



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 5a
SSTAC Meeting
March 5, 2025

DATE: February 24, 2025
TO: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
FROM: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner
SUBJECT: **Introduction to Grant-Funded Project: Humboldt Partnering Assets & Authorities for Comprehensive Transit (PAACT)**

Discussion **STAFF REPORT**

Staff Summary:

Staff and leadership of HCAOG and the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) share the goal of providing the most successful transit services for people traveling around Humboldt County. Humboldt's transit service is impressive for such a rural, remote, low-density region, but there are persistent unmet needs for more span and frequency, needs that cannot be met without more housing and mixed uses developed in in-fill areas. A key to reaching transit goals is to build and maintain working relationships among transportation planning staff and land use planning staff and decision-makers. Through established relationships and working together, public agencies can better understand and define transit opportunities and constraints and proactively plan for the region's transit priorities and needs.

HCAOG and HTA collaborated to apply for a Caltrans planning grant under the Strategic Partnerships–Transit Program. We are happy to report that we were awarded the grant. The grant award is \$479,500; the local cash match is \$62,150 (11.47%), for a total project cost of \$541,650. Caltrans District 1 staff have scheduled our project kick-off meeting for February 27, 2025. We will be conducting the project through June 30, 2027.

In addition to HCAOG and HTA, official project partners include Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of Trinidad Rancheria; Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, and Trinidad; County of Humboldt (Planning & Building Dept.); and the Yurok Tribe. All partners are contributing to the local cash match. All partners except the City of Eureka will receive grant funds to support staff time devoted to this project.

A transit network analysis will complement HCAOG's short-term Transit Development Plan (Dec. 2023) by identifying long-term opportunities to coordinate or consolidate routes, services, and/or governance, and leverage additional funding sources to expand transit service and multimodal options. The study will help guide agencies with land-use authority to increase consideration, and coordination, of multi-modal access in land use goals, policy, codes, and discretionary permitting.

The project's scope of work is:

Task 1. Lay Foundation for Consensus-Building: Establish Advisory Groups

Opportunities to engage across governments & agencies for coordinating transit systems (operations & planning).

Task 2. Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit & Multimodal Networks & Networking

Subtasks and deliverables include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Understanding the community's transit values and priorities. Define problem/vision/purpose statement for regional transit service. (Led primarily by the Project Steering Working Group.)
- Existing conditions report on community & regional characteristics
- Transit market analysis & regional operations assessment

Task 3. Land Use-Transportation Policy Connections

Strengthen government-to-government ties for integrating land use & transit/active mobility in their standard procedures. Specifically, work will seek to identify and implement procedures for improving regular agency consultation with HTA.

Task 4. Stakeholder Outreach, Engagement & Participation Strategies

Strategies shall include, but not be limited to, the following: HCAOG and the whole project team will: encourage stakeholder collaboration; involve active public engagement; conduct outreach to engage disadvantaged/underserved populations; proactively share project content and meeting content.

I welcome questions from SSTAC members and encourage you, and any other stakeholders, to share suggestions for kicking off the project work or for carrying out project tasks.