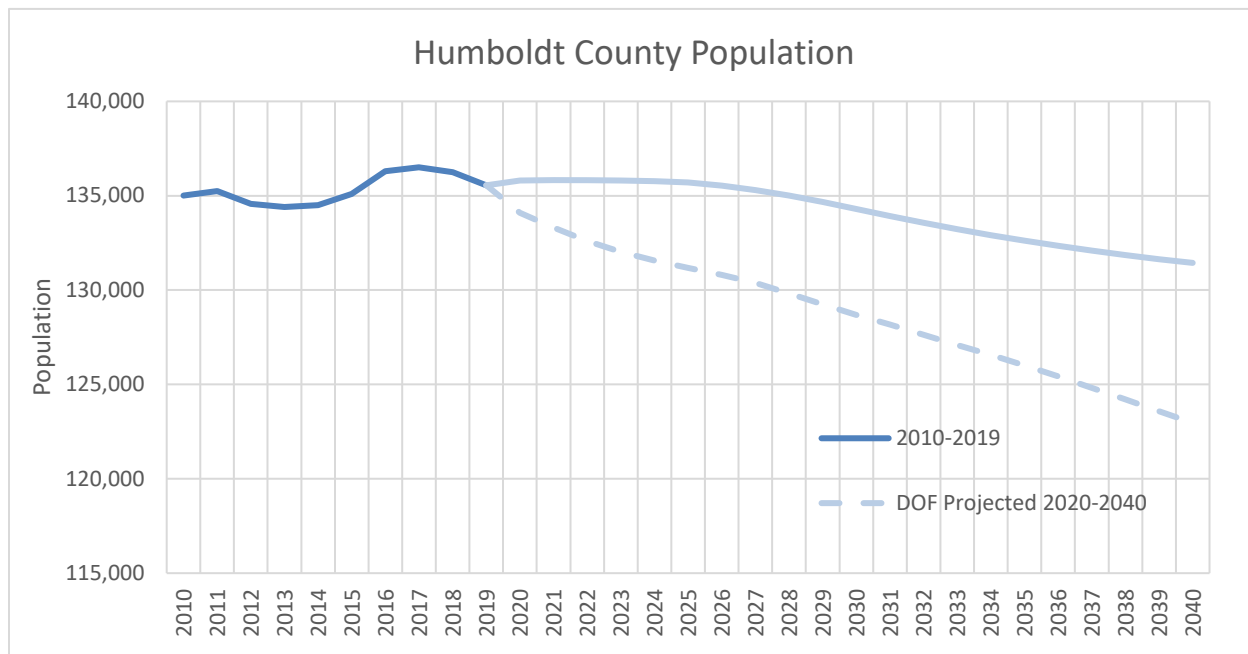
While all sectors of the community may utilize public and private transportation services, groups likely to be transit dependent or transit disadvantaged are those that are either unable to operate a vehicle or do not have access to a vehicle. Older citizens, young adults, persons with disabilities, carless households and persons of limited means are more likely to be transit dependent and may require specialized transportation.

Table 2: Transit-Dependent Groups

Transit Dependent Group	Description
Seniors	Age 65 and over
Very Low Income	Income below the poverty line
Disabled	Non-institutionalized members of the population who may be unable to operate vehicles or utilize certain modes of public transportation due to physical or mental disabilities
Limited Automobile Access	People who have no vehicles available for their use

Both the State of California and Caltrans project long-term population decline in Humboldt County, as illustrated in Figure 3. According to the Caltrans Long-Term Socioeconomic Forecast, the population is expected to decline at an annual average rate of 0.1 percent. Approximately 7% of the population in 2020 is age 75+, and the death rate is expected to outpace the birth rate.

Figure 3: Population Trendline 2020-2040



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Estimates for the Resident Population for Counties.
 California Department of Finance, P-2a. Vintage 2019 (2020.1.10) County Population Projections.
 California Department of Transportation, Vintage 2019 Long-Term Socio-Economic Forecasts by County

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. 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. Chapter 2 of the Transit Development Plan provides a more in-depth discussion of demographic trends and commuter patterns.

Table 3 provides data summarizing income 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. Countywide, 20.1% of people live below the poverty line, compared to a 13.4% rate statewide and across the country. Humboldt’s two largest cities, Arcata and Eureka, have the highest percentages of residents living in poverty. The City of Arcata shows a slight increase in the poverty percentage while the City of Eureka show a slight decrease. The high percentage for the City of Arcata is largely due to Humboldt State University’s (HSU) student population living near the University.

Table 3: Poverty Level Estimates

Jurisdiction	Population for whom poverty status is determined*	Persons Below Poverty Level*	% Below Poverty Level*	Previous year % Below Poverty Level [†]
Arcata	16,326	6,212	38%	37.4%
Blue Lake	902	145	16.1%	18.6%
Eureka	26,425	5,277	20.0%	22.3%
Ferndale	1,361	184	13.5%	12.1%
Fortuna	12,089	2,048	16.9%	16.8%
Rio Dell	3,360	257	7.6%	9.1%
Trinidad	324	55	17.0%	15.4%
Countywide	132,584	26,674	20.1%	20.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Table S1701 2015-2019* and 2014-2018+ American Community Survey 5 -year Poverty Status Estimates.

Figure 4: Poverty Density Map in Arcata and Eureka

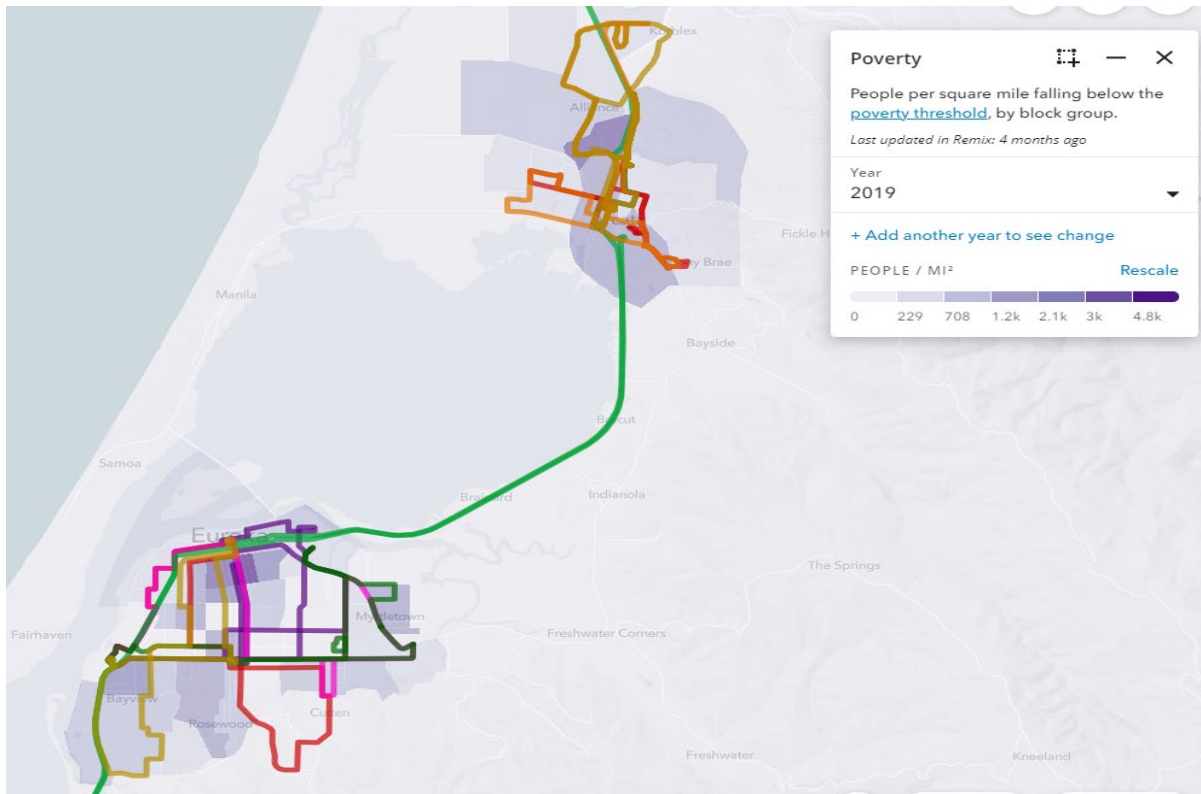


Table 4 provides the most current data summarizing the age indicators for transit dependency. Aging populations lose their ability to drive privately owned vehicles and have to rely on family, neighbors, dial-a-ride, and volunteer driver programs for mobility. It is increasingly important to address multiple modes of transportation to prevent isolation, economic hardship and reduced quality of life of the expanding senior population. All cities with the exceptions of Arcata, Eureka and Rio Dell exceed the 65 and older population countywide average of 17.3%. Arcata has the lowest 65 and older population percentage most likely due to the high student population.

Table 4: Persons 65 and Older Estimates

Jurisdiction	Population for whom age was determined	Persons 65 years plus	Percentage 65 plus	Previous year % of Persons 65 Years and Over
Arcata	18,178	2,063	11.3%	11.5%
Blue Lake	902	217	24%	25.1%
Eureka	26,966	4,748	17.6%	16.6%
Ferndale	1,377	399	28.9%	31.4%
Fortuna	12,210	2,324	19%	18.3%
Rio Dell	3,373	431	12.7%	14.4%
Trinidad	324	87	26.8%	27.9%
Countywide	135,940	23,518	17.3%	16.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Table DP05 2014-2018+ and 2015-2019* American Community Survey 5 -year Demographic and Housing Estimates.

Figure 5: Population Density of Seniors in Humboldt County

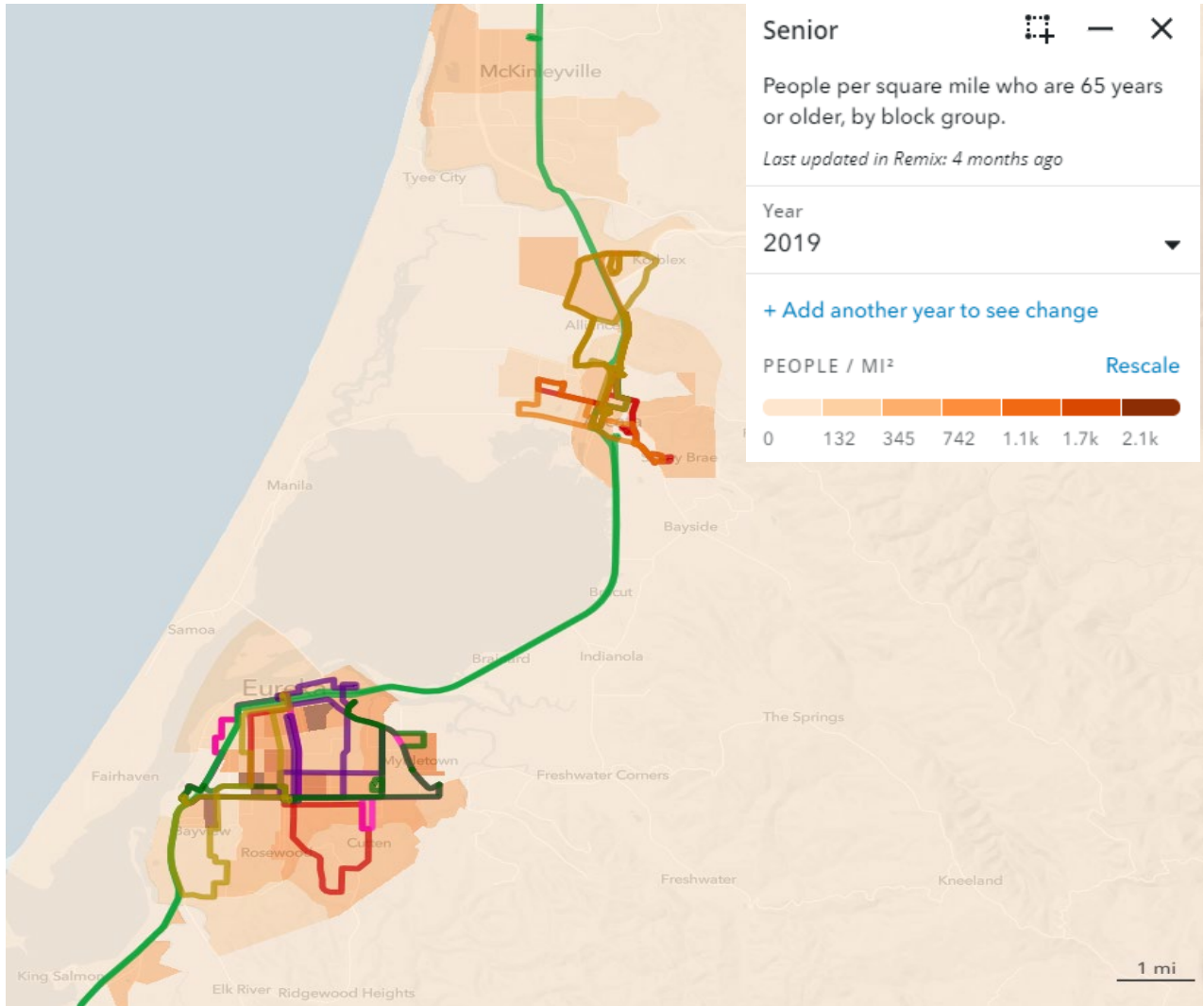


Table 5 provides census estimates of the percentage of residents with disabilities. While the countywide average is 16.5%, the cities of Blue Lake, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell and Trinidad all have just over 20% of their population living with a disability.

Table 5: Disability Status Estimates

Jurisdiction	Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population*	Population with a Disability*	% Population with a Disability*	Previous year % Population with a Disability⁺
Arcata	18,169	1,890	10.4%	11.4%
Blue Lake	902	187	20.7%	20.7%
Eureka	26,492	4,711	17.8%	18.5%
Ferndale	1,377	289	21.0%	21.5%
Fortuna	12,129	2,477	20.4%	18.7%
Rio Dell	3,373	680	20.2%	18.9%
Trinidad	324	65	20.1%	18.8%
Countywide	135,003	22,208	16.5%	16.3%
California	38,787,337	4,101,034	10.6%	N/A

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Table DP02 2015-2019* and 2014-2018+ American Community Survey 5 -year Selected Social Characteristics Estimates.

Table 6 provides census estimates of the percentage of carless households. The Cities of Arcata and Eureka are the jurisdictions with the highest percentage of careless households indicating there is a relatively higher need for transit service in these areas.

Table 6: Carless Household Estimates

Jurisdiction	Total Occupied Housing Units*	No Vehicle Available*	% Households With No Vehicle Available*	Previous year % Households With No Vehicle Available⁺
Arcata	7,155	718	10%	11.4%
Blue Lake	428	24	5.6%	2.9%
Eureka	11,606	1,405	12.1%	13.6%
Ferndale	566	21	3.7%	3.5%
Fortuna	4,769	296	6.2%	6.2%
Rio Dell	1,318	95	7.2%	11.2%
Trinidad	142	4	2.8%	10.3%
Countywide	54,679	4,045	7.4%	7.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Table DP04 2015-2019* and 2014-2018+ American Community Survey 5 -year Selected Housing Characteristics Estimates

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. Transit services are concentrated around the greater Humboldt Bay area, where population densities are higher and destinations are more compact. However, public transit also provides services to Blue Lake, Willow Creek, and Hoopa¹ in eastern Humboldt, and communities in southern Humboldt.

The following existing transportation resources are identified in Chapter 3 of the Humboldt County Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Plan:

Public transit service: Humboldt Transit Authority (Redwood Transit Service, Eureka Transit Service, Willow Creek, Southern Humboldt), Arcata & Mad River Transit Service, Blue Lake Rancheria Transit Service, Klamath Trinity Non-emergency Transit (KT-Net), Dial-A-Ride, Fortuna Transit.

Social services: Redwood Coast Regional Center, Area 1 Agency on Aging, Humboldt Senior Resource Center, County of Humboldt Health and Human Services, K'ima:w Medical Center, Adult Day Health Care of Mad River, Ferndale Senior Resource Agency "Bridging the Gap," Southern Trinity Health Services.

Private service: Humboldt Medi-Trans, Taxi services (includes CAE Transport Inc dba City Cab, which operates DAR and CAE Transport service under contract with HTA), Cher-Ae Heights Casino Shuttle.

Interregional: Amtrak, Greyhound, Redwood Coast Transit.

The Humboldt Transit Authority and Arcata & Mad River Transit System are fixed-route transit systems defined as a system of providing designated public transportation on which a vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule. Other bus services primarily connect outlying areas with a central city through bus service that operates with at least five miles of continuous closed-door service. Paratransit service (dial-a-ride) runs flexible routes usually with door-to-door service for their customers. 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 fixed-route public transportation systems to provide paratransit service. Other transportation services range from taxis to volunteer-driver programs for taking patients to medical appointments. More detailed information is provided in Chapter 3 of the TDP.

¹ Service to Hoopa has been provided by Klamath Trinity Non-Emergency Transit (KT-Net). However, KT-Net did not operate during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic and were non-operational from approximately April 2020 to the present time. Efforts are underway to have Humboldt Transit Authority resume service to this area.

Unmet Transit Needs Comments, Assessment, Findings

A total of 7 responses were received to an online survey. These responses, which consisted of answers to a set of questions, were further broken down into a total of 16 distinct comments. All comments are summarized in Appendix A. The comments were grouped into three categories (Unmet Transit Need, Minor Operational Improvement, General Comment) using HCAOG's adopted definitions, provided on page 4 of this report.

Of the 16 comments, 6 were determined to meet the definition of an Unmet Transit Need. Those 6 comments were then examined to see if they met the adopted criteria used to determine if the UTN is reasonable to meet, provided on pages 4 and 5 of this report.

The last spreadsheet in the Appendix was developed to incorporate the adopted criteria to determine if the unmet need is reasonable to meet following the schematics of HCAOG's UTN flowchart, provided on page 6 of this report.

The first query is if the requested service would be operationally feasible:

- If the answer is yes, then you move on to the question in the next column.
- If the answer is no, then the UTN is not reasonable to meet but may be considered in future years if financial, ridership or other pertinent conditions change.
- If additional information is required, then the follow up action is provided in the Comment/Action column.

Following the same flow process as the first question, the next column asks if the service would attain a 10% Farebox Return Ratio within 3 years. Due to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on transit ridership, none of the UTN's meet the farebox return criteria. In other words, because ridership has not yet returned to pre-pandemic ridership levels it is unreasonable for any expansion of service to be expected to meet farebox returns.

Staff is recommending that in the next UTN cycle the SSTAC consider the requests for the Redwood Transit Service to provide an express bus between McKinleyville and Eureka during peak hours as well as the request to implement late-night weekday service.

Prior Year Findings

Appendix B shows a summary of prior year findings dating to the 2015/16 UTN cycle. The Tish Non Village service to Loleta was discontinued due to lower than anticipated ridership. Similarly, the Old Arcata Road pilot project will also be terminated on June 31, 2021. Saturday service to Blue Lake began in October 2019. HTA is seeking funding to install a new bus stop on Broadway in Eureka near Pierson's Building Center.

The 2018-19 UTN process determined that late-night weekday service on the Redwood Transit System was an unmet need reasonable to meet. This service was scheduled to begin in the 2019-20 fiscal year. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the funding was repurposed to provide free transit for all HTA systems and the SSTAC recommended that this UTN be reconsidered in future cycles.

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.

LTF is the main funding source for transit in the region. After off-the-top allocations to the County Auditor, HCAOG administration and planning, and 2% for bicycle and pedestrian uses, LTF funds are divided among the seven cities and the County based on population in a process called apportionment. The County of Humboldt spends the entirety of its LTF funds on transit.

The State Transit Assistance (STA) fund is now fully funded by the sales tax on diesel, and can be used for operating and capital purposes. The spike beginning in 2017-18 is due to the passage of the Road Repair and Accountability Act (Senate Bill 1). Funding apportioned to Humboldt is shown in Figure 9. The zero-amount shown in 2010-11 was due to the State of California’s illegal diversion of transit funding which began in the 2009-10 State Budget. The program was reinstated as part of the original “Gas Tax Swap” agreement of 2010, which reconfigured the funding streams that flow into the program. STA

Figure 9: Humboldt County State Transit Assistance Trend

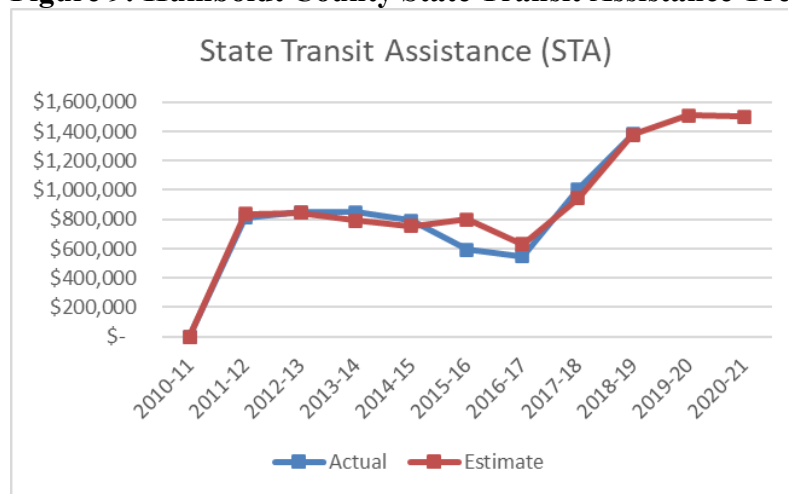


Table 7 provides FY 2021-2022 LTF apportionments for funds allocated by the HCAOG Board. These projections are based on an estimate provided by the Humboldt County Auditor pursuant to Government Code Section 6620. The County Auditor makes the estimate from such data as is available including those, which may be furnished by the State Board of Equalization. The estimate includes those moneys anticipated to be deposited in the fund during the ensuing fiscal year. After close of each fiscal year, the Auditor is responsible for reporting any remaining balance in each jurisdiction’s account. The estimate was made with consideration given to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 7: LTF Funds Allocated by Jurisdiction, FY 2021-22

Jurisdiction	Dept. of Finance Population Projection	% of Total Population	FY 2021-22 Appropriation*
Arcata	18,078	13.36%	\$ 605,852.31
Blue Lake	1,243	0.92%	\$ 41,656.95
Eureka	26,977	19.93%	\$ 904,086.61
Ferndale	1,335	0.99%	\$ 44,740.17
Fortuna	12,084	8.93%	\$ 404,973.96
Rio Dell	3,326	2.46%	\$ 111,465.03
Trinidad	360	0.27%	\$ 12,064.77
Humboldt County	71,930	53.15%	\$ 2,410,607.19
Total	135,333	100.00%	\$ 4,535,447.00

*Allocation estimate does not include potential rollover funds from FY 20-21

Appendix A: Summary of Public Input

ID	What changes to the existing transit service would get you to ride more or ride for the first time?	Would you ride more often if the bus ran more frequently? Time specific details and identification of the transit system are key in determining if the request meets the criteria of "reasonable to meet ..."	Would you choose transit for your transportation needs if the bus went to locations that are currently not accessible by transit? If so, please provide details regarding frequency, time of day, etc.	Do the current transit times meet your transportation needs? If not what times and days would you ride transit if provided?	If you have discontinued using transit due to the Coronavirus pandemic do you plan on returning to transit once things change?	Prior to submitting your unmet transit need request in the box below, please review the Unmet Transit Needs definition and criteria to guide your request. Does the bus get you to work on time?
1	More frequent service to stops so missing a bus doesn't mean an hour-long wait for the next one. Better weekend and evening service. HTA service to Social Services building on Koster Street without having to walk a long distance from the bus stop.	Yes	Yes. The Social Services campus at 929 Koster Street requires a long walk from HTA routes or a transfer to ETS routes that can add an hour to the trip. Service is needed weekdays 8-5.	Friday and Saturday evening service	Yes, I plan to return to transit once things change	Yes
2	Public transit is my mode of transportation. Running more frequently, every 30-45 minutes, for ETA would be desirable.	I ride the buses currently. Maybe ETA could run on the half hour in a time block: 9-6, Monday - Friday.	A ETA/RTA bus running from Eureka to Arcata, Myrtle Avenue - Old Arcata Road, at least twice a day.	5:00 p.m. shut down time is problematic. Too early. I understand that time is because of C-19, but having to leave Old Town at 4:00 pm is not convenient.	I have not discontinued riding the bus due to Covid-19	I understand ridership is the bottom line and governs any changes. I hope the transit system receives Federal Funding during C-19 to stay afloat. In reality, this will be with us for a while. The measures taken for drivers and riders are commendable.
3	Better integration of services, service to Arcata via Myrtle Avenue/Old Arcata Road	Better integration, particularly between city and county bus schedules, would make a bigger difference.	A service from Harris/Harrison to Arcata via Myrtle Avenue and Old Arcata Road with a stop at Kneeland Glen on Saturdays at two-hour intervals between 10am and 6pm would take care of almost all my transportation needs.	See answer to #3 above	N/A, have not been using public transportation as it doesn't meet my needs	Not sure what you want me to put here ... I don't work
4	I've quit the bus during the pandemic, but more frequent service to a location where I could connect with other services would be just dandy.	Yes. From Trinidad: If the bus ever came at a time which made my wait on either end less than an hour, I would be more inclined to ride the bus. When I worked in Eureka, I could not make it to work on time taking the bus. I also gave a ride to another person who worked in Arcata for whom the bus service provided no help in getting to work on time. Both of us had to be at work before 8 AM. I considered attempting to take the bus to 10 AM appointments in McKinleyville, but the wait time going and coming consumed the entire day. Even desperate poor people will hitchhike	I just want to get from Trinidad to central McKinleyville or Arcata and back, mostly for shopping but also for appointments. I am fine with walking a few blocks from a bus stop. The TIME is not so important as the turnaround time. And there is no service in the evening. I realize that now, during the pandemic, nobody is going anywhere at night for entertainment, but if life ever resumes in a more regular way, it would be very nice to go to a performance and actually get home on the bus. Night buses would also cut down on DULs. It would be pleasant to go out for a couple of drinks and not have to worry about obtaining a designated driver.	I am not riding during the pandemic. Post-pandemic I would look for a ride to McKinleyville arriving in McKinleyville at 9:45 and returning to Trinidad leaving McKinleyville at 1PM. The current three hours between buses is ridiculous, hourly would be adequate.	Yes.	Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. You will never achieve satisfactory fare box return ratio if bus serves are so scant that nobody rides. It didn't when I was working; I'm not working now
5	More frequent service between McKinleyville, Arcata and Eureka; express service in the same area	Yes. I would ride RTS more frequently if it ran to between McKinleyville and Arcata every half hour or less. I would ride the bus in the entire McKinleyville-Arcata-Eureka corridor a lot more frequently if it ran every 15-20 minutes or less. I might ride the A&MRTS and ETS buses if they ran every half hour or less (currently I just bike or walk in the cities because the buses are not convenient).	Access to transit is not an issue for me, just frequency. There is a problem with buses from the north arriving in Eureka just minutes before the hour. This means that if they're even a few minutes late, a rider will be late for work or a meeting, etc. That requires people to take buses 30-60 min earlier than they need, which is very inconvenient.	Later AND MORE FREQUENT weeknight service would help a lot.	Yes. Currently I don't ride the bus, in order to allow those who need to ride extra social distancing space. When the pandemic is over, I will ride again.	See answers above.
6		yes. every 15 minutes Right now, it takes 2 hours to go from Sunny Brae to St Joes. I would not take the bus if the trip took over 45 minutes.	1) If there was a regular bus stop at Jacobi Creek School for north and southbound buses and I didn't have to request a stop in advance. 2) I could be sure there was room for my bike on the bus rack or that a bike share would be available once I got into town. It would be great if bikeshares were included in transfers and could be reserved on Token 3) If it took less than 30 minutes.	It would also help if there was a covered place to sit and wait. No one likes standing in the rain.	I would definitely ride (once COVID is not a risk) from Bayside to Eureka and Arcata	
7	Instead of going in a single circle I would ask that the bus goes in both directions along the route	Yes this is especially true because now the bus stops at 450 it used to run until 650. If the bus ran until 650 again it would be very convenient for me and many other people trying to get home from work.	Southern Eureka used to be serviced by a bus stop at K Mart. Now in order to get to carpet one the western shop piersons you have to get off north bound and walk back about 20 minutes. Southern Eureka needs a bus stop.	The bus stops running very early in the day. The old schedule ran until 650 and was much more convenient	I still regularly take the Eureka Transit however less frequently. I would return to the previous schedule given a chance	It no longer provides service to get me home.

2021-2022 HCAOG Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) Comments

The following comments were found meet the adopted definitions of an Unmet Transit Need

1. To be considered reasonable to meet, a service must be operationally feasible and financially sustainable, as defined below:

a) To be considered operationally feasible, the service must have adequate running time, adequate roadways, and must be safe to operate.

b) To be considered financially sustainable, enough money should be available from identified sources of funding to pay for the marginal operating cost of the service continuously for three years.

Concern (with number of times requested in comments)	System/City	<p>Would the service be operationally feasible? If Yes, move to the next column</p> <p>If No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet but may be considered in future years if financial, ridership or other pertinent conditions change.</p> <p>If additional information is required, see the Comment/Action Item column</p>	<p>Would service attain a 10% Farebox Return Ratio within 3 years? If Yes, move to the next column</p> <p>If No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet but may be considered in future years if financial, ridership or other pertinent conditions change.</p> <p>If additional information is required, see the Comment/Action Item column</p>	<p>Would the request require funding from a jurisdiction in excess of available TDA funding? If Yes, the UTN is reasonable to meet, but cannot be funded but may be considered in future years if financial, ridership or other pertinent conditions change. If No, move to the next column</p>	<p>Would the service be financially sustainable over a minimum of 3 years? If Yes, the UTN is reasonable to meet. If No, the UTN is reasonable to meet, but cannot be funded, but may be considered in future years if financial, ridership or other pertinent conditions change.</p>	Comments/Action Items
Service every 30 minutes in McKinleyville-Arcata-Eureka (x4)	RTS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			The Humboldt Transit Authority had devoted funds to initiate peak our express busses between McKinleyville and Eureka. Those funds were redirected to keeping transit running and offering free fares due to Covid-19. This UTN should be reevaluated next year
Friday and Saturday evening service (x2)	RTS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			Late night weekend service farebox projections are not expected to meet the 10% requirement.
Service past 5pm (x2)	ETS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			Ridership levels for ETS between 5 and 7 PM are not projected to meet farebox returns
More frequent service, every 30-45 minutes, for ETS.	ETS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			Farebox projections for more frequent buses are not expected to meet the 10% requirement.
Hourly service to/from Trinidad	ETS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			Farebox projections are not expected to meet the 10% requirement.
Later service during the weekdays	RTS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			2018/19 UTN determined late night weekday service was an unmet need reasonable to meet. Current farebox projections are not expected to meet the 10% requirement, however this need will continue to be evaluated.
Bus stop southern Eureka (K-mart)	ETS	Yes, move to next column	No, the UTN is not reasonable to meet			Was to be addressed in Broadway Multimodal Corridor Plan. HTA also in talks with Caltrans about stop.

2021-2022 HCAOG Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) Comments

Color legend: A&MRTS DAR BLRTS ETS HTA Other Areas

The following public comments were deemed to be either Operational (O) or General Comments (GC) based on the following criteria:

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. "Minor operational improvements" are changes to service which do not affect the operating cost of the transit service either by requiring additional staff and/or additional vehicle hours of service or miles of service.

- Trips for primary or secondary school transportation.

- Sidewalk improvements or street and road needs.

Concern	System/City	Operational (O) or General Comment (GC)	Comments/Action Items
Early morning service from Trinidad to Eureka with enough time to be at work before 8am	RTS	O	
The Social Services campus at 929 Koster Street requires a long walk from HTA routes or a transfer to ETS routes that can add an hour to the trip.	RTS	O	The Northbound stop is 0.3 miles from 929 Koster. Southbound passengers can transfer at 4th & H to ETS to be dropped up directly across the street.
Instead of going in a single circle I would ask that the bus goes in both directions along the route for faster service	RTS	O	HTA is working on an ETS redesign
There is a problem with buses from the north arriving in Eureka just minutes before the hour. This means that if they're even a few minutes late, a rider will be late for work or a meeting, etc. That requires people to take buses 30-60 min earlier than they need, which is very inconvenient.	RTS / ETS	O	RTS is scheduled to arrive (from the North) 3 minutes before ETS arrives. If a RTS bus is late, they are able to radio ahead to make arrangements for ETS transfers.
If I could be sure there was room for my bike on the bus rack or that a bike share would be available once I got into town. It would be great if bikeshares were included in transfers and could be reserved on Token	RTS		Bike racks are first come/first served. We are replacing 2-bike rack holders with 3-bike rack holders on our buses and have ordered inside securements that can be used in the wheelchair station provided that it is not in use.
Better integration between city and county bus schedules	RTS	O	
Covered bus stop at Jacoby Creek School with 15 minute headway service to Eureka/Arcata, without need to request in advance. Including Saturday.		O	Old Arcata Road service on-demand began in 2019/Service will terminate June 30, 2021 due to lack of ridership

Appendix B: Recent History of Unmet Needs Requests

Hearing Year/Primary Request	HCAOG Response or Action
FY 2015/16	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service to Tish Non Community Village 2. Service on Old Arcata Road 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service began, and underperformed. Discontinued. 2. Service began and will be discontinued
FY 2016/17	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fieldbrook / Glendale / Korbel / Blue Lake routes considered with survey 	Not reasonable to meet based on farebox return
FY 2017/18	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most frequent comments asked for increased late-night and weekend service to CR and for service to Samoa 	Not reasonable to meet based on farebox return
FY 2018/19	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Late-night weekday service on RTS 	Lacked funding to begin service. LCTOP funds reserved and service scheduled to begin in 2020. Funding repurposed to provide free transit during Covid. SSTAC recommended this unmet need be revisited in future UTN cycles.
FY 2019/20	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Saturday service to Blue Lake 2. Bus stop on south Broadway 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service began October 12, 2019. Willow Creek line makes 3 stops in Blue Lake on Saturdays 2. Bus stop considered in Broadway Multimodal Corridor Plan. HTA seeking funding.
FY 2020/21	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Express bus between McKinleyville and Eureka during peak commute hours 	Not reasonable to meet due to Covid-19. SSTAC recommended this unmet need be revisited in future UTN cycles
FY 2021/22	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More frequent and later service on both ETS and RTS 	No unmet needs reasonable to meet.